We can not afford not to learn.

We want quality education.
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Nishal Robb, Head of EE’s Western Cape Office, and Lumkile Zani, Head of EE’s Eastern Cape Office at camp, December 2014

Junior Organiser Freddy Matheka leads the singing at an EE Gauteng protest for school sanitation
LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Dear Comrades,

The theme of this annual report is youth organising. The visible part of our work is often our campaigns, media advocacy, parliamentary engagement, policy outputs or legal interventions. The truth is that these are all underpinned and given their power, and a large part of their legitimacy, by the organising being done by young people – EE members – in communities across the country on a daily basis. These are the equalisers and facilitators, the activists who have built our movement over the past seven and a half years.

They are not the only members of EE. We have a vibrant parents sector, holding meetings on weekends, attending workshops, spreading awareness about school governance, and running successful campaigns for election onto School Governing Bodies. Our parents are a vital and indispensable part of the struggle for equal and publicly-provided education of a high quality. But EE is ultimately a youth-oriented movement, and youth membership is the mass base of the organisation.

How do we have marches of two-, five-, ten- or twenty-thousand people? How do all of our protests combine knowledge of the evidence with non-violent discipline, militancy and creativity? It is because each week thousands of youth are meeting in EE youth groups for serious discussion about schooling and inequality, politics and history, race and class, gender and sexual orientation, theory and practice, past, present and future. These meetings, which rely on texts, songs, debates, role-plays, internal democracy, fun and attention to logistical details, are the foundation of the movement, the place where EE builds not only its membership but its future leadership.

Those who were equalisers in 2008 are already leading the movement, holding various positions on the National Council and management structure. This will be deepened at our Second National Congress in July 2015.

We tackle our campaigns with the urgency they demand, and we approach movement-building with the patience and persistence it requires. The ultimate test of EE’s strength and sustainability is whether it continues to prioritise youth group as a space to develop and politicise young people and whether we can constantly improve and renew the content of those meetings. The growth and health of our movement will continue to reflect the efficacy of our youth organising.

I have no doubt that EE will continue to go from strength to strength in this area. It will be young black people, particularly those from poor communities, who lead us there. Onwards to an even bigger, better movement that fights for and wins an equal education and meaningful life for the still-marginalised and excluded masses of young people in South Africa.

Yoliswa Dwane
Chairperson
VISION

Quality and equal education for every person in South Africa.

MISSION

Equal Education (EE) is a movement of learners, parents, teachers and community members working for quality and equality in South African education, through analysis and activism.

CONTEXT

After two decades of democracy in South Africa, the education received by young people remains highly unequal. Despite efforts to improve the system, class and race-linked inequalities persist. Education was a foundation upon which race and class inequality was built and entrenched during the years of Apartheid, and unequal educational opportunities remain among the greatest obstacles to equality, dignity and freedom in South Africa.

Problems that face the majority of black learners in township and rural communities include unacceptable and demeaning physical conditions in many schools, lack of basic equipment and books, poor quality teaching, insufficient teachers, gang violence, the absence of sanitation and inadequate transport. These realities, which impact on learning outcomes and later life opportunities, are part of wider social injustices.

WHAT IS EE?

Since February 2008, EE has been striving for quality and equality in the South African education system through campaigns based on detailed research and policy analysis. EE is a community and membership-based movement. It is internally democratic, with elected leadership, mass participation and regular congresses.

EE’s core members are ‘equalisers’ – high school activists from grades 8 to 12. Along with teachers, activists and community members they build campaigns to effect change in their schools, and in the wider society.

EE works by building an understanding of the challenges and processes through regular weekly meetings of thousands of youth and parents across the country. The work done by EE’s researchers begins from and returns to the daily experience of its members. Through a combination of peaceful civil action, litigation, campaign work and public advocacy, EE strives to undo systemic racial and social inequalities, and to replace these with an equal education system that advances human dignity.

WHERE DOES EE WORK?

EE currently works in five provinces: the Western Cape, Gauteng, the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal. It began its organising work in Khayelitsha, a large township in Cape Town, and grew from there. EE has had an office in Gauteng since 2012, and has established a strong presence in the region through successful campaigning. Last year EE set up an office in King William’s Town in the Eastern Cape.
EE ORGANOGRAM

NATIONAL COUNCIL
EE’s highest decision-making body elected every three years at National Congress

NC LIASON OFFICER

GENERAL SECRETARY
Overall head of Equal Education

DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY

NATIONAL OFFICE
National administrative & financial functions

POLICY, COMMUNICATION & RESEARCH

FINANCE & FUNDRAISING

OPERATIONS

PROVINCIAL OFFICES

ORGANISING IN OTHER PROVINCES

NATIONAL ORGANISING

WESTERN CAPE

EASTERN CAPE

GAUTENG

COMMUNITY LEADERS, JUNIOR ORGANISERS, PARENT ORGANISERS, ADMINISTRATORS & RESEARCHERS
AN EE MEMBER’S JOURNEY

EQUAL EDUCATION OFFERS YOUNG ACTIVISTS WITH DIVERSE INTERESTS AND TALENTS INVALUABLE LIFE EXPERIENCE, AND A CHANCE TO BECOME INVOLVED IN BETTERING THEIR COMMUNITIES.

EQUALISER → EQUALISER MEMBER → FACILITATOR → STAFF → ELECTED LEADERSHIP

COMMUNITY LEADER

MANAGEMENT

SPokesPERSON

ORGANISER

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

AMAZWI WETHU FILM STUDENT

YOUTH GROUP HEAD

MARSHALL

AGE GROUP HEAD

UNIVERSITY BRANCH MEMBER

EXTENDED INVOLVEMENT
SPECIAL FEATURE: EQUALISERS AND YOUTH GROUP, THE HEART OF EE

The youth programme lies at the centre of EE’s work and its model for organising. Young people constitute and lead the movement, a framework that distinguishes EE from many other organisations. The model has been revised and tweaked over the years through a process of trial and error, and internal and external evaluation.

Youth group is the key organising space for EE; a place where equalisers meet for political education, solidarity building and planning campaign activities. These happen across the country, wherever equalisers are to be found. Youth group is led by ‘facilitators’, in two-hour sessions usually held every week at schools and community halls around the country. In some places there are also in-school meetings or regional mass meetings.

EE’s active support has been shown to be in the tens of thousands, a conservative estimate based on attendance at EE marches. Officially, a member is someone who has completed a membership form, paid the membership fee, is at least 12 years old, and has been recorded as active over the most recent six months. Membership and branch audits are carried out ahead of congresses. The membership core is those active on a weekly basis, through attending youth group meetings.
THE EQUALISERS

What is ‘Youth Group’ and why is it the core building block of Equal Education? Bhavya Dore spoke to dozens of equalisers in order to find out.

JOINING EE

Some came for the games and songs, some came for the hotdogs, some came for the social experience: young recruits came to youth group for different reasons. But many stayed for the same one: to learn how to fix the system, one school at a time.

Equalisers, past and present, chuckle or blush at the memory of their first flippant reason for attending a youth group meeting. But they grow serious reflecting on why they remained and what they hope to achieve by participating in this movement.

“We want to be something,” said Dunyiswa Dyanti, 15, a grade 9 student at Hopolang School in Khayelitsha, as she prepares to jump into youth group. “That is why we joined as equalisers.”

Broken chairs, missing teachers, crumbling buildings: students across the country face myriad problems while trying to learn.

“We DON’T HAVE THAT MUCH MONEY; BUT WE ALSO WANT A GOOD EDUCATION”

The base on which Equal Education grew itself as a movement and an organisation, was the shoulders of young students. Grade 8 to Grade 12 learners – equalisers – are the foot soldiers, and in some cases the generals, in this struggle against inequality.

“We want to be treated equally,” said Bonolo Mphatsoe, 14, one of Dyanti’s schoolmates. “We don’t have that much money; but we also want a good education.”

It is this chasm of inequality on which EE was built, and which equalisers are trying to surmount, through campaigns, petitions, community organising and political mobilisation.
AWAKENING CONSCIOUSNESS

Part of weekly youth group meetings is to awaken in students some realisation about their situations and what they can do to fix these. For some, even the meaning of a valuable schooling experience was only uncovered after becoming an equaliser. “I began to notice things I wouldn’t have otherwise noticed,” said Sbonisile Gova, 19, a former equaliser, who is now a community leader (CL) at EE. “Not having my own textbook, or having to share a chair, I didn’t really think of that as a problem.”

“NOT HAVING MY OWN TEXTBOOK, OR HAVING TO SHARE A CHAIR, I DIDN’T REALLY THINK OF THAT AS A PROBLEM”

The beginnings of a solution lie in knowing what the problem is in the first place. Through youth group learners come to craft their own aspirations and to first move to understand what they need to fix in the broken landscape of schooling that surrounds them. “Before I became an equaliser, I didn’t focus on the problem,” said Sipho Mngqibisa, 19, a grade 12 learner from Oscar Mptetha High School in Nyanga. “I didn’t realise these were problems and just accepted them. But then I realised we need change in our schools.”

“LOTS OF STUDENTS DON’T KNOW THEIR RIGHTS...THAT’S IMPORTANT TO KNOW. YOU NEED TO KNOW WHEN YOU ARE BEING TREATED BADLY”

At Oscar Mptetha broken doors and blocked toilets were the problem. Now, after trying to address it, the problem has been tackled, to some extent. Equalisers found that they didn’t have to put up with stinking toilets or broken furniture, but could demand that something be done about these things. “Lots of students don’t know their rights,” said Srinikiwe Gaqa, 18, a grade 12 learner. “That’s important to know. You need to know when you are being treated badly.”

LEARNINGS FROM YOUTH GROUP

Youth group begins with singing, dancing and games. It segues off into discussion, debate, and sharing. Sessions are usually in isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, or another local language, and occasionally in English. They last between one and two hours and take place once a week, or in some provinces, once a month. “I think it’s interesting because there are different topics and you get a chance to debate,” said Sisanda Khuzani, 16, a grade 11 learner. “You get to learn what needs to be done.”

At Sizimisele Technical High School for instance, one youth group session involved a discussion around Norms and Standards for school infrastructure, and a comparison between suburban former-Model C schools and township schools. “We saw the huge difference,” said Buhle Booi, 17, a grade 12 learner who is now one of EE’s two national deputy chairpersons. “That then led us to make our campaign.” For the past two years students from Sizimisele have organised marches to the provincial education department. The journey of political awakening begins here – helping students know when they are being wronged, and what their rights are.

Learners are exposed to schooling situations in other parts of the country, to current affairs, history and politics. They are engaged on questions of race, inequality and even structures at school such as governing bodies. “It keeps us up to date on what’s happening in our country,” said Vuyo Nqayi, 18, a grade 12 learner at Harry Gwala Senior Secondary School in Khayelitsha. He confessed that when he watched television he tended to watch entertainment channels, so youth group was an important avenue for hearing about the wider world.

However, youth group is not just about building campaigns or ensuring political enlightenment. Some participate as support for others, to build friendships and for their own personal growth, whether in overcoming shyness, learning how to lead, or developing a sense of identity as part of an assertive, informed collective of black youth. “You learn about problems other learners are facing,” said Kagiso Chauke, 17, a grade 11 learner at Tembisa High School in Gauteng. “It has also helped me to work with other people and improve my leadership skills.”

Though the nature of the discussions at youth group will naturally vary from school to school, the structure and format of these sessions remain in essence, the same. The site from which campaign ideas emerge is precisely through such semi-structured interactions. Discussions about challenges are influence by studying strategies and tactics from other movements around the world,
past and present, thereby rendering long-standing problems as capable of change, through struggle. What has been taken for granted, accepted as part of the hardship of life for poor communities starts to look like an injustice that must go, and indeed a situation that need not persist forever.

Though youth group is intended to build political understanding, it is at its heart, also essentially a social experience. “We enjoy the group activities and listening to each other,” said Thandolwethu Cighe, a grade 10 learner from Nkumbulo Comprehensive in KwaThema, Gauteng.

**RUNNING CAMPAIGNS**

What are the problems facing learners in South Africa today? Answers may vary across schools, but there are persistent themes. For the solutions, equalisers are acutely aware that they are the ones who can mobilise to fix their schools.

At Bonginkosi Hlongwane’s school in Khayelitsha for instance, safety is an issue, gangsters abound in the school vicinity and the school fence was broken. “What is the change we can bring?” said Hlongwane, 17, a grade 12 learner, who then helped run a campaign at Bulumko Secondary School to effect change. “It’s tiring but fun. You have to stand up and face challenges.” He helped rally students, petition the principal, and finally the education department stepped in and put up a fence last year.

Equalisers are aware though, that sometimes, victories are frustratingly incremental. For instance, after pregnant learners were banished from Masibambane Secondary School in Cape Town’s Kraaifontein township last year, a campaign by equalisers failed to see them reinstated in regular classes, but ensured that they were allowed to attend after-hours classes. At another school in Khayelitsha, the toilets were in abysmal condition, and were improved after learners lobbied, but “it still needs to get better”, said one learner.

Some campaigns are school-specific, but others must address structural inequalities that underly individual issues. By working together across schools and across provinces equalisers learn that patterns of injustice have their roots in history, economy and society. This perspective is strengthened by learning about youth undertaking similar campaigns around the world. National and local campaigns can then connect in the minds and experiences of EE’s members.

“We want to have a better life,” said Tsepo Khandelile, 15, in grade 9. “When many schools are all together, we can make a difference.” Which is why, even schools that do not run their own campaigns pitch in to aid other schools facing more serious problems, as a massive act of solidarity. “I enjoy the fact that even though there aren’t many problems at my school, I’m able to contribute to other schools’ efforts and speak on behalf of other learners,” said Yoleka Baninzi, 18, a grade 12 learner from Lansdowne. She said they couldn’t always relate to those problems, “but we want to help them anyway”. “We are getting a better education than our parents, but there is still a lot of work to be done,” she said.

**OPPOSITION FROM PARENTS AND TEACHERS**

Equalisers don’t always have a smooth path as budding political activists though; difficulties are complicated by recalcitrant parents, teachers and school authorities wary of the work of EE. This could be because principals feel exposed and threatened, or even under direct attack when learners seek improvements in their school lives. “Principals sometimes don’t like it,” said Phelokazi Tsoko, 20, a grade 11 learner at Joe Slovo Secondary School. “They have a mindset that we think we know better. They feel exposed.” Still, equalisers remain unfazed. “Not all teachers support us, but it is my right to join any organisation I want to be at,” said Sonwabile Dodwana, 17, a grade 11 learner.

Parents too, are not always supportive, but many begin to appreciate the struggle when they see their children energetically involved. “They thought it was a waste of time,” said Moderate Khumalo, 16, a grade 11 learner at Tembisa High School in Gauteng. “But I explained to them it helps fight for a better education and now my mother is excited by it.” Another former equaliser said that EE members at her school were singled out unnecessarily if they ever did anything wrong. “They point to you as if you’re not human,” she said.
THE ROLE OF A FACILITATOR

Youth group is the cornerstone of EE, and to educate, organise and motivate the mass membership of the movement, EE has a cadre of “facilitators”. They are volunteers responsible for leading and shaping each session, usually in consultation with the youth organisers in each EE office, sometimes following a nationally or provincially agreed-upon programme, sometimes crafting a session specific to a particular youth group, and increasingly drawing on the large database of materials EE has built up through over seven years of youth group meetings and camps.

EE holds monthly meetings for facilitators and trains them on a quarterly basis. Most are post-school youth, some of whom are students at universities, others working at low-paid jobs, and a large group being unemployed. A few facilitators are employed at EE as youth organisers or community leaders, but most give their time freely. Many were themselves equalisers, and can participate in the shared experience of having been a learner only recently. “I want to help and be involved because I believe in the work of EE,” said Portia Nyokana, 24, who works as a librarian for the Bookery, a school libraries NGO established by EE. Portia facilitates youth group once a week. She was one of the original group of equalisers who joined in 2008, and has been a facilitator since 2010. “I was an equaliser before, so I know where they are coming from,” she said. “I enjoy working with learners, to give them hope and support.”

The role of the facilitator is not simply to lead the group but to engage the equalisers as equals; to take discussions forward, without dictating exactly how things should unfold. “Your role is to engage with them, to instill activism,” said Buhle Ndongeni, 18, a university student and facilitator. She joined as an equaliser in 2011, when she was 14 years old. “As an equaliser you’re not as tunnel-visioned as other learners,” she said. “You want to know why something is done a certain way. You’re an activist, you’re revolution-minded.” Ndongeni has seen first-hand how campaigns are run and won, how change can be effected. But the struggle didn’t end when she matriculated. “It’s no longer about me learning,” she said. “I’m ready to give back by teaching others younger than me.”

LIFE AFTER MATRICULATING

What do former equalisers take away with them after they leave school, and essentially cease to be equalisers? Some try and stay connected, either by enlisting as facilitators or through joining the community leadership (CL) programme (see below). “EE has played a huge role in my becoming politically aware,” said Sibonisiwe Gova, 19, a CL. “I have also found a second family here.”

Equalisers who have gone on to universities have formed branches of EE to ensure that they continue to have a political home in a new context. Some have stayed on at EE, rising to positions of leadership. “I don’t think a lot has changed yet,” said Luzuko Sidimba, 25, who heads the Community and Parents department. Now part of EE’s management team, he started off in the original class of 2008 equalisers that worked on the inaugural campaign to fix broken windows. “Things can’t change overnight, it is a long process.”

And past equalisers are still participating in that long process. “I continued with EE because I want to provide change in schools,” said Luyolo Mazwembe, 24, who is EE’s National Organiser. “People were doing it for us, and I want to keep doing it for others.”

Equalisers also learn about themselves in unexpected ways, even shedding prejudices. “When I was an equaliser we were homophobic, we didn’t want to mix with gay or lesbian students, but then we understood the importance of accepting them,” said Sibusiso Nkosi, 25, who facilitates for EE and is employed by the Bookery, working full-time as a school librarian. Nkosi was an equaliser who remembers dodging the library, a ramshackle space with few books. “It’s a big deal for me to give back to my community,” he said. “It’s an opportunity that I didn’t get. This has been a phenomenal experience for me.”
LC and CL Training Camp
Former equaliser Pharie Sefali writes about her experiences as an EE member

When I first joined Equal Education in August 2008, I had no idea what the organisation was about. At the time I was the head prefect at my school. EE was interested in us due to the illegal marches that I would lead to government buildings. At the time the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) wanted to shut down our school and as learners we were contesting that. And we won.

