



A retrospective study of the enke: Make  
Your Mark approach  
enke: Make Your Mark



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## Executive Summary

enke: Make Your Mark is a youth leadership development organisation. enke's definition of leadership is the ability to take an idea and turn it into reality. This requires a combination of non-cognitive competencies – such as social intelligence, grit, flexibility, creativity, and emotional intelligence –. Developing these skills in young people has the added benefit of increasing their employability.

enke has identified four key competencies that we hypothesise are foundational to youth leadership development in the South African context, as well as having the potential to improve a young person's chances of future success.

- *Grit*: can be described as persistence and motivation for long-term goals.
- *Self-efficacy as measured by locus of control*: Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. However, because self-efficacy is difficult to measure, we have chosen to use locus of control as the closest measure. Locus of control is the extent to which individuals believe that they can control events that affect them.
- *Growth mindset*, closely linked to grit and self-efficacy, those with stronger growth mindset believe their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.
- *Social awareness and understanding of social norms* - The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports. This section covers empathy, cultural sensitivity and two forms of conflict management (competition and collaboration).

### **enke: Trailblazer Program (formerly enke: Youth Award)**

This research involves alumni from the enke: Trailblazer Program from 2009 – 2012. The enke: Trailblazer Program trains and supports high school learners to create social impact. Participants design and run projects to address whichever issues in their community they feel most passionate about. The process of running a project is a way for learners to develop leadership skills through supported, self-directed learning. The program uses a tailor-made curriculum covering emotional intelligence, social intelligence and contextual awareness during a weeklong retreat (the enke: Forum). It brings together high school learners (Grade 10 and 11 learners) from all over South Africa to connect, learn new skills, and gain inspiration.

During the week of the enke: Forum, participants design their “Community Action Project” (CAP). Running a CAP is intended to allow participants to learn through experience. During this process, they develop key skills in project design and management as well as non-cognitive competencies.

The 2009 and 2010 programs had little to no support for participants implementing their CAPs; in 2011 sustained, structured support to participants was added to the program.

### **Research Purpose**

The aim of this research is to explore the effectiveness of the program in light of enke's definition of youth leadership development (non-cognitive skill development and action).



## Research Question

1. How does self-directed learning, specifically running a project, impact a young person's leadership capacity as measured by non-cognitive competencies?
2. Does sustained support to participants increase their likelihood of completing a project and therefore the development and endurance of their non-cognitive competencies?

## Methods

This was a mixed-method, non-experimental (posttest only) design. Owing to a lack of baseline or comparison data, the research questions were best answered with exploratory methods to gain an overview through a large-scale survey, while seeking richer information on key concepts from alumni through discussion (group interviews).

## Results & Discussion

A total of 185 people started the survey, with 77 (41.6%) completing the survey. This represents 35% of the total alumni population. Twenty-nine people participated in five group interviews held in November and December 2013 in 5 locations across South Africa (4 provinces).

The greatest proportion of survey participants had an 'ongoing/complete' CAP (45%), followed by 'not finished' (38%) and 'not started' (17%). The majority were from 2011 (43%).

### Non-cognitive skills and enke

As hypothesised, a trend of improving grit, growth mindset and internal locus of control was seen across CAP status, with lower scores for those who did not start a project. While we can't say there was a causal relationship without baseline data, it does suggest that these non-cognitive skills appear to be positively linked to finishing a CAP and can be thought of a 'proof of concept' for the program.

The quantitative data was backed up by the qualitative data. Participants also reported gaining other non-cognitive skills during their CAP experience such as self-confidence, self-esteem, patience and courage.

Our findings show that those who finish a CAP have a stronger association with collaboration. The scores for all CAP categories were high for empathy and cultural awareness but were less than expected. Potentially interpersonal non-cognitive skills are less important than intrapersonal skills for successfully completing projects, though this is an area for further research as our findings on social awareness are unclear.

### Life destination

Our findings suggest enke alumni are in keeping with research literature on non-cognitive skill development and life success with a 76 per cent university enrolment rate (our selected age-appropriate indicator) and just nine per cent not in education, employment or training (NEET). In comparison to South African national education averages, enke alumni are doing better on all indicators – from National School Certificate pass rates to university enrolment. This may be due to the selection bias of the survey sample but is more likely indicative of the selection bias in initially selecting participants for enke programs.

According to our findings, those who started but didn't finish a CAP are almost 3 times as active in other youth leadership organizations than the other two CAP categories. Alumni who completed a CAP are more active in volunteering. It seems that if alumni started a project during enke (regardless of finishing it) they are more active starting projects now. In some ways this continued engagement may represent a



broader commitment to youth leadership and social action, or may be a result of an evolved self-efficacy or growth mindset developed through the program. We had no way of measuring which this is in this study but it certainly provides evidence for the activation of alumni and a continued motivation past the program.

### **Support for Community Action Projects**

Most participants needed support to successfully run a project. Even where alumni from the 2009/10 cohort did not receive support from enke, they found support from others in their communities. Our findings suggest emotional support is more important than practical support, which may be necessary for continued development of non-cognitive skills, which are essential for continued progress on projects, as well as self-development while at school. Most reasons for not finishing or starting a CAP could be resolved with more support.

Those in the later cohort (2011 and 2012) had marginally higher total non-cognitive scores indicating a more supported version as beneficial for non-cognitive skills. This cohort also started and finished a greater proportion of projects. We have no way of knowing the direction of any link between these three factors: we would hypothesise that increased support aids non-cognitive development and thus successful projects. This is further emphasized by the fact that the 2009/10 cohort have had longer to develop non-cognitive skills (average age is higher, longer since program) outside of the program yet still have slightly lower scores.

### **Conclusion**

This research has provided a snapshot of alumni from the enke: Trailblazer Program, and shown them to be engaged and skilled individuals. We have found a link between self-directed learning (the Community Action Project) and three of the four non-cognitive skills we identified as being needed for leadership. Our more structured and sustained support provided added benefits to program participants by allowing them access to necessary practical and emotional support that has resulted in increased numbers of started and finished projects. These findings are salient to program design and to the youth leadership development field.





## Introduction

### Context and literature review

#### *Why does youth leadership matter?*

When looking at the literature on youth in South Africa the presiding message is that young people need to be developed to remove a deficit. There is very little that talks about young people as able to contribute in anything more than tokenistic ways, or in ways that are intended to give them experience that will pay dividends into the future when they hold real positions of influence. To capitalise on the strengths, passion and innovativeness of South Africa's youth, we need a new approach.

We propose that the process of increasing the skill sets of young people to a baseline acceptable level is youth development, whereas youth *leadership* development is the process of increasing the skill sets of young people that allows for positive contribution to the nation - business, academic and social contributions - as opposed to being limited to individual success.

Education globally is undergoing a re-evaluation, with theorists such as Sir Ken Robinson popularising the view that traditional schooling models are out-dated. Robinson asks, "How do we educate our children to take their place in the economies of the 21st century given that we can't anticipate what the economy will look like at the end of next week?"<sup>1</sup> Combining and building on work by theorists like Albert Bandura, John Dewey, and Lev Vygotsky, there is a recognition that current, mainstream school-education was built to optimise the delivery of education rather than the outcome of learning.

Recent work by Paul Tough has made a compelling case that children need more than academic skills to succeed, pulling together both scientific research and the evaluations of several US-based education interventions (e.g. the KIPP charter schools and Harlem Children's Zone). He argues that non-cognitive skills, including persistence, self-control, curiosity, conscientiousness, grit and self-confidence, are more crucial than sheer brainpower to achieving success. Looking at children at both ends of the socio-economic spectrum he finds that these skills are not being given the same attention as cognitive skills (the types of skills that are measured by the traditional IQ test or standardised national exams) and yet they are just as important (if not more so)<sup>2</sup>.

Drawing heavily on the work of Nobel-prize winning economist, James Heckman, he shows that while schools are often developing some of these skills as a by-product of their work with young people, more often than not they aren't actively prioritising it and aren't evaluating their work through this lens. Heckman makes the case that that nurturing non-cognitive skills throughout adolescence pays dividends for both individuals and society through reduced risk taking behaviour and improved schooling and relationship outcomes<sup>3</sup>.

#### *The South African context*

Aside from providing inadequate opportunities for non-traditional learning, in South Africa there is a second level to the issue of education: the service delivery component of education is also failing. Multiple

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson, K 2013, 'How to Change Education – From the Ground Up', [video] published by RSA July 18 2013, available: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEsZOnyQzxQ>

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Tough, P, 2012, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company

<sup>3</sup> Heckman, J & Rubenstein, Y 2001, 'The Importance of Non-cognitive skills: Lessons from the GED testing program', *The American Economic Review*, vol91 No 2 pp 145 -149



curriculum reviews, poor infrastructure, low teacher preparedness all combine to create additional challenges that impede learning for young people.

The impact of not adequately preparing our young people is having serious effect. In 2009 an estimated 2.8 million (42% of) young South Africans between the ages of 18 and 24 were not in employment, education or training (NEET).<sup>4</sup> In comparison, the International Labour Organisation shows that the NEET rate was 15.6% in the United States, 13.1% in New Zealand and 9.7% in Japan while the OECD average was 12.8%.<sup>5</sup> In England, where the percentage of NEETs is seen to be at crisis levels, the rate is 17.9% for 19 to 24 year olds at the end of 2012.<sup>6</sup>

The impact of this goes beyond a missed economic opportunity for the nation; creating long term economic, psychological and social damage in individuals who experience unemployment whilst young. Studies have shown that those who experience unemployment early in their life are more likely to be unemployed again in later years. Moreover, they are likely to earn less over their working life than are their peers who find jobs more easily.<sup>7</sup>

Youth leadership development is a way to equip young people to actively contribute to society. In an increasingly complex, inter-related and diverse world, leadership needs to be situational. As such, it is social, it is adaptive, and it is relational. This requires a combination of non-cognitive competencies – such as social intelligence, grit, flexibility, creativity, and emotional intelligence – particularly those that foster and build interpersonal relationships. Developing these skills in young people has the added benefit of increasing their employability. However, to think of youth leadership development only in terms of contributing to the issue of youth unemployment underestimates the potential of young people to contribute meaningfully and innovatively to their communities and South Africa as a whole.

There are many innovative approaches being taken outside of formal education. However, youth leadership is often seen as being intangible and therefore difficult to measure. There are few interventions that have rigorously evaluated the outcomes of their work. If the sector of youth leadership development is to be more than a passing fad then we need to demonstrate clear, concrete outcomes of our work. This is the type of evidence from which strategies for evolving the education and youth policy of South Africa can be based.

