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LEARNING CENTER PROJECT IN ROMANIA[1]. EVALUATION REPORT.

Corina CACE[2], Sorin CACE[3]

Abstract

Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership (DCGEP) completed an independent evaluation of its Learning Center project in Romania. The purpose of the evaluation was to obtain objective data (enrollment, attendance, pass rates, retention rates) from DCGEP Learning Centers and control schools, to implement creativity test in GEP Learning Centers and in control schools and to identify Learning Centers best practices in three levels - individual, institutional and community. Creativity test was applied in all the six schools chosen to participate in the programme. The data was collected from an equal number of schools that had participated in the DCGEP Learning Center project ("intervention schools"), and schools that had not ("control schools"), in order to be able to compare differences. The control schools were carefully selected to match the intervention schools in terms of their size, context development and location. In order to identify best practices, school directors, teachers, students and parents were interviewed. A participatory data gathering process was used throughout the evaluation process. The positive impact of the programme upon students is obvious. After being involved in DCGEP students have enriched their vocabulary and they have become more creative and communicative. They are now able to perform various activities independently. Due to its design, its monitoring mechanisms and the involvement of all parties, the Discovery programme is a successful one. And taking into account the increasing need for such programmes, especially in rural areas, it is advised that it should be extended to other areas also.

Keywords: cvasi-experimental evaluation, attitudes towards education; student motivation; creativity; language development, community involvement; best practices, lessons learned

[1]Thank you to Claire Maneja and Miruna Popa for their support in the evaluation. Thank you to all the principals, teachers, students and parents who participate in evaluation activities.

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LEARNING CENTER PROJECT IN ROMANIA[4]. EVALUATION REPORT

Corina CACE, Sorin CACE

Executive summary

In 2006, Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership (DCGEP) completed an independent evaluation of its Learning Center project in Romania. The purpose of the evaluation was to obtain objective data (enrollment, attendance, pass rates, retention rates) from DCGEP Learning Centers and control schools, to implement creativity test in GEP Learning Centers and in control schools and to identify Learning Centers best practices in three levels - individual, institutional and community. The evaluator together with DCGEP staff developed instruments to collect data, and used both quantitative and qualitative analysis in their review. The objective data for all the three years of project implementation were grouped such as to offer a complete image on the final outcomes.

Creativity test was applied in all the six schools chosen to participate in the programme. The data was collected from an equal number of schools that had participated in the DCGEP Learning Center project ("intervention schools"), and schools that had not ("control schools"), in order to be able to compare differences. The control schools were carefully selected to match the intervention schools in terms of their size, context development and location.

In order to identify best practices, school directors, teachers, students and parents were interviewed. The data collection was completed in May-June 2006. A participatory data gathering process was used throughout the evaluation process. Maximum participation of all those involved, whenever possible, ensures that the process becomes a staff and student development activity in its own right.

[4] Thank you to Claire Maneja and Miruna Popa for their support in the evaluation. Thank you to all the principals, teachers, students and parents who participate in evaluation activities.

The evaluation findings

1. Project Initiation and Delivery Process in each Learning Center

DCGEP has developed clearly defined criteria for initiating the project in each school community, all of which are important for relevance, commitment and sustainability of the project in that learning center and its community.

DCGEP's project delivery involves not only the donation of the TV and VCR technology and customized video programming, but most importantly, a commitment to a three-year program of teacher training and support.

The emphasis in this program is, again, not only on effective use of the video and broadcast educational programming, but also on how it can be integrated with local curricular content and requirements, as well as on developing effective, active learning in the classroom.

Quite a large number of teachers were trained in interactive teaching methods and audio-visual techniques. This way, the number of classes where the "Video in the Classroom" method is employed has significantly grown in time.

2. Educational and socio-political factors affecting the project in Dambovita County

The educational system in Romania is going through a continuous reform targeting a series of components related to both learning process itself (curricula, manuals and organization in general) and infrastructure.

The situation of school buildings is generally unsatisfactory especially in rural areas. Many schools are more than 50 years old and they are no longer safe and secure for use. Although a large number of schools were repaired and rehabilitated, problems related to providing secure and functional locations for the educational process, still remain.

Computer techniques have been introduced late '90 in quite an accelerated manner but there still are schools where the supply with modern education techniques is rather poor.

Many communities are situated a long distance away from schools, fact which impedes both on school participation and on the quality of the educational process.

Weaknesses related to the hiring of didactic personnel within school units:

1. Many university graduates have no or low interest in starting a teacher career due to low level of salaries
2. Insufficient number of didactic personnel qualified in various objects of study such as: Romanian language, modern languages, computer since etc.;
3. Some cases of low level of professional qualification noticed in the case of teaching staff;
4. Teacher turn-over and mobility of the teaching staff;
5. Difficulties in obtaining and keeping a stable position;
6. Demographic trends especially for rural areas;
7. Available resources such as accommodation or transport for rural areas;
8. Specific socio-economic characteristic of particular communities in the meaning that communities confronting specific social problems such s related with poverty are not attractive;

Few school units employ interactive teaching methods and that is why the results of the educational process are relatively weak.

3. Progress overview

A multiplier effect (effects on students and teachers) of the Discovery method took place in all the six schools. Approximately 6200 students benefited from the programme throughout its whole implementation period. The average reach was 1500 students per year. Approximately 135 teachers and other teaching personnel got familiar with interactive teaching techniques. All six local communities included in the project benefited to a large enough extent from the Discovery facilities.

4. Results on Student Learning

A central goal of the project is to improve student learning. More specifically, it aims to increase student interaction and active thinking through both the stimulation of video and broadcast educational material and the training and resource guides provided by teachers. The evaluation measured student's *written language competence* as well as their *inferential and creative thinking* by administering and scoring a writing task.

The results of the quantitative analysis, which were statistically significant, showed that students involved in the DCGEP Learning Center schools had greater

inferential and creative thinking skills in comparison to their peers in schools that have not participated in the project.

Beyond the progresses achieved in terms of creative language and thinking, students have also developed a series of abilities such as communication skills, team working skills, and improve argumentation to support their own opinions.

5. Best practices and lessons learned

All the elements related to this project constitute by themselves a good practice for developing educational programmes.

School selection criteria and a careful monitoring of each stage of the project contributed to achieving very good results.

Breaking the barriers of unilateral communication between teachers and students is the premise for a quality education.

Integrated approach of the educational process by the inclusion of all relevant actors (teachers, students, and parents) has determined an increased involvement from their side, both in the educational act and in extra-scholar activities.

As a consequence of the Learning Center project school activities have become more sustainable because of continuous involvement of teacher and students in using modern methods for teaching and learning. They may be easily replicated in other similar schools.

Conclusions

The positive impact of the programme upon students is obvious. After being involved in DCGEP students have enriched their vocabulary and they have become more creative and communicative. They are now able to perform various activities independently.

Due to its design, its monitoring mechanisms and the involvement of all parties, the Discovery programme is a successful one. And taking into account the increasing need for such programmes, especially in rural areas, it is advised that it should be extended to other areas also.

Introduction

Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership (DCGEP) is a non-profit charitable organization spearheaded by Discovery Communications, Inc. in 1997 as an effort to bring together partners from the private and public sectors in support of a unique, grassroots education and technology project serving populations left out of the information age.

The Partnership provides under-resourced schools and communities in different countries of the world with TV, VCR, and satellite (or cable) technology, teacher training and video programming to increase access to information and educational opportunities, for students, teachers and members of the community.

The Partnership launched in 2003 six pilot Learning Centers in Dambovita County. Dambovita County is home to farming communes, where most of the inhabitants are former employees in the industrial sector. The schools included in project are located in six villages: Suta Seaca, Glodeni, Bungetu, Pucioasa, Runcu, Magura.

Project initiation and delivery process in each Learning Center

DCGEP has developed clearly defined criteria for selecting initiating the project in each Learning Center (Annex 1), all of which are important for relevance, commitment and sustainability of the project in that Learning Center and its community.

Project delivery in each Learning Center involves not only the donation of the television technology and culturally appropriate and relevant video programs but also, and most importantly, it involves a commitment from DCGEP to a three year program of teacher training and support. The emphasis in this program is, again, not only on effective use of the video programming but also on how it can be integrated with local curricular content and requirements, as well as on developing effective interactive, active learning in classroom practice.

The activities in developing Learning Center are:

1. Selection of Learning Centers for participation in the project

2. Provision of materials, training and support. Once DCGEP has approved development of a new Learning Center, it commits to the following: Donating a TV, VCR. Donating and distributing specially tailored video programs and resource guides, and other programming resources, on an ongoing basis, for the duration of the learning center's active utilization of the equipment.
3. Providing teacher training, mentoring, and monitoring for three years, pending yearly evaluations.
4. Assisting local educators in connecting DCGEP programming materials to local school curricula.
5. Facilitating in providing Learning Centers with sources of other videos of interest.
6. Facilitating ways for the community to obtain maximum benefit from the technology and content.

Training and monitoring

The director must enable teachers or staff to attend DCGEP training in the use of video as a teaching tool. DCGEP will outline a plan for training and monitoring over three years. The teachers must support the project and willingly agree to training.

Volunteer Coordinators

The school/center commits to providing volunteer coordinators to do the following on an ongoing basis:

1. Communicate with the DCGEP representative on an ongoing basis.
2. Work with the principal and DCGEP representative to schedule training and monitoring visits.
3. Establish timetables for TV/VCR usage by the school and community
4. Keep a monthly log of how the equipment is used (forms will be provided) and submit reports to the DCGEP representative on a monthly basis.
5. Submit end of term reports to the DCGEP representative to ensure feedback from the school to DCGEP.

6. Oversee the maintenance and security of the equipment.
7. Introduce new videos to the school/center and community.
8. Bring to the attention of the DCGEP representative any problems or challenges that are hindering full utilization of the TV, VCR, and satellite dish.

Community Access

The school or center commits itself to providing the community appropriate access to the equipment for the purposes of continuing education and serving other community needs and interests.

DCGEP Committee

The school or center forms a DCGEP committee to oversee the impact and sustainability of the project. DCGEP recommends that the committee include the principal/director, DCGEP school coordinator, two trained teachers, and two community members/parents.

Full utilization of the technology and content

The schools agree to fully integrate the technology and programming of all kinds into their education process, and to maximize opportunities for those outside the school/center to benefit from educational programs.

The three year program of teacher training and support

Initial training is delivered in a 3-day course, unless the school or Department of Education prefers that training be spread out over the term. After this course, and throughout the 3-year project period, training follow-up, teacher observations and monitoring will continue. The programme outlines the average amount of time expected of a trainer in each school during years 1, 2 and 3.

Throughout the entire period of the project communication was established between the members of the implementation team. The Country Representative supplied support through out the three years to the trainer, to the voluntary coordinators and to the management of the 6 schools. The trainer ensured the continuous training of the teachers throughout the entire period of the project.

The voluntary coordinators from the schools initiated and developed relations with other community actors (representatives of the public institutions and of the local authorities). See Appendix 5 for further details.

Romanian educational system

The legal framework regulating the organization and management of providing education in Romania is established through the Constitution, the Education Law (Law 84/1995) - organic law according to the Constitution, ordinary laws and ordinances of the Government. The specific procedures, rules and regulations in organizing and providing education and training at different levels are established within this general legal framework through legislative acts of lower level: decisions of the Government and Ministerial Orders of the Minister of Education and Research.

Public pre-university education (pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education) is part of the local decentralized public services and is subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Research through the County School Inspectorates. At the local level, the County School Inspectorates ensure implementation observance of the legislation in force and continuous evaluation of the educational system and process as well as implementation of the educational policy established at the national level by the Ministry of Education and Research.

Public education in Romania is financed at a minimum of 4% of GDP. According to the provisions of the Education Law (Law 84/1995), public education is co-financed both from the state and the local budgets (county, town, commune); Other actors such as economic agents, individuals and institutions with legal personality can also finance directly education and various training activities. (Antonio, Cojocaru, Ponea, 2010) The exact costs covered from by the state budget and respectively from by the local budgets depend directly on the educational level and type of institution and the entire financing process is regulated by means of the law. Public education institutions of all levels can create and use, in accordance with the in-force legal provisions, extra-budgetary funds depending of educational needs.