Joey Hasson and Lwandiso Stofile who were working at EE’s youth department at that time approached me. The first youth group I went to had less than 50 learners from different schools in Khayelitsha; it was amazing because I met young people whom I could relate to politically. One of the things I liked about youth group was the similarities that we all faced in our respective schools. Equalisers had the same goal, which was and still is to better our education.

It took me a month to actually figure out why I wanted to stay in the organisation and grow in it. Within a period of a week I learned how to be an activist and how to initiate ways to better the conditions at my school without breaking any laws.

At EE I was one of approximately 10 learners who became the first Leadership Committee members. I think those were the best years of my life. At the time Joey Hasson was our mentor. We were hard workers, because during weekends and school holidays, we would leave our homes at 7am and return at 10pm, as we would be busy with campaigns, attending leadership classes, marches and camps, to name a few things. In our training, we were taught activism, politics, education, leadership, character, how to be a role model and how to achieve success. And most importantly we built a bond as a team and with the organisation. Because the organisation is what we lived for.

As the Leadership Committee we sometimes ran the youth group assisted by Lwandiso and Joey. We taught other learners things we were taught by our leaders, depending on the topic of the week. It ranged from the Constitution, understanding our rights, reading, activism, human rights to social issues. EE membership grew fast. We were learners from different schools, townships and backgrounds but we had one thing in common: to change the education system.

Camps were extremely intense, but fun. As much as we were learning and having fun at the same time what I loved the most about camps was the fact that we were given an opportunity to create and run our own campaigns. Those campaigns would be run in our schools and we, as equalisers, were monitoring them ourselves, and every week and during youth groups we would report back. Back then equalisers were determined, hungry for education and were motivated on all levels.

As equalisers we felt and lived the education struggles

One could feel our spirits every week when we entered youth group singing songs, dancing, and reading poetry. Even at camps we had sessions where we just sang to revive ourselves. As equalisers we felt and lived the education struggles. We had very emotional moments, happy moments, internal fights, but we never lost the feelings of sisterhood and brotherhood.

Later, during my first year at university I became the head of a grade 11 and 12 youth group. Other comrades became heads of other groups. That was when most of us who were in the Leadership Committee as equalisers, had to practice what we were taught by our previous leaders at youth group and camps. Being in a leadership position like that was challenging and it showed growth.

There were times as “post equalisers” we had to challenge the management of EE. And we would defend our actions.
by saying EE made us activists and encouraged us to challenge things that we did not understand or did not approve of.

I learned a lot from each and every person at EE. I am the Pharie that I am today because of EE. My success as an activist, journalist, leader, and a role model to some is because of the character that was developed by the hardship of being an equaliser at EE. One thing I miss the most though is the hot dogs, juice and apples. When I was in the leadership sometimes I could have eaten more hot dogs than others, but what I learned the most was as leaders you have to wait for the others to eat first, then you eat after. Sometimes there wouldn’t be anything to eat. But then Joey would privately buy us chicken (happy moments).

Pharie Sefali is a journalist with GroundUp and a former equaliser

“EE MADE ME AN ACTIVIST AND A LEADER”

Sinekhaya Mbengo, current equaliser, Leadership Committee member and National Council representative.

This is a wonderful experience, one I didn’t think I would have. Through EE I experience what people who call themselves leaders, experience. I have found that people see what you don’t see in yourself.

First I became an equaliser. Then I became a Leadership Committee (LC) member. In December 2014 I was elected to a National Council position. The most memorable moment of all is the night I was told that I won the elections for the National Council position by 52% points. At a concert EE held in 2014 to raise funds I experienced being one of the speakers among well-known people: Vusi Mahlasela, The Muffinz and Driemanskap. They were there to entertain, but I was there to speak with people about EE and why it matters. I experienced talking to a huge crowd, possibly from all over South Africa. This happened when I was still an LC member.

I JOINED EE BECAUSE OF WHAT I BELIEVED EE WOULD DO AND CHANGE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM
People might have different reasons for joining a movement, but specifically, I joined EE because of what I believed EE would do and change in the South African education system. Now I am part of that change, and slowly but surely, there is a change. We as EE are getting there. That is one important reason. When I got to be a part of the LC, I also saw another reason, which is to grow my leadership skills and the activist side of a young lion. EE is a place where youth can grow a positive mindset regarding changing and educating the country. There is a Xhosa saying that goes “Inja ikhonkotha imoto ehambayo”, which means “A dog barks at a moving car”. This means that movements always face challenges, obstacles, criticism.

One of the challenges was that I was not sure about being an activist, but EE built that for me. School is the place I face most challenges from, specifically equalisers and getting them to understand some situations. Having a balance between my interests and school work and the effort and hard work I have to put into EE is another. Some of my friends were not very supportive as I thought they would be, but now things have changed.

In everything you do as a person there are moments when you feel proud of yourself. EE has given me that. I am planning to work with EE, at the same time I still want to carry on with my studies but I am also interested in investing my ideas in the movement as far as I possibly can.

Sinekhaya Mbengo, 21, is an equaliser, a grade 12 learner at Thandokhulu High School in Mowbray, Cape Town, and an elected member of EE’s National Council.
BEGGING WITH OBSERVATIONS

“When EE first started we decided to do observations at schools. Yoliswa Dwane, Doron Isaacs, Lumkile Zani, Nokubonga Yawa, Lwandiso Stofile and I began by looking at Luhlaza, KwaMfundo and Soyesile schools, and we spent time in the schools just observing school life, what learners and teachers did when they arrived. We did this in Khayelitsha because most of the team lived there. We got a sense of what goes on in schools, what the day is like. We met some of the representative councils, we chatted to learners about what they thought were the main problems and started to build relationships. We also ran seminar for ourselves and read whatever research we could find.”

TRACING EE BACKWARDS

“One strand of my personal intellectual and methodological background came from the organisation Habonim. I’d participated in those activities and been a youth leader at 16, so I had 10 years of experience. It is a Jewish South African socialist nationalist youth movement that took its roots in 1880s Russia and Europe, a time of great repression for Jewish people. I was part of a community focused on Jewish people. But I took the methodology; popular, informal educational methodology.

“Part of EE’s theory of change is to work with others educationally. To teach others, run workshops, engage people, share problems, using the facts and science, but also incorporating fun. Group learning as activism became part of EE. EE wants to build critical leaders, critical thinkers who are able to engage politically and operate in a way that they can build alliances and can assert a kind of moral agenda. The content had to speak to EE’s members, black youth in poor and working-class communities, who trace their lineage through South Africa’s brutal history of invasion and subjugation. It had to be relevant, exciting, meaningful to people’s lives. It had to come from them. At the same time EE’s always adopted a universalist approach, learning to be citizens of the world.”

THE EARLY YEARS: COMMUNITY WORK

“At the beginning of that early period, EE adopted a set of strategies and a way of operating that we inherited particularly from the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC); that is real, hard community work. It was about being trusted by communities, being allowed into homes, being safe in door-to-door campaigns, being known. Is Khayelitsha a place where you feel safe? Because it’s not a safe place, because people who live there don’t feel safe. But I personally always felt an immense sense of safety and protection, which is a kind of social force that came from TAC, and now has come from EE’s work.

“What is this organisation trying to do? The more our political agenda began to become clear, the more we started to face threats, the more we were blocked from having access to schools and got locked out of spaces. One has to ask oneself why? What was EE trying to reveal that needed to be shut down? The model of community organising, using advocacy and solidarity, using reason, knowledge and evidence to build community power, was from TAC. These traditions came from the United Democratic Front, from trade unionism, from the ANC, from traditions of resistance that imagined another world. But more than a technical advocacy. What are people’s actual experiences? Youth group was a place where it wasn’t just about intellectually talking about things, but about organising, getting down to what it would mean to organise, finding where the problems were, understanding how people speak about them.”

EE FOUNDING MEMBER JOEY HASSON REFLECTS ON BUILDING A FUNDAMENTAL SPACE

Joey was interviewed by Bhavya Dore and Kim Tichmann
STRUCTURING YOUTH GROUP EARLY ON

“What we would do is plan together. We planned a whole set of topics. We looked at history, politics, and some of the different areas that would be important for youth group. At the same time we had campaign events that went with the history and politics. We had a lot of ideas about mobilising people for campaigns.

“How do you organise a gathering? We are using a particular right, our freedom to assemble. You need quite a large group of trained, smart, effective youth leaders. So we wanted to balance the practical element with the content.

“We had an idea of what we wanted youth group to be. It had quite a clear political agenda – understanding why our schools are going wrong, where young people are at and how do we build our community? Let’s have leaders who listen to young people and young people can define the space.”

THE FIRST MEETING

“The first meeting happened in April 2008, with a very small number of students. It was geared towards listening to where young people were at and explaining to them who we were and what our agenda was. It took place at UCT’s Shawco Centre in Site B in Khayelitsha. Theirs was a very different model of academic support and after-school programmes. EE was never going to be about that – putting a patch on a problem. It was about how do we look at the systemic problems here?”

BUILDING POWER

“We needed to recognise that young people within the system are the most powerful agents for change within it. They have all kinds of issues: their anxieties, difficulty with their families and so on. We were looking for someone who could find a political home within EE. In your average class you also have those students who feel, “look I’m not going to get involved in anything”. We were looking for those students who were more politically interested. The agenda always was that this is a place to build leaders, a new kind of community, not just a place where we come to hang out together or receive entertainment, or wait to be passive receivers of today’s content. Youth group would be a place of dialogue: What’s actually going on in the school? How can we build power amongst ourselves? How do we build power and give each other power? It remains a central concern in youth group today. If the youth are going to be the heart of EE’s identity as an organisation, then that space is critical.”

GROWTH OF YOUTH GROUP

“In those early days, we started with a small group with people from a few different schools. The critical thing was that youth group had to happen regularly. We’re not going to send you a message every day. You know we’re going to be here. That process has never ended. Youth group started to expand and expand and expand. People knew the taxi is going to pick me up, I can call my friends. Then we had to order more hot dogs and order more taxis, and the budget started to exponentially increase. We went from 8 to 20 to 40 to 80 to 100 to 200 to 500 in a matter of months.

“People were saying I’m not going to see the other people, so there was resistance to this, but people understood. Then we had to split again, into grades. We were certain youth group would work in grades, and it did because people enjoyed being part of a Khayelitsha-wide grade that was bigger than them and their school.

“EE was spreading from school to school, beyond Khayelitsha into other townships, into schools attended by black youth beyond the townships. This happened fast. Transport became more expensive. We had to reorganise youth group into areas rather than grades. This again had to be discussed and agreed. One thing we realised early on was that it was not possible to deliver that quality experience to huge groups. So we kept each group under 100.”
YOUTH GROUP AS A NEW KIND OF SPACE

“Youth group is dynamic, it changes. There have been different models and ways of doing it. There are always challenges in creating a space for young people to come together. It’s a space that doesn’t really exist. They often don’t have their own spaces in their homes, or in the school system. It’s hard to participate in the democratic order. Young people want to socialise outside their homes, in the streets, through church, through other structures, so it’s quite a powerful thing to offer this new space. It’s a kind of bringing together of young people in a way they don’t ordinarily come together, which is powerful. The danger is you can have this dependency relationship that develops, where people feel like this is a place where we can chill out, get a free lunch. As we grew we had no choice but to reduce food and get people to walk during the summer months. A minority dropped off and we were concerned for a while, but overall we grew.

“We also started to see large numbers of lesbian, gay and transgendered people who were finding a place to be at EE. They were realising ‘it’s fine that I’m gay here, I can be a part of this community’.

“At some point in November 2008 the name ‘equalisers’ started to be used. EE’s high school members starting calling themselves this. It was a collective identity that everyone shared, with a sense of mission.”

FIRST EE RALLY

“The first one was on October 10, 2008 – the Fix Our Schools rally. It sent a message. We want to attract the brightest, the smartest young people in the country to come together in this way. That story has been told many times – youth from across Khayelitsha won hundreds of thousands of rands for upgrades to Luhlaza’s fencing and buildings. It started with a call to fix their broken windows. That was an act of solidarity in and of itself; students from all the different schools coming together to say we want to fix this school because it’s a symbol of the problems in the entire country facing black youth. Kids from poor families in Khayelitsha realised how much power they could have in a social movement.

“A few months before that EE’s members had mobilised against xenophobic attacks and to assist at the community halls where people were taking refuge. The powerful thing was that when kids from Khayelitsha could give assistance and be there in response to xenophobic violence, they realised ‘we can be agents of change’. It wouldn’t be arrogant enough to say that it was EE that brought them to that realisation. I created a platform to bring all those people together.”

CONNECTING WITH HISTORY

“Youth group was first and foremost a kind of community-building exercise, with young people who could be themselves, responsible for themselves. We see the challenges young people face in this country, particularly poor and marginalised children who are trying to find work and overcome very immediate needs. That burden is carried particularly by women. Young people were coming out of that environment, trying to get through school on the back of a huge deficit, and at the same time worrying, how am I going to get a job and move myself forward?

“It’s a very powerful thing when you start to engage young people as intellectual equals on the political meaning of what is happening in our schools. What are teachers doing? What are other students doing? That opens the space for quite radical thinking. You look to the roots of where these problems come from. Anyone who engaged with youth group then or today would notice the immense gap in young people’s knowledge of history, of their own history. And I think this is something EE has recognised and so tried to utilise youth group as a space where they can learn history. Part of EE’s theory, the way that EE thinks it can create change in society, a big part of that is engaging with history. That was a fundamental thing about EE at that time.”

TRAINING ACTIVISTS

“It was also a place where we were building a particular kind of discipline amongst teenagers. When you think about the rally in October 2008, or the 2009 rally, or really big rallies in 2010 and 2011, which built up to 25,000 people, how did we ensure no violence, that young people were leading, that there was a certain kind of energy, agenda, a way of representing the voice of young people? EE had a large number of highly disciplined, young, black, intellectual activists that developed the strategy we were using. We understand the policies and know we are going to make our demands in a particular way. We’re going to assert our perspective. It’s a powerful example being set. I honestly believe that’s how EE has held those giant marches in a safe way.”

BUILDING CONTENT

“With youth work, part of it is campaigns, part of it is intellectual education. Early on, content was on more of an ad-hoc basis. Youth group was highly responsive to where it was at. What’s going on here? Where are people at? Our job was to draw topics out of that: what are things we need to know about? If you look at the first compilation of activities which we brought out in 2010 it deals with colonialism, xenophobia, elections,
gender, racism, corporal punishment, human rights, environment, gay rights, growing up, youth politics, slavery, education under Apartheid, a lot of other things. We would tie topics to methods that got young people active, creative, arguing, engaged with the material.”

**YOUTH GROUP: THEN AND NOW**

“For one thing, it’s not as constrained now by language. A majority of EE’s top leadership and youth group facilitators were always from the communities where we were working, initially Khayelitsha. But some of us facilitated discussions in English. Now almost all youth groups happen in isiXhosa, Setswana, isiZulu, Sepedi or other African languages. That’s a massive thing. Language was never intended to be an impediment, but I’m sure youth group members find it a much better experience now. There is a whole new cohort of people doing things their own way, and I think that’s really important.

“Some things are the same. We had to struggle to present material that was heavy. But in a way it’s become part of EE culture that you read. We tried to institutionalise reading. At least one youth group a month we’d spend just reading. We tried to find a really engaging reading. I think that still happens to this day. Serious texts, history, short stories, ideas. That reading has a powerful effect, transporting people into other worlds, it has the power to inspire and develop youth politically.”

**THE EVOLVING ROLE OF A FACILITATOR**

“We had constant debates about youth group structure – grades or areas? We had debates about priorities – political learning or practical organising? Some said youth group was too much of a thing that was being facilitated for students. We reached a realisation to say these facilitators need to be organisers. Are they in touch with what’s going on at schools? Do they know the members of their youth group? This was in 2012. We’re going to use youth group time to mobilise students on issues that are relevant to them. We did community mapping. We engaged with principals, teachers, parents, community structures. Every youth group, every school was challenged to build campaigns. At some point we went back to more political and intellectual content, but the organising ethic stayed part of what it was about.

“When you look at the Community Leadership programme, a post-matric EE year, it’s geared towards organising. CLs have certain schools, they know which equalisers are Leadership Committee members, what the issues are, where leaflets need to be delivered and so on.

“If we want to keep understanding the problem we want to change, we have to be talking to young people, and we have to adapt. Facilitators play a major role in counselling, dealing with violence, gangs, psychological issues. We need young leaders who are equipped to deal with those kinds of things.”

**EE: A PLACE TO EMBRACE POLITICS**

“What is this organisation about? It was built at the youth group level first. For me, youth group should be seen as the heart of EE. It’s a place where we can learn not to fear politics, it’s a place where we can learn how to utilise politics and build each other and build power.”

Joey Hasson was a member of EE’s senior management from March 2008 until July 2012.
BUILDING YOUNG LEADERS: YOUTH WORK AT EE IN 2014

Youth work lies at the heart of EE’s organising model. Weekly youth groups are organised in schools and community halls across the provinces where EE works. In addition to overseeing youth groups and helping shape campaigns, this work also includes other activities through the year such as mass meetings, workshops and training camps.

EQUALISER CAMPS

EE held two national camps in 2014, each one involving over 500 equalisers. These were held from 6 to 12 January at Hermanus in the Western Cape, and from 13 to 18 December in Magaliesburg in the North West Province. Each five-day camp was run by a team of about 80 facilitators.

Camps are an intense learning experience for equalisers, and the last one featured programmes focusing on Apartheid geography, school transport, how inequality develops in an economy, gender, sexual expectations, and EE’s ongoing campaigns amongst other things. Every morning began with reading short stories by writers such as RRR Dhlomo, Nat Nakasa and Gcina Mhlophe; these were texts that enabled equalisers to access the day-to-day reality of Apartheid and dispossession through stories. “Camp is fun because there are so many programmes and people from all over share their problems,” said Yoleka Baninzi, 18, a grade 12 learner. “It’s a big learning curve.”