#### *Youth Leadership – A Richer Definition*

enke's definition of leadership is the ability to take an idea and turn it into reality. This deceptively simple definition was chosen primarily because of its accessibility for the young people we work with. It is based on the definition proposed by UK-based organisation, The Young Foundation's research: 'young people empowered to inspire and mobilise themselves and others towards a common purpose, in response to personal and/or social issues and challenges, to effect positive change'.<sup>8</sup>

Our simple definition of leadership deliberately smuggles in a number of components that are not necessarily obvious. At its core, this is a definition about non-cognitive competencies. The literature on

<sup>4</sup> Cloete, N. (ed.) (2009). Responding to the educational needs of post-school youth: determining the scope of the problem and developing a capacity-building model. Centre for Higher Education Transformation: Wynberg

<sup>5</sup> ILO (2012), "Neither working nor studying, the fate for millions of youth worldwide" sourced from [http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/global-employment-trends/2012/WCMS\\_180989/lang--it/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/global-employment-trends/2012/WCMS_180989/lang--it/index.htm)

<sup>6</sup> UK Department for Education (2013) NEET Statistics - Quarterly Brief – Quarter 4 2012

<sup>7</sup> IMF - <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2012/03/morsy.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Kahn, Hewes and Ali, Taking the Lead: Youth Leadership in Theory and Practice (2009), pg 6



the topic of non-cognitive competencies is inconsistent in its labelling practices - referring to them variously as emotional intelligence,<sup>9</sup> character, social and emotional competencies or skills, character. We have chosen to use the slightly more technical term “non-cognitive competencies”.

In addition, there is debate over which non-cognitive competencies are most important as well as the actual definitions of their content. enke has identified 4 key competencies that we hypothesise are foundational to youth leadership development in the South African context, as well as having the potential to improve a young person’s chances of future success. Three of these are intrapersonal and deal with the way people view the world and themselves in it, and the fourth is about how people relate to others. The model doesn’t present any one as being more important than any other, and there is an assumption that they are inter-related.<sup>10</sup>

- **Grit** - Angela Duckworth, Christopher Peterson, Michael Matthews and Dennis Kelly define grit as “working strenuously towards challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity and plateaus in progress... The gritty individual approaches achievement as a marathon: his or her advantage is stamina. Whereas disappointment or boredom signal to others that it is time to change trajectory and cut losses, the gritty individual stays the course.”<sup>11</sup>

- **Social awareness and understanding of social norms** - The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.<sup>12</sup> Howard Gardner who led the movement towards multiple intelligences, looks at something similar in his work on interpersonal intelligence or being “people smart”.<sup>13</sup> For this research project, we look at empathy, cultural sensitivity and two forms of conflict management (competition and collaboration). These three concepts are considered important to youth leadership development because fostering relationships and being able to take others’ perspectives is central to being able to understand complex issues and to mobilising others towards a common goal. Particularly in the South African context, with high levels of diversity, cultural sensitivity is important for working effectively with others and understanding multiple perspectives and practices.

- **Self efficacy** as measured by locus of control – Albert Bandura defined this as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives.<sup>14</sup> Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and

<sup>9</sup> Made popular by Daniel Goleman in Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More than IQ and forming the basis for many curricula in this field, including enke’s.

<sup>10</sup> As one group of researchers put it, “The growth of one encourages the flowering of the others; to suppress one is to stunt the rest. Honestly recognising your feelings as your own is a prerequisite to taking responsibility for them and acting effectively upon them. Unless you take responsibility, it’s hard to feel like a person who can make a difference. Responsible behaviour is both a cause and a result of these skills.” Hauser, S, Allen, J and Golden, E (2006) Out of the Woods: Tales of resilient teens. Harvard University Press

<sup>11</sup> Duckworth, A, Peterson, C, Matthews, M & Kelly, D 2007, ‘Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long Term Goals’, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, vol 92, No 6, pp. 1087-1101.

<sup>12</sup> This definition is taken from CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) sourced from <http://casel.org/why-it-matters/what-is-sel/> and is based on Goleman’s Social Intelligence work.

<sup>13</sup> Gardner, H. (1983), Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences

<sup>14</sup> Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), Encyclopedia of human behavior (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], Encyclopedia of mental health. San Diego: Academic Press, 1998) sourced from <http://www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Bandura/BanEncy.html>





behave. However, because self efficacy is difficult to measure (as noted by Bandura himself), we have chosen to use locus of control as the closest measure. Locus of control is the extent to which individuals believe that they can control events that affect them. Those with an internal locus of control tend to attribute results to their own traits, whereas those with an external locus of control tend to attribute events to external, environmental traits.

- **Growth mindset** - closely linked to self-efficacy, and grit, Carol Dweck argues that there are two types of mindset – a fixed and a growth mindset.<sup>15</sup> In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. In contrast, in a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

*What is enke and how does it try to build these competencies?*

enke: Make Your Mark is a youth leadership development organisation. The organisation works with high school learners and university students to develop them as individuals who can contribute to their country. In a practical sense this means running residential training programs for each group that covers personal development content designed to develop non-cognitive competencies as well as supporting them to run their own, self-directed projects.

The focus of this study, the Trailblazer Program (formerly the enke: Youth Award) is a 9-month program, working with Grade 10 and 11 learners from around the country (all provinces except Northern Cape). Each cohort is chosen to be representative of the demographics of South Africa as a whole, with a primary focus on socio-economic diversity but also looking at race, gender and rural / urban splits. Participants design and run a project in their community, addressing whichever social issue they feel passionately about.

The Trailblazers Program has 3 key components:

**Training:** Participants attend the enke: Forum - a weeklong, residential retreat. The week uses a tailor-made curriculum covering emotional intelligence, social intelligence and contextual awareness. Participants are required to design their “Community Action Project” (CAP) with support of university-level facilitators and the enke team. Additionally, speakers and experts in fields such as entrepreneurship, technology, media and the environment are invited to contribute and inspire learners. After 2009 (the pilot), the curriculum was totally overhauled, but has remained largely unchanged since 2010.

**Self-directed learning (action):** Running a CAP is intended to allow participants to learn by doing (experiential learning). Through this process, they develop key skills in project design and management as well as non-cognitive competencies. Over the 9-month period, enke provides technical and emotional support for participants through our troubleshooting hotline and monthly reports (submitted via SMS, Whatsapp, Facebook, email or phone).

**Recognition:** We recognise the effort that all participants put into the program - even where a CAP isn't completed. All participants who start a project are invited to regional celebration events. In addition, top projects are awarded prizes and all participants receive a certificate and letter of recognition.

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<sup>15</sup> Professor Dweck has written a number of books including 2000, *Self Theories: Their role in motivation, personality and development*, Psychology Press



The enke: Trailblazer Program, has evolved from 2009 to the present. The two major iterations of the program design were 2009-2010 and 2011-present. The first version was a one-week residential, curriculum-based “camp” (the enke: Forum), that included the design of a project for which no formal support was offered after participants returned home.

The second version added structured support to participants as they ran their projects: supported, self-directed learning.

## **Research Purpose**

This research project will be working with alumni from the enke: Trailblazer Program from 2009 -2012. The aim is to investigate the effectiveness of the program in light of enke’s definition of youth leadership development (non-cognitive skill development and action). This research will inform program decision-making with the intention that the findings can be used by other organisations and the sector as a whole.

The research aimed to study the impact of starting a Community Action Project (CAP) on young people’s leadership capacities, as measured through specific non-cognitive skills. Of further interest was how sustained programmatic support from enke would improve the likelihood of young people finishing the project, and, as a result, their development of non-cognitive skills.

## **Research Question**

The research is structured in two parts, guided by two main questions;

1. How does self-directed learning, specifically running a project, impact a young person’s leadership capacity as measured by non-cognitive competencies?
2. In addition, does sustained support to participants increase their likelihood of completing a project and therefore the development and endurance of their non-cognitive competencies?

We had five hypotheses we wanted tested as part of the research questions;

*Hypothesis #1: “Starting a project” will have less impact on an individual’s development of grit, social awareness, self-efficacy, and growth mindset than “completing a project”.*

*Hypothesis #2: Individuals with high levels of grit, social awareness, self-efficacy, and growth mindset will be less likely to be in the category of “not in education, employment or training”. (Note: this is being used as an age appropriate indicator of life success).*

*Hypothesis #3: that individuals from communities with multiple avenues for support and multiple, reinforcing opportunities will be more likely to initiate and complete projects and will also see higher non-cognitive skills development (e.g. schools with engaged teachers and multiple programs available for personal development).*

*Hypothesis #4: that individuals from communities with multiple avenues for support and multiple, reinforcing opportunities will be less likely to be not in employment, education or training, regardless of their project start and completion rates.*

*Hypothesis #5: individual non-cognitive skill development is significantly higher in a program with structures for sustained support.*



## Methods

### Design and methods

This was a mixed-method, non-experimental (posttest only) design. Owing to a lack of baseline or comparison data, the research questions were best answered with exploratory methods to gain an overview through a large-scale survey, while seeking richer information on key concepts from alumni through discussion (group interviews). Triangulation between samples and methods was achieved through combining survey methods with group interviews, comparison to national data, and the literature where appropriate.

### Subject selection and recruitment

The research study was open to all alumni of the enke: Trailblazer Program from 2009 to 2012 (inclusive), a total of 530 people. The aim was to achieve a 50% sample of 265 alumni.

#### *Survey*

Invitations to complete the survey were posted on the enke website, the enke Alumni Facebook Group (a closed group) and the enke Facebook page (a public platform). Emails and SMSs were sent to the all alumni for whom we had contact detail (465, 88%). Personalised invitations were also sent via Facebook inboxing (our Alumni Group grew from 70 members to over 330 as a result).

#### *Group Interviews*

Participants were recruited through direct invitation and general call out. Sampling was through convenience and snowball methods. We attempted to include a representative number of people across years, gender and CAP status. This was not achieved as will be shown, and depended overly on people's availability and their desire to participate. We continued recruiting until either the groups were full (max 8 people) or the response dried up. Groups were recorded and detailed notes made of the discussion. All groups were conducted in English.

### Design and analysis

#### *Survey*

An online survey was created using SurveyMonkey and the link sent by email, SMS and Facebook inbox messaging. The link was also posted on enke specific pages and through Twitter. We offered alumni a R20 incentive for completing the survey.