Accordingly, the *„Strategy for developing the pre-university education in Romania in the period 2001-2004"* was elaborated and implementation has begun during 2001. Following the decision of the Romanian Government - as stated at the Conference of the European Ministers of Education, Bratislava, June 2002 - to join the process of implementation of the Education & Training 2010*" programme, two major actions were taken: first to adapt the „Strategy for developing the pre-university education in Romania in the period 2001-2004"* to meet the objectives agreed upon at the European level, and secondly to ensure the establishment of a strategic partnership for education with all the concerned players. This strategic partnership is seen as a prerequisite to ensure continuity and sustainability over the next period in order to achieve the proposed educational objectives. To ensure accountability of the various stakeholders, a set of public debates has been undertaken in the strategic planning phase. Representatives of the Romanian Parliament, of the Delegation of the European

Commission in Bucharest, and international donors such as the World Bank as well as social partners and local public authorities were involved in these debates and the concrete outcomes were fully taken into consideration.

Strategic directions of the Ministry of Education and Research during 2006 – 2008

1. Provide equal opportunities and increase the access to education;
2. Provide for education quality and render the national system of education compatible with the European system of education and professional training;
3. Decentralise and increase the autonomy of the educational system at the level of the units/institutions of education;
4. Reform the early education;
5. Increase the institutional capacity to elaborate and manage projects.

Pre-primary education

Pre-primary education is a part of the non-compulsory pre-university education and can be provided in public and private kindergartens. According to the provisions of the Education Law (Law 84/1995), pre-primary education is organised for children aged 3-6/7 in three types of programmes, offered in the same or different kindergartens: normal, prolonged and weekly programme. Children are organised in age-level groups: lower (3-4 years old); middle (4-5 years old) and high, school-preparatory group (5-6/7 years old). A group works with one or two teachers, depending on the programme, and comprises in average 15 children, but no less than 10 and no more than 20.

Primary education

Primary education is a part of the compulsory education and can be provide in public and private schools. According to the provisions of the Education Law (Law 84/1995), primary education is organized for pupils aged 6(7)-10(11) and includes grades I to IV. A class of any grade in primary education works with one teacher and comprises in average 20 pupils, but no less than 10 and no more than 25.

Public primary schools are established by the County School Inspectorates with the agreement of the Ministry of Education and Research and are co-financed from the state budget and the local budgets (county - for special education only, town, and commune).

The content of pre-university education curricula is established within the National Curriculum, defined by the Education Law (Law 84/1995) as the coherent assembly of frame-curricula, syllabi and textbooks for each pre-university educational level, route, profile, specialization and grade.

The National Curriculum is structured into two parts, one that is mandatory for each educational level, route, profile, specialization and grade (the common core curriculum) and one which is at the decision of the school (the school-based curriculum):

The common core curriculum is the common educational offer established at national level and consisting of a number of compulsory subjects with the same syllabi and time-allocation for all pupils attending a given educational level, route, profile, specialization and grade. During compulsory education, the common core curriculum is meant to ensure equal opportunities for accomplishing basic education for all pupils through the development of the key-competences. The frame-curricula indicate for the compulsory subjects either the exact or the minimum and the maximum number of classes per week.

The school-based curriculum is the educational offer entirely decided at the school level by the teachers' council and the administration council and consists of optional subjects with syllabi established at national or school level as well as other educational activities. The school-based curriculum is meant to ensure differentiated performances of the pupils (high and low achievers) and to respond to certain local needs and/or particular needs of the pupils.

The frame-curricula establish the number of classes per week allocated to compulsory and optional subjects/activities as well as the total minimum and maximum number of classes per week by educational level, route, profile, specialization and grade. The syllabi lay down for each compulsory subject the educational objectives and the content and provide methodological guidelines for the teachers.

The school-based curriculum can include:

1. Further study classes - dedicated to the subjects included in the common core curriculum and using the same syllabi as the one established within the common core curriculum. These types of activities are usually meant for supporting low achievers;

2. Extended study classes - dedicated to the subjects included in the common core curriculum and using extended syllabi (supplementary/same educational objectives and supplementary content). These types of activities are usually meant for supporting high achievers;

Optional subjects - subjects different from the one included in the common core curriculum for the given educational level, route, profile, specialization and grade. In some cases subjects established in the common core curriculum for other educational level, route, profile, specialization and grade might be proposed (e.g. foreign languages, ICT, etc.). In these cases an adapted syllabi can be used. For subjects that are not part of the National Curriculum (e.g. local history, cultural heritage, applied mathematics and sciences, use of ICT, etc.) the teachers proposing the optional subjects have to prepare the syllabi and to submit it for approval to the County School Inspectorate.

The teaching methods applied in primary education are carefully chosen so as to meet the finalities of the educational level, the frame and reference objectives of every subject. The teacher is fully responsible for choosing the methods, taking the structure of the class into consideration, the teaching aids available in the school and following the methodological guidelines provided by the National Curriculum and the teachers' guides for each subject.

For most of the subjects, a given class works with the same teacher all the way through primary education; foreign languages, religion and, in some cases, music and physical education are taught by other teachers. During a given lesson, the class management is entirely the responsibility of the teacher. In consequence, teachers can decide *per se* to organize the activities with all the pupils (frontal activities), in smaller groups or individually (differentiated activities) - depending on the specific objectives of the lesson and the level of the pupils. Separated group teaching-learning activities, with groups comprising at least 10 pupils, can only be organized either within the school-based curriculum or within extra-curricular activities.

Teaching Methods in the Romanian Classroom

Regarding the teaching methods, the following general remarks can be taken into consideration:

1. The oral communication methods utilized can be classified as expository methods (story telling, description, explanation etc.) and conversational methods (conversation, heuristic conversation, questioning on a special subject etc.) and participatory methods (laboratory experiments, study visits). Teachers also use exploratory learning methods: direct exploration of objects and phenomena (systematic and independent observation, small experiments etc.) and indirect exploration (problem solving, demonstration through pictures, films etc.);

2. For teaching most subjects, teachers use extensively methods based on the pupils' direct voluntary action (exercises, practical work, etc.) and simulated action (didactic games, learning through dramatization etc.);

At least in the first two grades of primary education, continuing the methods used in pre-primary education, the game is still used as an important modality to stimulate the mental and physical capacity of the pupils and to facilitate adaptation of the pupils to the requirements of formal education.

At the end of each lesson teachers usually assign the homework for the next class – foreseeing both further understanding of the knowledge acquired and exercise of the competences developed and knowledge learned. The homework consists of exercises, activities, etc. chosen either from the textbooks or from other printed teaching aids (pupils' textbooks, texts anthologies, problems and exercises collections etc.) with the scope to use the information cumulated through education process.

The teaching aids used in primary education consist of natural materials (plants, insects, rocks etc.), technical objects (measurement instruments, home appliances etc.), intuitive materials (cast and clay models), figurative aids (pictures, photographs, atlas books, maps, albums, audio-video images etc.) and printed teaching aids (pupils' textbooks, texts anthologies, problems and exercises collections etc.). Printed teaching aids can be acquired by the schools' libraries or recommended by the teacher according with the curricula and acquired by the pupils. Teaching through ICT is rather developed at a low level due to lack of both hardware and trained human resources.

Pupils' evaluation has to be performed on a regular base for all subjects (compulsory and optional) during the semesters by the teachers working with the class (continuous evaluation). Each semester includes periods dedicated to the consolidation and evaluation of the competences acquired by the pupils (formative and summative evaluations) decided by the teachers working with the class. Usually these periods are established towards the end of the semester and teachers foresee:

1. To improve the teaching-learning process results;
2. To asses the level of knowledge acquired;
3. To support systematization of the knowledge acquired;
4. To stimulate the performances of low and high achievers;
5. To identify week and strong points in learning process.

Evaluation methods and instruments are established by the teacher according to the age and psychological particularities of the pupils and taking the specificity of the

subject into consideration. These can include oral questioning, written papers, practical activities, reports and projects, interviews, portfolios, as well as other instruments elaborated by the school's chairs/departments and approved by the head of school or elaborated by the Ministry of Education and Research and the County School Inspectorates. Various yearly contests are organized at local or national level in order to asses performances in areas such as arts, mathematics, Romanian or foreign languages.

Transition from primary education to secondary education is only conditioned by the promotion of the first four grades. Special languages exams are organized at the end of four years in the case of schools with classes studying foreign languages.

Lower secondary education

Lower secondary education is part of the compulsory education and gives all pupils equal opportunities in accomplishing the second stage of basic education and in continuing their education in the subsequent educational levels.

Until the year 2003, lower secondary education comprised only the gymnasium (grades V to VIII) Beginning with the school year 2003/2004 compulsory education was extended to 10 years. Consequently, lower secondary education includes now the gymnasium, but also the subsequent two grades (IX and X) - provided in two alternative educational routes: the high school lower cycle and the "arts and trades school" (VET). In the new structure the gymnasium is considered as the "first cycle of lower secondary" and grades IX and X (regardless the educational route) as the "second cycle of lower secondary".

The content of secondary education is established within the National Curriculum, defined by the Education Law (Law 84/1995) as the coherent assembly of frame-curricula, syllabi and textbooks for each educational level, branch of study, profile, specialization and grade. The National Curriculum is structured into two parts: the common core curriculum and the school-based curriculum.

The common core curriculum is the common educational offer established at national level and consisting of a number of compulsory subjects with the same syllabi and time-allocation for all pupils attending a given educational level, branch of study, profile, specialization and grade. During compulsory education, the common core curriculum is meant to ensure equal opportunities for accomplishing basic education for all pupils through the development of the key-competences. For the post-compulsory education, the common core curriculum ensures the acquisition of the general competences corresponding to the branch of study, educational profile and specialization. The frame-curricula indicate for the compulsory subjects either the exact or the minimum and the maximum number of classes per week.

The school-based curriculum is the educational offer entirely decided at the school level by the teachers' council and the administration council and consists of optional subjects with syllabi established at national or school level as well as other educational activities. The school-based curriculum is meant to ensure differentiated performances of the pupils (high and low achievers) and to respond to certain local needs and/or particular needs of the pupils. The teaching methods applied in secondary are carefully chosen so as to meet the finalities and the educational objectives set for the educational levels.

The teacher is fully responsible for choosing the methods, taking the structure of the class into consideration, the teaching aids available in the school and following the methodological guidelines provided by the National Curriculum and the teachers' guides for each subject.

Educational and socio-political factors affecting the DCGEP project in Romania

School enrolment situation in the Dambovita County. *Data calculated according to the Yearly Statistics Book of the National Institute for Statistics*

School year	Total	Preschool	Percent	Primary and secondary	Percent
1995/1996	108522	16110	25,06	64288	59,24
2000/2001	109909	13226	20,83	63510	57,78
2001/2002	110001	13479	22,12	60932	55,39
2002/2003	106066	13762	23,83	57752	54,45
2003/2004	105265	14439	25,86	55843	53,05
2004/2005	101761	14574	27,59	52830	51,92

Table 1. School population enrolled in preschool, primary and secondary education in Dambovita county – absolute figures and percentages of the total

As regards pre-school education, we may notice that the percentage has been on the rise for the past two years unlike primary and secondary education where the percentage has significantly been lowered.

Problems encountered in Dambovita County in the field of education

1. The situation of material support

The situation of buildings designed for schooling is generally unsatisfactory. There are many schools which function in buildings more than 40 years old (i.e. Runcu School). A number of 47 schools were included in the School Rehabilitation Programme for the school years of 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 at Dambovita county level. The programme was co-financed by World Bank and Romanian Government. From the six schools included in DGCEP project only Magura School was included in the WB project.

At the same time, a large number of schools benefited from the financial contribution of local community and County Council and were repaired and rehabilitated. Such actions are to be continued in order to secure functional spaces for the educational process.

Within the programme to rehabilitate material support in schools, a number of 2000 school desks were manufactured during the last school year. This action was accomplished by personal means. The County School Inspectorate benefited from the support of County Council, from the sponsorship of Dambovita Department for Forestry as well as of other economic agents.

All the school units included in the Rehabilitation Programme co-financed by World Bank and Romanian Government were newly furnished. This furniture rehabilitation programme is to be continued in the future.

2. Providing computer equipment and other equipment

For the past few years, computer techniques have been introduced in the educational process in an accelerated manner. School education in Dambovita County has benefited from the Governmental programme to supply computer equipment in schools. A number of 22 high schools as well as vocational schools were supplied full equipment consisting of 25 performing PC units, copy machines, printers, scanners, etc. Another 4 schools are to be provided with computers within the Phare Programme but not with other equipment. School units in rural area were supplied a number of 146 new PC units. Many other computer units were procured through personal means of the school units themselves. This programme to equip schools with computer units shall continue in the future. In DGCEF schools the number of computers is limited. In Romania the use of television as an educational tool is not very well developed.