Some provinces held smaller camps for Leadership Committee equalisers at different points during the year.

TRAINING

A five-day training camp for facilitators from Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape was held in Limpopo from 19 March. About 35 facilitators attended in total, with sessions featuring the history and achievements of EE, its constitution, the education system and Norms and Standards for school infrastructure. There was also practical training on running in-school meetings and youth groups.
From 7 to 9 November all facilitators came together for a national pre-camp in Magaliesburg, to prepare for the five-day camp in December. This ensured that their ideas fed into the programming for camp, and that they were effectively bonded into teams, all led by former equalisers who are now leaders within EE.

Gauteng held quarterly facilitator training with input from the Canon Collins Trust, and various provinces had training programmes throughout the year.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP (CL) PROGRAMME 2014

EE continues to run this programme, and 2014 was no exception. The nearly year-long programme combines political education along with organising work, helping post-matriculants build leadership and life skills. It also gives them some exposure to lectures and material at a university level. Eight CLs were recruited in the Western Cape and five in Gauteng, from more than 30 applicants. Training for the new recruits took place in March. The Western Cape CLs also attended a once-a-week training with sister organisation Ndifuna Ukwazi until May. CLs also attended a week-long writing workshop in Johannesburg run by former NUMSA publications editor Jenny Grice. The rest of the year was spent organising youth group, with heavy CL involvement in last year’s school-based campaigns in the Western Cape.

TEACH-INS

EE held simultaneous teach-ins for equalisers in Cape Town and Johannesburg on 25 and 26 April. The teach-ins focused on the historical development of the South African working class. This might sound like a very dry and academic topic, but to equalisers it was the opposite. For EE’s members this topic is about the history of their families. It speaks to the reasons why they may have a relative who labours underground in a mine, or works as a domestic worker for a wealthy white person. The development of the working class is a story of deliberate dispossession through annexation of land, taxation and the creation of a cheap migrant labour force to serve the capitalist economy of the settler communities. It is the backstory to Apartheid. Equalisers loved the two days and asked for more. Subsequent teach-ins were held in July for learners from the other provinces, along similar lines.

AMAZWI WETHU - EE’S FILM SCHOOL

In 2014, Kedibone Peace Legole, had close personal brushes with violence; two of her friends were robbed, another was raped and then died. These experiences sparked off a film project, Why Us, which sought to capture the essence of what it means to live in Khayelitsha, through the prism of personal trauma.

This was under the umbrella of Amazwi Wethu – “Our voices” in isiXhosa – EE’s film training component for youth members, equalisers like Legole. The programme teaches them documentary filmmaking, photography and editing skills in a bid to encourage media literacy “It helps us portray our feelings and depict our communities,” said Legole, a grade 12 learner.

Students are taught how to use media for activism and advocacy and to add their voices to the debates surrounding education. “I love writing and poetry, that’s why I joined,” said Sisanda Khuzani, 16, a grade 11 learner from a school in Makhaza, Khayelitsha, who joined the programme last year. “I like to tell my stories.”
There are many stories to be told in these communities—under-resourced, insecure places, where day-to-day life is often a struggle. Films shot under the project last year included Why Us, and Hear Me Out, an exploration of the experience of young men in Khayelitsha. Since it began in 2012, nine films have been made under the banner.

The programme is not just about hands-on filmmaking, however; its broader mission involves engaging audiences and generating discussion through screenings and seminars. Learners are honed in technical aspects of filmmaking but also pushed to think about the issues raised by the films they make and watch.

In June 2014, Equal Education organised the Khayelitsha Documentary Film Festival at the Khayelitsha HubSpace, screening four films, and drawing an audience of over 200 people. The two-day event generated discussions after the screenings, serving as a platform for community members, and especially young people, to reflect on social justice issues. The first edition saw lively discussions on xenophobia, gender and HIV/AIDS.

The festival was a collaboration between the Tri Continental Film Festival, STEPS Southern Africa, Equal Education, Treatment Action Campaign, Social Justice Coalition and Mosaic.

CONSOLIDATING OUR LEARNING: THE INTERNAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING UNIT

In 2014 EE created a new unit, the Internal Education and Training Unit (IETU). IETU sounds like eyethu an isiZulu word meaning “our own”. Whilst EE places a lot of emphasis on the methodology of engaging equalisers and trains facilitators to do this in fun and engaging ways, content is of huge importance. Educational content must speak to EE’s political values and be relevant to its members. “For me it’s the content that takes your mind, arouses you... if I could have youth group every day I would... it stops people from getting involved in social ills and raises awareness,” said Kholwani Simelani, a facilitator in KwaThema.

Around 3,000 equalisers are now attending EE’s youth group meetings each week, organised in as many as 114 separate spaces. In 2014, it became clear that setting up a central EE unit responsible for devising and consolidating EE’s educational content was necessary. As a result, IETU was born in October 2014. This unit is responsible for producing educational content for youth groups and camps; updating and digitising existing activities; providing assistance and training to facilitators via facilitator workshops; producing user guides and manuals; creating and distributing reading material which addresses key themes and concerns of the movement and its members; and creating a film library which EE can use in its various activities as a means of deepening knowledge and debate within the organisation. IETU is therefore a vehicle to consolidate all of EE’s educational materials and to produce new materials.

The extant collection is significant, with over seven years of youth group activities, for example, available for editing and consolidation. The aim is to produce a searchable database of all of EE’s activities, and to continuously produce new instruments of learning, like a reader IETU is publishing, made up of short stories, essays and poems by black South Africans that depict life under colonialism and Apartheid.

One of IETU’s first tasks was to develop programmes for EE’s youth camp in December, using interactive methodologies to help equalisers engage with the content. After analysing facilitators’ suggestions and preferences, IETU developed programmes on abuse, learner transport, school governing structures, unemployment, Apartheid geography and social divisions, sexual expectations, unrecognised activists, critical thinking, matric reflection, life after matric, social media, discipline, and the state.

At the end of camp, IETU asked equalisers to reflect on the activities and their content, in order to gain a clearer picture of what is needed for EE’s youth education programming. Equalisers were asked to explain why they attend and participate in EE youth group, as well as their favourite activities and topics, the skills they have learned, and their preferences for future youth group meetings. Through this survey, IETU gained a sense of how to proceed in 2015, and build relevant, engaging content for equalisers.

IETU’s members are based in Johannesburg and Cape Town. They are Daniel Sher, Noncedo Madubedube, Gabriel Nahmias, Joshua Maserow, Kgothatso Mabunda, Ntombesizwe Mkonto, Doron Isaacs, and Tracey Malawana.
FORMER EQUALISERS TAKE THE REINS OF LEADERSHIP

NTUTHUZO NDZOMO, THE HEAD OF EE’S YOUTH DEPARTMENT IN THE WESTERN CAPE, LUZUKO “LUYA” SIDIMBA, HEAD OF EE’S COMMUNITY AND PARENTS DEPARTMENT IN THE WESTERN CAPE, AND LUYOLO “LEE” MAZWEMBE, EE’S NATIONAL ORGANISER, ALL JOINED EE AS EQUALISERS IN 2008, THE YEAR EE WAS BORN. NTUTHUZO HOLDS A BA DEGREE FROM UCT, LUYA IS COMPLETING HIS FINAL COURSE BEFORE GRADUATING WITH A DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK, ALSO FROM UCT, AND LEE IS STUDYING TEACHING THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA). IN A GROUP INTERVIEW, THEY SPEAK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH EE AND THEIR JOURNEY FROM LEARNERS TO LEADERS.

Q: Can you tell us about how you first got involved with EE?

Luya: I joined EE on 8 May, 2008. I was invited by a friend to go and observe what was going on.

Ntuthuzo: Observe means to check out the girls.

(Laughter)

Luya: Ya, I was invited. At first I didn’t want to go because I was so busy. I had to go for soccer, but I got injured, so I went. But then that was it. I didn’t stop going after that, even when I could go back to a soccer field. I wasn’t studying history at school, and this was an opportunity for me to learn history.

Ntuthuzo: I was invited by one of the first EE organisers. He came into my school, Esangweni Secondary, in Khayelitsha, to tell us about this organisation. And then he explained to me that there would be transport to take me home. I was interested in it, but not very excited about it because I had a lot on my plate. The first meeting I attended was around the time of the xenophobic attacks.
It was in late May 2008. EE, TAC and other groups, they were going around, delivering food. So we were a part of that, going around and dealing with food delivery. When I was there they taught me more about what the organisation was about. And I thought, this is interesting.

**Lee:** For me, my first meeting was in 2008. I was invited by the late Mnoneleli “My Lord” Ngubo. At first I didn’t want to go, because I was doing drama. I didn’t have time for EE. So I went there later, in July. The first activity that stood out for me was an activity on Barack Obama. In 2008 he was running for president. We learnt about his history, where he’s from. That stood out for me, because I was not a history student. But that activity made me love history. It’s one of the reasons why I’m still a part of EE – to be a part of the change.

**Q:** Did you guys enjoy going to the schools that you were going to? Did you enjoy the overall educational experience?

**Ntuthuzo:** I thought everything that was happening at my school was normal. Toilets weren’t working. There was an issue with our doors. All of this was just normal. EE asked us to take pictures, I remember. The interesting thing about EE is that it makes you challenge what you think is the norm and makes you ask why am I living with these conditions, when others have better options? But I did enjoy school – I loved my school.

**Luya:** For me, I didn’t enjoy school. That’s a big no. I didn’t enjoy going to school because all the subjects I was doing were not the subjects I wanted to do. I was forced to do them. And, while I was doing them, I didn’t know what I would do with them after matriculating. My options were tourism, consumer studies – those were the two choices for me. We didn’t have information on careers, what to do after matric, what choices do you have if you do these subjects.

**Q:** How did EE change your plans?

**Luya:** Because I remember at one stage in grade 11 I didn’t have a teacher for three months, to me that was not a problem, it was free time. I will get marks even if I don’t have that teacher. I didn’t know the impact of that on me. But after joining EE I started realising the impact of that.

**Lee:** I went to study in CPUT, but it wasn’t really what I wanted to do. So I would come to EE and support them in some of their work.

**Q:** Did your family support you working with EE? What did they want you to do?

**Lee:** They wanted me to continue with drama. They used to come and see me act, so they knew what I was doing. My mom wasn’t really with me for this EE journey, but my uncle told me I can do both. But EE won eventually.

**Ntuthuzo:** I actually planned to study journalism at Rhodes University, then I spent 2010 at CPUT doing some courses. I was confused by what I wanted to do because I thought ‘I don’t want to be a journalist anymore’. I remember just having conversations with Joey about it, when I said ‘I’m not happy with the courses I’m doing [retail, business management]’. I went to UCT and kept changing my courses. Then I realised I like politics, public policy etc, and it was closely linked with my experiences at EE. As for my parents, they used to complain when I appeared on the radio, talking badly about the ANC, for instance. They said ‘they’ll kill you, don’t do it, you’re criticising the liberation movement’. They would support me, but they were worried, they felt it was unsafe. They were also huge ANC supporters, so that makes sense.

**Luya:** For me, they wanted me to do two things. To focus on my studies, and to commit myself to soccer. They were supportive, but towards the end of 2008, they started realising I’m more committed to EE. My father was invited to the first EE parents’ meeting, and he attended. Since then, he wanted me to come because he saw what EE was, what we were fighting for. So since then they’ve been supportive.

**Q:** What is it like now? From being a young equaliser, to becoming a big part of EE, part of the management team and heading departments?

**Ntuthuzo:** It’s exciting. When I was at UCT, I actually wanted to work for EE afterwards. I find it really exciting and overwhelming at the same time. Because you’re changing people’s lives, you’re actually building the future for your own children or for your grandchildren, because realistically, it’s not something that’s going to happen tomorrow. Basically I’m happy – it’s not like you
go home and think, ‘I hate my job’. You think about work all the time, and your work surrounds you.

Luya: You look forward to the next day.

Q: How many years has it been in total for all of you?

All: Seven or eight years.

Q: How different would you have been if you had not joined as equalisers?

Ntuthuzo: Yoh! Lee would be an actor.

Lee: Maybe bra!

Ntuthuzo: We’re slowing you down.

Q: So aside from derailing Lee’s acting career, it worked out okay.

(Laughter)

Ntuthuzo: I actually look at the people I started with, when I entered university. Maybe I’d be working for some firm somewhere, some corporate.

Luya: I think I would be playing soccer, struggling to be professional. I would still be playing in Khayelitsha.

Q: How did it affect your growth in terms of personality or your way of thinking?

Ntuthuzo: It enlightened us, it opened our eyes to many things which you saw, but didn’t see at the same time. It also enhanced your way of thinking.

Lee: Ya it shaped our minds, we started to see things that we believed before that we can’t get rid of. So we developed tactics to understand how to get rid of objects that limit our education. We also gained skills – how to speak in public, how to organise people. Now we’re all grown-ups, and we’re taking responsibility. EE has grown us.

Q: How has EE changed apart from the obvious growth and expansion?

Lee: In terms of campaigning strategies, EE is still using the same strategies. EE is still marching, picketing, using the same protests, in different campaigns. But youth groups have changed. The content that we grew up with has changed, also the numbers. That also has an effect, because back then we were not so many. Now there’s a lot of people to educate. So now it’s quite difficult.

Luya: Like he said, if you think of the content, I remember at one stage we were taught about global warming, and the impact of that. But now, because of the politics of the country, the politics in general, you have to shift your focus to make sure that people understand what’s going on around them, that they feel free to comment on issues that are happening, and to debate them in public, and with their friends and families.

Q: What are the memorable events/highlights for you at EE?

Ntuthuzo: We went to this camp once, it was when the libraries campaign was about to be released. Zackie was talking about languages saying people aren’t passionate about their languages, and he said – I even talk in Afrikaans when I’m having sex! And I thought mannn...
Luya: There’s so many things.

Ntuthuzo: In 2011, when we had 20,000 people marching from the Grand Parade to Parliament. And me being in front, and seeing this, it was just overwhelming just seeing so many people.

Luya: Transport used to be done by almost the whole office. It was a very small staff then. So I volunteered to do transport. It turned out to be good. For me, it was the first time organising transport alone and also making sure all the taxi drivers are paid on time. I did that all by myself. And also for the 20,000 people march. For me, that’s when I started to realise my strengths and things that I’m capable of. Because at first I never thought I could manage all of that.

Q: Has EE exceeded what you expected when you first joined?

Luya: When I came to EE, I didn’t come with expectations or anything. I was coming like everyone else. I wanted to see what was going on – is it fun, is it interesting? That meeting, the first meeting – it caught my attention, because I started to realise a lot of things I didn’t know before. I still don’t have expectations.
IMPLEMENTING THE NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

In January 2014, six-year-old Michael Komape died after falling into a pit latrine in a Limpopo school. Komape’s death brought into sharper scrutiny everything that was broken in South Africa’s schools – toilets, furniture, fences, and teaching itself.

Komape died two months after a landmark law on ensuring Minimum Norms and Standards came to be passed – regulations that EE has been fighting for since 2010, to prevent deaths such as Komape’s, and to improve the conditions of teaching and learning.

The struggle reached a definitive point in November 2013, when the government finally created legally binding Minimum Norms and Standards. But EE only celebrated briefly, knowing the battle for implementation would be just as hard. EE decided to name this important stage of the struggle ‘The Michael Komape Norms and Standards Implementation Campaign.’ Michael’s parents have been active participants.

WHAT DO THE NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE ENSURE?

These apply to all public schools in South Africa, and mean all teachers and students have a claim to adequately resourced and well provided-for learning environments. For the first time it is legally binding on every school to ensure water, electricity, clean and safe sanitation, electronic connectivity, safe classrooms with a maximum of 40 learners, and security. Thereafter schools must be provided with libraries, laboratories and sports facilities. There is a series of deadlines, the first being towards the end of 2016. By 29 November 2016, all schools built from mud, wood or asbestos must be replaced, and all schools without water, electricity or sanitation must be provided with these amenities.

Of the 23,740 public schools in the country, 1,131 do not have electricity, 604 have no water supply, 11,033 still have pit toilets and 18,301 do not have libraries; a dismal picture painted by data from the National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) report of October 2014.

When Minister Angie Motshekga announced in November 2013 that she would be bringing in the legislation, EE publicly welcomed the move:

“THE ADOPTION OF THESE LEGALLY BINDING NORMS AND STANDARDS IS A MAJOR VICTORY FOR ACTIVISM, AND THE RESULT OF OVER THREE YEARS OF SUSTAINED CAMPAIGNING BY THOUSANDS OF EQUAL EDUCATION MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY... EQUAL EDUCATION IS EXTREMELY PLEASED TO BE WALKING FORWARD WITH MINISTER MOTSHEKGA. WE ARE HERE AFTER THREE YEARS OF SUSTAINED ACTIVISM, AND MANY BROKEN PROMISES, BUT WE’RE HERE. THE MINISTER HAS DONE THE RIGHT THING. SHE DESERVES SUBSTANTIAL CREDIT FOR THAT. THESE REGULATIONS WILL BE A PROUD PART OF HER LEGACY.”

That statement signalled EE’s willingness to work closely and amicably with the minister in ensuring effective implementation. Unfortunately, that hasn’t been easy.

FOLLOWING UP IN 2014

EE is now focusing on ensuring that that legislation leaps off the paper and is implemented on the ground. 2014 saw a series of follow-up efforts on the part of EE to consolidate on the previous year’s successes,
as part of the Michael Komape Norms and Standards Implementation Campaign. The effort was two-pronged: to work on fine-tuning the legal specificity of the Norms and Standards text, and to push provincial and national governments to act on their new duties.

**REVIEWING THE REGULATIONS**

The process was set in motion in February 2014, with EE writing to the minister raising questions and laying out concerns with the vagueness of certain provisions of the new law. What happens to schools partly made of inappropriate structures such as mud or asbestos; do they fall within the three-year deadline? Why is there a clause that excuses the Minister from accountability for implementing the regulations if other government agencies don’t cooperate? Will every school have a centralised library? Why don’t sanitation stipulations meet international requirements?