The survey included a number of questions on demographics, life destination, perceptions of support and descriptions of the participant's CAP (see Appendix 1). It also utilised six short surveys measuring non-cognitive skills,

- Grit<sup>16</sup>
- Growth mindset<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Adapted from the Angela Duckworth Grit survey, available:

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~duckwort/images/8-item%20Grit%204.pdf> <<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/%7Educkwort/images/8-item%20Grit%204.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Adapted from Carol Dweck's survey, available: <http://mindsetonline.com/testyourmindset/step1.php>



- Locus of control<sup>18</sup>
- Conflict management<sup>19</sup>
- Empathy<sup>20</sup>
- Cultural diversity<sup>21</sup>

The grit, locus of control and growth mindset instruments were designed and tested by subject-matter experts and have been previously validated. The questions for conflict management and cultural sensitivity were adapted from larger surveys to better suit young South Africans. Six empathy questions were selected from a larger emotional quotient questionnaire that represented a cross-section of concepts relevant to the target audience.

Data was downloaded and cleaned for duplicate and incomplete entries. Analysis of quantitative questions was done with excel for basic descriptive statistical analytics.

The non-cognitive scores, means and ranges were calculated with JMP 11 software. Excel was used to calculate correlations.

The cumulative non-cognitive score was calculated by averaging all mean scores, weighting them to a common factor and then adding them. Because the collaboration and locus of control desirability score ran in the opposite direction to the other measures (as per desirability for the working definition of leadership), we inverted all collaboration and locus of control scores to make the cumulative score. The cumulative score serves as an illustrative measure and is not based on any validated methodology.

Qualitative questions were analysed as word documents. Inductive analysis allowed for interpretation of various themes within the structured questions.

#### *Group interview*

Group interviews were designed to investigate three key concepts from the survey – 1. leadership skills (specifically non-cognitive development), 2. the experience of the CAP process, and 3. support structures utilised and perceived needs.

Data were analysed through content analysis with themes arising inductively. Major themes were coded, relationships tested and compared against survey findings.

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<sup>18</sup> Adapted from the J.B. Rotter survey, available: <http://www.psych.uncc.edu/pagoolka/LC.html>

<sup>19</sup> Adapted from Reginald Adkins survey, available:  
<http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/preparing-future-leaders/docs/conflict-management-styles-quiz.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Adapted from Simon Baron-Cohen and Sally Wheelwright's survey, available:  
<http://glennrowe.net/baroncohen/empathyquotient/empathyquotient.aspx>

<sup>21</sup> Adapted from the University of Arkansas For Medical Sciences survey, available:  
<http://www.uams.edu/diversity/test.asp>



## Results

### Survey population

A total of 185 people started the survey, with 77 (41.6%) completing the survey. This represents 35% of the total alumni population and falls short of the desired 50%. Fifteen per cent of the total alumni population finished the survey.

For all years except 2012 the attrition rate of completing the survey was between 42-52%; the 2012 attrition rate was 66%. The reasons for this large incompleteness rate for 2012 are unknown, however it may be because many of the 2012 alumni are still at school and potentially have less access to reliable Internet connections. Ten people began the survey who were not part of the Trailblazer Program and were directed out of the survey.

Of the people who finished the survey, eight provinces were represented (all but Northern Cape). The majority came from Gauteng (53%), followed by Western Cape (19%) and Limpopo (14%).

Survey participants ranged in age from 17 to 23, with the majority being 18 and 19 (20% and 37% respectively). This is consistent with the majority of survey participants being 2011/2012 alumni.

### Group Interview participants

Twenty-nine people participated in five group interviews held in November and December 2013 in 5 locations across South Africa (4 provinces).

Initial plans were to hold a group interview in East Cape, however, owing to difficulties recruiting participants during exam time this was not possible. Lack of attendance in Cape Town resulted in a single person semi-structured interview.

Group interview participants aged from 17 to 21 years of age; came from all year groups; from both rural and urban schools; funded and independent. One third of participants were female.

### *Community Action Project Status*

A key variable investigated was the outcome of their Community Action Project (CAP). CAPs are classified in the three ways;

- 'not started' – learner attends a forum, but does no more (or negligible) planning or implementation once leaving forum
- 'not finished' – learner attends a forum, continues planning and either attempts to or physically begins implementing the project but is unable to finish the project
- 'ongoing/complete' – learner attends a forum, continues planning and successfully implements what is planned and the project either finishes or is continued to run in the community (by the participant or handed over to someone else)

The proportion of all CAPs that are started is referred to as the 'conversion rate' and the proportion of those started that finish is called the 'completion rate'.

### Survey

The greatest proportion of survey participants across all years fell into the 'ongoing/complete' category, followed by 'not finished' and 'not started' as seen in table one. Of those who were 'ongoing/completed'





the majority were from 2012. Just over half of those 'not finished' were from 2011. Responses were more evenly spread across the years for 'not started' however, 2012 had the most and 2010 the least.

Survey participants had higher conversion rates (87%) when compared to the combined cohort of 2011 and 2012 (67%), but had lower completion rates (50%, compared to 64%). Conversion and completion rates are unavailable for the 2009 and 2010 cohorts as this data was not collected prior to 2011.

*Table 1: CAP status by year*

Year	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/complete	Total
2009	7 (41%)	6 (35%)	4 (24%)	17
2010	5 (28%)	9 (50%)	4 (22%)	18
2011	8 (11%)	40 (53%)	27 (36%)	75
2012	10 (15%)	12 (19%)	43 (66%)	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 (17%)</b>	<b>67 (38%)</b>	<b>78 (45%)</b>	<b>175</b>

## Group Interview

Just fewer than 20 per cent of projects were run alone and everyone had started at least one project – multiple people had started more than one.

Of the 29 people who participated in group interviews, no one had 'not started' a project; just over half had started but 'not finished' a project and the remainder had an 'ongoing/complete' CAP as shown in table 2.

*Table 2: Number of group interview participants by CAP status and cohort*

CAP status	2009/10	2011/12	Total
Not planned/Not started	0	0	0
Started, not finished	7	8	15
Ongoing/Complete	4	10	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>



## RESULTS SECTION 1: Non-cognitive competencies development

We investigated the relationship between different non-cognitive competencies and Community Action Project (CAP) status through both the online survey and group interviews.

### Surveys

#### Grit

Overall there is an upward trend in average grit scores from 'not-started' to 'ongoing/complete' CAP (approx 1 point), meaning those who have completed a CAP are more gritty than those who started but didn't finish, and those that didn't start, as seen in table 3. This is a positive, not very strong association ( $r = 0.19$ ). The range in scores across all years and CAP status is from 1.75 – 5 (median 3.5).

Table 3: Grit (not at all gritty = 1; extremely gritty = 5)

Year	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/Complete
2009 + 2010	3.33	3.531	3.661
2011 + 2012	3.083	3.5	3.617
Mean	3.276	3.507	3.625

#### Growth Mindset

Table 4 shows an upward trend from those 'not started' toward a stronger growth mindset for those who's CAPs were 'ongoing/complete'. There was very little correlation between CAP status and growth mindset ( $r = 0.08$ ) however there was a stronger link between growth mindset and grit ( $r = 0.44$ ).

The jump in scores between 'not started' and 'not finished' may indicate a point where moving to a stronger growth mindset is necessary amount of growth mindset. Range 1-8, median 5.

Table 4: Growth Mindset (fixed mindset = 0; growth mindset = 8)

Year	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/Complete
2009 + 2010	5	5.12	5.42
2011 + 2012	5.33	5.5	5.53
Mean	5.071	5.411	5.512

#### Locus of Control

There is a slight trend across CAP status for locus of control, suggesting a link between a stronger internal locus of control and finishing a CAP, though the differences are small ( $r = -0.05$ ). Results are seen in table 5. There is a big spread and a high median score indicating a few outliers in an otherwise moderately external locus of control group. Range 3-8, median 6.

Table 5: Locus of Control (8 indicates an external locus of control, lower scores indicates strengthening internal locus of control)

Year	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/Complete
2009 + 2010	5.90	5.87	6.57
2011 + 2012	6.33	5.84	5.65
<b>Mean</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5.852</b>	<b>5.820</b>

#### Social Awareness components

We looked at three components of social awareness to gauge interpersonal skill levels:

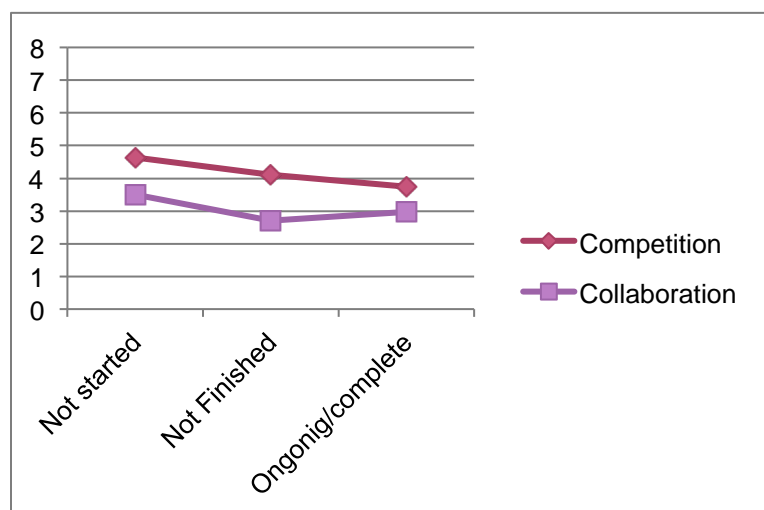
1. Empathy: Table six shows overall empathy scores having a marked increase between those 'not started' and those 'not finished', falling again for 'ongoing/complete' (though still higher than 'not started'). The 2009/10 cohort scores higher on all CAP categories and the same trend across CAP categories hold for each cohort. Most scores were in the moderate to upper empathy range (rrange 0-6, median 5). There was very little correlation with CAP status ( $r = -0.12$ ).

Table 6: Empathy (higher empathy = 6)

Year	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/Complete
2009 + 2010	4.636	5.5	4.714
2011 + 2012	4	5.115	4.656
<b>Mean</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>5.205</b>	<b>4.666</b>

2. Conflict management: competition and collaboration: Those who started and completed a project have a higher inclination toward collaboration than those who did not (figure 1), perhaps indicating a collaborative disposition is important for having beginning and completing a CAP. For both collaboration and competition, there is a wide range of scores across all years, however there is a more concentrated association with collaboration than with competition across all CAP statuses. Neither were correlated with CAP status ( $r = -0.05$  and  $-0.12$  respectively)

Figure 1: Competition and collaboration (Strongest = 1)



3. Cultural Sensitivity: Overall cultural sensitivity averages trend downward with CAP categories so that those who don't start a project are slightly more culturally sensitive than those whose CAP was 'ongoing/complete' ( $r = -0.10$ ) as seen in table seven. There was a full spread of scores with most above 6 and the median 7.