3. Communities situated at long distance from school units

Due to a lack of systematization, in almost every commune there are isolated villages with a small number of inhabitants. As a rule, in such villages there is an only a school for primary education and in order to attend secondary education, pupils from these villages must walk to a school situated in the center of the commune and many times the distance is between 5-10 km away. In order to improve their situation, Dambovita County benefited from the programme developed by the Ministry of Education and Research to supply school units with transportation vehicles. A number of 12 school buses were received and are currently used for the transportation of pupils in the following communes: Răcari, Ulmi, Malu cu Flori, Bărbulețu, Sălcioara, Branişte, Iedera.

This action is also to be continued in the future. It is hoped that by this action, the school network will be restructured and those school units with a low enrolment rate and poor educational results will be massed.

4. Human resources

In Dambovita County didactic personnel is relatively high qualified and the number of unqualified tutors has significantly lowered. There is a strong decrease in the number of school population and as a consequence, the number of available jobs in the educational field has also been lowered.

Weaknesses related to the hiring of didactic personnel within school units:

1. Many valuable graduates from superior education show a lowered interest to enter the field of education due to a low remuneration;
2. Insufficient number of didactic personnel qualified in various objects such as: Romanian language, modern languages, computer since etc.;
3. Low level of professional qualification noticed in some member of the teaching staff;
4. Fluctuation of the teaching staff;

In order to diminish the deficit of teaching staff in some of the school objects, a cooperation with superior education is needed in order to enroll more pupils in the respective faculties and universities and vacancies in the field of education shall be better advertised for.

Name of the school	Runcu School			Glodeni School			Suta Seaca		
year	permanent staff	temporary staff	total	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total
2005-2006	19	6	25	22	5	27	9	3	12
Name of the school	Bungetu School			Magura School			Pucioasa School		
Year	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total	permanent staff	temporary staff	total	permanent staff	temporary staff	total
2005-2006	12	3	15	8	6	4	28	15	33

Table 2. Teaching staff in DCGEP Schools

In order to diminish the fluctuation of teaching staff, measures to create better living conditions are needed as well as granting facilities to those who wish to settle in under-privileged areas. Formulating proposals to improve the legal framework in the field of education is also necessary.

In order to improve the professional and methodical training of the teaching staff and in cooperation with the House of Didactic Personnel the offer for training courses should be enlarged both for the teaching staff and for the management of school units.

5. Scholl enrolment, attendance, school drop-out and repeating grades

School attendance remains a key condition for a successful education. In Dambovita county, most of the pupils and their parents seem to understand this condition and the result is a general positive and realistic attitude towards school attendance. In June 2002, a number of 46 children were not found enrolled in any form of the primary education (11 in urban areas and 35 in rural areas) and a number of 96 pupils did not graduated the school year (33 in urban areas and 64 in rural ones).

As compared to the past year, in 2005-2006 these figures are smaller but the problem remains and it must be paid full attention.

As results, there are several causes leading to such situations:

1. Children are involved by their families in various work related activities;
2. Material difficulties;
3. Premature marriages between minors which "transfer" children from the classroom directly to the individual household;
4. Ill intended families;
5. Because they have to repeat a grade, some children refuse to continue education rather then repeating the grade due to low educational results;
6. Disorganized families whose influence upon children has a negative impact;
7. Families, especially Rroma families who do not understand the role of education for children;
8. A negative influence from the peer groups.

Both the managing and teaching staff has continuously tried to identify appropriate measures to improve this situation.

Examples of actions undertaken:

1. Visiting families in order to acknowledge their exact situation;
2. Filling in forms to apply for social scholarships, providing them with material aids resulted from selling recyclable materials;
3. Cooperating with local institutions and communities;

4. Launching training programs focus on adult education and social integration of Rroma population;
5. Punishing bad behavior in class and stopping allowances on these grounds;
6. Rewarding pupils with good results and a high rate of school attendance by sending them to social camps organized by the Ministry of Education and Research / 240 pupils).

For DCGEP see analysis of situation in next chapters.

6. A relatively low percentage of teachers trained and modern teaching methods employed

Few school units employ interactive teaching methods and that is why the results of the educational process are relatively weak.

Pre-primary education teachers (*educatori*) and primary education teachers *(învăţători)* are trained in pedagogical high school (upper secondary education). *Institutori*, primary education teachers who specialize in subjects like foreign languages, music and sports are trained in university colleges (short-term education), providing courses which last two years (for graduates of pedagogical high schools) or three years (for graduates of other high schools). Lower and upper secondary school teachers (*profesori*) are trained in long-term higher education, four to five years, depending on the subject they will teach.

During the period of teacher training stress was laid particularly on the classical methods of teaching. There are just few universities that use active teaching methods and modern teaching means to train prospective teachers.

Initial and In-service Training for Teachers and School Managers

The reform of initial and in-service teacher training enables teachers:

1. to adopt adequate teaching-learning strategies, related to new objectives and contents specified in the new curriculum framework plan;
2. to use new evaluation methods of the education process and of its outcomes.

Two national institutional bodies have been set up and empowered to monitor changes in initial and in-service training for teachers and school managers: the National Centre for Training Pre-university Teachers and the National Centre for Training Pre-university Managers. These two institutions have the following main tasks:

1. to develop initial and in-service training standards;
2. to set up criteria and methods for accreditation of training programmes;
3. to accredit various in-service training programmes based on national standards;
4. to elaborate the project for in-service training financing from various sources;
5. to supervise the development of in-service training activities;
6. to conceive training programmes for awarding on the job confirmation and/or didactical degrees;
7. to elaborate the new methodology for in-service training;
8. to elaborate support programmes for junior teachers;
9. to establish development routes for the teaching profession;
10. to conceive strategies for pre-university initial and in-service training;
11. to assure a balance between supply and demand on the training market;
12. to analyze the outcomes of training activities;
13. to support in-service training activities performed in Teacher Resource Centers.

Besides the updating courses for professional development, initial and in-service teacher training include training sessions for the use of computers as a teaching tool and for the development of new skills related to the use of modern technologies.

The training courses are required by the teachers from the schools that have modern teaching means. Participation in the training courses is optional and in most cases it requires the payment of a fee.

Evaluation methodology

Definition of Evaluation

There are a lot of different definitions of evaluation. Here is one of the best, because it touches on the most important aspects of evaluation: “Evaluation is a collection of methods, skills and sensitivities necessary to determine whether a human service is needed and likely to be used, whether it is conducted as planned, and

whether the human service actually does help people" (Posavac and Carey, 1980, p.6). Another is: „systematic tracking of valorisation or the value of an object" (Cace, C., 2002, p.15).

These definitions encompass the two main types of evaluation: process and summative.

Two Main Types of Evaluation

Although the literature includes over a hundred different kinds of evaluation (see Patton, 1982; Cojocaru, 2010), the vast majority boil down to two types: those that aim to determine if the program has been implemented as planned (Cojocaru, 2009), and those that measure its success in achieving its objectives (i.e., its impact). The label most often associated with the first type is "process evaluation," although it is sometimes called formative evaluation (Cojocaru, 2008). The latter type is known as "summative evaluation," also known as impact, outcome, or effectiveness evaluation.

Process Evaluation — *How is the program operating and how can it be made better?* Process evaluations are directed at three key questions: (1) the extent to which a program is reaching the appropriate target population; (2) whether or not its service delivery is consistent with program design; and (3) what resources are being expended (Rossi and Freeman, 1993). An important role plays participative evaluation (Cace, S, 2003). The main objective is to provide feedback to managers on whether the program is being carried out as planned and in an efficient manner. Guidance should be provided for modifying the program to help ensure it meets its objectives. With this information, the program can be modified so it is carried out as planned, or the plan itself can be modified if it is found lacking.

Summative Evaluation — *Does the program achieve its objectives?* The purpose of summative evaluations is to assess the impact of the program; that is, ascertain the extent to which the program meets its objectives, and the needs of its target group. As well, it should provide advice for modifying the program so that it will better serve the needs of its clients and become more cost-effective (Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, 1985).

Objectives of evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to obtain objective data (enrollment, attendance, pass rates, retention rates) from DCGEP Learning Centers and control schools, to implement creativity test in DCGEP Learning Centers and in control schools and to identify Learning Centers best practices in three levels - individual, institutional and community.

Also, the study was focused on the project's impact on three main areas: student learning and motivation, teachers' professional development, and school-community relationships.

Data collection

The objective data was collected with DCGEP team support in Romania. The interviews and the focus groups took place in May/June 2006 in six schools from Dambovita County: Suta Seaca, Glodeni, Bungetu, Pucioasa, Runcu, Magura. A number of individual interviews was performed in each school (principal, parent, community representative, and Volunteer coordinator - in LCs; focus group discussions and interview with both teachers and students; the completion of the language/creativity test. The focus group discussions were held with students from Grades 7. The language/creativity test was administered by a member of the evaluation team in collaboration with the class teacher (Grade 7). The students' written sheets were collected in random order and sent to scorer for analysis and scoring. In interview with parents in most cases the parent was selected because they were available and lived nearby. Data collected was used for identifying best practices at individual, institutional and community level (Baichère, Cukrowicz, Duprez, Rahmania, 2010).

Data analysis

All audio-recorded interview (49) and focus group materials were transcribed and then thematically analyzed to reveal, qualitatively, the most common or prominent differences between Learning Centers and control schools on the relevant indicators listed above. Illustrative quotes are included in the results to give reality and substance to the analyses. Themes that constitute as best practices were also identified and analyzed. Quantitative data on the relevant indicators listed above was analyzed for statistically significant differences between the intervention and control conditions.

One evaluator conducted fieldwork between May-June 2006. He met with school principals, teachers, parents and students from grade seven. The following interviews and focus groups were conducted:

6 interview with shool principals;

- individual interview with 16 teachers;

- individual interview with 14 students;

- individual interview with 13 parents;

- one focus group with teachers;

- one focus group with students;

- creativity test in 12 schools for students seven grade (6 Learning Centers and 6 control schools).

Criteria for selection of control schools:

1. number of students enrolled (academic year 2002-2003 and 2005-2006)- control schools could have 20-30 students more or less compared with the DCGEP schools;
2. teachers that are employed as permanent staff (academic year 2002-2003 and 2005-2006) - in percentage. It is obtained by dividing the number of permanent teachers to the total no of teachers in the school multiplied by 100. Control schools could have 1-3 teachers more or less compared with DCGEP schools;
3. preschool children enrolled in kindergarten (academic year 2002-2003 and 2005-2006). Control schools could have 10 children more or less;
4. other educational based projects implemented at school level (projects that interfered with the learning process).

Themes of evaluation

A. Student learning

Language development and creativity. A central goal of the DCGEP project is to improve student learning. More specifically it aims to increase student interaction and active thinking through both the stimulation of television material and the training provided to teachers. This quantitative indicator (creativity score) provides a measure of written language competence as well as inferential and creative thinking. These skills may be seen as central outcomes if the project is indeed fulfilling the above specific aims in relation to student learning. The instrument used was a writing task undertaken in a class of Grade 7s in each from 12 schools. All writing tasks were scored 'blind' by one experienced teacher. Scoring may therefore be taken as consistent and totally unbiased. This quantitative indicator was supplemented by qualitative analysis of creativity test.

Student motivation. Student interest in school and enthusiasm for learning affect learning in general. They are clearly desirable outcomes of an intervention of this nature and constitute an important indicator. The results was derived qualitatively primarily through the thematic analysis of one focus group discussions held with

students and 14 individual interviews as well as through teachers' focus groups and individual interviews (principals, parents).

Student breadth of perspective. As the result of exposure to the video material in particular, as well as broader television coverage, the project aims to increase students' understanding and perspectives of the world beyond their immediate environments. These qualitative results were derived through the thematic analysis of individual interview and focus group discussions held in each school, as well as comments by teachers and principals.

B. Teacher effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness in promoting active learning. The goal of the Learning Center project is to support the teacher professional development by training educators in student-centered, interactive teaching techniques using TV and video as an educational tool. A measure of the effectiveness of this therefore constitutes a central indicator of the project's results. The qualitative data resulted from the teacher focus groups and interview.