The minister provided a comprehensive response to EE’s concerns in March, but ultimately concluded that she would not review the regulations. In May EE moved the minister again to review the norms, whilst also pushing for more clarity and transparency in the process. After writing again in August, there was still no reply.

In October EE’s National Council passed a resolution saying EE would wait for the November deadline for the submission of provincial plans to pass, and then contemplate further action to force the minister to review the text of the regulations.

The minister ultimately responded to EE’s concerns reiterating her stand that the regulations should first be implemented in practice before being reviewed. She also said that the provincial plans needed to come in first.

In November EE once again wrote to the minister giving her time until 29 January 2015 to “remedy the defects”, as parts of the regulations did not comply with the Constitution and the South African Schools Act.

Throughout this correspondence EE was assisted by the Equal Education Law Centre (EELC). Preparations are now underway to address some of the defects in the Norms and Standards in court.

**TIME TO IMPLEMENT: GATHERING INFORMATION**

Alongside pushing for a review of the existing law, EE has simultaneously been working on implementing the Norms and Standards as they exist now. Despite flaws, they are a powerful instrument to drive a transformation of school infrastructure. The starting point of that process was to collect information through Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) requests.
EE’s Policy, Communications and Research (PCR) department wrote to all nine provinces to request the names of all schools made of inappropriate structures (mud, wood, asbestos and metal) as well as those without regular access to services such as water, electricity and/or sanitation. All except Gauteng responded to the PAIA requests; Gauteng failed to respond by the deadline, and an appeal was been lodged with MEC Panyaza Lesufi.

EE also organised a team of university students to phone a sample of the schools on the available lists to verify the information provided by the provincial education departments. In many instances evidence of inaccuracies in the provincial lists were uncovered.

**JULY CONFERENCE**

In collaboration with Section27, the EELC and the Legal Resources Centre, EE organised a three-day conference in Johannesburg on 14 and 15 July. The purpose of the conference was to ensure a collective push from civil society to effectively implement the Norms and Standards, with a particular focus on the first three-year deadline.

The conference was dedicated to the memory of Komape, with his father addressing the inaugural session. All stakeholders were brought on board, with the participants including activists, government officials, engineers, building contractors, teachers and learners.

Sessions featured grassroots organisers and expert speakers who addressed a range of issues including the legal obligations created by the Norms and Standards, the funds required for implementation and proper fund utilisation, obstacles to the building process, and community mobilisation, participation and monitoring.

Ultimately, the conference aimed to act as a first step in consensus-building on how to proceed. Students who came to the conference were able to share their experiences and get an insight into the schooling system in different parts of the country. Participants brought a variety of suggestions to the table. These included the need to hold individual infrastructure contractors accountable and the importance of using community newspapers, church groups and soccer clubs to build awareness.

**POST-CONFERENCE**

EE has been pushing for the provincial plans, which were required to be submitted to the minister by 29 November 2014, to be made public. This is necessary for full transparency and wider engagement with the process. It is in the public interest for these documents to be released, both to understand how the provinces intend to act, and to help students and parents to engage with the plans and ensure that the data being used to draw up the plans is up-to-date. The minister’s reluctance and the ongoing delays moved EE to the next stage of the struggle: mass mobilisation to force the minister to go public with the plans.

**SINCE NOVEMBER**

Once the 29 November deadline passed, by which time all provinces were to have submitted their plans, EE was swift to act, and wrote to the minister three times between December 2014 and March 2015, but failed to receive a response. The EELC also put in an access to information request for the plans.

With government inaction writ large, EE decided to stage two-day sleep-ins outside government offices in Pretoria, Cape Town and Zwelitsha near King William’s Town.

It was only on 31 March 2015, hours before EE’s planned sleep-ins that the government released a statement. It said they would be releasing the plans “in a few weeks”, without specifying a date, and labelled the sleep-ins as “cheap tricks”. EE went ahead with the sleep-ins across the country, with more than 600 people participating.
2014

12 FEBRUARY EE writes to the minister with concerns about some of the aspects of the legislation.

17 MARCH The minister responds, but refuses to amend the existing legislation. She invites EE to a meeting with DBE officials.

9 MAY EE once again writes to the minister and agrees to meet officials. In the same month, PCR writes to all provinces, seeking information on all schools made of inappropriate structures and those lacking basic services.

JUNE Telephone campaign to call schools at random to try and verify the information provided by the government.

3 JULY EE meets DBE officials, following an invitation from the minister, to thresh out concerns over Norms and Standards.

14 - 15 JULY EE along with others organises a conference on Norms and Standards featuring various stakeholders and speakers.

29 JULY EE writes to new MECs of seven provinces congratulating them on their fresh appointment and explaining the Norms and Standards.

8 AUGUST EE once again writes to the minister seeking a response, but fails to hear from her.

9 OCTOBER The minister once again reiterates her previous stand on not reviewing the regulations for now.

18 OCTOBER EE National Council passes a resolution saying EE should wait for the November deadline to pass before taking further action.

28 NOVEMBER DBE spokesperson says the minister has met with all MECs and the plans have been handed over.

29 NOVEMBER The deadline passes but the plans are still not made public. The minister says she will first consider the plans.

9 DECEMBER EE writes to the minister. The DBE is quoted as saying the minister will be meeting the MECs in January or February to go through the plans before making them public.

2015

29 JANUARY EE gives the minister time until this date to remedy the flaws in the legislation.

27 FEBRUARY EE writes to the DBE again requesting the plans.

MARCH In early March the DBE says the minister will meet the MEC within 10 days.

12 MARCH EE sends yet another letter to the DBE.

19 MARCH EELC puts in a PAIA application for EE requesting the provincial plans.

31 MARCH The DBE announces that it intends to make the plans public “in a few weeks”, but does not specify a date. The statement also attacks EE.

1 - 3 APRIL EE holds sleep-ins outside Parliament and other places around the country to put pressure on the government to hasten the process.

17 APRIL In a response to the PAIA request, the DBE seeks an extension until May 21 to provide the plans, saying they are still being re-submitted and finalised.

30 APRIL EE writes to the DBE agreeing on the new deadline for providing the information.

29 MAY EE marches in the Eastern Cape to escalate pressure for the release of the provincial plans to implement the Norms and Standards for school infrastructure.

12 JUNE Provincial implementation plans for Norms & Standards for School Infrastructure are released.
The youth department in the Western Cape set the theme for 2014 as inequality – what is it and how do we beat it? The thematic device allowed it to structure content along these lines for youth group activities and mass meetings. Mass meetings serve to bring together equalisers from across schools four or five times during the course of the year to speak about common problems they experience in their schools.

A performance of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* was held at one such event, and was a huge success with equalisers. Originally a novel, the work deals with issues of power, equality, leadership, revolution, and revolution betrayed; it was performed by EE staff and facilitators at False Bay College in August. Another mass meeting in April used the device of a ‘privilege walk’, an activity where equalisers enacted different characters and through that process learnt about life chances and gaps in achievement, based on background and the intersectionality of disadvantage and oppression.

Further, learners conducted a series of audits to understand their problems and identify campaign issues in their schools. There were also opportunities for introspection, with the youth department conducting self-reflection exercises to gauge where the equalisers were at in terms of their understanding of different socio-political issues.

**SCHOOL-BASED CAMPAIGNS**

From the edifying highs of the Norms and Standards campaign, the Western Cape office decided to step back and return to the grassroots of where the struggles began: at individual schools. From a more national, all-encompassing agenda, to reinvigorate equalisers, campaigns became hyper-local. The reason was to engage with schools and their very peculiar problems in a direct way.

Campaigns were organised in 24 schools along thematic lines: (1) Norms and Standards: Sanitation, (2) Norms and Standards: Educational Support Spaces, (3) Norms and Standards: General, (4) Violence: Gangsterism and Drugs, (5) Violence: Corporal Punishment, (6) Teaching and Learning and (7) Teenage Pregnancy.

After a lot of local organising, the campaigns were brought together on 31 October 2014 in a large march into Cape Town, where new MEC for Education in the Western Cape Debbie Schafer accepted the memorandum. Detailed evidence gathered by equalisers, with support from EE’s office in Khayelitsha, was presented along with the memorandum. After taking some time to consider the memorandum, the MEC met a delegation from EE on 2 December 2014 to report back on the demands. In 18 out of the 24 schools, problems were addressed or promises for improvement were made. EE is continuing to work with equalisers in these schools to decide on an appropriate response in each of the cases that were not fully addressed, and put pressure on the education department to identify and address the problems in these schools. Here are some examples of the campaigns built by learners in the under-resourced schools of Cape Town’s townships.

**TEACHER SHORTAGES AT SIZIMISELE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL**

In March last year, students studying technical subjects at Sizimisele Technical High School found that they did not have teachers for the very subjects the ‘technical’ school was supposed to specialise in. Learners from grades 10, 11 and 12 enrolled in engineering and electronics found themselves stranded during these classes.

When they approached their school principal on the issue, he told them there was nothing he could do. The authorities had decided to prune these teachers from the school assuming that there were more teachers than students. The flawed assumption left several students reeling under a serious disadvantage, leading them to craft a campaign around the issue with guidance from EE. “We explained the situation to the whole school,” said Lucas Ndabeni, 19, currently a member of EE’s Community Leadership programme, and at the time a grade 12 student at the school closely involved in the campaign.

About 500 learners undertook a peaceful march to the education department office, but were met with an over-the-top police response including scores of officers in riot gear, several armoured vehicles, vans and even
crime intelligence photographers. Tear gas canisters and rubber bullets were fired by the Public Order Police. In the face of police violence, the equalisers refused to leave until a department official arrived on the spot to assure them their demands would be heard.

The official showed up, spelling out in so many words that the teacher deficit would be addressed and students would be provided tutors for extra classes. In less than a week, the missing teachers returned.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY AT MASIBAMBANE HIGH SCHOOL

Sisipho Xhaxha and her friends decided last year that they needed to fix one glaring inequality at their school: the fact that their pregnant schoolmates (pregnant girls, not the boys with whom they fell pregnant) were being prevented from attending classes. At Masibambane High School in Kraaifontein, teenage pregnancy is a serious problem; it is also one that the authorities have decided to address by wishing away the students, and unconstitutionally forbidding them from going to class. “There is no proper sex education,” said Xhaxha, 16, a grade 10 learner. “They’re scared to tell us things we need to know, to protect ourselves.”

After discussing the issue with their EE facilitator, the students, along with EE, approached the principal. He agreed that excluding pregnant learners was problematic, but explained that he had constraints in terms of maintaining high performance standards at the school. The learners then organised a signature campaign, bringing on board more than 100 of their schoolmates to protest against this injustice.

They had some success, with the authorities relenting and allowing the pregnant learners to attend after-school classes.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN KHAYELITSHA: HOPOLANG COMBINED AND JOE SLOVO SECONDARY

At Hopolang Combined School in Ekhaya, beatings were a way of life. In a small-scale social audit of learners, all respondents reported having been hit by an educator, while half said they had been beaten for no reason. Usually it was grade 8 and 9 learners who suffered the most. Half of the sample reported that beating did not contribute to improving their behaviour. Those who spoke out about the issue were ostracised by the authorities. “Learners don’t have rights because it’s a primary school,” one teacher is reported to have said.

At Joe Slovo Secondary School in Eyethu, the same situation prevailed. A separate storage room had been set aside as a chamber for corporal punishment, where indignities were being heaped on learners by way of

### SOME CAMPAIGN VICTORIES

- At Hector Pietersen stolen taps were replaced and overall sanitation improved
- At Rustoff SSS a gate and fence was erected
- At Oscar Mpetha additional funding was secured for maintenance

Activist and EE National Council member Zackie Achmat addresses a gathering at the 31 October rally

31 October rally at Cape Town, a culmination of the Western Province’s school-based campaigns
planks, belts and bare hands. “It is so painful,” said Zintle Ndinga, 13, a grade 9 student. “Some of us don’t want to go back to school.” Male learners in particular, were being targeted. Students found that speaking out made life more difficult for them, with the punishments continuing. As a result of the equalisers’ campaigns the education district office conducted an investigation but found that no formal complaints had been lodged with the directorate of labour relations. The principals in both Hopolang and Joe Slovo denied that beatings took place, but at Hopolang, a system is being set up to help educate teachers on the issue.

**RALLY AGAINST EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY**

Efforts in the Western Cape last year culminated in a massive rally on 31 October in the heart of Cape Town, at the Western Cape Provincial Legislature. Around 2,500 people marched, including learners, parents and community members from Khayelitsha, Nyanga, Gugulethu, Kraaifontein and Strand. The rally was a push to demand resources, facilities and an overall more efficient and equitable schooling system. Members demanded proper infrastructure and sanitation, libraries and laboratories, well-trained teachers, adequate textbooks, safe learning environments, an end to corporal punishment, among other things. Learners submitted a detailed memorandum of demands to the education department on the day.

**EQUALISERS PER GRADE***

These are the number of equalisers (according to grades) who filled in the survey. Even though a significant number of equalisers did not fill in the survey, results still show that we have a large number of equalisers in the lower grades.

*Results of an internal survey conducted by the youth department for the Western Cape

- 86% of equalisers attend YG weekly
- 3% of equalisers only attend mass meetings
- 7% of equalisers parents’ are members

*Results of an internal survey conducted by the youth department for the Western Cape
“It is impossible to learn when our schools cannot be provided dignified and safe sanitation. It is impossible to learn when our windows and doors are broken, when our roofs leak and when we have to sit three to a desk and two to a chair. It is impossible to learn when we experience our schools as violent places, where teachers still practise corporal punishment and gangsters are able to enter freely to sell drugs and rob us because our schools have broken fences and no security guards.”

“For the past two months, we have been building up campaigns in our schools and communities. Through a democratic process, we chose to campaign on the issues we feel undermine teaching and learning at our schools most seriously. We have discussed and debated the ways in which our education suffers as a result. We have conducted audits at our schools so that we understand how big the challenges we face are. We have educated ourselves about these issues: we have engaged with research about them and how they affect our learning; we know the law and understand what it entitles us to; we know who is responsible for ensuring that quality education in the province is delivered to all; and together we have formulated demands to put to our government. We have engaged with our fellow learners, teachers, principals, parents and community members on the challenges we are facing, and we will continue to build support for our fight until it is won.”

“Many of us arrive at school each day traumatised and unable to learn because of what we see and experience in our communities. 32% of learners in Khayelitsha have seen another human being getting shot; 46% have witnessed a stabbing. Murder is the leading cause of death for people age 15-19 years living in Khayelitsha. In such a violent and unsafe world, our schools must be non-violent, safe spaces for us. The WCED may not be in charge of stopping all crime, but it is their responsibility to make sure that our schools are safe and secure. We cannot accept excuses about vandalism of school fences. We will not be told that it is our own fault that we are experiencing violence at school. EE members demand and will fight for proper fencing and proper security guards; we will realise our right to safety at school.”

“We know that there must be huge struggles ahead if we are going to change this reality.

“To achieve equality and quality, teachers must be dedicated to change through hard work in and beyond the classroom. Parents must be aware of the problems schools face and join the fight for quality and equal schools. Learners must be at the very front of these struggles.”

“Most importantly of all, real equality in education requires commitment, leadership and strength on the part of our government. If decades of deliberately unequal resource allocation and centuries of racial oppression will ever be reversed, government must commit to far greater educational investment in township and rural schools. It is not good enough to provide all schools with equal resource allocations; township and rural schools require extra investment to provide learners with a quality education. That is why EE members call for Quality, Equality and Equity in the education system.”

“In addition, government must commit to eradicating corruption at every level of the education system and building capacity to ensure that provincial departments can spend their budgets effectively. Every year learners in South Africa lose out on billions of rands of investment in their education because of these failures. We look forward to working with government however we can to achieve this.”
GAUTENG: SANITATION IS DIGNITY

EE opened an office in Johannesburg in 2012 and since then, the movement has grown significantly in the province. EE has successfully expanded from the township of Tembisa, into Daveyton, KwaThema, Tsakane and Etwatwa, and now has an active parents branch in Tembisa. Equalisers in Gauteng monitored their schools’ sanitation through carefully auditing toilets, and then all school infrastructure, province-wide. They successfully mobilised their communities, met with government officials and campaigned for improved sanitation and infrastructure in their schools.

SANITATION CAMPAIGN

At Thandolwethu Cighe’s school in KwaThema, sanitation is the biggest problem. “You can smell the stench, even from outside the gate,” said the grade 10 learner. Scores of school toilets across the region are like Thandolwethu’s: broken, smelly and, overcrowded. EE Gauteng’s campaign for school sanitation began in 2013 in the township of Tembisa. On 19 November 2013, marked as UN World Toilet Day, EE publicly launched the Gauteng Sanitation Campaign. Since the audit of 11 Tembisa high schools in 2013, EE has expanded its sanitation monitoring process to Tsakane, Daveyton, KwaThema and Etwatwa. Gauteng equalisers have conducted three extensive school audits: an initial audit of 11 schools in Tembisa in August 2013, a 48-school audit in October 2014, also in Tembisa, and an audit covering over 200 schools across Gauteng in early 2015.

The year began with a promising step for the campaign, as the government delivered 10 new prefabricated toilet blocks to Tembisa schools in January. Gauteng MEC for Education, Barbara Creecy, visited schools in the township and promised to address the sanitation problem. In the first half of 2014, EE members worked to improve sanitary conditions in their schools. Equalisers and parent members cleaned and painted toilet blocks. They also strengthened or established Environmental Committees in schools, which consist of learners, parents and community members, and are responsible for monitoring the maintenance of school infrastructure.

On 8 July 2014, EE met with the new MEC for Education, Panyaza Lesufi to discuss the sanitation campaign, as well as the outstanding sanitation challenges. On 15 July, MEC Lesufi visited Tembisa, promising to fix all Gauteng toilets by the end of August 2014. EE members in Gauteng continued to document the problem. In early September, students in Tembisa counted over 200 blocked or closed toilets in their schools. The prefabricated toilets delivered in early 2014 remained locked. In Kwa-Thema, Tsakane and Daveyton, equalisers found that up to 80 toilets were blocked or closed each day. The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) had not delivered on MEC Lesufi’s promise.

