

Project Title:	Feasibility assessment for Sparrow Schools (nonprofit educational service)
Client Organization:	Sparrow Schools Educational Trust (www.sparrowschools.co.za)
Location:	Johannesburg, South Africa
Period of Performance:	December 2008 – April 2009

Problem Statement and Background:

The Sparrow Schools Educational Trust enables children and youth with learning difficulties to grow into resilient, skilled and contributing members of society. Sparrow Schools achieve this by providing affordable, quality specialized education, practical vocational skills training and comprehensive learner support. Some of the children served by Sparrow Schools come from difficult circumstances, and in their short lives they have been impacted by the legacy of poverty, HIV/AIDS and unemployment.

Sparrow Schools wanted to explore options for scaling the organization's service offerings, for example through a for-profit consultancy, so that they could impact more people and communities and help other NGOs establish best practices.

Project Objectives:

- Conduct a feasibility study of consultancy
- Identify areas for Sparrow Schools to scale out or scale deep their service offerings
- Create and conduct teacher training sessions to help with teachers facing special challenges in the classroom

Approach / Methodology:

The Duke GCP team used interactive visioning sessions with Sparrow’s three main management teams (Foundation School, Combined School, and Sparrow general management) to identify organizational strengths and areas for improvement. They created a “workbook” so that Sparrow could replicate these visioning sessions with potential future clients and developed frameworks for developing workshops for knowledge transfer.

The team also did extensive research and interviews with Sparrow’s stakeholders to better understand their needs and identify feasibility of a for-profit consultancy and conducted an in-depth analysis of Sparrow’s opportunities to scale deep.

Sample Recommendations:

The Duke GCP team ultimately determined that, at the present time, Sparrow was not ready to launch a full-scale for-profit consultancy. However, the team identified many strengths that Sparrow could share with other NGOs (particularly educational organizations) to build strong management practices. The team also provided Sparrow with frameworks for developing and presenting workshops and the initial research on forming a consultancy in the future.

Student Team:

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