Teacher access to, and use of, teaching aids. Since a primary goal of the project is to provide disadvantaged schools with video resources and television as teaching aids it is important to establish how access to, and use of, teaching aids in general then differs between intervention and control schools. The results were derived qualitatively through the thematic analysis of individual interview and focus group discussions held with teachers and supplemented by interview material from principals.

C. Parent and community involvement

Parent involvement. Given the goal of making television facilities available to the community, it was hoped that parents - being an important group in the school's community - would become more involved in the school's activities. The results were derived qualitatively through the thematic analysis of interviews with parents, as well as with principals.

Community involvement and use of school facilities. Given the project's goal of making television facilities available to general members of the community, this indicator was designed to gauge the success of this. The results were derived qualitatively through the thematic analysis of interviews with principals.

Limitations of the study. The main limitation of the study lies in the impossibility of achieving in depth comparative analysis (at different level) between DCGEP schools and controls schools because of missing reliable data. In some cases the criteria for selecting control school was adjusted due to low fulfillment of all

conditions of selection especially in terms of number of students comparable with Learning Center. This is the main reason why there are only few cases when the number of students is higher than the highest or lowest level designed by the selection criteria. Those results that relate either to data collected from groups of individuals (e.g. the language/creativity task, focus group discussions, and other qualitative results that involved analysis of responses from a number of sources) may be taken as adequately representative and reliable.

Results of evaluation

Analysis of objective data: enrollment, attendance, pass rates, and retention rates

School	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Suta Seaca	112	113	113	109
Glodeni	351	321	319	308
Bungetu	145	161	165	162
Pucioasa	595	584	566	553
Runcu	311	288	269	253
Magura	107	101	95	86

Table 3. Enrollment by year

If we consider school enrolment, a lower number of students were observed in 5 of the 6 schools. The number of students increased only at the school from Bungetu. Comparatively to 2002-2003 teaching year, in 2005-2006 teaching year the proportion of students in the learning centres reached 90.74%, that is almost 10% less.

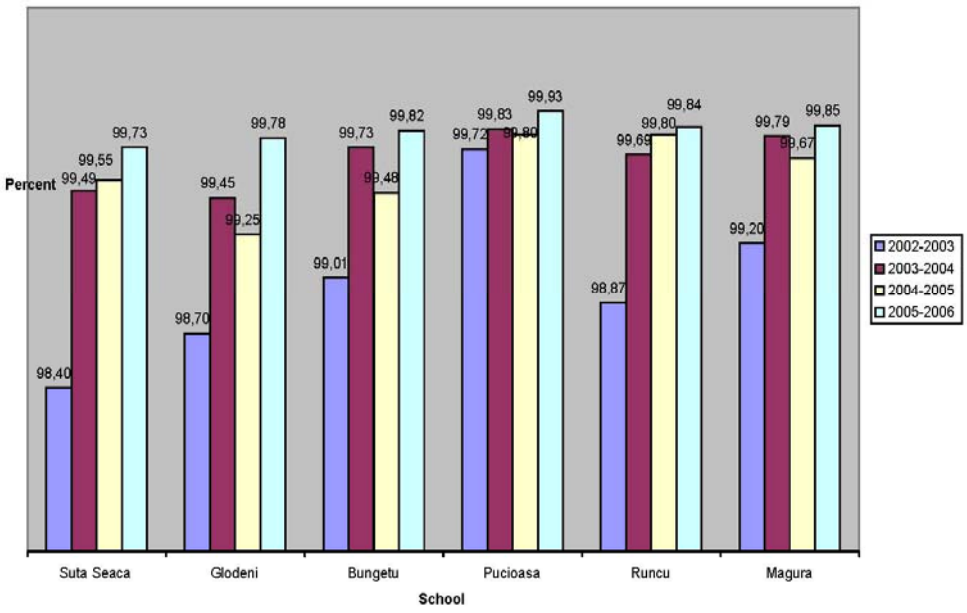

Figure 1. Attendance rate by year

In all schools, the attendance of classes increased in 2005-2006 teaching year comparatively to 2002-2003 teaching year reaching almost 100%. The most significant increase was noticed in the schools from Suta Seaca and Glodeni.

School	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Suta Seaca	100%	100%	100%	100%
Glodeni	99%	99%	100%	86,53%
Bungetu	100%	100%	98,68%	99,32%
Pucioasa	93,03%	93,03%	99,83%	93,17%
Runcu	99%	99%	100%	100%
Magura	100%	100%	100%	94%

Table 4. Pass rate by year

The number of students that promoted a higher grade was different. Thus, at Suta Seaca, it remained constant, 100%. At Magura it decreased by almost 6% in 2005-2006 teaching year reaching 94%. At Runcu it increased reaching 100% in 2005-2006 teaching year. In the other 3 schools, there were either small increases (Pucioasa) or decreases (Glodeni, Bungetu) in the 4 school years.

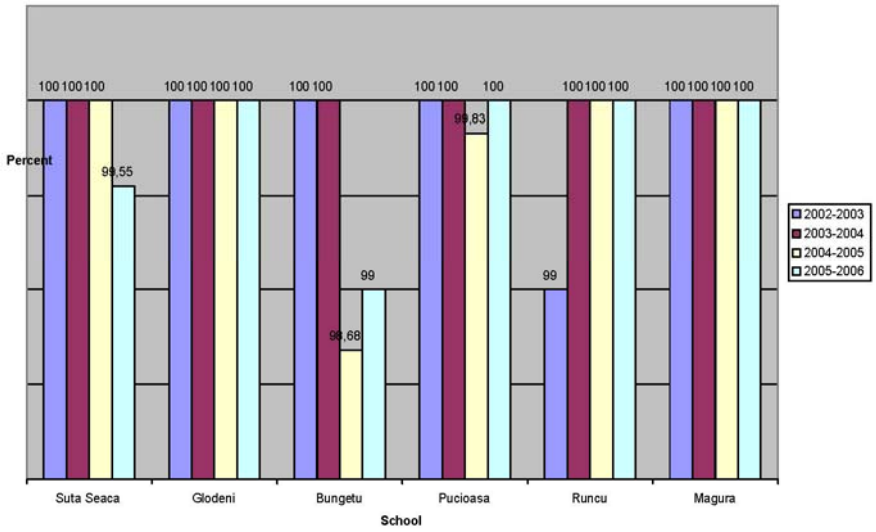

Figure 2. Retention rate by years

The retention rate remained unchanged in two schools (Glodeni and Magura) being 100%. It increased to 100% in Runcu in 2005-2006 teaching year, unlike Suta Seaca where it decreased to 99.5%. It decreased initially in Bungetu and Pucioasa and then increased.

Language development and creativity[5]

Quantitative Analysis

Language competence and inferential and creative thinking are seen as central and critical skills in the broader process of scholastic achievements. Since the central aim of the project is to increase student's participation, linguistic interaction and active thinking and writing, this measure may be taken as a key indicator of whether it achieves this goal. In order to assess written language competence and creativity, students in both intervention and control schools were asked to write as much as they could about a large, colored *'stimulus'* picture that the teacher held up in front of the class. The students had the same picture printed in black and white on a blank sheet of paper in front of them.

A full description of the language and creativity instrument is presented in annex no 3. For the main 'condition' effect the mean performance of students in all intervention schools was 81.4% (SE: 0,15; N:103) while that of students in all control schools was 69.0% (SE:0.14; N:103). This difference was statistically highly significant at the $p<0.001$ level ($F=36.29$; df 1)

Condition	Means %	Std. Error	N
Intervention	81,4	0,15	103
Control	69,0	0,14	103

Table 5. Language/Creativity Means[6]

Control schools	Mean	N	Std. Deviation

[5] Clacherty & Associates and Professor David Donald used the some methods to test significance, DCGEF Africa Impact Evaluation, 2003

[6] The *t*-test tells us if the variation between two groups is "significant".

1,00	8,1432	103	1,4084
2,00	6,9029	103	1,5444
Total	7,5231	206	1,6000

Report DGCEF schools

			Sum of Squares	f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
DGCEF schools* Control schools	Between Groups	(Combined)	79,224	1	79,224	6,269	,000
	Within Groups		445,604	04	2,184		
	Total		524,828	05			

ANOVA Table[7]

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
DGCEF schools and control schools	06	7,5231	1,6000	,1115

[7]ANOVA is a general technique that can be used to test the hypothesis that the means among two or more groups are equal, under the assumption that the sampled populations are normally distributed.

	Test Value = 6.90					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
DGCEF schools and control schools	5,589	205	,000	,6231	,4033	,8429

One-Sample Statistics

Qualitative Analysis

It is noticed that in all Learning Centers the effects upon creativity and language have been significant. Also, following the qualitative analysis of all the 206 creativity tests it comes out very clearly that children in all Learning Centers possess a more elevated and enriched vocabulary and expression compared to those in control schools.

Category	DCGEP	Control schools
Vocabulary	Newly emerged notions such as competition, imagination, training for life; Their vocabulary is rich and metaphorical : *„the heaven of moral treasures", „creativity", „secrets", „bright minds", „dark tendency", „tenebrous", „to bear one's cross", „flourished inside the soul"* etc;	Simple vocabulary and regular expressions; They use of inadequate words;
Level of expression	Freedom of opinion and a relaxed attitude are emerging from all papers;	Lack of ideas and creativity (recurrence of the superlative "*very*");

	Students externalize their feelings and personalize them; Warmth and affection emerge from their papers;	They reiterate the same ideas; They express themselves with difficulty;
Perceptions and attitudes about school	All the students have referred strictly to School No. 4, to its material base, its decorations and its teaching staff. *(„European School", modern school"* etc.); For them, "*school is a second family";* For some, school „*is not a joke*";	Many students have expressed their disappointment regarding the fact that school does not have sufficient funds to support extraordinary children; A lot of them wish for a better school, more modern, for movies which may help them learn easier, they would like to participate in contests as children in other schools do; No one considers school to be modern School is seen as a "*hardship*", *„ a burden", „something compulsory*"; Most of them have expressed their doubts and admitted they had no idea about the future of the school; For them school is the only means to get a job, to start and maintain a family In the future school will turn into just a pleasant memory for them;
General knowledge base	The programme has raised their interest for knowledge and enlarged their general knowledge base;	Some students proved to have strong general knowledge (Pitagora, Galileo-Galilei);
Working in groups	In many written test we have found statements such as "*I am*	

	not getting bored anymore, I work in a team and not on my own, I see various things, images are more captivating" etc;	
Improving English language	They have enriched their English vocabulary (many students claim this fact);	
Others	The programme has "*developed imagination"* and „*improved communication*"; In other cases they were only able to enumerate activities without knowing what impact these were having upon them; they just listed information and knowledge.	

Table 6. Qualitative comparative analysis of creativity test

Student motivation and attitudes towards education

Student motivation

Students are more motivated to search for other sources of information and learn more. Together teachers and students together confirm an increased interest from the side of the students to diversify their sources of information. In all DCGEP schools, the programme has contributed to a better involvement of students in activities related to lesson preparation.

Now, their competences to look for, select and organize information are better because I realize I dare children to read more. (Principal, Pucioasa)

The fact that they have this nice painted classroom … And it is a good thing for the children… they are receptive and this is exactly the essence of the Discovery project because it has meant something new and has directed and motivated them to somehow prepare themselves at home because teachers tell them in advance that they will watch a video tape and suggest them what they have to prepare at home. (Teacher, Bungetu)

Now they are eager to find magazines on animals. Their parents went to the city and bought them such magazines. Instead of buying something else they prefer to buy a book to be informed. They are eager to learn as much as possible. (Teacher, Bungetu)

They are, first of all, enthusiastic about participating in those activities and we have raised their interest to watch tapes and, to read at home and they have increased their cultural level. (Principal, Runcu)

I don't know if they are now learning more but they surely are more interested in studying in what happens around them in the universe, in the environment, especially since this is very actual matter. (Teacher, Runcu)

Parents also claim that they have noticed a better involvement of their children in doing their homeworks.

> *Yes ... they are interested in magazines which may reveal them more information and in other programmes as well. They even told grandpa at home to start looking for older magazines.* (Parent, Bungetu)
>
> *My daughter has grasped everything from the beginning and I can see a change because teaching nowadays is based on certain methods and especially on projects. It is not that these projects are complicated but they require the child to document and consult a lot of books and manuals. And this is where this programme intervenes and helps the child develop its imagination and find many data regarding animals and nature.* (Parent Glodeni)

Student breadth of perspective

The students generally considered that having more information would help them to have achieve cultural goals, to be ready for life and to improve their communication skills.