In response to the GDE’s broken promises, EE sent a letter to MEC Lesufi, explaining the aims of the sanitation campaign, and EE’s intentions to march to the GDE to protest the lack of adequate sanitation in Gauteng schools. Lesufi responded to EE’s evidence-driven pressure by sending contractors to fix school toilets, taps, basins and pipes in Tembisa. He organised an emergency press conference two days before the march, during which he announced that 580 schools in Gauteng would be scheduled to receive repairs, and that a budget of R150 million would be allocated for these repairs. Lesufi shared his detailed plans for improvement for Tembisa schools with EE leaders and equalisers in a meeting on 12 September, a day before the march.

In the lead-up to the march, EE members shared sanitation facts and described their experiences with school sanitation in a variety of media outlets, raising greater public awareness on the issue of school sanitation, as well as the Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure. On 13 September, 2000 Equalisers, parents and community members marched to the GDE, demanding proper sanitation for Gauteng schools. On the day of the march, MEC Lesufi wore an EE t-shirt and marched alongside equalisers.

In October 2014, GDE Deputy Director General for Strategic Planning Management, Albert Chanee, met with EE to discuss the sanitation upgrades. Chanee provided EE with a status report, indicating that almost all upgrades had been completed, and the project was ahead of schedule.

Throughout September and October 2014, EE continually monitored school sanitation, creating a detailed report of school sanitation conditions in Tembisa, which covered 48 schools attended by over 50 000 students. EE then submitted this report to MEC Lesufi, asking him to review and respond to the findings. However, after almost a month of silence from MEC Lesufi, EE publicly released the audit results on 19 November 2014.

After the success of the sanitation campaign in 2014, EE Gauteng continues to track the progress of sanitation improvements in the province. EE has established the Gauteng Education Crisis Coalition, and is currently...
working with stakeholders and community organisations to conduct detailed audits, investigating sanitation and infrastructure in schools throughout the province. The coalition has audited over 200 schools throughout the province, serving more than 200 000 learners. On 16 May 2015, EE held the Schools Social Audit Summit in Soweto, to announce the results of the audit. MEC Lesufi accepted all demands and promised to address the sanitation crisis. EE will continue to closely monitor school sanitation and hold the GDE accountable for their promises.
### 2013

**AUG 2013**
EE staff and equalisers conduct a two-week social audit of school sanitation conditions in 11 schools in Tembisa, uncovering that in over half of these schools, over 100 boys or girls share a single working toilet. The campaign for adequate sanitation is launched.

**25 OCT 2013**
EE presents audit findings to the Ekurhuleni North Education District Director, Ephraim Tau. Following this meeting, EE attempts to contact MEC Creecy without success.

**19 NOV 2013**
UN World Toilet Day. Following the GDE’s failure to address the sanitation crisis, EE publishes a detailed report of its findings.

### 2014

**12 JAN 2014**
MEC for Education Barbara Creecy visits Tembisa schools to inspect sanitation. GDE announces that contractors will build prefabricated toilets for five schools in Tembisa. Over the following months the GDE provided prefabricated toilets. However, these toilets remained closed to students, with some principals noting that the structures were unsafe.

**JUN 2014**
Panyaza Lesufi becomes Gauteng’s new MEC for Education.

**8 JUL 2014**
EE meets with new MEC Lesufi.

**15 JUL 2014**
MEC Lesufi holds a public event in Tembisa and promises to fix all toilets in Gauteng by the end of August.

**EARLY SEP**
EE members conduct audits of school toilets in Tembisa, Daveyton, Kwa-Thema and Tsakane, finding no improvement in school sanitation.

**11 SEP 2014**
In response to EE’s audit findings, as well as EE’s promise to march, the GDE announces the allocation of R150 million to the improvement of sanitation in 580 schools in the province.

**12 SEP 2014**
MEC Panyaza Lesufi meets with EE members, sharing detailed school improvement plans.

**13 SEP 2014**
2000 Equalisers, parents and community members march to protest the lack of adequate sanitation in schools, and present their demands to the GDE.

**OCT 2014**
GDE Deputy Director General for Strategic Planning Management, Albert Chanee, meets with EE to discuss the sanitation upgrades. Chanee provides EE with a status report. EE members in Tembisa monitor progress of school sanitation, covering 48 schools that serve approximately 50 000 students.

**31 OCT 2014**
EE releases social audit findings to MEC Lesufi.

**19 NOV 2014**
EE publicly releases the findings of the audit, following MEC Lesufi’s failure to respond to the findings.

### 2015

**28 FEB 2015**
EE establishes the Gauteng Education Crisis Coalition, responsible for monitoring school sanitation across Gauteng. The province-wide coalition takes the sanitation campaign, and the social audit methodology, to all parts of the province. Over 200 schools in 20 towns and townships are audited, in a much more wide-ranging social audit process than anything EE had done previously.

**MAR 2015**
EE releases a series of articles detailing school sanitation challenges in Gauteng.

**13 MAR 2015**
EE makes a submission to the Gauteng Provincial Legislature’s Portfolio Committee for Finance regarding the province’s 2015 budget.

**16 MAY 2015**
EE holds the Schools Social Audit Summit and a march in Soweto to announce the results of the coalition’s audit of over 200 schools. The results confirm previous findings of serious problems. Lack of soap and toilet paper emerge as major issues, as well as the drastic under-allocation of maintenance staff. In around 30% of high schools 100 students have been sharing each working toilet. EE makes numerous demands to address the situation. MEC Lesufi attends the summit and publicly accepted all of EE’s demands.
KEY AUDIT FINDINGS

The GDE contractors provided some form of relief to 47 of the schools we audited, including upgrading toilets, pipes, taps, ceilings, roofs and tiling.

At over 90% of the schools audited, or 44 in total, the job was not complete and additional improvements required.

Over 10% of the schools audited, or 5 in total, did not have enough working toilets to fulfil the minimum requirements prescribed in the Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure, harming students’ education, health, dignity, safety and security.

Nearly three quarters of schools did not have enough toilets to meet any respected international or national sanitation norm. For example, the World Health Organisation states that schools should have a minimum of one toilet plus one urinal per 50 male students and one toilet per 25 female students. This was not the case at 34 schools we audited.

Thousands of students, particularly those in secondary schools, continue to suffer without sufficient access to toilet paper, soap and sanitary pads, an affront to their dignity and a serious risk to their health.

There is an unequal allocation of maintenance staff posts to schools. While about half of schools had a ratio of one post per 200-300 students, the rest fell outside of this mark. For example, some schools had a ratio of one post per 65 students while others had one post per 1,009 students.

RESULTS FROM EE’S 11-SCHOOL AUDIT CONDUCTED IN 2014.

In Tembisa, 200 school toilets were either blocked or closed, and more than 80 toilets in Daveyton and KwaThema were broken. At over half of the schools surveyed, it was commonplace for more than 100 boys or 100 girls to have to share a single working toilet. By comparison, according to the Wits Justice Project, 65 men share a single toilet at Johannesburg Medium A prison.

CAMPAIGN VICTORIES

- Sanitation upgrades for about half a million students at 580 schools in Gauteng, including all 51 schools in Tembisa.
- Detailed sanitation upgrade plans for Tembisa which EE is now using to monitor progress.
- Shifted the GDE’s priorities to focus on sanitation, particularly in township and rural schools. This is evidenced by their efforts to develop a sanitation user manual and to run workshops for principals on how to care for their school toilets.
- Raised the profile of school sanitation as an issue with the national media now reporting on the issue more regularly.
KWAZULU-NATAL: LONG WALK TO EDUCATION

EE is active in the town of Nquthu, which is part of the Umzinyathi District Municipality of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). In 2014, EE KZN focused on strengthening youth groups, facilitator training and building a provincial campaign for scholar transport.

The first half of the year was geared towards growth, team-building and training. Over the course of 2014, EE’s KZN organiser, Sandile Ndlovu, along with EE facilitators and equalisers, successfully mobilised hundreds of learners to join EE. There are now over 800 equalisers from 14 schools across Nquthu. KZN equalisers actively and enthusiastically participate in weekly youth group meetings, national camps and campaigns, and are headed by a lively Leadership Committee.

KZN equalisers are building a campaign around the lack of scholar transport, an acute problem in the province, one that is detrimental to the health and safety of learners.

SCHOLAR TRANSPORT

In 2009, the Department of Transport published the “Final Draft National Scholar Transport Policy.” However, the draft has not yet been finalised. Currently, only 360,248 learners benefit from scholar transport programmes nationally, leaving many learners no choice but to walk to school. Across South Africa, more than half a million learners (517,000) walk to school for more than one hour each way daily, and another two million learners walk for between 30 minutes and one hour each way daily.

KZN has the highest percentage of learners who walk to school. The province has developed its own learner transport policy. According to this policy, schools in need of transport assistance have to apply to their education district office. However, the policy has never been fully implemented, and the KZN Department of Education recently claimed that it remains a draft. Only 22,045 KZN learners are provided with transport services. As a result, more than two million learners walk to school in KZN, with more than 210,000 of these learners walking for more than an hour to get to school, not to mention an hour’s walk home, and a further 659,000 learners walking between 30 minutes and an hour, according to the National Household Survey, 2013.

THE LONG WALK TO EDUCATION

The lack of adequate transportation to and from school emerged as a major issue affecting Nquthu equalisers. This emerged through youth group, weekly engagement with equalisers, and regular discussions with principals and teachers throughout 2014.

As a first step, EE began documenting the issue, conducting visits to schools and homes, and discussing the issue with learners, teachers and principals. In July, EE organiser, Sandile Ndlovu raised greater awareness of the issue, writing an article for GroundUp, the online news site, which highlighted the plight of Nquthu learners.

EE AND THE EELC VISIT NQUTHU

In November, EE and EELC staff visited 10 Nquthu schools, interviewing 60 learners, two teachers and eight principals. All 14 schools visited had not received scholar transport assistance, despite having all applied for assistance from the government.

“It takes us one hour and thirty minutes to walk to school... when I arrive at school I am already very tired and I struggle to concentrate in class,” one equaliser told the team. “There is no other high school in my area and I have to attend this one. I at times even struggle to keep my eyes open in class because I am so tired.”

The long walks students endure pose risks to their health, safety and well-being. Learners reported walking distances of six to 30km. All learners mentioned fearing for their safety while travelling to and from school. Those interviewed described walking in heat, rain, storms and sometimes traversing rocky mountainous terrain, or crossing dangerous rivers.

Learners and principals reported incidents of rape, robbery and assault experienced en route. The significant fear and exhaustion students experience travelling to and from school hinders their ability to learn while at school. “When I am in class I also feel tired and when I feel tired it makes it more difficult to listen,” said another equaliser. “I think I could do better in my results if I lived closer by my school.”

The lack of scholar transport leads to high rates of absenteeism and late-coming, particularly during harsh weather conditions, and has been linked to high drop-out rates.
BUILDING A CAMPAIGN FOR SCHOLAR TRANSPORT

Part of the scholar transport campaign has been focused on educating equalisers about their right to access education and the barrier that lack of transport presents, and providing accurate information about the policies already in place, as well as statistics illustrating the breadth of the problem.

Another aspect is working with teachers and principals to understand the problem and possible demands or solutions. Solutions offered by principals and teachers varied according to the schools’ situation.

EE’s visits to Nquthu schools as well as research on the issue provided the information necessary to take the KZN Campaign for Scholar Transport forward. The EELC provided an investigative and legal backbone around which EE organised and educated its members and the wider community. At the end of January 2015, EE met with the Director of the Umzinyathi education district, who confirmed that the lack of scholar transport was a widespread problem in KZN, with only 15 schools receiving transport assistance out of 500 in need of transport in that district. In April 2015, EE mobilised learners and community members to protest against the lack of scholar transport. This culminated in a march of 500 people to the provincial department of education in Pietermaritzburg, to demand an adequate solution to the problem of scholar transport. At present EE and the EELC are preparing litigation and planning to escalate the campaign significantly. The strong and growing crop of EE organisers in Nquthu, along with the hundreds of equalisers in the region, continue to be the primary strategic driving force of the campaign.

STUDENTS’ DEMANDS

1. The provision of scholar transport to equalisers’ schools in Nquthu, as these schools are in urgent need of service.

2. The proper implementation of the KZN Scholar Transport Policy and a much greater budget to be allocated towards this programme in the province. Official claims that the policy remains a ‘draft’ must be put to rest.

3. The adoption of a national policy on Scholar Transport, as well as a conditional grant from Treasury which will provide adequate funding for comprehensive provision of scholar transport across the country.

EE General Secretary Brad Brockman speaks at the KZN march on 9 April 2015

Scholar transport campaign efforts at KZN
EASTERN CAPE: IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING IN THE POOREST PROVINCE

The Eastern Cape, notorious for having among the most under-resourced, inadequate schools, has become the focus of EE’s efforts to ensure the full and timely implementation of the Regulations Relating to Minimum Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure.

NEW OFFICE

The process of monitoring the norms was kicked off by opening the new office in King William’s Town on 10 October 2014. EE aims to forge relationships with schools in the region and build the membership base of the movement in this province. The office will be coordinating efforts in the Eastern Cape, and ensuring that thorough research and activism is undertaken so that schools and communities are empowered to hold government to account to the legally binding standards and time frames set out in the new law. The EE Law Centre also has a presence in the office.

The first task for the new office was to enlist equalisers, gather parents, and recruit and train facilitators. Already, more than 200 equalisers from eight schools in and around King William’s Town are participating as active members, led by a team of 15 facilitators. The equalisers meet regularly in their schools to discuss political history and the struggle for quality education and socio-economic justice. Beyond their schools, EE members have held meetings with community members.

The Eastern Cape office is working on connecting with schools that should fall within the ambit of the three-year priority phase set out in the new law. This first phase of the Norms and Standards requires that within three years all schools built of inappropriate materials be replaced, and all schools with no water, sanitation or electricity be provided with these essentials. The team has been visiting schools which appear to require higher priority after gathering information through PAIA applications. The office is also developing a database of information and photographs from the schools visited so far.

In February 2015, Eastern Cape equalisers elected their first Leadership Committee. The committee meets regularly at the office, and it played a crucial role in organising schools for the picket and sleep-in at the Eastern Cape Department of Education office in Zwelitsha, which took place on 1 and 2 April 2015, as part of the movement’s national days of action to demand the release of the school infrastructure provincial implementation plans.

Although opened in October 2014, the office was officially launched on 9 March 2015.

GATHERING INFORMATION AND MAKING VISITS

EE spent the last few months of 2014, and the first part of 2015, conducting field visits in schools around the province. Schools in King William’s Town, Grahamstown, Dutywa, Butterworth, Mthatha, Maluti and East London education districts have been visited so far.

The process began with collecting information from the government through applications for information under the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA). According to EE’s summaries of the Department of Basic Education’s (DBE) response the Eastern Cape had 260
schools without access to electricity, 90 without access to water and 66 without access to sanitation. However, these numbers conflicted with the latest government figures, set out in the National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) 2014 report, which says that the province had 377 schools without electricity, 399 without water and 366 without sanitation.

Visits to schools, community meetings, and telephone surveys conducted by EE members in the Eastern Cape have indicated that details of schools set out in the PAIA lists are often incorrect, and this has emphasised the importance of EE’s demand for the release of the provincial implementation plans which, according to the Norms and Standards regulations, must contain a comprehensive list of the backlogs in school infrastructure in each province.

MEETINGS

In addition to school visits, EE’s new office has held a number of community meetings and mass meetings. Mass meetings have been attended by more than 350 parents, educators and learners, representing more than 80 schools in Msobomvu, Butterworth, and in Ginsberg, King William’s Town. These meetings have provided an opportunity for schools and community members to learn about the Norms and Standards and the work EE is doing to push for implementation, as well as to speak about the conditions in their schools.

School visits and meetings around the province have made it clear that a year and a half after the adoption of the Norms and Standards, most schools have not been informed about the new norms or their rights to better school infrastructure.

CASE STUDY: ZAZULWANA

About 8km north-west of Butterworth, Zazulwana Senior Secondary School sits in an arid landscape. The school was built in 1995 for the community by the old Eastern Cape Technikon and has 465 learners. Loose electrical wires, unsteady power supply, makeshift pit latrines; the school is a picture of everything that EE is fighting to put an end to – unsafe and under-resourced learning spaces.

The visit, conducted by a joint team of EE and EELC staff on 25 November, yielded some startling insights. Learners have to relieve themselves in the nearby bushes, there is no running water and learners need to take buckets into the village to get any. When it rains very heavily, learners can’t make it to school, even though the distance is not more than 5km. Further, there is a shortage of desks and chairs, inadequate classroom space and teaching materials. All of this disrupts the teaching-learning process.

“Many of the learners want to be engineers and scientists,” the principal Nolwandle Ndandani told the team during the visit. “[But] where must they go to do experiments?” She continued, “Must these children live under these circumstances just because they are in a rural area? We can’t all live in the city”.

The provincial department visited the school in June 2013 and took measurements of the school structures. In January 2014 the DBE told the principal that an administrative block and kitchen would be built, but work is yet to begin.

CASE STUDY: MOSHESH

The struggle at Moshesh Senior Secondary School began in June 2012 when EE visited the school following a letter from learners seeking help in dealing with various problems including teacher absenteeism and teacher shortages. This secondary school catering to grade 10 to grade 12 learners is about 36km away from Matatiele town centre, in a remote part of the Eastern Cape, near the border with Lesotho.
In November 2013 EE, the school, the district and the provincial department reached a settlement agreement that was made an order of court. It prescribed adequate curriculum planning, the provision of teachers, so-called “guru teachers” to provide training and support, a new principal, fixing the hostel, a catch-up plan for the learners who had missed out on months of work, and other things.