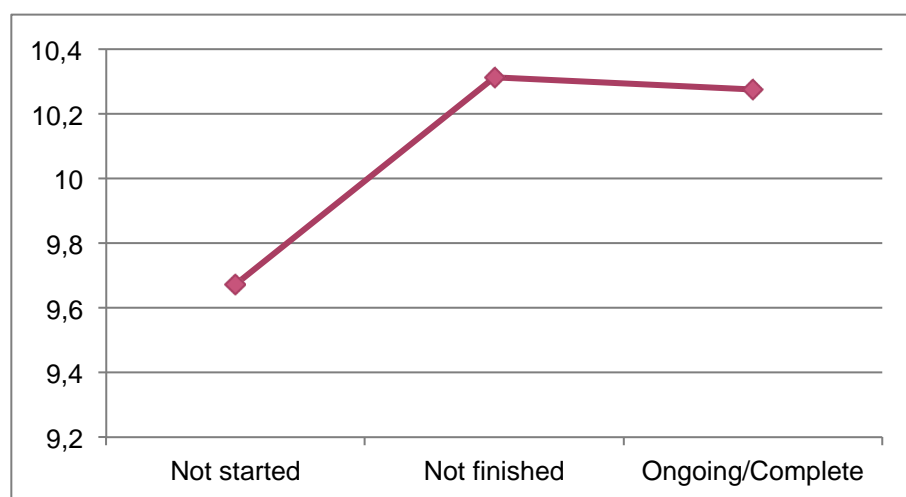
Table 7: Cultural sensitivity (higher cultural sensitivity = 10)

Year	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/Complete
2009 + 2010	7.727	7.375	6.428
2011 + 2012	7.333	7.615	7.5
<b>Mean</b>	<b>7.642</b>	<b>7.558</b>	<b>7.307</b>

#### Weighted cumulative score

Overall there is an upward trend in cumulative score averages, with those 'not-finished' having a lower score than those who started projects and those in 'ongoing/complete'. While 'ongoing/complete' scored higher on intrapersonal scores, the greater scores for social awareness score (interpersonal skills) from 'not finished' pushed 'not finished' 0.04 points higher as seen in figure two. There is unlikely any functional difference between these two scores.

Figure 2: Weighted cumulative scores (16 = highest)



#### Group Interviews

Group interview participants generally had non-cognitive skills scores slightly below the average on all categories.

The main skills learnt during running a CAP did not differ markedly between people that 'didn't finish' and those whose CAPs were 'ongoing/complete'. Most of the skills people developed were in relation to working with people, facing negative attitudes of others, and encountering challenges in the process of doing their CAP.



While very few people used the words / labels for the non-cognitive skills we were measuring, many of the same or related concepts were mentioned time and again. For example, while no one talked about 'grit' we can see the components of grit in conversations about persistence or perseverance, resilience, sticking to the plan, and remaining committed to the goal.

The main non-cognitive skills learnt for both groups (as described by participants) were:

- Patience; described as patience with the process and allowing results to happen rather than being discouraged.
- Perseverance; continuing to try to succeed in spite of setbacks, as described by one participant "it's a lot of perseverance...no such thing as an easy path. And at the end of the day you just need to know how to push through" (Male, 2011 cohort)
- Resilience; a power that comes from within you, that is greatly enhanced by having supportive people around you and "knowing you're not alone... you have to go through, whether you finished or not finished, we all had to go through the setbacks...we had to go through disappointment...those things, by attempting the CAP, you learn those things" (Female, 2011 cohort).
  - Resilience was spoken about as being stronger in the presence inspiration (either a friend or remembering a story), and motivation for a cause.
  - For those whose projects were 'ongoing/complete', resilience included having a vision and keeping a commitment to a goal and knowing that they didn't want to give up.
  - No one in 'not finished' group spoke of resilience being strengthened by going through disappointments and setback or the connection to persistence, where as people in other groups did.
- Courage; developing a sense of personal courage was considered important as a source of strength for persistence. The basis for this was also building self-respect, pride and determination.
- Self-confidence; also linked to courage and resilience. People spoke about building confidence and self-esteem when having success, and as a motivator to begin something not tried before.
  - Learning about yourself and acknowledging your strengths and weaknesses was integral and helped people accept the need to believe in yourself and your ideas
  - Building self-confidence assisted them in approaching people for support and to stay on track when others might be helpful, as described by a 2009 delegate, "what I took from enke, I think its courage and confidence...because if you don't have faith in yourself no one else will". (Female, 2009 cohort)
- Teamwork/collaboration; described as the feeling of being united with others (team, peers, teachers etc) with a shared purpose. Often this meant achieving more than would have been possible on ones own. To do this best, people spoke of needing to realise that, "not everything is about me" (Female, 2010 cohort), accepting others and overcoming feeling of competition or "self-focus".
  - Those who completed a CAP acknowledge teamwork as a major contributor to success. This was best expressed by one participant who said, "without the team it wouldn't have happened – there was just too much to do. Something would've fallen by the wayside. We all brought different skills, and motivation, and communication to make it happen...It's 'our' problem". (Male, 2011 cohort)
- Hard work and inspiration (growth mindset);
  - Finding inspiration from others, particularly enke alumni, gave people the idea that they could complete their plans and led to them initiating action.



- For those whose CAPs were 'ongoing/complete' inspiration grew an interest in being more innovative and to push forward. This meant "[learning] you have to work hard. Whether you like it or not..." (Male, 2011) in order to achieve the goal. For one young woman, it was realizing "...that nothing is impossible". (Female, 2009)



The following two areas of learning were only expressed by those in the category "ongoing/complete":

- Empathy; this was described as developing care and regard for others which built commitment to the project, and compassion to reach out to beneficiaries and for support. Also considered necessary for teamwork, building social skills and better collaboration. Some people spoke of having empathy as helping to understand the context better so you can design a better project plan.
- Adapting to setbacks; this is part of resilience but only mentioned by those who completed their CAP. This is basically the ability to modify the plan based on evolving needs and contexts. It's also about accepting that some things don't work out and that trying a new way is not defeat – related to growth mindset



## RESULTS PART 2: Life Destination

This section describes the answers to questions regarding where alumni are now and their involvement in civic life.

### Education and employment

As seen in table eight, just over 30 per cent of alumni were still at high school.

Of those who have left school, 76 per cent are in undergraduate study, 100 per cent of those from the 2009/10 are enrolled in further education, and 72 per cent from 2011/12. As seen in table 9, there appears to be very little impact of starting or completing a project on attending university overall. While there were marginally less alumni listed as enrolled at university for the 'Ongoing/Complete' group, there were more in the FET and didn't finish high school group as well.

Thirteen people are working, 10 people are working while studying and three are working only.

Overall, two people (3%) didn't finish high school and eleven (16%) matriculated. Of both groups,

- One is studying nursing and working
- Two are working full time
- One is on a bridging program
- Two are waiting to hear if they have been accepted to university
- Nine are not working or in further study

Table 8: Education post-enke by year and CAP status (n = 97)

CAP status	Education status					
	Finished high school with matric	Didn't finish high school	Enrolled in undergraduate degree	FET	Total	Still at high school
<i>Not started</i>	3 (20%)	0	12 (80%)	0	15	1
<i>Not finished</i>	6 (22%)	0	21 (78%)	0	27	9
<i>Complete/ongoing</i>	2 (8%)	2 (8%)	18 (72%)	2 (8%)	25	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 (16%)</b>	<b>2 (3%)</b>	<b>51 (76%)</b>	<b>2 (3%)</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>30 (31%)</b>

### Not in Training, Education or Employment (NEET)

Nine people (9%) are not working or in education or training. All these people are in the 2011/12 cohort (19%). These people are working unpaid in family business, looking for apprenticeships and considering study options. While not all people in this category answered the non-cognitive skill section of the survey, from the ones that did we see those that finished their CAP have a higher non-cognitive skills score, while both are below average. The only indicator on which people from both CAP categories scored lower than



the overall average was on locus of control (which means they are more internally located than the overall group).

When compared to the national average, the alumni are doing better on all education indicators as shown in table 9 below.

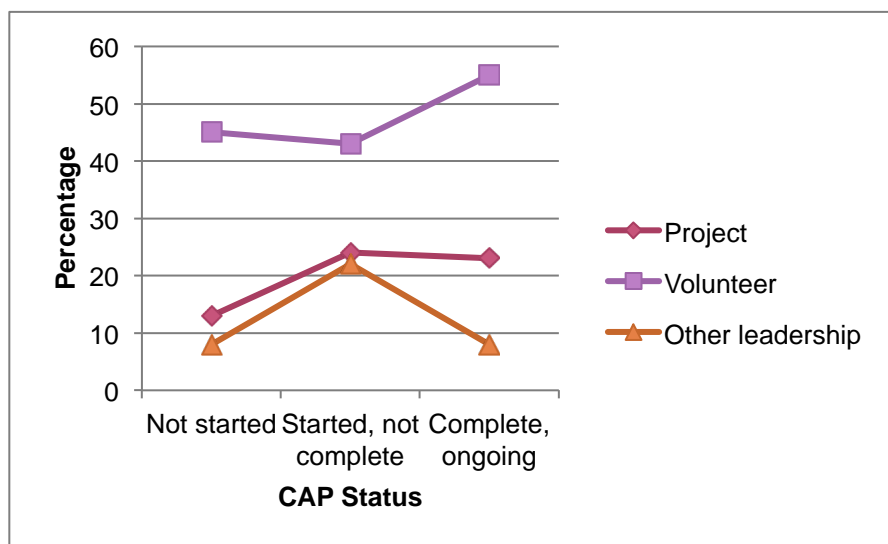
Table 9: Education outcome compared to national averages<sup>22</sup>

	Passed Matric	Failed Matric	Qualified for bachelor	University enrolment rate	NEET (15-24 yo)
National	70.1%	29.8%	24.3%	16.3% <sup>23</sup>	31%
2011 survey participants	95%	5%	74%	74%	19%
All survey participants	97%	3%	79%	76%	9%

### Community engagement post-enke

We wanted to know if people were either continuing to start projects, volunteering with other people or organizations; or were active with other youth leadership organizations. This was a proxy measure of community involvement and continued action on the enke experience and values.