The efficient learning by using modern means is another gain of the Learning Centres.

Well, to a certain degree it is worth getting more information because we enrich our general culture and we also talk in a friendlier way to our colleagues. (Student, Magura)

Well, I think they can be more reflexive. The fact that they read and then you ask them selectively some information, this helps the conscious reading. The fact that we use the example in the first grade, this makes use of the individual value and maybe offering some models of fast reading. The translation disappears and then you challenge the child to read much faster ... a critical thinking, a reflexive, analytical, synthetic thinking, a divergent thinking. (Principal, Pucioasa)

And I told you it is more captivating to watch it on TV than to read it in a book. As my classmate *said, it is an impulse for us and it stimulates us, makes us want to know more and it develops our creativity and imagination. (Student, Pucioasa)*

We noticed the difference, the students became more communicative, they started to trust themselves. They managed to communicate. (Teacher, Bungetu)

The greatest challenge was the opening of the student towards knowledge and then, of the teachers to change the old mentality. (Principal, Runcu)

They learned to communicate efficiently. They have the courage to express their opinions and the power to argument them. And there is something more, they learned that if they are wrong, if they make a wrong statement, they can make it right in the long run, they can learn from making mistakes. They have also learned that the teacher helps them when they need it, he is not just a mere evaluator that just evaluates them and scores them. (Teacher, Pucioasa)

As advantages, ... you gain a lot of time and it is very efficient. Furthermore, they gain the ability to select information from electronic sources, which is important, and you can direct them, watch this show ... watch the news. (Teacher, Pucioasa)

In this way we understand the lessons better and it was useful for several courses such as biology, geography, even religion, history. We used this program for several courses and it made us understand the lessons easier. (Student, Pucioasa)

...the horizon of thinking has changed, they gathered more knowledge, much easier than using other methods. (Teacher Bungetu)

The program contributed to a change in the relationship between teachers and students. It made it easier to bridge communication between both. The classical unidirectional relation (from teacher to student) became less present and thus the role of the students increased obviously.

> *The students (were) used to the old professor-student relation, the professor dictates and the student just listens. Now, the students got used to tell their opinion during the classes. They gained more liberty, as it should normally be, collaboration, discussion. (Principal, Runcu)*
>
> *We can say our opinion freely. The teacher to student relation is tighter. (Student Runcu)*

An important role was represented by the specific ambiance of Discovery classrooms, which are more welcoming and attractive.

> *In the classes we have with Discovery the atmosphere is more pleasant, more relaxed, we feel much better. I also liked the classroom, it is more coloured and it makes us feel better. The teachers are more relaxed, we are more attentive because we are very drawn by the TV and at the same time we can express freely, we can tell our opinion. (Student, Glodeni)*

The educational activities conducted in groups are another winning point of the program. The teachers and students became conscious of the fact that they can acquire easier knowledge by working in small, dynamic groups.

> *From Discovery they learned very well to work in teams. It helps them develop their imagination, their capacity to communicate. (Teacher, Magura)*

Teachers' professional development

Teachers' effectiveness in promoting active learning

By using the modern tools of teaching, the lessons became interactive based on coherent and properly structured information.

The acquired knowledge has a higher degree of applicability in everyday life, which makes teaching more efficient.

I think this project has multiple benefits. The most valuable is that the teacher was used to teach in a different way and to support the active methodology on clear, scientific, objective information. (Principal, Pucioasa)

Maybe the applicability of knowledge …the fact that the principle of knowledge applicability was not observed by the content of the course manuals … (knowledge) accessibility I think, I think that was it. (Principal, Pucioasa)

Before they were used with the classical lesson, they worked with the class frontally and individually. Now, working on groups … it made the children too prepare, know what they were told about, that tomorrow they are going to learn about that and that, the children started to document. (Principal, Bungetu)

The training programs helped them to learn practical and efficient methods that they used during classes and the children acquired the knowledge stipulated in the school curriculum. (Principal, Suta Seaca)

It was of great help because we used more these active methods and we blended them with the traditional ones. The lesson was better structured after this training. The children understood better the knowledge when we applied these methods during the classes. At the same time the lesson was better structured and they acquire better the knowledge. (Teacher, Suta Seaca)

The efficiency of teaching is also shown by teamwork. Almost all teachers worked with small groups of students, which enabled a better communication and facilitated the acquisition of the educational objectives.

> *We were used to typical lessons, more rigid ones. The children were responding individually, until the Discovery program we never worked in teams, I saw it was very useful. The children collaborate very well. (Teacher, Bungetu)*
>
> *Gradually I noticed a lot of changes. I know, I want to know, so it makes them think, it makes them work in teams, ... and one can see the lessons are modernised (Principal, Runcu)*
>
> *It offered the teachers a different view on the classes. They are more open to use the new methods, a different climate exists now in the school because we worked in pairs and we tried to inform the new comers on these methods and thus we collaborated. (Principal, Magura)*

Some of the teachers think that the information should be better adapted to the Romanian context so as to increase even more the efficiency of learning process.

> *It helps you a lot, the only problem is that these tapes were not compiled according to the Romanian curriculum, according to the specificity of the Romanian education, or they are more superficial. (Teacher, Pucioasa)*

Teachers' access to, and use of teaching aids

The video players enabled people to acquire abilities to operate them. The didactic material supplied by the program was considered to be a good source of information for the teachers and made teaching easier.

This year I learned to use the equipment, last year I didn't know so well and there is clearly a change. (Teacher, Magura)

Having the documentary and having the colour, having the sound, the image, the translation, having the English on the background, I think it was a multidisciplinary lesson and thus it gained value. (Principal, Pucioasa)

For the school it was a novelty that we could benefit from the equipment and cassettes … this was a minus for the school, we did not have, I can say that the school reform started in 2003. (Principal, Magura)

Schools don't have many resources to modern teaching aid. Yet, the teachers diversify the sources of information using magazines or other special publications.

I have home collections of several magazines and I brought them for the children to see when I had classes. But there are differences, there are, and I am glad that most questions they ask are in those texts (Teacher, Magura)

Parent and Community involvement

Parent involvement

The program benefited from proper media attention as shown by the fact that the parents know what is going on in the school and are aware of the educational novelties.

> *I attended meetings. They always talk about this program when we are asked to attend meetings; they tell us what else has happened. We keep in touch. (Mother, Bungetu)*

The involvement of the parents in the program was done by holding special classes using modern didactic materials and modern teaching methods.

> *I remember I was at a meeting with the parents when the teacher asked us what we know of the brain. The patents said what they knew and then they played a videotape and we, patents, learned a lot of interesting things, so things do not stop here and the information doesn't stop at the children, they want it transmitted to the parents too. (Parent, Pucioasa)*
>
> *The community participated in classes, the village people participated. They liked it a lot and the lessons were active. (Principal, Bungetu)*

In some places (Runcu, Magura) the parents are too much involved in other activities and therefore they did not display availability to participate in school programs. They came to school only when the form master invited them.

The community members are caught in their social problems, they help less. But every time we ask them to help some of them come to support us. The others come only when we hold such meetings with the community. (Principal, Runcu)

They would be receptive to the calls of the school but they do not have the time to participate every time we call them. They are glad their children have these opportunities, they come with pleasure, and they acknowledged they can learn quite useful things from there. (Principal, Magura)

When the form-master or the school Principal asks us we come. For instance there are meetings, meeting of the parent committee; there are 3 or 4 patents in the parent committee who now the problems of the class and then we gather as parents. (Parent, Runcu)

The parents who participated in the project activities displayed a desire to expand and diversify the teaching activities. These activities support, from their point of view, the teaching process all life long.

After we had the first activities with the parents, they were pleasantly impressed by what happens in the school and they even asked us to do it again and hold more such meetings. (Teacher, Glodeni)

It is very good for us parents to hold educational activities. We were educated in a certain way, the times change and we also have to change. They also proposed more activities but we don't quite find the time for it. (Parent, Glodeni)

Yes, there were lessons in which the parents participated too…first we must educate them and then we shall see. (Teacher, Magura)

The activities were held more in the small classes with parents; on subjects of health education and the parents attended them. The doctor, the family doctor were also invited and the parents were delighted. (Principal, Suta Seaca)

The parents expressed their wish to keep on watching several videotapes; they also mentioned some subjects…on alcohol consumption. (Teacher, Suta Seaca)

Community involvement and use of school facilities

The involvement of the community was not very obvious in many cases. However, there are schools where the community was more involved than in others. In Pucioasa case, although people consider that much more could have been done, several local organizations participated in the school programs. Among them are the representatives of the Directorate of Public Health, of the prospective mothers. Also, the methodical commissions benefited constantly from the active learning methods promoted by the program.

In other schools the community was involved sporadically and there was no coherent approach to draw the local institutions into the extracurricular educational programs.

I can't say that the impact on the community was as big as the project intended (Principal, Pucioasa)

With the girls, prospective mothers, we watched a video on pregnancy and I think this is a subject that one does not discuss so openly. (Principal, Pucioasa)

The health directorate was very much involved because there were challenges, avian influenza, ecological education, pregnancy. We have a lot of activities and we have in the school a properly developed policy of education for health and we asked resource persons. The police are permanently in the school, they come here every week but we did not involve the police in a Discovery project. (Principal, Pucioasa)

All the lessons we presented within the methodical commissions and within the pedagogical meetings were properly appreciated. (Teacher, Pucioasa)

The old authorities that changed meantime, those we started with were very receptive and even helped us to run the activities. Those who came after the 2004 elections took over during the action and we had discussions on the advantages of this program and they supported us with funds because you need a budget to teach these classes, consumables, paper ...that the local community provides from the local budget. (Principal, Glodeni)

Best practices and lessons learned

Best practices and lessons learned throughout the three-year project period are extracted from focus groups and interviews, documented and analyzed according to the extent by which they establish linkages with and complement public policy in education; establish an integrated, long-term vision; promote sustainability through capacity development; and generate tangible linkages with longer-term processes.

When identifying positive practices we were interested in three key elements:

1. Background/Context/Problem Identification- *Relevance to the schools' specific context and environment*

2. Process- *Methodology in using video in the classroom*

3. Results/Impact Assessment including (*Effectiveness, Replicability, Sustainability, Innovation)*

It is important to emphasize the way this programme has contributed to make changes at individual, institutional and community level taking into consideration:

1. the context in which the programme was developed and implemented;
2. in the case of students, the motivation to learn more;
3. in the case of teachers, the motivation to diversify ways of teaching;
4. the inclusion of video lessons related to school development;
5. openness to different activities;
6. good partnership with other schools and with local authorities;
7. development of other projects in connection with Learning Center.

Background/Context/Problem Identification- *Relevance*

Through this project in all six Learning Center schools their need for educational resources are demonstrated. Within this context, selection criteria constitute themselves an element of best practice because they allowed for a better focus on the demonstrated need.

Box 1.

Selection Criteria for Learning Centers to participate in the project:

Necessity

Appropriateness

Location

Leadership

Community motivation and initiative

Sustainability

Community access

Video Room/Security

Partnerships

In fact, this integrated selection approach has contributed to a good start of the project.

Lesson learned: projects need to be implemented in those contexts where their relevance is highest and by using complementary selection criteria. A good selection of the intervention areas based on the identified needs is an approach that should be further employed in public educational policies.

Process- *Methodology*

As regards the project implementation process, specifically with regards to the Video in the Classroom methodology, we have identified two elements of best practice elements:

– initial intensive training for the programme and continuous training

– permanent monitoring

Initial training for the programme and continuous training

Box 2

We were introduced in the programme, what we would have liked to present, what we liked best. We chose a programme and afterwards…we began to think how to present that programme to our colleagues and we were programmed on daily and hourly basis and we were preparing the project this way…We simply were treated as students, we were divided into work groups, we were shown the tapes…and we worked following the same footsteps we follow in teaching our students, with the presentation of the tape exactly as we knew, based on critical thinking and we responded the same way as the children we teach. Than again, we were evaluated at the end and we were asked to us create lessons. (Teacher, Pucioasa)

The training course was very interesting, working in teams and the fact that we were present in all six schools was an extraordinary idea. (Teacher, Bungetu)

The success of the school was given by the training courses, a lot of training courses in which the school teaching staff participated

We introduce the teacher to his class, we inform him with regard to the requirements of our school as well as those of students and parents and we offer him training in various forms, either from the colleagues teaching the same object or by introducing him the teachers' council assembled on a special theme, assistance, etc. We have even initiate a sort of mentorship, that is counseling hours on various themes which are identified as training needs of the newcomers and not only of

Lesson learned:

Beginning the programme with training teachers in interactive teaching methods has contributed to creating higher competences in the field. Also, continuous training constitutes an important element for a higher quality of the teaching process.