Despite the intentions of the settlement agreement, when EE visited the school in March 2014, it found that learner numbers had grown from 349 to 504, without a commensurate increase in teaching staff. There were eight vacant educator positions, and out of 18 subjects taught at the school, only five had been reported on in terms of results and improvement plans. There were no signs of the “guru teachers” that had been promised, the hostel remained in disrepair despite an earlier promise to renovate it, and textbooks remained woefully in short supply. This abysmal state of affairs continued even after a court order mandating the department address the issues facing the school.

EE then wrote to the provincial department demanding that the long-standing issues be addressed before 30 April. In the run-up to the deadline an EE team visited Moshesh and conducted activities with learners, culminating in a picket at the Maluti district office.

Following the 30 April protest some textbooks and learning materials were delivered, but not enough to keep up with the increased number of learners. EE then followed up with visits in June and July.

The case continues. Promisingly, a new principal has been appointed and a new SGB elected, and some, but not all, of the vacant educator posts have been filled.

In mid-April 2015, professor Mary Metcalfe, who is on the EELC’s board, and was EE’s founding chairperson, visited the school and conducted a workshop for the school and the district to create a plan to improve Moshesh and the quality of education there.

**SANITATION**

EE Eastern Cape also ran localised sanitation campaigns in three schools during the middle of the year including Forbes Grant and Bisho High School. Learners took a two-pronged approach: this included both educating their peers about good hygiene practices and writing to the principal and district officials on the need to fix, or in some cases build, toilets. The campaigns have had considerable success, with fewer instances of vandalism in the toilets and overall better sanitation conditions.
EE has been working on consolidating its presence in Limpopo, by growing its branches and engaging more learners and community members. The focus in the region last year was small, school-based campaigns, hitting out at three particular problems: late-coming, sanitation and furniture.

**LATE-COMING CAMPAIGN**

EE launched a campaign centered on late-coming after learners pointed out that many of their peers and even teachers were missing more than an hour every day of teaching and learning time. Equalisers decided to wake up early every day for a week and remind their peers to arrive on time, handing out pamphlets and making sure that after break everyone was promptly back in class. Following on from EE’s commitment to eradicating learner late-coming at schools, authorities committed to doing the same with teachers. After a week of campaigning the late-coming had completely dropped. The teachers’ arrival on time also improved.

**SANITATION CAMPAIGN**

EE ran sanitation campaigns in schools in Limpopo last year, especially in Capricorn district. At first equalisers surveyed the toilets, of which up to 90% were found to be unusable. Almost all the toilets the government built were not working as they were not connected to the local water supply. Results also pointed to the fact that learners spent a lot of time waiting in line to use toilets and that girls especially, found using the toilet a frightening experience.

EE reported the survey results to the authorities, and were informed that new contractors would be building the toilets at the concerned schools. Learners meanwhile campaigned to educate their peers about hygiene and sanitation, distributing pamphlets and by word-of-mouth. They also agreed to stay back after school to clean the toilets.

**SCHOOL FURNITURE CAMPAIGN**

Schools in Limpopo have been suffering from a shortage of proper school furniture, an issue that EE took up with the provincial department on 13 August 2014. The purpose was to pressure the government to address the issue. The government pledged to deliver desks to all schools facing the problem, and some furniture has been coming into schools since then.

**LIMPOPO: GROWING A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OF THE 24,793 PUBLIC ORDINARY SCHOOLS</th>
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<tr>
<td>11,450 schools are still using pit latrine toilets and</td>
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<td>2402 schools have no water supply, while a further 2611 schools have an unreliable water supply.</td>
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<td>67.2% of schools still use pit toilets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Only 6.5% of schools have libraries and only 43% of these are stocked with books</td>
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<td>94% do not have laboratories</td>
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<td>85% do not have computer centres</td>
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<td>NO SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE PROVISION OF WATER FOR SCHOOLS SINCE 23% IN 2012, 22% IN 2013 AND 21% IN 2014 RESPECTIVELY HAVE HAD UNRELIABLE OR NO WATER SUPPLY AT ALL.</td>
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Youth group meetings and toilet clean-up efforts at Limpopo schools
COMMUNITY AND PARENTS

ORGANISATION

EE has more than 500 parent members who attend weekly branch meetings in the Western Cape and four full-time and three part-time parent organisers. A parents’ branch was opened in Gauteng in 2014, where membership stands at 30, and is growing. The Western Cape office opened three new branches in 2014, at Kraaifontein, Nyanga and New Cross roads. Every branch meets once a week, with the Parents Executive Committee (PEC) meeting once or twice a month. Each of the eight original parent branches successfully ran their own projects in 2014. These included painting schools and fixing toilets.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PARENT ACTIVISTS IN THE MOVEMENT?

Young equalisers are the life blood of the movement, but the supports of parents and the broader community is essential for it to succeed. “The purpose of having parents involved in the struggle is that we want them to support their children,” said Luzuko Sidimba, 25, the head of the department.

Parents undergo trainings and workshops on an array of issues: from parenting skills to social justice and education concerns. They are also enlisted in school-based campaigns and participate in EE’s demonstrations and marches. Parents work actively to support equalisers.

“In our days, parents did not get involved in school,” said Andiswa Kolanisi, one of the organisers. “They think there is no need. They don’t realise they should be a part of good education, even when the teachers are there.”

The idea of parents maintaining a distance from school, is gradually changing. Still, there are challenges. For one, many parents of equalisers are not a part of the movement, something that likely stems from the reluctance of equalisers to share the same space with their parents. And some parents might be outright opposed to the idea of their children participating. “Some parents think EE is teaching their children to be revolutionary or violent,” said Daphne Erosi, another organiser. “They don’t know what EE is about.”

Given that most parents have full-time jobs, regular attendance of parents at meetings is another issue. But while availability may be a concern, parents have begun to understand their role and the struggle itself.

They also serve as a pressure group with an electoral voice. “The main idea is to hold government accountable and for that we need people older than learners,” said Unathi Lasiti, who headed the department for some part of 2014. “For political purposes government won’t listen to children, we need people who voted. It says, ‘I’ve put you there and I’m holding you accountable’.”

CAMPS

A camp for Branch Executive Committee (BEC) members was held in April, to improve leadership skills and train them on how to facilitate weekly parent meetings. A camp for all parent members was also held in June. Camps provide information about EE and the role of parent members, and allow parents to share perspectives and ideas with other parents and National Council members. Camps are also a chance for intensive learning. The June 2014 camp focused on...
teaching parents about School Governing Bodies (SGB) and the upcoming SGB elections, informing them on the rules, rights and responsibilities of SGBs. New members were taught about EE’s constitution and structure, and all members were updated on the current successes, challenges and goals of EE.

**HERITAGE DAY**

The parent programme conducted its annual Heritage Day event on 24 September in Makhaza in the Western Cape, which had more than 800 parents and community members in attendance. The focus was on the history of education in South Africa, and its impact on the current system.

**SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY SEMINAR**

In 2015 School Governing Bodies (SGBs) were elected across the nation’s schools. Ahead of this major event, the parents department spent some time working to educate parents about the elections. A seminar held in Kraaifontein in October informed parents on the role of SGBs in schools, how they can be involved as also the challenges that SGB members face. EE continued to urge parents to run for SGBs in the early part of the year, before the March elections.

The SGB is empowered to serve a number of crucial functions including financial management, making recommendations for teacher appointments and exercising oversight over educational curricula. EE has been successful in electing SGBs in schools in the Western Cape and four in Gauteng and is in the process of developing a support system for the parents who were elected. This includes follow-up workshops to make sure they stay focused and empowered to make decisions that will affect the schools positively.
PCR is the research and analysis wing of EE and produces much of the work that drives the organisation’s campaign efforts. The department generates reports, op-ed pieces in the media, press statements and other forms of analytical commentary. It also participates in parliamentary proceedings and meetings with governmental bodies.

The department also publishes The Equalizer, a publication collating views and information relevant to equalisers and staff. Additionally, last year PCR was instrumental in organising the July conference on Norms and Standards for school infrastructure, a large two-day conference on implementing the Norms and Standards, held in Johannesburg at the Wits Education Campus. It was conceptualised and coordinated by PCR with the assistance of other partner organisations (the EELC, Section27 and the LRC). Rather than reviewing all of PCR’s work, we take a look at some of the highlights of 2014.

PARLIAMENTARY WORK

How many inappropriate structures have been eradicated and replaced since 1994? Where are these new schools located?

How many schools have benefited from the Education Infrastructure Grant, with regard to maintenance and construction of classrooms? Where are these schools located?

When does the minister anticipate the ASIDI programme will be completed?

These were some of the written questions EE raised in 2014 through Members of Parliament (MPs). Since 2010 EE has attended parliamentary meetings concerning the Department of Basic Education (DBE). EE has engaged with MPs from the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education, the Select Committee on Education and Recreation, and the Standing Committee on Appropriations, amongst others. This work has been crucial in ensuring that Parliament fulfil its mandate to provide oversight on the activities of the DBE. Through this work EE engages with MPs and makes important contributions in terms of putting pressure when necessary and flagging key issues. This work has been continuing through 2014.

EE was pleased to see that its input given in an oral presentation to the Portfolio Committee, formed part of the committee’s ‘Legacy Report’ on basic education released last year covering the period from May 2009 to May 2014. EE’s presentation had reviewed the DBE’s performance during the previous financial year and provided a list of recommendations for the Budget Review. The report itself was aimed at informing MPs of the incoming Parliament about key outstanding issues of oversight and legislation in relation to the DBE.

SUBMISSION ON SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

EE’s detailed report to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was submitted in March and provided an overview of the abysmal situation of sanitation provisioning in public schools, particularly those in the rural areas and townships. Gaps in school infrastructure and service delivery have reduced learners to victims of erratic systems when it comes to sanitation. The submission contained an account of the challenges, recommendations for remedying the situation and examples of EE’s work on sanitation in schools in Tembisa, Gauteng.

EASTERN CAPE RESEARCH VISIT

A four-member team comprising Hopolung Selebalo and Yoliswa Dwane from EE and Lisa Draga and Solminic Joseph from EELC made a 12-day visit to the Eastern Cape from 2 September to 14 September 2014. The purpose of the visit was to get first-hand accounts on the DBE’s provisioning of scholar transport, school nutrition, and school infrastructure. The team also spoke to teachers and learners about their performance when it came to the Annual National Assessments, Matric exams and generally throughout the year. Information was retrieved from principals and teachers about water shortages, teacher shortages and failing infrastructure. This report compiled based on this research trip informed EE’s submissions in its Shadow Report (see below).

SUBMISSION ON THE MEDIUM-TERM BUDGET POLICY STATEMENT

EE and the Public Service Accountability Monitor made a written and verbal submission in November 2014 to the Standing Committee on Appropriations on the Medium-
Term Budget Policy Statement. The submission assessed National Treasury’s budgets (or lack thereof) for school infrastructure (N&S, EIG and ASIDI), scholar transport and nutrition. This resulted in the Standing Committee on Appropriations recommending that, “the National Treasury in consultation with the Department of Basic Education and with assistance from the Financial and Fiscal Commission consider the formulation and development of a conditional grant for the provision of scholar transport.” This is important official support for a central demand of EE’s scholar transport campaign.

BASIC EDUCATION SHADOW REPORT

This report, by EE and EELC, was an assessment of the DBE’s 2013-14 performance, and spanned issues of scholar transport, nutrition and underperforming schools. The detailed report contained a series of recommendations for the department on each of the issues, and presented a thorough account of what has been done, what needs to be done, and where the department has been lacking. The report was a joint effort between EE and the EELC. The report was submitted in early October to the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education, in anticipation of the Committee’s Budget Review and Recommendation Report (BRRR). Some of EE’s recommendations were incorporated in the BRRR. This report is accessible at www.equaleducation.org.za/file/2015-02-03-equal-education-shadow-report-1.

ROUND TABLE AND BOOK ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

PCR’s Joshua Maserow edited a book titled ‘Taking Equal Education into the Classroom’. The book is subtitled ‘The challenges of teaching and learning and possible campaigns to address the crisis of quality and equality in the pedagogic encounter’. The book emanated partly from a roundtable EE hosted on 19 September 2014 at Woodstock in Cape Town, which included many of South Africa’s top scholars and researchers in the education field. Issues debated at the roundtable included teacher well-being, training, subject content-knowledge, remuneration, demographics, qualifications, student testing, pedagogy and many other related questions. EE is in the process of developing campaign work in this regard.

SEMINARS

EE organised a series of public seminars through 2014, in partnership with Ndifuna Ukwazi (NU), covering various political and social justice concerns and under the umbrella theme of marking 20 years of the country’s democracy. These included:

27 February: At What Cost? The Education System and the Budget: This was organised at the UCT campus by the PCR unit, and featured Elliot Sogoni, chair of the Appropriations Committee, Zukisa Kota of the Public Service Accountability Monitoring Group and Shaun Muller, an economist. The event was organised with the purpose of encouraging engagement between EE and Members of Parliament on the cost of education.

10 April and 24 April: Held in the run-up to the national elections in May, two events were organised at Look Out Hill in Khayelitsha. ‘Political Party Debate’ gave the representatives of different political parties an opportunity to tell activists what their plans were for the elections and after the elections. ‘My Vote Goes to...’ was organised with a view to educating young people on the importance of voting and what to keep in mind while voting.

23 October: Bullets before School – Keeping Learners Safe in Cape Town: This covered the issue of safety in Cape Town schools. The panel consisted of Sherylle Dass from EELC and Asheetah, a learner from Manenberg, and was chaired by Jared Rossouw from NU.
WORK WITH PARTNERS

THE BOOKERY

More than 90% of public schools in South Africa do not have functional libraries, an acute shortage, with implications for all-round education and development. The Bookery sets up and supports school libraries across the country, ensuring a minimum of three books per learner per school.

Established by Equal Education in 2010, The Bookery became an independent entity in 2013, and shifted to its present address at Plein Street, Cape Town, in January 2014. Since its inception, the Bookery has opened 41 libraries in schools across the country, including eight new ones in 2014. Last year the Bookery branched out for the first time outside of the Western Cape, setting up one library in Gauteng and one in the Eastern Cape. EE continues to play a prominent goal in the governance of the Bookery, with EE staff members Ntshadi Mofokeng, Yoni Bass and Lwando Mzandisi sitting on the Bookery’s board of trustees.

In 2014, the Bookery formally took over the management of all libraries as part of the initiative, including 18 that had been previously managed by EE. The formal handover helped streamline the maintenance of the libraries and means that they will be all managed under a single model.

The Bookery also advanced into new territory, inducting its first batch of interns under the PAY (Premier’s Advancement of Youth) programme. The first lot of 10 began working at the Bookery in June 2014 and finished their tenure in March 2015. In 2015, 15 interns will be participating. This marks a new dawn in terms of the education department getting involved with the initiative. The interns are fresh matriculants and are trained in aspects of library management with a view to creating a cadre of well-equipped library staff for schools.

The Bookery continued to operate its literacy programmes – formalising loose partnerships with other non-profits more solidly in 2014. These programmes are aimed at primary and high school learners and vary from school to school.

For more visit www.thebookery.org.za

THE EQUAL EDUCATION LAW CENTRE (EELC)

The EELC is an independent, registered law clinic that grew from the work of EE and has been operating since January 2012. EELC works in specialised areas of public interest litigation and advocacy to advance the constitutional right to education, provide legal assistance to EE and others who approach EE with education-related matters.

It is managed, governed and funded separately from EE, and has its own premises. Often working closely with EE, its lawyers have assisted learners, parents and communities in cases relating to exclusion of learners, school-fee exemptions, Norms and Standards for school infrastructure, lock-outs, attempted evictions of schools from private property, school closures, discrimination, mismanagement, academic under-performance, and school and community safety – all with the view to ensuring that every learner receives an equitable, safe and adequate basic education, as enshrined in the Constitution.

In 2014 the EELC and EE worked together during school inspection visits on scholar transport in KwaZulu-Natal which laid the ground work for the campaign for scholar transport, and similar support was given for school inspections in the Eastern Cape as part of the campaign on Norms and Standards for school infrastructure. The detailed field visits were crucial in gathering data and assessing the situation on the ground to understand how to move forward. EELC also provided legal assistance to EE for permissions for protests and took up individual cases referred to it by EE in matters of school admissions and disciplinary issues.

EELC’s support has been crucial in putting through PAIA requests and following up on Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure, especially in dealing with a reluctant, and a sometimes uncooperative DBE. Together, the organisations also co-hosted along with others, the July conference on Norms and Standards.

For more visit www.eelawcentre.org.za or call 021 461 1421.
BUILDING COALITIONS

Equal Education has always worked with other social movements and civil society groups and believes that to continue to strengthen democracy and seek effective results, it is vital for a healthy eco-system of such cooperation to flourish.

EE works closely with the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), the Social Justice Coalition (SJC) and Ndifuna Ukwazi (NU), with leaders of these organisations mentoring and supporting EE. These sister organisations collaborate extensively and provide support for each other’s activist work. EE has also sought, and sometimes achieved, collaborations with COSATU trade unions, numerous research organisations and public interest law firms, university-based schools of education, NGOs like the Public Service Accountability Monitor and the International Budget Partnership, church and other religious groups, and numerous community-based groups such as the South African National Civics Organisation (SANCO) amongst others.

At the August 25 march over the policing enquiry
Lwandle Demolitions

On 2 and 3 June 2014, hundreds of people watched as their homes were taken apart following a court order in January. The police, apparently at the behest of the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL), and with the active connivance of the City of Cape Town, moved in quickly to demolish homes and evict people, failing to take into account the human cost or the legality of the situation. The interdict order was not an eviction order, meaning that those “intending to occupy” the land would be forbidden from doing so, but not those “currently occupying the property” on the date of the order.

Students writing exams were suddenly homeless, families were pushed out into community halls, and basic amenities became a luxury for the residents. EE along with SJC and NU strongly condemned the developments, and demanded that in line with previous court rulings, the city provide temporary accommodation for the evictees. The groups also arranged for emergency measures in terms of food, supplies and clothes for the suddenly homeless group. Together with the Ses’Khona movement these organisations helped manage the situation in the area for weeks and ameliorate the humanitarian crisis.