Figure 3: Continued action post-enke by CAP status



<sup>22</sup> Department of Basic Education 2011, 'Education Statistics in South Africa 2011' Department of Basic Education, South African Government

<sup>23</sup> Statistics South Africa 2012, 'General Household Survey', Statistics South Africa



Comparing the groups by CAP status, between 13-24% (16.5% average) of alumni have started their own community projects since leaving enke as shown in figure 3. It seems if alumni started a project during enke (regardless of finishing it) they are more active starting projects now. Project topics include;

- Education (mostly at high schools)
- Environmental awareness campaigns
- Fundraising for church projects (including clothes donations)
- Youth leadership and peer mentoring
- Entertaining/working with children from underprivileged areas

Alumni who completed a CAP are more active in volunteering (55%) than those who didn't start (45%) and didn't finish (43%).

Those who started but didn't finish a CAP are almost 3 times as active in other youth leadership organizations than the other two CAP status categories.

There is little to suggest a difference in those that started and finished a project regarding education and employment.



### RESULTS PART 3: Factors for Completing Projects (support)

We hypothesised that people with higher non-cognitive skills and multiple avenues for support would be more successful in both starting a project and going on to complete a project (ongoing/complete). In this section we present our findings on potential factors involved with finishing a project, focusing strongly on support structures. We also wanted to see if there were any demographic or prior life-experience indicators that would correlate with project status.

#### Individual variables for CAP conversion and completion

##### *Demographic variables*

Table ten shows that of all the variables we collected data on, there is no major distinction between genders, whether they were funded or independent, or age (median age for all is 17) on CAP status. More than double the amount of people whose CAP was 'ongoing/complete' worked in a team than those who started but didn't finish. There is no obvious trend in CAP status regarding rural or urban school, or whether alumni attended the enke: Forum with fellow schoolmates, though it does appear going with others might be beneficial for starting a project (50% 'not-started' were the only attendee from their school, while only 26% alone for 'not finished')

*Table 10: Key variables to starting and finishing a project (n = 59)*

Variable	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/complete
Gender	Male 40% Female 60%	Male 41% Female 59%	Male 45% Female 55%
Funding source	Independent 18.2% Partner / CSR 81.8%	Independent 24.1% CSR 75.9%	Independent 20.6% CSR 79.8%
Age at forum	17= 50% 16 = 30% 18= 20%	17 = 62% 16 = 31% 18 = 7%	17=61% 16 = 36% 19 = 3%
Worked in a team	N/A	16%	37%
Went to enke alone	50%	26%	32%
Rural school	44%	70%	54%

##### *Reasons for not finishing the CAP*

Thirty-five people (51%) answered this question. The biggest reason cited for not finishing a CAP was 'not enough time' (74%) and was consistent across all years. The next biggest reason cited across all years was 'didn't have the right/enough resources'; the third, a lack of support from peers to run the project.

Finding people to support your CAP (either as a team or as beneficiaries – expressed as 'no one seemed interested in my ideas') was ranked highly only by those in 2011 and 2012. This was backed up by comments like "people in higher places were not willing to help, like social workers".





## Reasons for not starting a CAP

Twenty-four people (80%) this question. The biggest reason for not starting a CAP overall was also 'not enough time'. This was true for all years except 2012 where the biggest reason was shared between;

- No support to run the project
- Not enough money
- Didn't have enough/right resources

Overall the next biggest challenges for all years were not knowing what to do or how to do it, and not having enough money.

The options 'not enough money' and 'no support to run the project' were only selected by 2011 and 2012 participants. Rather, for people in 2009 and 2010 finding people to support the idea and believe in the project were listed as bigger challenges.

Not finding a suitable venue and not being motivated enough were not listed as reasons by anybody. One person listed 'procrastination' as a reason.

## Support

### Type and outcome

enke is interested in what the best support for program participants looks like. We asked people to describe from whom they got support and what the outcome of that support was (eg, money, new skills, emotional support) and compared it to their CAP status. Results show that support from family and friends is very important for both starting and completing a CAP (57% for 'not started' compared to 71-78% for 'not finished' and 'ongoing/complete'). Interestingly emotional support was the biggest support people got from family and friends. To finish a CAP we also see higher support reported from the school and enke. 'Ongoing/complete' people had three times more support from community groups; mostly in the form of facilities.

The table below shows the percentage of that CAP status group that listed each support structure as their top support and what the most common "outcome" of support was in each category.

Table 11: Proportion of people receiving support by CAP status

Support	Not started	Not finished	Ongoing/complete
Family	57% (motivation)	78% (emotional support)	71% (emotional support)
Friends	43% (motivation)	84% (motivation)	82% (emotional support)
School	24% (skills)	54% (facilities)	80% (facilities)
Community group	9.5% (skills)	8% (motivation)	35% (facilities)
Corporate	5% (money)	10% (connection to others, materials)	8% (money, connection to others)
Government	9.5% (money)	3% (time and action)	4% (time and action)
enke	61% (motivation)	24% (motivation)	88% (motivation)



### Number of support structures utilised

People described receiving support from different people, in different ways, to help them with their CAP. In some instances this was a teacher who allowed access to a classroom and chalk, and in others it was a neighbour who offered ideas and encouragement. The number of people that each person received support from was counted during the group interviews and is presented below (table 12). Those in the 'ongoing/complete' category had a greater number of different support structures, with the most common being four or more.

Table 12: Number of different support structures utilised from group interviews

Number of supports	Not finished	Ongoing/complete
1	2	0
2-3	10	7
4+	1	6
<b>Mode</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

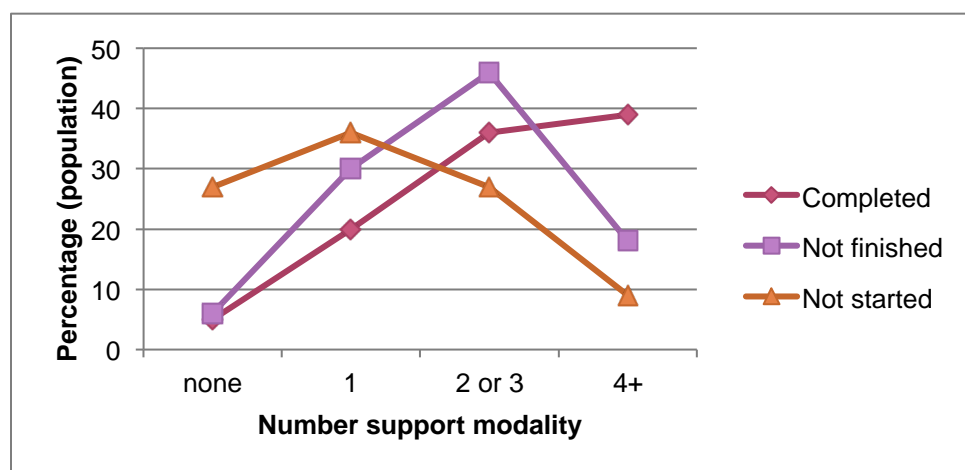
### Support from enke

As enke has evolved so has the support offered. For alumni from 2009/10 there was very little support compared to those from 2011/12. According to the survey, 48 per cent of 2009/10 alumni reported receiving at least one form of support compared to 91 per cent from 2011/12. The majority of 2009/10 received only one form of support, whereas the majority of the later cohort received 2-3 forms of support.

Telephone calls and conversations with facilitators or presenters were the most common form of support for both cohorts. For the 2011/12 cohort, the Facebook group and text messaging were also common.

Having multiple support modalities from enke may be important for finishing a CAP. As seen in figure four, almost two-thirds of those who didn't start a CAP received one or no support from enke whereas three-quarters of those who finished received two or more (and two-thirds of those 'not finished').

Figure 4: Number of modalities of enke support by CAP status (n=88)





## Non-cognitive competencies and CAP status by cohort

One way of describing the impact of support from enke is through the difference in proportion of CAPs started and carried through completion for the different cohorts. Another is to describe the non-cognitive skill development compared between 2009/10 and 2011/12.

On both indicators we see the cohort with support (2011/12) having more success with community action projects as seen in table 1 (page 13). The conversion rate of this sample for 2009/10 is 65 per cent and for 2011/12 is 87 per cent. The completion rate is 35 per cent for 2009/10 and 57 per cent for 2011/12.

Individual non-cognitive competencies were compared across CAP status and cohort to investigate trends for non-cognitive competency development, shown in table 13. Without a baseline measurement we cannot ascertain in which direction any relationship goes.

*Table 13: Non-cognitive skills by cohort*

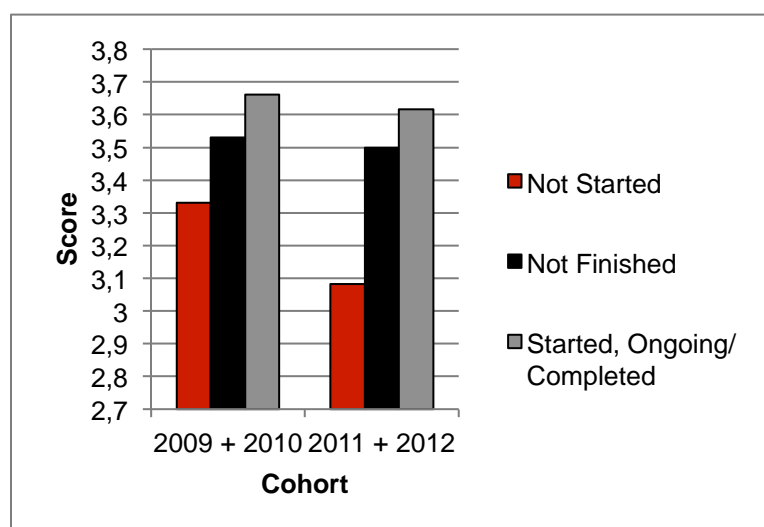
Year	Grit	Collaboration	Growth mindset	Locus of control	Empathy	Cultural sensitivity	Weighted cumulative
2009/10	3.48	2.73	5.15	6.07	4.92	7.26	9.95
2011/12	3.54	3.48	5.50	5.77	4.81	7.54	10.27

### Grit

Overall grit score for 2009/10 is lower than for the later cohort. The lowest score was for those 'not started' in 2011/2012. The difference in scores between the two 'not-started' cohorts is the biggest of the three CAP categories, and accounts for the average score being lower despite 'not finished' and 'ongoing/complete' having higher individual scores (seen in figure five). The upward trend across CAP categories seen here is in keeping with the trend seen in overall mean scores for both cohorts.

Despite having a higher grit score on all individual CAP status measures, a lower grit score overall for the unsupported cohort may be explained by the smaller sample size. Individually higher grit scores by CAP status makes sense in light of needing to go the extra mile to make a CAP happen with limited support.