All teachers involved in training session were very satisfied. They learned a lot and improved continuously the abilities to work with Video in the Classroom.

The training session was very well structured and gives possibility to teachers to understand much better teaching methods. The teachers participated in six days training session in different stage of project development.

Permanent monitoring

Box 3

..... first of all, I myself was supposed to be very well acquainted to the methods of promoting teaching based on videotapes, as well as to the content of the programes, the handing of technical equipment and how it should be maintained to an optimal functioning and than, after the first training seminaries, we began to tightly monitor each school. In the first year we monitored each school at every two weeks, in the second year once a month and in the third one, once at every two months. Visits consisted in assisting teaching classes during the first part of the programme, in formulating opinions, assessing the way resources were employed, making recommendations regarding the respective lesson held in class, sharing successful experiences from other schools to the entire team of the school. Of course, it all started with training sessions for the entire school staff, so the initially trained groups within our first seminary with American trainers were followed by training sessions in every school and with every team member. (Programme Trainer)

The highest contribution, in my opinion, was brought in by Georgiana (Programme Monitor), she was always bringing new information .....a new flipchart, a new worksheet, she was telling us "look the others did that on this tape, they adapted that way".(Teacher, Glodeni).

Georgiana (Programme Monitor) has taught us a lot, she came very often and brought us information gathered from other schools. She used to come every 2 weeks and afterwards once a month and once every 2 months but she was always bringing new information telling us what happened in other schools, what they were using and how they were using and in which objects because we were having a problem at this point. (Teacher Magura)

Lesson learned: The implementation of an effective monitoring mechanism allows for a better assessment of the progresses made during the project as well as for a transfer of expertise from one school to another within the established school network.

The teachers consider that the monitoring activity was necessary and give them possibility to improve teaching activities.

Results/Impact including (Effectiveness, Replicability, Sustainability, Innovative)

Innovative

In terms of innovation, there are two approaches which are emergent to best practices. The first one is about integrating optional objects of study within the educational process by making use of the Discovery Programme and the second approach consists in using several video tapes locally produced.

Optional objects of study

In all schools teachers have introduced optional courses making use of the information presented on the video programs. The most presented themes in optional module were curiosity from nature, education for health, natural hazard, violence in schools, English. The numbers of students which attend to optional when are using video programs increased year by year.

Box 4

Yes, what was most valuable was that the children asked us at one point to teach them optional classes based on Discovery.....At the level of third grade we do not teach such classes, each teacher with his class. We have 4 or 3 teachers and each one is teaching an optional object. ..we have 100 children and the dance teacher is also coming and we shall have also communication and information technology, computer science and we shall group these 100 children according to these offers our school is making. At the Discovery course we may find children in the third grade (A, B, and C) and what is important for them is to work within a group and then, when they have the break they socialize and befriend each other. (Director, Pucioasa school)

We even had watched a few tapes on this subject during the fourth grade. Children who enlisted for the optional object while they were in the third grade ... they all came next year although they had other options as well. (Teacher, Pucioasa)

This year I am going to use it a lot; I have introduced an optional I have chosen together with parents and children. We thought we had the necessary materials and the lessons may not follow the same pattern as the others and we introduced the optional about curiosities from the world of nature and this year they have had the chance to watch almost all the tapes because I took care and I used Discovery materials in class. (Teacher, Bungetu)

Lesson learned:

The attractive way of teaching by using video programs means is more convincing for the students and they become more interested in participating in these optional courses.

Using video tapes locally produced

Teachers are very interested to use other video tapes in teaching process. They have initiative and confidence and gained enough skill in identifying and obtaining video materials that they need in educational process.

For example, at the optional course we use the video tape about butterflies and we discuss the things they already know about and I administer their information and write down in a separate column what they would like to know about butterflies, I prepare my material, try to find the piece that matches from the video tape. They watch that piece; they withdraw information from it, work in groups and then all the groups are heard to see which one has retained more information. Towards the end, we brief the information or make a drawing and the children are asked to make up various patchworks with those kinds of butterflies they liked best. We discuss and debate on this theme. (Teacher, Magura)

… being an optional….. I have the opportunity to use more and make the class more relaxed. Once I used a video tape about flooding and it was just in a period when in our country the Danube was overflowing. (Teacher, Suta Seaca)

Academic year	DCGEP video programmes (segments) watched (total no)	Other video programms watched (total no)
Semester 2 (February 2003 - June 2003)	98 out 132	34
Semester 1 (September 2003 - January 2004)	72 out 132	38
Semester 2 (February 2004 - June 2004)	73 out 132	28
Semester 1 (September 2004- January 2005)	78 out 132	43
Semester 2 (February 2005 - June 2005)	72 out 132	91
Semester 1 (September 2005-February 2006)	65 out 132	58

Table 7. Video programmes watched

Box 5

Yes, we have filmed a lot of extra video tapes .... We have used them for the lesson on Childhood Memories, we have documentaries from the TV which we have used so far and we have the greatest number of videotapes of all schools. (Director, Magura School)

Lesson learned:

The existent didactical material in schools can be improved with a relatively small investment.

Effectiveness

Box 6

Utilizing technique and getting used to handle it……is a good practice. Using active participatory methods ……. especially because the education in Romania is suffering from this point of view (Programme Monitor)

There are some teachers who made professional progresses, learned to use modern materials and adapt them to their teaching purposes. They have learned to transform their lessons into interactive process because the student does not just receive a documentary but he is dared to extract information, to think and make predictions, to create and analyze… what he knows about the respective material. (Programme Monitor)

Teachers have developed to a large extent their ability to transform classic lessons into interactive ones where learning is student centered. (Programme Monitor)

what is important is that students began to work very well in groups, they have problems,…… they started to be more tolerant, to respect each other's opinion even if sometimes it is wrong and I have taught them to motivate in their turn and they are more attentive both in class and outside the classroom. (Teacher, Bungetu)

- Previous to the Discovery programme were you working in groups?

- Yes, we were, but not so often. (Student, Bungetu)

Students were used to the old relationship between teacher and student: the teacher dictates (or commands) and the student is listening. Now they are getting used to express their opinions in class, they are given more freedom as it should be in a cooperation, a discussion, the lesson should be… should not be so rigid as it used to be when I was a student. (Director, Runcu School)

At the Discovery classes the atmosphere is more pleasant, more relaxed and we feel much better. I even like better the classroom itself because it is more colorful an it makes us feel better, teachers are more relaxed and we are more quiet because we are attracted to the TV and at the same time we can freely express our opinions and what we would like to learn more about. (Student, Glodeni)

Lessons learned: In many cases the teachers used the traditional methods in class rooms. The educational process has shifted towards a student centered learning mainly by improving communication between teacher and student. Interactivity and participatory methods are premises for a quality education.

Sustainability

Project sustainability is important and it can be ensured within the given context throughout several means.

In all the six schools, the Discovery method was included in educational process and sustainability is ensured both on medium and long term by using interactive methods day by day.

The school directors play a decisive role in providing project sustainability by conducting an efficient management both in the school and in the relations with other local actors. In all 6 schools, the directors display a particular interest to continue the project, which is an important indicator of project sustainability.

Replicability

Within similar contexts, where schools are rather isolated and have little access to modern teaching methods, this project may be fully replicated. Some elements in this project, such as attracting parents and communities to school, may also be replicated.

Conclusions

A multiplier effect of the Discovery method took place in all the six schools. A number of approximately 6200 students benefited from the DCGEP programme throughout its whole implementation period. The average was of 1500 students per year.

Approximately 135 teachers and didactic personnel employed interactive teaching techniques.

All six local communities included in the project benefited to a large enough extent from the Discovery facilities.

Under the conditions in which school enrolment decreased by about 10%, a good attendance of classes was noticed in all 6 schools. The retention rate was very high given the specificity of the Romanian education where student mobility is very low. The increase in class attendance in all 6 schools shows that the learning centres influenced positively the desire of the students to come to school.

A central goal of the project is to improve student learning. More specifically, it aims to increase student interaction and active thinking through both the stimulation of video and broadcast educational material and the training and resource guides provided to teachers. The evaluation measured student's *written language competence* as well as their *inferential and creative thinking* by administering and scoring a writing task.

The results of the quantitative analysis, which were statistically significant, showed that students involved in the DCGEP Learning Center schools had greater inferential and creative thinking skills in comparison to their peers in schools that have not participated in the project.

Beyond the progresses achieved in terms of creative language and thinking, students have also developed a series of abilities such as communication skills, team working, and argumentation to support their own opinions.

Overall, the educational program contributed significantly both to increase the motivation of children to know as much as possible and to facilitate the communication with the colleagues and teachers. In all schools, the teachers and students and sometimes even the parents showed progress. Noteworthy is that the complementary sources of information allowed a better understanding of the educational context by the students.

The active teaching in the meaning of the interactivity and the permanent dialogue between the teachers and students appear in all 6 Learning Centers. All the teachers that used the modern means of teaching within education process consider a real gain the fact that they passed from the traditional to the modern way of teaching. In many cases the teachers use additional sources of information (magazines, special publications) to prepare the lessons.

The involvement of the parents in curricular and extracurricular activities differed from one school to another. In Pucioasa, given the higher opening of the school towards the parents and community, obvious progress was noticed. In the schools where the parents come from very poor families, they participate in school activities only when invited by the teachers or directors. It is difficult to identify the impact on community involvement. Isolated cases appear when some institutions participate, especially, in extracurricular programs.

All the elements related to this project constitute by themselves a good practice for developing educational programmes.

School selection criteria and a careful monitoring of each stage of the project contributed to achieving very good results.

Breaking the barriers of unilateral communication between teachers and students is the premise for a quality education.

Integrated approach of the educational process by the inclusion of all relevant actors (teachers, students, and parents) has determined an increased involvement from their side, both in the educational act and in extra-curricular activities.

As a consequence of the Discovery programme school activities have become more sustainable. They may be easily replicated in other similar schools.

The impact of the programme upon students is obvious. They have enriched their vocabulary and become more creative and communicative. They are now able to perform various activities independently.

Due to its design, its monitoring mechanisms and the involvement of all parties, the Discovery programme is a successful one. And taking into account the increasing need for such programmes, especially in rural areas, it is advised that it should be extended to other areas also.

The program has an increased impact on the expansion of the modern teaching means in more and more schools. It is in agreement with one of the strategic directions of the Ministry of Education and Research, that is provide for education quality and render the national system of education compatible with the European system of education and professional training.The program also is a good example for the development of the optional programs in schools.

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Web page www.edu.ro for describing Romanian education system

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Questions for Learning Centers (for GEP schools only)

Principals:

1) How long have you been principal of this school?
2) Please tell us how your school was changed since the last three years. Please explain the reasons for the change.
3) What do you think has been the outputs/impact of the Learning Center project in your school?
   - on teachers' performance?
   - on students' performance?
   - on the communities?
4) Since the beginning of the Learning Center project in 2003, have you seen any change in the way your teachers teach? Please describe.
5) Since the beginning of the Learning Center project in 2003, have you seen any change in the way your students learn? Please describe.
6) Can you relate this change to the project? Please describe.
7) What other opportunities for training outside of the DCGEP training were available for your teachers?
8) Did the introduction of television as a teaching tool increase teachers' use of other resources? In what ways?
9) What do you think have been the main challenges to the project?
10) What is the relation with the local authorities? Can you give us more details?
11) What was the level of involvement of the community members in school activities?

Parents:

1) What do you know about Discovery Project?
2) Please tell me how has the education of your children changed in the last 3 years or over the time? Please also explain the reasons for these changes.
3) Are your children enjoying learning because of the Learning Center project?
4) Did you see increased motivation among your child/children before or after the project?
5) Has the project played a role in increasing children engagement in the schools?

Teachers (identify grade level and subject taught):

1) What is the description of the situation of your field experience? Describe the school and the community, the cooperating teacher and the classroom.
2) How long have you been a teacher in this school?
3) For how long have you been using video/ TV in the classroom?
4) Has the DCGEP training changed your teaching methods? If so, how?
5) Did you achieve your anticipated goals? Cite reasons for your response.
6) Do you think the project helped students enjoy learning?
7) How were the students motivated?
8) What do you plan on doing prior to your practicum experience to upgrade your knowledge, attitude, and skills?