Khayelitsha Policing Enquiry

EE, under the leadership of the SJC and NU, has continued to work on policing issues in Khayelitsha. Many of EE’s staff and members come from Khayelitsha, where gang-violence, alcohol abuse and a high murder rate remain frightening day-to-day realities.

The O’Regan-Pikoli Commission, set up to enquire into alleged police inefficiency in Khayelitsha, began its series of public hearings in January 2014, finally presenting its 580-page report to Premier Hellen Zille in August.

EE, along with others, marched on August 25 to Lookout Hill in Khayelitsha ahead of the findings being made public. The report highlighted numerous problem areas alongside a slew of recommendations. It equated the unjust and unequal resource-allocation of police, which sees Khayelitsha being woefully under-resourced, as reminiscent of Apartheid. EE intends to remain engaged with the implementation phase of this work to make Khayelitsha a safer place.

Treatment Action Campaign

EE donated R50,000 to the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) on World Aids Day last year, responding to a financial crisis that hit TAC. EE believes that all of civil society is interdependent and that sustaining TAC is integral to the good health of EE itself. EE also wrote to all its donors requesting them to put in a one-off R50,000 donation to TAC. Further, it also reached out to other organisations and movements urging them to contribute. Health, education and other social realities are deeply linked, and the work of TAC remains crucial to the struggle for availing of medicines and for an equal health system.

United Front Prep Assembly

EE accepted an invitation to make a presentation at the United Front Preparatory Assembly in Johannesburg on 13 and 14 December but the EE National Council decided not to join the Front formally. This decision was communicated in writing to National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) general secretary Irvin Jim, with a pledge to work collaboratively with NUMSA at a community level and on specific campaigns. EE believes class inequalities cannot be breached without a united movement of the poor and working class, with close cooperation between community organisations, social movements and trade unions.
Thank you to all our donors who contributed in their personal capacity, for supporting the cause of quality and equality in South African education.

Throughout 2014, EE had a team of dedicated face-to-face fundraisers, encouraging individual South Africans to contribute to the movement. Through the team’s weekly outreach efforts in shopping centres across South Africa (mainly thus far in the Western Cape), over 1,000 people have shown support for the movement by signing up for monthly debit orders. In addition, many South Africans have made one-off donations to show their support.

To join the hundreds of South Africans in supporting the movement, donate at www.equaleducation.org.za/donate or contact a-isha@equaleducation.org.za.

EE is a beneficiary of the MySchool Card scheme. This means that for every card swiped at selected South African retail chains, EE receives a percentage of the amount paid, at no cost to the purchaser. If you wish to support EE through MySchool, sign up at www.myschool.org.za.
FUNDRAISING CONCERT

On August 24, more than 1,000 people thronged the Artscape Opera House at Cape Town for ‘Say Africa! Say Education! A Night with Vusi Mahlasela and Friends’, a fundraising event organised by EE. The concert was an opportunity to celebrate the work of EE, engage the public on EE’s work, and raise money by signing up monthly donors.

Mahlasela, whose work has touched upon themes of freedom, equality and courage, ensured the night was a scintillating success. Completing the night’s line-up were also Driemanskap, from Langa township and The Muffinz, a popular dance band. They were chosen after consulting with learners on which musicians they would enjoy listening to.

EE’s deputy chairperson Ntuthuzo Ndzomo hosted the event, with speeches given by Archbishop Thabo Makgoba (the Anglican archbishop of Cape Town), Brad Brockman (the General Secretary of EE) and equalisers Kedibone Legoale and Sinekhaya Mbengo. The archbishop reflected on his education experience and his commitment to working with EE. He then pledged R24,000 to the organisation, whilst encouraging audience members to sign up as donors. The one-off event proved a huge hit with the crowd, and EE was successful in signing up several donors for monthly debit order contributions.
# AUDITED FINANCIALS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURES IN R</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Current Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>416,045</td>
<td>407,185</td>
<td>206,929</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Assets</td>
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<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
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<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>10,426,935</td>
<td>7,281,245</td>
<td>4,250,829</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>10,860,374</td>
<td>7,717,665</td>
<td>4,485,829</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Retained income</td>
<td>2,996,302</td>
<td>859,621</td>
<td>426,496</td>
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<td>Current Liabilities</td>
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<td>Trade and other payables</td>
<td>255,226</td>
<td>177,188</td>
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<td>Income received in advance</td>
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<td>Bank overdraft</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td>10,860,374</td>
<td>7,717,665</td>
<td>4,485,829</td>
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## INCOME STATEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURES IN R</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME</strong></td>
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<td>Donations</td>
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<td>15,400,895</td>
<td>12,540,896</td>
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<td>Investment Income</td>
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<td>Profit on sale of property, plant &amp; equipment</td>
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<td>1,492</td>
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<td>Other income and recoveries</td>
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<td>36,359</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PROJECT EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<td>Direct project costs</td>
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<td>Bookery</td>
<td>17,216</td>
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<td>475,326</td>
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<td>Campaigns</td>
<td>1,522,319</td>
<td>2,199,828</td>
<td>1,259,529</td>
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<td>Community mobilisation</td>
<td>239,625</td>
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<td>Gauteng office projects &amp; operations</td>
<td>2,095,149</td>
<td>648,363</td>
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<td>Libraries project</td>
<td>411,532</td>
<td>943,981</td>
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<td>National coordination</td>
<td>569,218</td>
<td>373,423</td>
<td>504,618</td>
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<td>Parents project</td>
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<td>Policy, Communications &amp; Research</td>
<td>1,550,729</td>
<td>1,873,086</td>
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<td>Youth</td>
<td>4,321,759</td>
<td>3,408,940</td>
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<td>Eastern Cape office projects</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<td>10,704,023</td>
<td>8,923,674</td>
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## INCOME STATEMENT CONTINUED...

### FIGURES IN R

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<td>Accounting fees</td>
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<td>67,453</td>
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<td>Advertising</td>
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<td>Auditors' remuneration</td>
<td>42,693</td>
<td>46,512</td>
<td>43,320</td>
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<td>Bank charges</td>
<td>51,761</td>
<td>61,965</td>
<td>69,809</td>
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<td>Capital items under R7,000</td>
<td>9,737</td>
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<td>Cleaning</td>
<td>15,109</td>
<td>22,289</td>
<td>15,846</td>
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<td>Computer expenses</td>
<td>46,112</td>
<td>71,493</td>
<td>122,534</td>
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<td>Consulting fees</td>
<td>135,843</td>
<td>369,140</td>
<td>26,120</td>
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<td>Contribution to capital fund</td>
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<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>150,660</td>
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<td>Electricity and water</td>
<td>24,400</td>
<td>29,708</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>13,682</td>
<td>2,380</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment rental</td>
<td>39,064</td>
<td>27,528</td>
<td>25,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fines and penalties</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>219,586</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
<td>18,931</td>
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<td>Legal expense</td>
<td>7,182</td>
<td>2,753</td>
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<td>Loans written off</td>
<td>4,456</td>
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<td>Loss on sale of property, plant &amp; equipment</td>
<td>9,434</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,019</td>
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<td>Meals, catering and refreshments</td>
<td>62,213</td>
<td>43,440</td>
<td>22,232</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting costs</td>
<td>8,198</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Postage</td>
<td>29,501</td>
<td>2,599</td>
<td>2,073</td>
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<tr>
<td>Printing and stationery</td>
<td>162,459</td>
<td>115,227</td>
<td>148,701</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruitment fees</td>
<td>28,721</td>
<td>83,406</td>
<td>104,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent paid - premises</td>
<td>69,688</td>
<td>92,319</td>
<td>190,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs and maintenance</td>
<td>196,765</td>
<td>191,613</td>
<td>206,372</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>3,143,549</td>
<td>2,675,718</td>
<td>1,557,927</td>
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<td>Security</td>
<td>35,323</td>
<td>3,474</td>
<td>111,444</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff welfare</td>
<td>13,391</td>
<td>34,286</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td>2,837</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundry expenses</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>1,782</td>
<td>70,675</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone and fax</td>
<td>46,689</td>
<td>67,297</td>
<td>136,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90,377</td>
<td>60,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel - local</td>
<td>450,969</td>
<td>249,292</td>
<td>178,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition fees</td>
<td>7,638</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,194,198</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,472,820</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,330,071</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,546,406</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,176,843</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,253,745</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET SURPLUS</strong></td>
<td><strong>136,681</strong></td>
<td><strong>433,123</strong></td>
<td><strong>452,612</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The National Council, the highest decision-making body of EE between congresses, includes equalisers, parents, provincial representatives and co-opted experienced comrades and meets three or four times a year. It is democratically elected by the National Congress and is headed by Chairperson Yoliswa Dwane. The body was elected for the first time in 2012, and a new council is set to be elected at the National Congress starting 6 July 2015.

Congress is a crucial event in the 2015 calendar year for EE. It is when delegates from all of the organisation’s branches meet and elect leaders, discuss and finalise campaigns and priorities for the next three years. In order to apportion delegates fairly, EE has conducted two membership audits of all of its branches in recent months. At this Congress, the organisation’s constitution, which has been operating as an interim constitution for the past three years, will be finalised and adopted.

Congress is also an important space for learning, debate and discussion. The occasion will be an opportunity for members to understand and define the shape of the movement, an opportunity for new leadership to emerge and a space for contesting ideas, developing a vision and self-education. Delegates to the National Congress will be drawn from various branches and selected through a voting process. It will be held at the University of the Western Cape and prefaced by a series of seminars in June to prepare delegates.

TEACHING AND LEARNING NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

EE’s fight to implement basic Norms and Standards will continue, as will its works on various school-based campaigns in schools across provinces. However, EE is also in the process of crafting a national campaign around teaching and learning.

Throughout 2014, EE conducted significant research on teaching and learning in South Africa. EE’s PCR department published a book based on EE’s research into the teaching profession. Therefore, in 2015, EE aims to continue conducting detailed research, and begin to build a campaign on an aspect of teaching and learning.
The National Council includes equalisers, parents, provincial representatives and experienced members and meets three or four times a year. It is democratically elected by the National Congress.

**YOLISWA DWANE**
**CHAIRPERSON**
Yoliswa grew up in Dimbaza township, Eastern Cape. At the University of Cape Town (UCT) she completed a degree in Media, Film and Visual Studies and an LLB. Yoliswa is a founding member of EE and the head of EE’s PCR department. She is an EELC board member, and a member of the UCT council and senate.

**NTUTHUZO NDZOMO**
**DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON**
**POST-SCHOOL YOUTH**
Ntuthuzo joined EE in 2008 and has played a role in most of EE’s campaigns since. He graduated from UCT with a BA degree and majored in History, Politics and Public Policy and Administration. He currently heads the Youth Department in the Western Cape.

**BUHLE BOOI**
**DEPUTY CHAIR – EQUALISERS**
Buhle Neo Booi grew up in Khayelitsha and is in grade 12 at Sizimisele Technical High School. He was elected as deputy president of the Representative Council of Learners and president of the Congress of South African Students at his school. In December 2014 he replaced Bayanda Mazwi (when Bayanda finished high school) as Deputy Chair of EE.

**BRAD BROCKMAN**
**GENERAL SECRETARY**
Brad grew up in Cape Town and graduated from UCT with a BA in History and Politics, and an Honours degree in History. In 2010 he joined EE as a researcher, before working as the Head of the Community and Youth Departments. Elected to the position of General Secretary in 2012, Brad leads all of EE’s work on a day-to-day basis.

**DORON ISAACS**
**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY**
Doron grew up in Durban. He has degrees in Finance and Law from UCT. During university he led Habonim, and later established Students for Law and Social Justice. After graduating he co-founded Open Shuhada Street, and began working full-time for EE as its founding coordinator. He is a board member of EELC, Ndifuna Ukwazi, and the Khayelitsha Youth and Community Centre Trust.

**SEAN FEINBERG**
**TREASURER**
Sean grew up in Durban and graduated from UCT with a degree in Business Science in 2002. He was actively involved in Habonim for many years. After spending five years working for Nedbank, Sean is now a senior manager of a listed financial service company based in Cape Town.

**LWANDO MZANDISI**
**POST-SCHOOL YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE**
Lwando attended KwaMfundo High School in Khayelitsha, and joined EE in 2008. He has worked as a youth group leader, a facilitator and a leadership trainer. Currently, he is studying to be a teacher at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).

**THANDO DYAMARA**
**POST-SCHOOL YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE**
Thando was born in Cape Town and matriculated at Kensington High School. In 2012, he was an EE community leader and since 2013, has worked for the Bookery as a librarian at Thembelihle High. Thando is also an EE facilitator in the Ekhaya and Eyethu areas of Khayelitsha.
SINEKHAYA MBENGO
EQUALISER REPRESENTATIVE

Sinekhaya was born in Gugulethu and lives in Khayelitsha. He is a grade 12 learner at Thandokhulu High School in Mowbray and will matriculate this year. He has also served on his school’s Representative Council of Learners.

DAPHNE EROSI
PARENT REPRESENTATIVE

Daphne grew up in Aliwal North and completed her education at Chris Hani Secondary in Makhaza, Khayelitsha. She now lives in Site B, Khayelitsha, and in addition to being a full-time parent organiser, is a team leader for a support group of Prevention in Action, an outfit working on issues of violence against women.

ANDISWA KOLANISI
PARENT REPRESENTATIVE

Andiswa supports the development of branches of EE parent members. She lives in Macassar, east of Khayelitsha, and joined EE in 2011 when the organisation assisted her son in finding a position in a local school.

PHATHUSEDZO MANWADU
LIMPOPO REPRESENTATIVE

Phathu grew up in Thohoyandou, Limpopo. He is currently completing a degree in youth development through the University of Venda. Phathu has been one of the drivers of EE in Limpopo.

MPHO MOTLOUNG
GAUTENG REPRESENTATIVE

Mpho grew up in Nquthu in rural KwaZulu-Natal. After attaining a BA degree from Wits University, she returned to Nquthu to run youth development in the community. Mpho is currently based in Gauteng.

LOVEY MTHETHWA
KZN REPRESENTATIVE

Lovely was born in KwaCeza, in rural KwaZulu-Natal, and matriculated at lvungu High. He lives in Nquthu and is based at the municipality where he works for the Seriti Institute as a site manager.

MAWANDE MZIZI
EASTERN CAPE REPRESENTATIVE

Mawande is from King William’s Town and is studying for a degree in financial management at Dale View College. He joined EE in February 2014 as a volunteer facilitator.

PELLWE LOLWANA
CO-OPTED

Professor Lolwana is the director for the Researching Education and Labour (REAL) Centre at the Wits School of Education. This was previously the Wits Education Policy Unit. Prior to that she was head of Umalusi, the examinations Quality Assurance Authority of South Africa.

PAULA ENSOR
CO-OPTED

Professor Ensor was UCT’s Dean of Humanities for 10 years. She holds a PhD in Mathematics Education from the University of London, where she lived in exile after being banned as an anti-Apartheid activist. She is currently a professor in UCT’s School of Education.
STAFF

GENERAL SECRETARY’S OFFICE

BRAD BROCKMAN
GENERAL SECRETARY

Brad grew up in Cape Town and graduated from the University of Cape Town (UCT) with a BA in History and Politics, and an honours degree in History. In 2010 he joined EE as a researcher, before working as the head of the Community and Youth Departments. Elected to the position of General Secretary in 2012, Brad leads all of EE’s work on a day-to-day basis.

DORON ISAACS
DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY

Doron grew up in Durban. He has degrees in Finance and Law from UCT. During university he led Habonim, and later established Students for Law and Social Justice. After graduating he co-founded Open Shuhada Street, and began working fulltime for EE as its founding coordinator. He is a board member of EELC, Ndifuna Ukwazi, and the Khayelitsha Youth and Community Centre Trust.

LWANDO MZANDISI
NATIONAL COUNCIL LIAISON OFFICER

Lwando attended KwaMfundo High School in Khayelitsha, and joined EE in 2008. He has worked as a youth group leader, a facilitator and a leadership trainer. Currently, he is studying to be a teacher at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).

NTSHADI MOFOKENG
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Ntshadi interned with EE in 2011 while studying and later joined the organisation full-time in 2013. She joined the Youth Department as a youth organiser and later became head of the department.

OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

KYLE BAILEY
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Kyle grew up in Durban. He graduated with a BSc in Political Science and Legal Studies and an LLB from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2009. Kyle interned at the Legal Resources Centre and Asiye iTafuni before completing his LLM in Global Environment and Climate Change Law at the University of Edinburgh. He has been admitted as an Attorney of the High Court of South Africa. He joined EE in 2014.

Whitney grew up in Durban and graduated from UCT with a B.Com in Politics, Philosophy and Economics. She joined EE in 2014 as the administration and logistics officer.

NIXOLE MONGAMELI
DATA CAPTURER

Nixole joined EE in 2009. She worked as a CL for two years, with equalisers at Esangweni, KwaMfundo and Siphamandla High Schools in Litha Park, Khayelitsha. She is now EE’s data capturer.

NOSIVUYILE SILWANYANA
RECEPTIONIST

Nosivuyile was born in Cofimvaba in the Eastern Cape. In 1984 she and her mother moved to the Western Cape. Until March 2013, when she joined EE, Nosivuyile worked as a domestic worker and later as a cleaner in a Department of Health forensics unit. She is married and has four children.
Busi is originally from the Eastern Cape and moved to Cape Town in 1992. A mother of two boys, she lives with her family in Delft. Busi began working for EE in early 2013.

Noma-Afrika was born in Thokoza, Johannesburg, and moved to Cape Town in 2009. She has been working for EE since 2008. Noma-Afrika ensures that the EE office is a welcoming and productive working environment.

Phumza grew up in Paarl and attended school in Khayelitsha. She completed a home-based care course, and then began volunteering at EE in 2010. She then became the receptionist, before moving on to administration. This includes running EE’s reception, phones and office supplies, as well as managing security, cleaners and general logistics.

MALIMA MLAWULI
SECURITY GUARD

Mlawuli grew up in Alice in the Eastern Cape, and was educated at Gcoto Senior Secondary School. He currently lives in Kuyasa, Khayelitsha.