*Figure 5: Grit scores by CAP status and cohort*

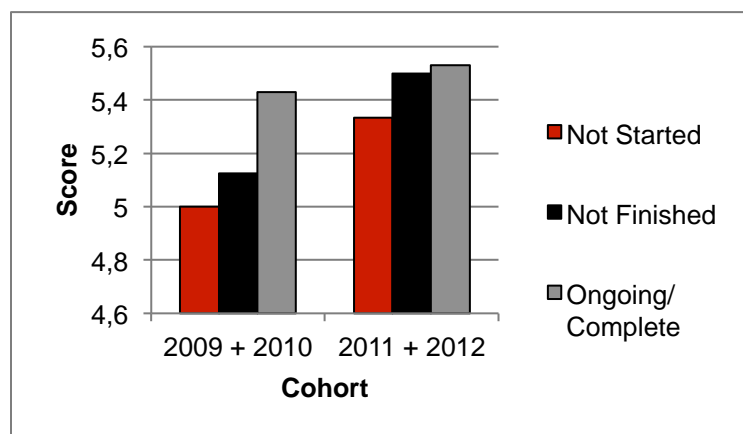




### Growth mindset

A higher growth mindset is seen in the 2011/12 cohort than the 2009/10, but both scores are on the 'growth' side of the scale rather than the 'fixed' side. There is a clear trend for both cohorts of increasing strength in growth mindset from 'not started' to 'ongoing/complete' as shown in figure six. The 2011/12 has a stronger growth mindset on all CAP categories and may provide evidence of how the type of support offered by enke plays into more of a learning mindset. These trends match the trend seen in mean growth mindset for both cohorts.

Figure 6: Growth mindset score by CAP status and cohort

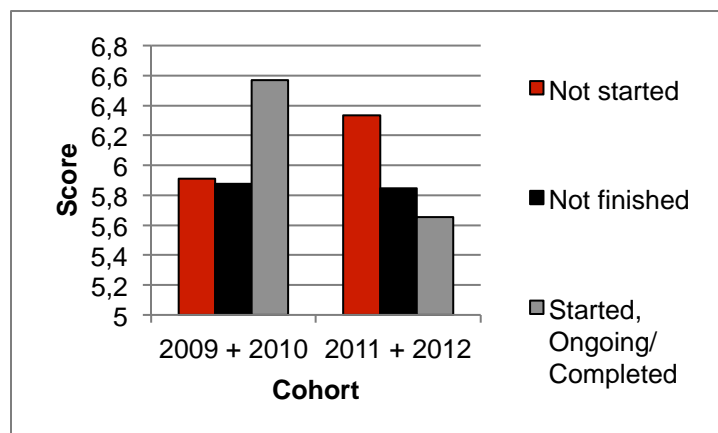


### Locus of control

A higher internal locus of control (greater self-efficacy and a lower score) would be expected for those that finish a CAP, but this is only obvious for the 2011/12 cohort. In fact, in the 2009/10 cohort the trend is precisely the opposite of what is expected (see figure seven). 2011/12 scores match more closely what is expected with the 'ongoing/complete' group trending downward toward the internal side of the scale. Scores for the 2011/12 cohort match the overall mean scores for both cohorts.

These individual scores are reflected in the average scores – the 2009/10 cohort has a higher score than the 2011/12 cohort (6.07 and 5.77 respectively – higher score is stronger external locus of control). All scores sit on the 'external locus of control' side of the scale.

Figure 7: Locus of control by CAP status and cohort



## Social awareness



### Conflict management: competition and collaboration

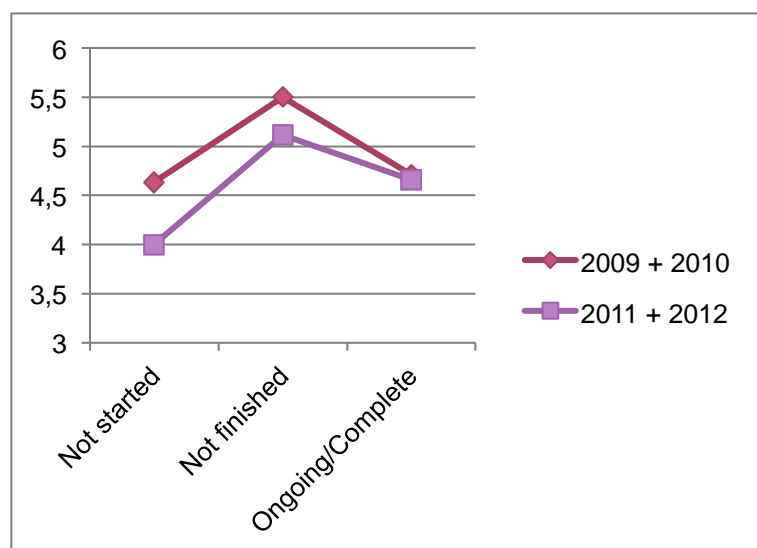
Average scores for both cohorts sit on the stronger side of the collaboration, with the 2009/10 cohort being more strongly collaborative. The highest collaborative score (less collaborative) was in the 'not started' group from 2011/12 and lowest (strongly collaborative) in 'ongoing/complete' 2009/10. Both of the cohorts fit the trend seen in the overall mean scores for both cohorts.

Competition is strongest among 'ongoing/complete' 2011/12 and lowest among 'not finished/ 2009/10. Neither cohort fits the overall trend.

### Empathy

Empathy scores are higher for all CAP categories for the 2009/10 cohort. Both cohorts share a similar pattern with 'not finished' having the highest score, 'not started' and then 'ongoing/complete' as seen in figure eight. This is in keeping with overall trends for empathy seen earlier.

Figure 8: Empathy scores by cohort

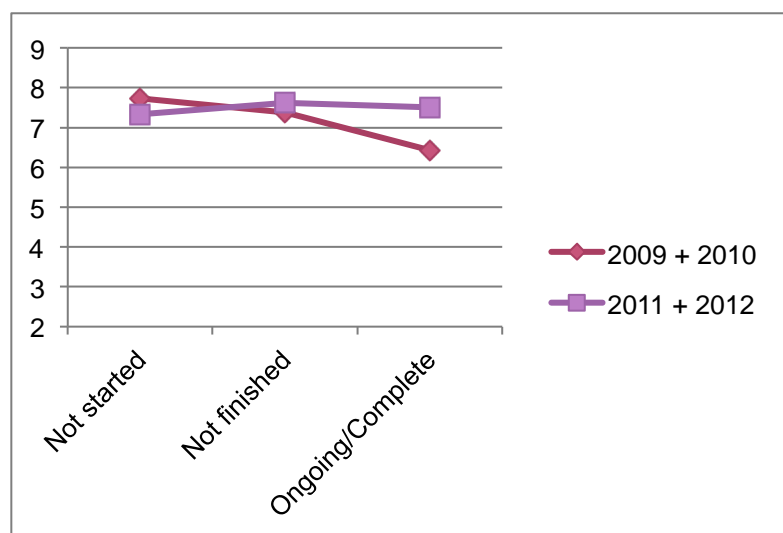


### Cultural sensitivity

Overall cultural sensitivity scores are higher for 2011/12 and hold steady across all CAP categories (see figure 9). Conversely there is a downward trend for the 2009/10 cohort, suggesting those who didn't start a project have higher cultural sensitivity than those who did. This is in keeping with the overall averages seen across years.



Figure 9: Cultural sensitivity scores by cohort



### Barriers and enablers – qualitative data

To better understand why people start and manage to finish we asked people about the process of running a CAP, what they needed to succeed and who supported them. There were no real differences between people from different cohorts, other than talking about support from enke.

The groups identified most of the same factors – barriers were often the absence of what was an enabler in other circumstances eg, where having an insufficiently detailed or realistic plan was a barrier, the presence of a solid and achievable plan was an enabler. This was especially evident for support structures, where those who didn't finish spoke a lot about gatekeepers and struggling to get people to buy into the project, those whose CAP was 'ongoing/complete' put a lot of their success down to teamwork and having people who believed in their dreams.

There are strong links between many of the enablers. Most of the things that help people get through their projects relate to perseverance and resilience (eg, confidence, motivation, having a clear vision, having the right support).

Almost half of all participants started another project after the first one didn't work.

The results on barriers and enablers are presented below.

#### Barriers to finishing a CAP

- Lost motivation to carry on; especially after encountering difficulties and there is no one to help come up with new ideas or to problem solve with.
- Lack of support for implementation; described as people needing help from peers to initiate or continue to run the project; needing support from gatekeepers and being unable to get people to buy into the idea.
  - Felt that people in the community or school didn't understand why the project was necessary and didn't want to participate. This included the "apathy" of peers as described by one young woman when trying to get support from people her own age who



responded with “woah, this is how we do things, this is our daily lives” and were unsupportive.

- Feeling unaccountable – some of the 2009/10 cohort spoke of a lack of attention or reporting to enke as a reason many people didn’t finish as there was no one keeping track of what they were doing.
  - Gatekeepers – people in positions of power not supporting or giving approval. Mostly this is principals and teachers, but in other cases social workers, hospital staff, the mayor. Some of this was attributed to perceptions of what young people can or should be doing, such as a principal telling one young man “[they] are just a bunch of school kids” (Male, 2011 cohort) and not granting permission or support.
  - Not having people in the area to continue planning, problem solving or sharing stories with.
- Project too big and inadequate plans
    - Plan wasn’t specific or detailed enough
    - Need a tangible work plan to overcome obstacles, keep up motivation
    - An absence of planning for risks and failures and feeling unprepared
    - Inadequate planning was detrimental for time management
  - Hard to see results as a demotivating factor
    - Can be difficult to see desired changes or measure success, especially where change is not tangible (eg, youth ‘inspiration’ projects)
  - Perceptions of challenges by young people – how alumni view the problem as insurmountable or fatalistic as opposed to finding solutions and adapting the plan. Also tightly linked to support and how peers and community view problems or young people as active solution generators.