Teachers (who don't used video lesson)

1) Do you know something about Learning Center project?
2) What is your opinion about using video and TV equipment in the classroom, using video programs during lessons?
3) You have possibility to use video lesson?

Students

1) What do you like most about television in the classroom?
2) What is your favorite video program?
3) What was the most interesting or unforgettable thing you learned in a video lesson?
4) The participation in video lessons gave you idea to try finding other new information's? What are the sources? (e.g TV, books)
5) What would you like to be when you grow up?
6) Have the things you learned on TV changed your ideas of what you would like to be when you grow up?

Annex 2. Best practices

To find at individual, institutional and community level:

1. motivation to learn more for students
2. motivation to diversify way of teaching for teacher
3. to include video lesson in Plan for school development
4. opening to different activities
5. good partnership with local authorities
6. development other project in connection with Learning Center

Best Practice criteria

Background/Context/Problem Identification: *Relevance*
Process: Methodology
Impact Assessment: *Effectiveness, Replicability, Sustainability, Innovative*

Annex 3. Language/Creativity task

Grade 7 classes in both intervention and control schools. In Intervention school students to have participated in DCGEP project.

Instrument:

The teacher holds up a large, coloured 'stimulus picture' in front of the class. The students have the same picture printed small in black and white on a blank sheet of paper in front of them.

They are instructed to write as much as they can about the picture, with the following prompts:

Say what you think is happening;

What has just happened;

What will happen next, and why.

(Time: 30 minutes, but flexible, allowing students to finish - within limits).

Scoring Criteria:

Length: number of words in the passage (Score: Max 10 – scale below);

Coherence: the degree to which the passage has a logical sequence (Score: Max 10);

Clarity: the degree to which events/'happenings' are clearly explained (Score: Max 10);

Creativity: the degree to which 'credible' inferences are drawn from 'what is happening' to 'what has happened' and 'what will happen/why'. Within this, the degree to which creative or unusual ideas are used. (Score: Max 10).

(Total %: Score/40 x 100)

Name					
Grade					
School					
Length	2	4	6	8	10
	100 words or less	100-140 words	140-170 words	170-200 words	200 + words
Coherence	/10				
Clarity	/10				
Creativity	/10				
Total score					
%					

Annex 4. Criteria applied in the selection of Learning Centers for participation in the project

Necessity. The learning centre serves an under-resourced community that has limited or no access to technology and information. Electricity is not a prerequisite.

Appropriateness. DCGEP and the community must determine the appropriateness of the technology at this time for the community. The project is designed to support or complement existing education programmes, and must not interfere with any ongoing education projects.

Location. Learning Centers may be in urban or rural areas, provided the centre is accessible to DCGEP representatives for training and monitoring. Priority should be given to developing clusters of at least 4-5 Learning Centers to maximise training effectiveness and opportunity for sharing ideas.

Leadership. DCGEP looks for active principals who have good relationships with teachers and the community, and show an interest in the project.

Community motivation and initiative. Preference will be given to Learning Centers that have some history of self-generated initiatives that improve their centres.

Sustainability. Communities must exhibit a willingness to engage in project-sustaining activities that enable them to cover any ongoing maintenance costs and continue to develop the project.

Community access. The learning centre management commits to allowing the community, or other groups, to use the equipment at suitable times.

Video Room/Security. The learning centre must designate a secure video-viewing room that is accessible to all classes and the community. Ideally the equipment should stay in one place. If it is not possible to safely store the equipment in the viewing room, DCGEP should assess on a case-by-case basis how each Learning Center will secure the equipment. In some cases a trolley may be used for transporting the equipment from a storeroom to the TV viewing room.

Partnerships. DCGEP looks for opportunities to leverage resources and increase impact and sustainability through partnerships at a variety of levels, including government, private companies, NGO's and communities. Preference will be given to locations where such partnerships facilitate project development.

Annex 5. The three year program of teacher training and support

YEAR 1

3 days intensive training workshop

• Estimated preparation time for first training workshop (Logistics-Content) 25 hrs.

• Preparation time will decrease after trainer has facilitated his/her first workshop.

Phase1

To be completed in 16 weeks = 4 months

Frequency of visits to schools = every 2 weeks

At each school:

• 7 practice-time sessions: 14 hrs. (2 hrs/session allows teachers to practice using equipment and videos with one another. Trainer provides ongoing feedback and support during practice sessions.

• 1 evaluation session: 2 hrs.

• Report time and communication with country representative: 8 hrs (2 hrs/month)

Phase 2

To be completed in 16 weeks = 4 months

Frequency of visits to schools = every 2 weeks

At each school:

• 8 observation sessions (monitoring project, observing teachers in the classroom and providing feedback to them): 24 hrs. (3 hrs/session)

• Report time and communication with country representative: 8 hrs (2 hrs/month)

YEAR 2

Phase 3 and Phase 4

To be completed in 32 weeks = 8 months

Frequency of visits to schools = once a month

At each school:

• 8 visits: 16 hrs (2 hrs/session) Focus on the following:

Meet with teachers and principals

Get feedback from schools and communities

Evaluate and monitor DCGEP project

Prepare workshops to promote: parents' involvement, community involvement and fundraising towards making DCGEP project self-sustainable.

• Report time and communication with country representative: 12 hrs (1 ½ hrs/month)

YEAR 3

Phase 5 and Phase 6

To be completed in 32 weeks = 8 months

Frequency of visits to schools = once every 2 months

At each school:

• 4 visits: 8 hrs (2 hrs/session) Focus on the following:

Meet with teachers and principals

Seek feedback from schools and communities

Evaluate and monitor DCGEP project

Prepare volunteer school coordinators to take greater leadership: receive new videos, continue communication with DCGEP etc.

Continue working towards self-sustainability.

• Report time and communication with country representative: 6 hrs (1½ hrs/every

2 months)

AFTER YEAR 3

DCGEP trainers visit schools at the beginning and end of each term in order to maintain communication with each site, to provide support as necessary, and to deliver new DCGEP video programs.

Annex 6. Profiles of the 6 Learning Centers in Romania

1. Bungetu School

Location: Bungetu Village, Vacaresti Commune, Dambovita County, 14 km South East from Targoviste (the capital of the county),

No of inhabitants: 1,200

Year of school construction: 1980 (the school was rebuilt after the earthquake in 1977)

Type of school: primary and secondary (1-8 grades); school working in 1 shift; there are 2 kindergarten groups

Infrastructure: 9 classrooms, 1 toilet outside, 1 sports field

No of teachers in February 2003: 15

No of teachers in February 2006: 15

2. Magura School

Location: Magura Village, Bezdead Commune, Dambovita County, around 35 km North from Targoviste town (the capital of the county),

No of inhabitants: 1,500 in the village, 5,100 in the commune

Year of school construction: old building in 1976, new building in 2003

Type of school: primary and secondary school (grades 1-8) plus 1 group of kindergarten children

Infrastructure: 2 buildings, 11 classrooms, 1 sport hall, 1 library, 2 toilets

No of teachers in 2003: 14

No of teachers in February 2006: 14

3. School Runcu

Location: Runcu Village, Runcu Commune, Dambovita County, 40 km North from Targoviste (the county capital)

No of inhabitants: 2800 in the village and 4400 in the commune

Year of school construction: 1965

Type of school: primary and secondary (grades 1-8), 1 shift, 2 kindergarten groups

Infrastructure: 8 classrooms, 1 biology lab, 1 library, 1 sports field

No of teachers in 2003: 21

No of teachers in February 2006: 22

4. Glodeni School

Location: Glodeni din Deal Village, Glodeni Commune, Dambovita County, 21 km North-East from Targoviste (county capital)

No of inhabitants: 4449 in the commune

Year of school construction: 1978

Type of school: primary and lower secondary school (grades 1-8, age 6-14 years old), 1shift, 3 kindergarten groups

Infrastructure: 16 classrooms, 1 library, 1 lab for physics & chemistry, 1 sports hall, 1 sports/playfield, 5 toilets

No of teachers in 2003: 22

No of teachers in February 2006: 25

5. School no 4 Pucioasa

Location: Pucioasa town, Dambovita County, 22 km North of Targoviste (the county capital)

No of inhabitants: around 15,272

Year of construction: 1970

Type of school: primary and secondary school, 2 shifts

Infrastructure: 10 classrooms, 1 library, 1 laboratory, 1 sports hall, 1 sports/play field,

No of teachers in 2003: 33

No of teachers in February 2006: 41

6. Suta Seaca School

Location: Suta Seaca Village, Lucieni Commune, Dambovita County, 12 km South from Targoviste

No of inhabitants: 882 in the village, 6300 in the commune

Year of school construction: 1924; a new building was built in 1966

Type of school: primary and secondary school (grades 1-8), 1 shift, 1 kindergarten group

Infrastructure: 6 classrooms, 2 labs, 1 sports hall and 1 workshop

No of teachers in 2003: 13

No of teachers in February 2006: 11

Annex 7. Profiles of the 6 Control School in Romania

1. Pucheni School

Location: Pucheni village, Dambovita County, 45 km from Targoviste and 38 km from Câmpulung - Arges

No of inhabitants: 2353

Year of school construction: 1860, in 1910 2 classrooms were erected, in 1965 1 new building, 4 classrooms, 2 teacher counsel rooms, 1 warehouse, 1 hall way

Type of school: primary and secondary, 2 shifts

Infrastructure: 7 classrooms, 1 lab, 1 PC, room for another lab, 1 printer, 1 photocopier

No of teachers in 2003: 13

No of teachers in February 2006: 12

2. Branistea School

Location: North of Titu City, 3 km away from the main road Titu-Targoviste

No of inhabitants: 4400

Year of school construction: 1972, 2 buildings

Type of school: primary and secondary, 2 shifts

Infrastructure: 9 classrooms, 1 informatics lab, 1 biology lab, 1 history-geography lab, 1 foreign language lab, 1 Romanian language lab, 1 PC, 1 printer

No of teachers in 2003: 19

No of teachers in February 2006: 24

3. Butimanu School

Location: South of Targoviste, 60 km away

No of inhabitants: 2500

Year of school construction: 1954 and extended in 1970 with three classrooms

Type of school: primary and secondary (grades 1-8), 1 shift, 1 group of kindergarten children

Infrastructure: 8 classrooms, 1 toilet outside, 1 sports field, 1 PC, 1 printer

No of teachers in 2003: 16

No of teachers in February 2006: 13

4. School no 1 „Mihai Viteazul" Pucioasa

Location: Pucioasa town, Dambovita County, 22 km North of Targoviste (the county capital)

No of inhabitants: 15272

Year of school construction: 1976

Type of school: primary and secondary, 2 shifts

Infrastructure: 18 classrooms, 7 toilets, 2 sport fields, 1 sport hall, 2 labs, 1 library, 2 special classrooms for teaching special subjects, 12 PC, 1 scanner, 3 printers, 1 television, 1 video recorder

No of teachers in 2003: 39

No of teachers in February 2006: 35

5. Mircea Vodă School

Location: Salcioara Commune, East of Targoviste, 23 km away

No of inhabitants: 3925

Year of school construction: 1970

Infrastructure: three buildings, 7 classrooms, 1 library, 1 toilet outside, 1 sports field

Type of school: primary and secondary (grades 1-8), 1 shift, one group of kindergarten children

No of teachers in 2003: 11

No of teachers in February 2006: 11

6. Bucşani School

Location: South of Targoviste, 20 km away

No of inhabitants: 7000

Year of school construction: 1898

Type of school: primary and secondary (grades 1-8), 2 shifts, 4 groups of kindergarten children

Infrastructure: 9 classrooms, 2 toilet outside, 1 sports field

No of teachers in 2003: 29

No of teachers in February 2006: 28

Annex 8. DCGEP LC project 2003-2006, List of control schools and LCs

Type of school	Name of the school	No of teachers 2002-2003	No of teachers 2005-2006	No of permanent teachers 2002-2003	No of permanent teachers 2005-2006	No of students 2002-2003	No of students 2005-2006	Kindergarten 2002-2003	Kindergarten 2005-2006	Location within Dambovita county
Control school	Bucsani School	29	28	21	17	368	361	106	115	East
LC	Glodeni School	28	27	23	22	351	309	75	75	North east
Control school	Butimanu School	16	13	7	9	206	192	34	33	South east
LC	Bungetu School	15	15	13	12	145	162	40	40	South east
Control school	Mircea Voda	11	11	8	8	115	114	25	26	South
LC	Suta Seaca School	13	12	8	9	112	109	27	27	South west
Control school	*"Spiru Haret" School, Branistea*	*24*	24	17	15	267	238	76	76	South
LC	Runcu School	25	25	17	19	311	256	74	54	North
Control school	Pucheni School	14	14	11	11	170	152	55	54	North