SIYABONGA SOTOMELA
SECURITY GUARD

Siyabonga was born in the Eastern Cape and moved to Cape Town in 2005 after matriculating from Cunningham Senior Secondary School in Toleni. He has been with EE since April 2014.

YONI BASS
CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

Yoni was born and raised in Durban. He graduated with a law degree in 2009, and spent 2010 working for the Social Justice Coalition (SJC). At the beginning of 2011, Yoni joined EE to work on fundraising and development. Currently he is responsible for overseeing both EE’s fundraising and finance.

APHIWE MANGXOLA
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

Aphiwe attended school in the Eastern Cape. In 2009 she obtained a certificate in end-user computing from Walter Sisulu University, before completing a B.Com in General Economics at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Since November 2013, Aphiwe has been a Financial Administrator for EE. She is also an active parents’ branch member.

Kim was born in Durban. She graduated from Harvard with a BA in Psychology in 2013 and, joined the EE fundraising team in 2014.

James comes from Polokwane, Limpopo. He holds a BA in International Politics from the University of Limpopo. He joined EE in 2014 to work as a fundraiser.

Unathi was born in the Eastern Cape and grew up in Khayelitsha. He received a degree in Industrial Sociology, Public Policy and Administration with Commercial Law at UCT. Unathi joined EE as a fundraiser in early 2013. He was acting head of the Parents department for part of 2014.

A-isha grew up in Cape Town and received a B Sc in Sports and Recreation Science. She has worked as a fundraiser for Doctors Without Borders, and joined EE in July 2014 as the head of Face-to-Face Fundraising.
Naeema grew up in Cape Town and matriculated from Kensington High School in Kensington. She joined EE in September 2014 as a face-to-face fundraiser.

THEO ABRAM
FACE-TO-FACE FUNDRAISER
Theo matriculated from Table View Secondary School in 2006 and then received a degree from CPUT in Business and Retail Management in 2007. He has previously worked with Sonke Gender Justice Centre and loveLife.

POLICY, COMMUNICATIONS AND RESEARCH

YOLISWA DWANE
HEAD OF PCR
Yoliswa grew up in Dimbaza township in King William’s Town. At UCT she completed a degree in Media, Film and Visual Studies and an LLB. Yoliswa is a founding member of EE and also leads the organisation’s research, media engagement, law reform work and publications. She is on the board of EELC and a member of the UCT council and senate.

HOPOLANG SELEBALO
DEPUTY HEAD OF PCR
Hopolang studied politics and drama at Rhodes University. She has since worked for the Centre for Conflict Resolution and the Institute for Security Studies. She joined EE at the end of 2012 and worked at the organisation until March 2015. She was responsible for monitoring the DBE performance in Parliament and was deputy head of PCR.

WIM LOUW
SENIOR RESEARCHER
Wim is from Durban. He studied at the University of KwaZulu-Natal where he obtained a BA (Politics, Philosophy), a BA Hons (Cognitive Science), and an MA (Linguistics). He works as a senior researcher in the Western Cape.

NOMBULELO NYATHELA
SPOKESPERSON AND MEDIA OFFICER
Nombulelo studied Law at Wits, and later political economy at the Thabo Mbeki Leadership Institute. In July 2013 she joined EE’s Gauteng branch as operations manager before becoming spokesperson and media officer.

SAMUEL SHAPIRO
SENIOR RESEARCHER
Sam grew up in Johannesburg, and attained an honours degree in politics and philosophy from Rhodes University. He joined EE at the beginning of 2012 as a researcher. He spent two years working as the national organiser until the middle of 2013, and now holds the position of senior researcher in Gauteng.

DUMISA MBUWA
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Dumisa grew up in the Eastern Cape, and moved to Cape Town to finish his studies. He has worked at the Nelson Mandela Institute for Educationand Rural Development, where he volunteered as an educational facilitator working in schools in and around rural Eastern Cape. Dumisa works on internal and external messaging for EE, and is also responsible for the production and distribution of The Equalizer magazine.

CARLA GOLDSTEIN
CHIEF TECHNOLOGICAL OFFICER
Carla was born in Cape Town and completed and engineering degree at UCT. She worked for a software consulting company for three years before studying Industrial Design at CPUT. Carla joined EE in 2014 and has worked on the website and helped create EE’s first auditing app for monitoring Norms and Standards in schools.

JOSHUA MASEROW
RESEARCHER
Josh was born in Johannesburg. Currently, he is a Gauteng-based member of the Internal Education and Training Unit (IETU) at EE where he does research and develops educational materials for the political education of equalisers. Prior to joining EE he dabbled in on-line journalism and tutored for the Department of English Language and Literature at UCT.
Daniel grew up in Johannesburg. He completed a BA in History, Philosophy and Politics and BA (Honours) in History, both at Wits. He joined EE in September 2014 and is a member of IETU. His work involves creating youth group content, organising and editing an online database of youth group activities, and running workshops for facilitators on activity creation.

**Luoyo joined EE in 2008 while in grade 11. In 2010 he began facilitating youth groups in Kraaifontein, before becoming one of EE’s original librarians in 2012. In 2013, he became a CL, later a JuniorOrganiser, and since November 2014 has been the national organiser. He is also pursuing a degree in education at the University of South Africa (UNISA).**

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**Charity joined EE in 2011 as an equaliser, before becoming a facilitator in 2013 and a Junior Organiser in early 2014. Charity now works as a National Organiser with Luoyo. Her dream is to study Social Work.**

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**Sandile was born in Nkandla, and raised in Nquthu and Pietermaritzburg. He studied sound engineering after matriculating and has previously worked with JDI Silver Chest Record Label in Pietermaritzburg. He is responsible for organising in-school meetings and working with teachers and parents in KZN.**

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Ntosh grew up in Cape Town, matriculated from Wynberg High School in 2010 and is currently studying Public Relations at CPUT. She joined EE in 2009, became chairperson of the equalisers in 2010, and sat on the EE board. Having interned in the PCR department and worked as a facilitator with the Youth Department, she is now a junior youth organiser and an IETU member.

Lucas was born and brought up in Cape Town. He matriculated from Sizimisele Technical High School in 2014. He joined EE as an equaliser in 2013 and is now a CL.

Sibonisiwe was born in Gauteng and grew up in Cape Town. She joined as an equaliser in 2010 and was also a part of Amazwi Wethu. She is a CL.

Ayanda grew up in Khayelitsha, first attending Chumisa Primary School, then matriculating in 2014 from Joe Slovo Engineering High School. He joined EE in 2010, serving on the leadership committee and also participating in Amazwi Wethu. He is now a CL.

Bayanda spent his early childhood in East London, in Mdantsane township. He moved to Cape Town in 2002 and matriculated from the Centre of Science and Technology (COSAT). Bayanda joined EE in 2009 and is now a CL.

Aviwe Lithemba Papu was born in the Eastern Cape and has spent most of her life in Cape Town. She attended Bernadino Heights High in Kraaifontein, and matriculated in 2014. She joined EE in 2010 as an equaliser became a CL in 2015. She heads the Kraaifontein branch.

Amava was born and brought up in Cape Town and joined EE as an equaliser in 2009. She matriculated from Oaklands High School in 2013. She then became a facilitator the following year. She is now a CL.

Bayanda was born in the Eastern Cape and has spent most of her life in Cape Town. He matriculated from Simanyene High School in Strand and joined EE in 2013. He facilitates youth groups for learners from Khanyolwethu Secondary School, Simanyene, Rusthof Secondary School and Nomzamo High School.

Raphael grew up in Johannesburg and has been involved in EE since 2010. He has a BA in History and French, and an honours degree in Economic History from UCT. He was the deputy general secretary of Habonim in 2014. He now works full time at EE on political education sessions for CLs, research and graphic design for campaigns.

Gabriel was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. He graduated with an MA in political science and a BA in African Studies from Emory University in 2013. Gabriel joined EE as a Princeton in Africa Fellow in the winter of 2014. Along with his responsibilities as a researcher for the Western Cape office, Gabriel is a member of IETU.

Noncedo was born in Khayelitsha, and matriculated in 2013. He has been a member of the SJC for two years. In 2014 he was a fellow at Ndifuna Ukwazi and later joined EE as a CL. He is responsible for mobilising and running youth groups.

Gabriel was born and raised in Port Elizabeth. She is currently pursuing a BA degree in Education, majoring in Mathematics and Languages at UWC. She joined EE in 2012 as a grade 12 tutor. She is part of the training and research unit and works with CLs on leadership and facilitation training. She is also a member of IETU.
**WESTERN CAPE COMMUNITY AND PARENTS**

**LUZUKO SIDIMBA**  
HEAD OF WESTERN CAPE COMMUNITY AND PARENTS  

Luya was one of EE’s early members, joining in 2008 through KwaMfundo High School. He has participated in most of EE’s major campaigns. In 2014 he organised the EE national camp for equalisers in five provinces. In 2010 he participated in EE’s post-matric CL programme and is now completing a social work degree at UCT.

**MSANKU PATRICK RALEHOKO**  
PARENT ORGANISER  

Patrick lives in Site B, Khayelitsha. He matriculated from Joe Slovo High School in 1997, and then went on to study a few short courses at Cape College. His current role is to organise and train EE’s parent members.

**WISEMAN DINGANI**  
PARENT ORGANISER  

Wiseman was born in the Eastern Cape and joined EE as a parent organiser in 2012. In addition to his work at EE, Wiseman is also an active community stakeholder and leader in SANCO.

**ANDISWA KOLANISI**  
PARENT ORGANISER  

Ma Andiswa supports the development of branches of EE parent members. She lives in Macassar, east of Khayelitsha, and joined EE in 2011 when the organisation assisted her son to find a position in a local school.

**GAUTENG OFFICE**

**DAPHNE EROSI**  
PARENT ORGANISER  

Daphne grew up in Aliwal North and completed her education at Chris Hani Secondary in Makhaza, Khayelitsha. She now lives in Site B, Khayelitsha, and in addition to being a full-time parent organiser, is a team leader for a Prevention in Action support group.

**TSHEPO MOTSEPE**  
CO-HEAD OF GAUTENG  

Tshepo is a qualified teacher. He studied at Wits where he was a leader in the South African Student Congress (SASCO), Wits University SRC Member 2008/9 and Johannesburg Regional Secretary of SASCO. Along with Adam, Tshepo is responsible for building and strengthening EE’s presence in Gauteng.

**ADAM BRADLOW**  
CO-HEAD OF GAUTENG  

Adam completed his undergraduate studies at Princeton University. Before joining EE he worked for Dalberg and volunteered at the Legal Resources Centre. Together with Tshepo, Adam is responsible for building and strengthening EE’s foothold in Gauteng.

**ZANDILE NGUBENI**  
INCOMING HEAD GAUTENG  

Zandile Ngubeni grew up in Soweto, and completed a BA in Politics and International Relations at WITS and Honours in International Relations at UNISA. For the past three years Zandi worked as a researcher at the ANC Gauteng provincial office.

**ANGELA BUKENYA**  
DEPUTY HEAD GAUTENG  

Angela Bukunya grew up in Mafikeng, moving to Pretoria to complete a B Admin in International Relations, honours in Public Administration and Masters in Human Rights Law. She spent the past four years at the University of Pretoria’s Centre for Human Rights.

**THOLAKELE KUMALO**  
OFFICE MANAGER  

Tholakele Kumalo is the Gauteng office manager at EE. Her expertise covers community development, project management, programme monitoring and evaluation and budget management. She has worked for a number of organisations, such as the Ford Foundation, Wits Graduate School of Governance and the Africa-America Institute.

**RITA PILUSHA**  
OFFICE CLEANER  

Rita grew up in Tswenyane, where she completed primary school, before moving to the village of Leboeng. She is now a mother of two, and is a cleaner in the Gauteng office. She hopes to one day go back to studying and become a nurse.

**TRACEY MALAWANA**  
JUNIOR ORGANISER  

Tracey was born and raised in Gauteng. She matriculated from Masitebenze Comprehensive School and joined EE in 2012, initially as an equaliser. She is currently studying Public Relations and Management at UNISA. She serves as a Junior Organiser at EE in Gauteng, and is responsible for the Tembisa branch. She is also an IETU member.
FREDDY MATHEKGA
JUNIOR ORGANISER

Freddy matriculated in 2012 from Thuto ke Maatla Comprehensive School in Tembisa and joined EE in February 2013 as a volunteer. He then became a CL for Daveyton in 2014 and is now a Junior Organizer in Daveyton.

STEVEN MOLLO
JUNIOR ORGANISER

Steven joined EE in 2013 as a facilitator and became a CL in 2014. He is currently studying financial management. He is a Junior Organizer and also works with the parents’ committee in Tembisa. He led the sanitation social audit and the school infrastructure audit around Gauteng last year.

KHOLOWANI SIMELANE
JUNIOR ORGANISER

Kholwani is a Junior Organizer for KwaThema and Tsakane and has been with EE for more than two years. He matriculated from South View High School and is now pursuing a degree in teaching at UNISA.

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TSHEPO BILA
COMMUNITY LEADER

Tshepo was born and raised in Daveyton, Gauteng. He matriculated from Unity Secondary School in 2013 and joined EE in early 2014 as a facilitator at his former high school. He then moved to facilitate at Mabuya Secondary School and now works as a CL in Daveyton.

NKULULEKO MAGAGULA
COMMUNITY LEADER

Nkululeko was born in Tembisa and matriculated from Ingqayizivele High School. He now studies part-time at UNISA. He joined EE in 2012, when he was an equaliser and is currently a CL.

ZANELE MODISE
COMMUNITY LEADER

Zanele grew up in Tembisa and matriculated from Zitikeni Secondary School and became a facilitator in 2014. She is now a CL.

PONTSHO SHAKHANE
COMMUNITY LEADER

Pontsho is from Johannesburg. She matriculated in 2013 and joined EE later that year. In 2014 she volunteered at EE as a facilitator. Pontsho is currently a CL at Gauteng’s KwaThema branch.

LUMKILE ZANI
HEAD OF EASTERN CAPE

Lumkile grew up in Alice, Dimbaza, Zwelitsha and East London. He matriculated from KwaMfundo High School in Khayelitsha and studied photojournalism. Lumkile then became a qualified chef, before joining EE in 2008. He previously headed the Community and Parents Department and since October 2014 has been heading the new EE office at King William’s Town in the Eastern Cape.

DANIEL LINDE
DEPUTY HEAD OF EASTERN CAPE

Daniel first got involved with EE in 2010. He completed a Bachelor of Commerce degree at UCT in 2007 and an LLB in 2011. In 2009, Daniel served as the Secretary General of Habonim dror Southern African. He has served legal articles and practiced as an attorney at Read Hope Phillips Inc. Daniel is working to grow the movement in the Eastern Cape and is also an attorney for the EELC’s Eastern Cape Office.

HONJISA RABA
EASTERN CAPE OFFICE MANAGER

Honjisa was born in Cape Town. She completed a B. Soc. Sci in Political Science, Sociology and Public Policy and Administration at UCT. Before joining EE in March 2013, she interned at the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

SINAZO MAKAWULA
JUNIOR ORGANISER

Sinazo was born and raised in Mdantsane and currently studying towards a Bcom Law degree at the University of Fort Hare East London. I first became involved in Equal Education campaigns when SLSJ UFH was supporting the Library campaign. She has been the Eastern Cape Junior Youth Organizer since February 2015.
**EQUALISER POETRY**

**MY SCHOOL IS UNDER-RESOURCED**

Where is the door to proper sanitation and infrastructure for all?  
Is the door left closed?  
When we sit by our schools made of mud,  
Steel, wood and asbestos.  
When we sit by our schools with inadequate classrooms, electricity,  
Water, sanitation, internet connectivity and fencing.  
When we sit by our schools with no libraries and laboratories.  
When we sit in our schools with no sports fields and kitchens.  
The days slowly rushing past like water,  
Our dignity, our safety, our health, our education,  
Disappearing downstream, no matter, no matter.  

The trees outside our screens tipped their cooling leaves to hear  
The noise of our cries.  
My school oh my school,  
I will always cry, when I think of my school.  

_Moderate Khumalo, 16 and Bongane Mdluli, 17, Tembisa High School, Gauteng_

**THE FIGHT FOR MY EDUCATION**

When I was told that I am free  
I thought things were going to be easy  
But they just got too hard  
Just when I thought that I have  
all the right  
It was when I had to fight  
for them  
It was time when I had to  
go stand in court just for  
Education  
Fighting for my rights is  
like bringing the country apart  
when I thought I should just  
stop it is when I lost a friend  
going to the toilet and never  
coming back never got a chance  
to say goodbye  

_Sisanda Khuzani, 16, Harry Gwala Secondary School, Khayelitsha_
BEING AN EQUALISER

Being an equaliser, has made me a friend, a sister and a brother to all.
Being an equaliser has groomed me for the best!
I remember my first mass meeting a couple years back, the vibe, spirit, the song took my breath away like my first kiss...
A bunch of young vibrant people handsome, beautiful, sun-kissed, everything was bliss! as I thought South Africa, Africa you have been blessed with selfless souls dedicated their time to a better you...
Being an equaliser has been food for thought, food for soul food for my country and food for my continent.
Being an equaliser has made me a growing seed of success.

Kedibone Peace Legoale, 17, Sizimisele Technical High School, Khayelitsha

CELEBRATE HUMANITY

Celebrate Humanity
And when you love,
Love unconditionally
A better world begins
with a smile and I
Can give it a try

Celebrate humanity
Peace, love and happiness
Is what we need. Peace,
Love and happiness is
What we need.

Celebrate humanity
As soon as you hear
this poem be filled with
love. Rejoice and spread love

Celebrate humanity
I’m calling all the nation
And everyone from different
Races to stand up and make changes

Celebrate humanity
It might not be easy
But I know we can
Together we can stand
Love others
Treat them
like family. Let us stand
and fight as a country

Kamva Rwayi, 17, Imiqhayi Secondary School, King William’s Town
Ntuthuzo Ndzomo leads an activity during the 2014 teach-in in King William’s Town, Eastern Cape.
EE marches through the streets of Johannesburg: Sanitation is Dignity
Late night strategy session in Queen Mercy Village, Matatiele, 2014

Marching into Cape Town: End Educational Inequality!