#### *Enablers to completing a CAP*

- Teamwork; as a specific form of support. Team members are usually not other enke participants but rather friends, family or school staff.
  - Finding and recruiting the right people for your team who bring necessary skills like teaching or language skills is important, especially when adapting to the needs of the beneficiaries. People who are also able to share the workload of running a project.
  - Team members provide positive reinforcements of success (and boost confidence). They also helped problem solve when participants didn’t know what to do or how to do it, as well as providing a range of emotional support measures.
- Seeing results from the project; process progress and beneficiaries
  - Getting something happening is really useful for showing others that alumni are serious and competent. These results create buy-in: as the community begins seeing success they are more likely to get behind the idea. As described by one young man, “so you have to work with what you got but be persistent so that you can show people you are serious so that you can get support. Work with what you’ve got to show people you’re serious.” (Male, 2010 cohort)
  - Results are an important part of continued motivation and positive reinforcement of own development for participants. This encouraged people to go bigger and better with their projects and continue their own personal development.
  - Many participants spoke of success in one project fostering a desire second projects through feeling proud of themselves, like, “it was done, that was me” (Female, 2011 cohort) and changed mindsets around self-competence.
- Having a clear vision can maintain commitment and facilitate clearer planning
  - Keeping the end in mind helps overcome discouragement and fosters focus on the steps needed to get there, “It’s good to know what you want in order to know your end results – begin with the end in mind... because you are going to get bumped around so you learn



as you go, you have to know where you are going and that way you can focus on getting there. So for me that was the most important thing I learnt is knowing what you want and working backward and not to get discouraged.” (Male, 2010 cohort)

- Having a vision and a plan helps people buy into the idea and see ways they can provide support. Helps get support from others.
- It's important to have a realistic and achievable goal, both so that participants succeed and so they can easily come back to the goal after setbacks.
- Resilience and persistence – bouncing back and keeping going
  - Persistence includes hard work and sacrifice, and being able to learn the skills needed to adapt to changing circumstances. Learning to be resilient is central for persistence.
  - Emotional support from others is very important for maintaining resilience and persistence.
  - Internal motivation (for the goal, for sense of self, as a factor of leadership) is important for persistence and resilience.
  - Having a good response, or a few quick wins, prompts action and persistence when challenges arise later.
  - Much like seeing results, if alumni could show others that they are persistent it was a way of demonstrating commitment and seriousness. This builds other's confidence in them and fosters greater support.
- Ability to adapt the plan to the needs of the beneficiaries
  - Being vision focused but aware enough to notice that the project needs to adapt to better meet the needs of those you're trying to serve, for example one project added a drug awareness component after seeing the need, and another found a team member who was better able to relate to the students.
- Doing something you're passionate about
  - Helps maintain motivation throughout the project, “stay motivated and do something you're passionate about. You can't continue something you have no drive for.” (Male, 2012).
  - Being passionate also helps inspire others to join the project and helps get buy-in.
- There's a real need
  - When people see a real need for change and feel their project is working toward a tangible improvement in people's lives, they continue working and are driven to succeed, “but the motivation to not give up was because of the need to help people with their problems...needed to create a support system for the girls. I just thought, 'I can't leave this school without making a difference'” (Female, 2009 cohort).
- Support structures
  - In contrast to the barriers, getting people to understand the project and what is to be achieved creates buy-in. As more people come to understand the ideas and motivations they are more willing to assist and become more involved.
  - Having someone to dream with and to help plan how to turn the dream into reality. This is both practical support in terms of planning, but also emotional support by having someone who believes in the participant and their ideas. These people often have a way of keeping participants on track and encouraging accountability. Facilitators were described as bringing back the motivation gained at forum and help with problem solving.
  - Having a team is most useful for practical support and to help problem solve.
  - Teachers and principals are most important for encouragement and granting permission for action on CAPs



## Discussion

### Non-cognitive skills and enke

#### *Intrapersonal competencies: Grit, growth mindset, locus of control*

As hypothesised, a trend of increasing grit, growth mindset and internal locus of control was seen across CAP status, with lower scores for those who did not start a project. While we can't say there was a causal relationship because we do not have baseline data, it does suggest that these non-cognitive skills appear to be positively linked to finishing a CAP and can be thought of a 'proof of concept' for the program. None of the average scores were extreme, suggesting that moderate scoring is enough for achievement in the CAP process ie, starting a project.

We see the growth of people's resilience, persistence, perseverance and need for achievement as separate concepts but with common themes related to grit. So while no one in the group interviews mentioned 'grit' there was a lot of discussion about how people sustain their efforts over the nine months and how they continue to motivate themselves after setbacks. Participants reported gaining other non-cognitive skills during their CAP experience such as self-confidence, self-esteem, patience and courage.

Duckworth et al<sup>24</sup> recognise a link between growth mindset and grit – that having a stronger growth mindset is beneficial to acting gritty – which is also borne-out in our findings. In their stories of hard work, those who finished their CAPs show that growth mindset may be related to grit by effecting the way people see obstacles as moments of learning rather than defeat, enabling people to adapt their plans to challenges.

Undoubtedly the way people perceive challenges is linked to their sense of self-efficacy and their locus of control. Where alumni talk about finding courage and self-confidence, they may be expressing a growth in internal locus of control or their own self-efficacy. Moving from thinking about an idea to acting on it or overcoming challenges may be about having the courage to believe in themselves and their ability to achieve their goals – which is the very essence of self-efficacy. Our question is then what are the feedback loops between these constructs and how do find the trigger points to effect development?

Our qualitative data tells us these skills are built during the CAP experience, regardless of completion status. Just starting a CAP is important for showing people how to work in a team, improving resilience and perseverance, as well as building self-confidence and self-belief. Finding and maintaining inspiration and motivation is essential for the continued pursuit of goals and growth of these skills. Finding encouragement and inspiration from people on the ground was as important, if not more so, than from enke to 'keep the fire burning' after the enke: Forum. Finding the best way to do this will be a point of action for further program improvements.

#### *Social awareness: Collaboration, empathy, cultural sensitivity*

Emotional intelligence and learning to work with others are skills needed not just to run projects, but to be effective in the workplace and collaborative environments.<sup>25</sup> For our alumni, working in a team may be one of the best ways to successfully complete their project. To do that, they need to know not just how to identify people to work with but how to build their trust, and to work effectively together to achieve results.

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<sup>24</sup> Duckworth, A, Peterson, C, Matthews, M & Kelly, D 2007, 'Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long Term Goals', Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, vol 92, No 6, pp. 1087-1101.

<sup>25</sup> Goleman, D, 1995 Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ



In South Africa today, having the social skills to communicate and collaborate with a diversity of people is paramount.

Our findings show that those who finish a CAP have a stronger association with collaboration. The scores for all CAP categories were high for empathy and cultural awareness but were less than expected. Certainly interpersonal skills and understanding others were mentioned strongly by group interview participants – these skills are relevant for effective communication to garner support and buy-in which was seen as crucial to project success. However, these findings are unclear. Potentially interpersonal non-cognitive skills and social awareness are less important than intrapersonal skills for successfully completing projects, though this is an area for further research.

## **Life destination**

### *Education and employment*

Research shows a link between stronger non-cognitive skill development and life success such as educational attainment, employment outcomes and spelling bees success<sup>26,27,28</sup>. Our findings suggest enke alumni are in keeping with research literature with a 76 per cent university enrolment rate (our selected age-appropriate indicator). In comparison to South African national education averages, enke alumni are doing better on all indicators – from National School Certificate pass rates to university enrolment. This may be due to the selection bias of the survey sample but is more likely indicative of the selection bias in initially selecting participants for enke programs. They are generally a highly motivated group of people who require recommendations from their school to come, attesting to their ability to juggle schoolwork and extra-curricula activities. This may mean our cohorts begin their journey with higher non-cognitive skill development and greater likelihood of educational achievement.

Given the age of participants it is unrealistic to expect to see a high level of employment. Instead we have high levels of enrolment in further education with all of 2009/10 in enrolled in a tertiary institution. Only a few people are working while studying or only working.

Nine per cent of survey participants were not in education, employment or training (NEET), and all come from the 2011/12 cohort which is unusual given the higher non-cognitive scores. The NEET rate is at least three times less than the national average (currently 31%). There appears to be no link between NEET status and CAP category (ie, all had started a CAP) but there may be a slight link with non-cognitive skills – all had a cumulative score lower than the overall average and both groups score less on locus of control. According to numerous studies, locus of control and self-efficacy are important for educational achievement and may shed light on other life destination results.<sup>29</sup> Alternatively - given the small numbers involved – there may be other contextual factors at play.

<sup>26</sup> Heckman, J & Rubenstein, Y 2001, 'The Importance of Non-cognitive skills: Lessons from the GED testing program', *The American Economic Review*, vol91 No 2 pp 145 -149

<sup>27</sup> Tella, A, Tella, A & Adeniyi, S, 2011, 'Locus of Control, Interest in Schooling and Self-Efficacy as Predictors of Academic Achievement among Junior Secondary School Students in Osun State, Nigeria', *New Horizons in Education*, vol.59, No.1, pp 25 -37

<sup>28</sup> Brunello, G & Schlotter, M 2011, 'Non Cognitive Skills and Personality Traits: Labour Market Relevance and their Development in Education & Training Systems', IZA Discussion Paper No. 5743

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, Tella et al 2011



### *Action as leadership*

As part of enke's definition of youth leadership, taking action toward social benefit is considered part and parcel of what it means to demonstrate leadership. Being active in community groups or continuing to work on social entrepreneurial projects is not only part of our leadership model, but continues developing and reinforcing the non-cognitive skills essential for leadership. According to our findings, those who started but didn't finish a CAP are almost 3 times as active in other youth leadership organizations than the other two CAP categories. Alumni who completed a CAP are more active in volunteering. It seems that if alumni started a project during enke (regardless of finishing it) they are more active starting projects now. In some ways this continued engagement may represent a broader commitment to youth leadership and social action, or may be a result of an evolved self-efficacy or growth mindset developed through the program. We had no way of measuring which this is in this study but it certainly provides evidence for the activation of alumni and a continued motivation past the program.

### **Support for Community Action Projects**

#### *Support to start and finish a Community Action Project*

Put plainly, the majority of people need support to successfully run a project. Even where alumni from the 2009/10 cohort did not receive support from enke, they found support from others in their communities. Support can be either emotional or practical, though our findings suggest emotional support is the more important of the two. This may be necessary for continued support in developing non-cognitive skills, which are essential for continued progress on projects, as well as self-development while at school. It could simply be the lynchpin – if you have emotional support you'll feel better able to find practical support on your own, but without emotional support you'll struggle to keep going even if you have practical project skills and resources.

Support from family, friends and the school were significantly higher for those who had started a project and for those 'ongoing/complete'. These people were more likely to do education projects, which typically have more support from school and community. Education projects have certain characteristics that make them more likely to get support, which may have lessons for how program participants can engage others. Education projects are generally easily understood, tap into a widely held value (that education is a critically important issue in South Africa at this time), and are generally seen as a necessary add-on to a failing system.