LC	Magura School	14	14	8	6	107	84	20	28	North east
Control school	*School no 1 Pucioasa*	*39*	35	26	28	557	519	0	0	Pucioasa
LC	School no 4 Pucioasa	40	43	27	28	595	553	0	0	Pucioasa

Annex 9 Number of teachers-DCGEP Schools

Name of the school	Bungetu School			Magura School			Pucioasa School		
year	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total	permanent staff	temporary staff	total	permanent staff	temporary staff	total
2002-2003	13	2	15	10	4	14	27	13	40
2003-2004	13	2	15	8	6	14	30	8	38
2004-2005	12	4	16	9	5	14	31	11	42
2005-2006	12	3	15	8	6	14	28	15	43
Total	*50*	*1*	*51*	*35*	*21*	*56*	*116*	*47*	*163*

Name of the school	Runcu School			Glodeni School			Suta Seaca		
year	permanent staff	temporary staff	total	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total
2002-2003	17	8	25	23	5	28	8	5	13
2003-2004	19	7	26	22	5	27	7	6	13
2004-2005	20	7	27	20	7	27	6	7	13
2005-2006	19	6	25	22	5	27	9	3	12
Total	*75*	*28*	*103*	*87*	*22*	*109*	*30*	*21*	*51*

Annex 10. Number of teachers-Control schools

Name of the school	Butimanu School			Branistea School			Mircea Voda		
year	permanent staff	temporary staff	total	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total
2002-2003	7	9	16	17	7	24	8	3	21
2003-2004	8	8	16	16	6	22	8	3	21
2004-2005	8	5	13	17	7	24	8	3	21
2005-2006	9	4	13	15	9	24	8	3	21
Total	*75*	*26*	*58*	*65*	*29*	*94*	*32*	*12*	*44*

Name of the schol	Busani School			Pucheni School			Pucioasa School 1		
year	permanent teachers	temporary staff	total	permanent staff	temporary staff	total	permanent staff	temporary staff	total
2002-2003	21	8	29	11	1	14	28	12	40
2003-2004	20	8	28	11	1	12	25	12	37
2004-2005	20	7	27	11	1	12	26	13	39
2005-2006	17	11	28	11	1	12	27	9	36
Total	*78*	*34*	*112*	*44*	*4*	*50*	*106*	*46*	*152*

Annex 11. Number of preschool children enrolled in kindergarten in DCGEP schools

Year	Bungetu School	Magura School	Pucioasa School	Runcu School	Glodeni School	Suta Seaca School
2002-2003	40	20	0	74	75	27
2003-2004	40	24	0	66	75	27
2004-2005	40	25	0	63	75	27
2005-2006	40	28	0	54	75	27
Total	*160*	*97*	*0*	*257*	*300*	*108*

Annex 12. Number of preschool children enrolled in kindergarten in control schools

Year	Bucsani School	Pucheni School	Pucioasa School 1	Butimanu School	Branistea School	Mircea Voda School
2002-2003	106	55	0	34	76	25
2003-2004	108	56	0	30	78	26
2004-2005	110	56	0	30	75	25
2005-2006	115	54	0	33	76	26
Total	*439*	*221*	*0*	*127*	*305*	*102*

Annex. 13 Educational indicators in DCGEP Schools

	2002-2003				2003-2004			
Name of School	Enrollment	Attendance	Pass Rates	Retention Rates	Enrollment	Attendance	Pass Rates	Retention Rates
Suta Seaca	112	98,40%	1100%	100%	113	99, 49%	1100%	100%
Glodeni	351	98,70%	99%	100%	321	99,45%	999%	100%
Bungetu	145	99,01%	1100%	100%	161	99,73%	1100%	100%
Pucioasa	595	99,72%	993,03%	100%	584	99,83%	993,03%	100%
Runcu	311	98,87%	999%	99%	288	99,69%	999%	100%
Magura	107	99,20%	1100%	100%	101	99,79%	1100%	100%
	2004-2005				2005-2006			
Name of School	Enrollment	Attendance	Pass Rates	Retention Rates	Enrollment	Attendance	Pass Rates	Retention Rates

Suta Seaca	113	99, 55%	100%	100%	109	99,73%	100%	99,55%
Glodeni	319	99,25%	98,58%	100%	308	99,78%	86,53%	100%
Bungetu	165	99,48%	98,68%	98,68%	162	99,82%	99,32%	99%
Pucioasa	566	99,80%	98,93%	99,83%	553	99,93%	93,17%	100%
Runcu	269	99,80%	100%	100%	253	99,84%	100%	100%
Magura	95	99,67%	100%	100%	86	99,85%	94%	100%

Annex 14. Educational indicators in control schools

	2002-2003				2003-2004			
Name of School	Enrollment	Drop out	Pass Rates	Retention Rates	Enrollment	Drop out	Pass Rates	Retention Rates
Bucsani	368	2%	98,00%	98,24%	375	2,10%	97, 8%	98,54%
Pucheni	170	0	100%	100%	173	0%	100%	100%
Butimanu	206	22,71%	77,29	98,69%	197	9,14%	90,86%	97,8%
Pucioasa 1	497	12,50%	87,50%	99%	520	5,20%	94,80%	97,67%
Branistea	267	0	100%	100%	257	1%	99%	99,13%
Mircea Voda	115	0	100%	100%	116	0	100%	100%

	2004-2005				2005-2006			
Name of School	Enrollment	Drop out	Pass Rates	Retention Rates	Enrollment	Drop out	Pass Rates	Retention Rates
Romania								
Bucsani	376	2%	98%	98,56%	361	3,20%	96,80%	98,76%
Pucheni	162	0	100,00%	100%	152	0	100,00%	100%
Butimanu	192	8,34%	91,66%	97,80%	192	7,30%	92,70%	96,69%
Pucioasa 1	522	2,30%	97,70%	98,32%	516	12,20%	87,80%	96,67%
Branistea	239	2%	98%	99,18%	238	2%	98%	99,30%
Mircea Voda	118	100%	100%	100%	114	2%	98%	99,36%

Annex 15. Trainings achieved in DCGEP program

	Number of workshops	Duration (no of days)	No of teachers trained		Total no of teachers trained	Basic outline of content
Intensive workshops			females	males		
	1	2 days and half	18	6	24	Getting familiar with the project, train teachers to use video effectively in the classroom and to be able to train other teachers to use the equipment
	1	half day			22	Promoting the project at school and community level, project status at school level, demo lessons, plans for the future
February 2004-January 2005	1	half day	16	4	20	Progress of the project at school level, monitoring activities, DCGEP teaching methods, using the latest DCGEP video programs, organizing Discovery Day
	1	1 day and half	19	6	25	School and community - community based approaches, use of video programs for the needs of the parents and of the local community

February 2005-January 2006	1	1 day	20	5	25	In-house training of new teachers, ensuring project sustainability, project achievements, graduation ceremony and formal evaluation plans
TOTAL	5	6 days	73	1	116	

Annex 16. Community use of facility in DCGEP program

February 2003-January 2004												
	Feb.	Mar	April	May	June	July	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Bungetu School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Glodeni School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	15
Magura School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pucioasa School	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
Runcu School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suta Seaca School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	15
Total	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	15	15	0	0	57
February 2004-January 2005												
	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Septe mber	Octo ber	Nove mber	Dec emb er	Janu ary	Total
Bungetu School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	20

Glodeni School	0	18	10	30	4	0	0	0	47	21	0	60
Magura School	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	90	12	0	14
Pucioasa School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	27	0	7
Runcu School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	4
Suta Seaca School	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	8
Total	0	30	10	51	4	0	0	0	157	121	0	403
February 2005-January 2006												
	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Total
Bungetu School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	10	0	25
Glodeni School	0	70	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	92
Magura School	0	32	0	0	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	68
Pucioasa School	20	129	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	149
Runcu School	0	0	0	16	0	5	0	0	0	0	25	6
Suta Seaca School	0	0	0	20	0	2	0	15	12	56	0	105
Total	20	231	0	58	6	7	0	30	12	66	25	485

Annex 17. Monitoring visits in DCGEP program

Visits made by the trainer	February 2003-January 2004	February 2004-January 2005	February 2005-January 2006	Total
Bungetu School	7	5	5	17
Glodeni School	10	6	4	20
Magura School	8	7	4	19
Pucioasa School	14	6	5	25
Runcu School	8	6	4	18
Suta Seaca School	8	5	5	18
Total	55	35	27	117

Annex 18. Video programs - viewing state in DCGEP program

Academic year 2003-2004	DCGEP programs viewed	DCGEP video programs viewed (total no)	other video programs viewed (total no)
Semester 2 (February 2003 - June 2003)			
School: Suta-Seaca	all	22 out of 22	1
School: Bungetu	1,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11-16,17,18,19,20,21	14 out of 22	0
School: Pucioasa	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11-16,17,20,21	14 out of 22	20
School: Magura	all	22 out of 22	12
School: Glodeni	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11-16,17,19,22	13 out of 22	2
School: Runcu	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,16,19,20,21,22	13 out of 22	0
Academic year 2004-2005			
Semester 1 (September 2003 - January 2004)			
School: Suta-Seaca	1,3,4,5,8,9,10,11-16,17,18,19,21	12 out of 22	2
School: Bungetu	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11-16,17,19,21,22	14 out of 22	0
School: Pucioasa	3,4,5,11-16,17,20,21	7 out of 22	14

School: Magura	2,3,6,7,8,9,10,11-16,18,19,20,21	12 out of 22	16
School: Glodeni	1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,11-16,19,20,22	12 out of 22	6
School: Runcu	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11-16,19,20,21,22	15 out of 22	0
Semester 2 (February 2004 - June 2004)			
School: Suta-Seaca	1,2,4,5,7,8,10,11-16,17,18,20,21,22	13 out of 26	0
School: Bungetu	1,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11-16,17,20,21	12 out of 26	0
School: Pucioasa	1,2,3,5,8,9,10,11-16,17,19,20,21,23,24	14 out of 26	8
School: Magura	2,3,5,7,9,11-16,17,18,20,21,22	12 out of 26	18
School: Glodeni	1,2,4,5,7,8,9,11-16,17,19,20	11 out of 26	0
School: Runcu	1,2,4,5,7,8,9,10,11-16,18,19	11 out of 26	0
Academic year 2004-2005			
Semester 1 (September 2004- January 2005)			
School: Suta-Seaca	1,3,4,5,7,8,10,11-16,17,19,20,21,23,24	14 out of 26	7
School: Bungetu	1,2,5,7,8,9,11-16,17,19,20,21,22,23, 24, 26	15 out of 26	0
School: Pucioasa	1,2,5,6,7,10,11-16,18,21,23,24,25	12 out of 26	5

School: Magura	4,5,6,8,11-16,18,19,20,22,23,24,26	12 out of 26	17
School: Glodeni	1,2,4,5,6,7,8,11-16,18,19,23,24,25,26	14 out of 26	14
School: Runcu	4,5,7,8,9,10,11-16,17,21,23,25	11 out of 26	0
Semester 2 (February 2005 - June 2005)			
School: Suta-Seaca	4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11-16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 26	13 out of 26	19
School: Bungetu	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11-16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25	15 out of 26	0
School: Pucioasa	5, 8, 9, 11-16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26	10 out of 26	20
School: Magura	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11-16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24	14 out of 26	38
School: Glodeni	3, 5, 8, 11-16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25	10 out of 26	12
School: Runcu	3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11-16, 19, 24	8 out of 26	2
Academic year 2005-2006			
Semester 1 (September 2005-February 2006)			
School: Suta-Seaca	1,2,4,5,8,9,10,11-16,17,21,23,24	12 out of 30	29
School: Bungetu	1,2,5,7,11-16,17,18,19,20,21,24	11 out of 30	0

School: Pucioasa	3,4,6,7,11-16,17	6 out of 30	0
School: Magura	2,3,5,11-16,20,24	6 out of 30	21
School: Glodeni	1,3,4,6,9,10,11-16,17,19	9 out of 30	3
School: Runcu	3,4,5,8,10,17,20,21,30	9 out of 30	5

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