Having a team (friends, family, teachers etc) was also significantly higher in these groups. Group interview data described a team as useful for implementing a CAP, problem solving and keeping motivated even if the project went unfinished. Not having a team was seen as a barrier to completion and sustained effort, which will have implications for program design.

The main reasons cited for not finishing a CAP from the survey (insufficient time, resources, support from peers) can all be addressed by improved support structures, including having the right people on your team. A possible exception is time, especially for those in matric, however having an effective team might be beneficial.<sup>30</sup> While some mentioned their plans being too big and insufficiently detailed, this could also be another manifestation of having a lack of support to both implement and support to adapt the plan to a more realistic vision.

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<sup>30</sup> Note: enke is currently planning on changing the starting Grade for the program from Grade 11 to Grade 10 to counter the time conflict with matric during the final months of participants' CAPs.





When compared to the enabling conditions for completing a project, we see a difference in the way people speak about getting support. For example, resilience in those that didn't finish is more about not wanting to fail, finding your passion and having patience with the process. For those that did complete a project, resilience is closely tied to persistence and how these things achieve greater buy-in from others and allow them to mobilise more support. This provides further evidence to the link between higher grit scores, persistence and resilience and the ability to gain support in those who completed a project.

Significantly, those who finished their CAPs reported more support from enke. Having two or more forms of support from enke might be most useful for starting, and less for finishing. Although the 'not finished' group interview data describes enke as not being the biggest form of support, enke was most useful for accountability (in the form of CAP reports) and motivation; and this was done mostly through facilitators. In contrast, those in the 'ongoing/complete' group interviews describe receiving a lot of support from enke (in the 2011/12 group where support was offered).

### *Non-cognitive competencies*

Those in the later cohort (2011 and 2012) had a marginally higher total non-cognitive score indicating a more supported version as beneficial for non-cognitive competencies. This cohort also started and finished a greater proportion of projects. We have no way of knowing the direction of any link between these three factors: we would hypothesise that increased support aids non-cognitive development and thus successful projects but it could also be the reverse (having support increases project success and running a project increases non-cognitive competencies). This is further emphasized by the fact that the 2009/10 cohort have had longer to develop non-cognitive skills (average age is higher, longer since program) outside of the program and still have a slightly lower score.

The major differences seen in non-cognitive competencies between cohorts are in grit and growth mindset. This may be a result of increased focus on coaching these skills during enke support. Unsurprisingly the highest grit score came from 'ongoing/complete' in 2009/10, demonstrating that grit is needed for success but doesn't require enke support to do so at that level (for people who were likely to finish regardless of support).

Emotional support was found to be the most important form of support across both cohorts. This fostered people's motivation and built their confidence, things that are necessary for both grit and internalising a locus of control.

### **Hypotheses**

*Hypothesis #1: "Starting a project" will have less impact on an individual's development of grit, social awareness, self-efficacy, and growth mindset than "completing a project".*

This hypothesis is supported for grit, growth mindset, locus of control.

The overall weighted cumulative scores were higher for those who completed a project than for those who started but didn't finish.

The trend did not follow for collaboration, empathy or cultural sensitivity (social awareness). Completing a project had the opposite trend.





*Hypothesis #2: Individuals with high levels of grit, social awareness, self-efficacy, and growth mindset will be less likely to be in the category of “not in education, employment or training”. (Note: this is being used as an age appropriate indicator of life success).*

This hypothesis is not supported when using CAP status as a proxy measure. Those who did not start a project (and had lower non-cognitive scores) were as likely to be in further education or employment as those in the 'ongoing/complete' category. However we did not explicitly collect this data.

*Hypothesis #3: that individuals from communities with multiple avenues for support and multiple, reinforcing opportunities will be more likely to initiate and complete projects and will also see higher non-cognitive skills development (e.g. schools with engaged teachers and multiple programs available for personal development).*

This hypothesis can be partly supported by the data showing multiple forms of support offered by different groups (namely family, friends school, community groups) are necessary ingredients for initiating and completing a project. Having at least one avenue for emotional support also seems to be integral for not only starting, but also completing.

*Hypothesis #4: that individuals from communities with multiple avenues for support and multiple, reinforcing opportunities will be less likely to be not in employment, education or training, regardless of their project start and completion rates.*

Our findings cannot really answer this hypothesis. Neither the survey nor the group interviews explored reinforcing support structures and links to employment, education or training.

Owing to small numbers we see no correlation between CAP status and those classified as NEET.

*Hypothesis #5: individual non-cognitive skill development is significantly higher in a program with structures for sustained support.*

This hypothesis is partially supported by our data. The program with more structured and sustained support (2011/12 cohort) had better scores for some the measures; grit, growth mindset, locus of control and cultural sensitivity. Overall cumulative score was slightly higher too, though we are unclear whether a difference of 0.32 is significant in any practical sense.

## **Limitations and further research**

### *Sample size and diversity*

Our plan was to reach 50 per cent of existing alumni (265) however once the survey data was cleaned we had a sample size of 185 (35%). While 35 per cent is still an acceptable sample size, the sample was biased toward alumni from 2012 and 2011 and people who had started and/or finished a community action project. In our recruitment we specifically targeted people from earlier years however given the time since engagement with enke (over four years in some cases) we lacked correct contact details and when asking alumni to refer us, they too had limited contact details.

Another unforeseen reason for limited diversity and smaller numbers was the online survey. Many people started the survey but were unable to finish it online either through lack of phone credit or bad Internet connection. Others were undoubtedly excluded because they were unable to access a computer. We



estimate this to be a small number but one that cannot be ignored. To combat these issues, we offered to call people to do the survey over the phone with them, an option only utilised by a few.

However, we have now established a good baseline engagement for future research with this population

### *Non-experimental design*

This study was designed to be exploratory rather than explanatory; however, a lack of baseline or other comparison data makes calculating correlation difficult. In many ways we cannot say how strong a link is or in which direction the association runs.

Further research is needed to explore the links between growth in non-cognitive competency development, experiential learning (ie, running a Community Action Project) and life destination. Doing a comparative longitudinal study would also shed light on the strength of association over time since leaving the program. This research gives a good baseline for following participants across the life course and test non-cognitive competency endurance and life successes.

### *Survey design*

All data is self-report and, in some instances an extended period since the program (selective memory bias would be present in group interviews as well). Issues of responder bias and validity affect non-cognitive skill data, however we attempted to overcome these by using validated questionnaires where possible. Grit, growth mindset and locus of control all use scientifically accepted measures and analysis. This may be a reason there are stronger trends in those three skills than with the three where we adapted from existing surveys. Finding reliable measures for different non-cognitive competencies is difficult, especially for multicultural adolescent groups.

Finding reliable measures to use with this population in the future will be very important for quantifying growth and impact. Further research is also required into how these non-cognitive competencies relate to one another and how they are specifically developed through the program – especially if we find that finishing a CAP leads to the biggest growth. We are also interested in finding reliable measures for other non-cognitive competencies to further explore some of the concepts mentioned in the group interviews such as self-belief, courage and patience.

### *Researcher characteristics*

All group interviews were conducted in English by two non-South Africans who work for enke. At least one participant in each group did not speak English as a first language. Though all participants appeared to have fluency with English, it cannot be discounted that there weren't at times language barriers. Having two people present was useful for clarification and double-checking during analysis, but some concepts may not have been fully explained or understood by both participants and the interviewers based on limited English language proficiency.

Having two enke staff conducting group interviews may also have led to more socially desirable responses or retelling only successes if participants thought that's what the interviewers wanted to hear.

Further research should be conducted by external researchers to evaluate the best possible support format for participants and how context plays into the CAP experience.



## Conclusion

This research has provided a snapshot of alumni from the enke: Trailblazer Program, and shown them to be engaged and skilled individuals. We have found a link between self-directed learning (the Community Action Project) and three non-cognitive skills needed for leadership. Our more structured and sustained support provided added benefits to program participants by allowing them access to necessary practical and emotional support that has resulted in increased numbers of started and finished projects. These findings are salient to program design and to the youth leadership development field.

### Implications for program design

#### *Curriculum development*

Our programs seek to do more than inspire young people. We want to create a network of skilled individuals, capable of taking their passion and turning it into reality. In line with other research, our findings suggest one way of doing this is by having a growth mindset, self-confidence, and a gritty personality. Our programs will need more explicit training for young people on the role of non-cognitive skills and how to grow them during the project process. Perceptions of failure and overcoming setbacks must be a focus for both training and support to assist more people in moving into either starting a project or finishing one.

#### *Support structure*

Providing participants with support is important for the process of finishing a CAP as well as personal growth. We have found higher non-cognitive competency development in those who finish CAPs and those with more support, so fine-tuning program support is paramount. Further implications are:

- Relationships with schools need to be strengthened to garner increased buy-in and support for learners who need it;
- A dispersed model of support that is peer-to-peer and contextually relevant might better meet the needs of participants for both practical and emotional support;
- Providing an accountability structure (through enke) provides motivation for continued effort, so exploring options for strengthening engagement with this process is likely worthwhile.

#### *Monitoring and evaluation*

More impact tracking and measurement will be needed to gauge the relationships between different non-cognitive skills, e.g. which are most important, and to test which other variables are at play. Reassessing which skills to look at, especially around social awareness, will further inform program design. Looking further afield to social capital may shed light on how people mobilise and optimise support.

#### *Life after enke*

People who go through enke are achieving in life and continuing to be socially active. Our goal is to improve the number of people starting a project as there appears to be link between 'leadership capacity' and starting a project. Potentially, encouraging teamwork and strengthening ties between program participants in the same area and school will be needed.

### Implications for youth leadership development

Various youth development programs aim to build the skills of young people and provide them with opportunities for leadership. What sets enke apart from other youth leadership development organisations

is our focus on non-cognitive development and our sustained support structures. enke alumni appear to be dynamic members of society, expressing leadership through community engagement and continued social entrepreneurialism. We believe this is important for youth development practitioners and policy makers for two reasons,



- Its not just individuals who benefit from improved skills and connection. To capitalise on the youth of South Africa today we need capable, passionate people with the leadership skills necessary to bring people together toward a common goal. Aside from our own passionate belief in young people to tackle some of the country's most pressing social issues, there is a lot of research showing benefits to society of equipped and motivated leaders.
- Overcoming apathy and negative attitudes to young people's abilities is hard. That's where supporting young people in their endeavours is paramount. Many of our participants spoke of struggling to get buy-in and not knowing people who had ever started something before. Especially in rural areas where diversity and access to opportunities is usually lower, our model of bringing people together, strengthening their skills and supporting them to take action, might be an effective method of developing young leaders.