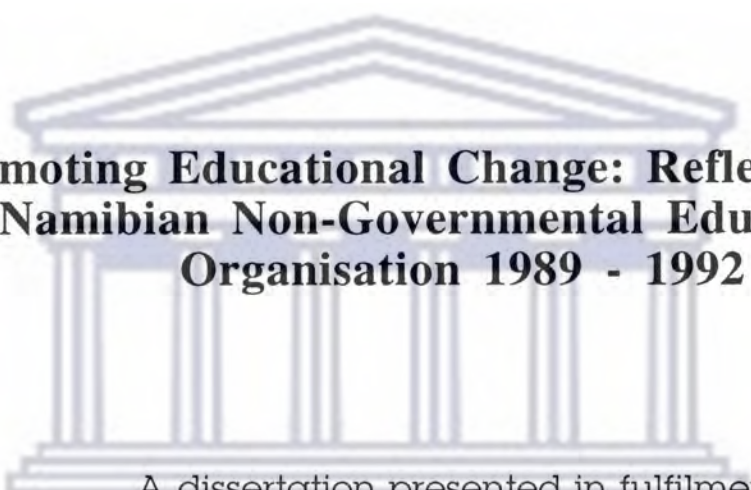


UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE
FACULTY OF EDUCATION



**Promoting Educational Change: Reflections on a
Namibian Non-Governmental Educational
Organisation 1989 - 1992**

A dissertation presented in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Karen Suzette Collett

November 1999

Supervisors: Professor Sandy Lazarus
Professor Owen van den Berg

ABSTRACT

Promoting Educational Change: Reflections on a Namibian Non-Governmental Educational Organisation 1989-1992

In this dissertation I set out to reflect on and examine a case study of a Namibian non-governmental educational organisation (NGEO), the Primary Teachers Project (PTP), from 1989 to 1992 focusing on issues of educational change and the role of NGOs in this process. My aim is to highlight some of the factors which helped and hindered the Primary Teachers Project playing a role in educational change. The study focuses on the following four aspects:

- The Primary Teachers Project's in-service education and training (INSET) model.
- The relationship between the Namibian Ministry of Education and the PTP.
- Funding relationships and their influence on the project's development.
- Internal dynamics within the Primary Teachers Project.

The dissertation begins by locating the Primary Teachers Project within the broader geographical, political and educational context of Namibia. The PTP's development between 1989 and 1992 is then described. The four focus areas above are highlighted within the case study. Topical reflections on each of these areas are integrated with relevant national and international literature on INSET, educational change and the role of NGOs. Central learnings with regard to the PTP and its role in educational change in Namibia are raised. Some of the key factors which worked for and against this NGO's influence on educational change are highlighted. Finally, I make a number of general recommendations with regard to the role of NGOs in the Southern African context.


This study raises key factors relating to the influence of NGOs on educational change. These are:

- NGOs need to develop their understanding of the complexity of educational change processes, in order to inform INSET strategies.
- School-focused INSET models need to strengthen strategies for follow-up support to assist teachers to implement new ideas and practices.
- A combination of curriculum-based INSET and organisation development support needs to be provided at the school level to assist educational change.
- Organisation development processes within NGOs can strengthen their internal capacity and critically inform their INSET strategies.
- NGOs need to research and reflect on their practice and disseminate their findings, in order to improve their own practice and influence educational change at other levels of the educational system.
- Collaboration between different INSET providers builds the capacity for sustainability of educational change processes at school level, and supports NGOs in disseminating their knowledge and expertise throughout the formal educational system.
- An enabling INSET policy framework is required at national and local level to support INSET work in schools and assist the work of NGOs and donors.

November 1999

DECLARATION

I, KAREN SUZETTE COLLETT declare that **Promoting Educational Change: Reflections on a Namibian Non-Governmental Educational Organisation 1989 - 1992**, is my own original work and that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Signed.....

KAREN SUZETTE COLLETT

Date: November 1999



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LANGUAGE USE AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this dissertation I have made a distinction between non-governmental educational organisations (NGEO's) and non-governmental organisations (NGO's). NGEO's refer to those organisations commonly referred to as NGO's who have an educational focus as a primary function. Where I have made reference to the literature, or used data from interviews, the term NGO here includes NGEO's.

In my reference to the Ministry of Education in Namibia, at times I refer to the Ministry of Education and Culture or, more colloquially, to the Ministry. The name of this Ministry has undergone several changes since 1990 when it was first established.



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CONTEXTUALISING THE RESEARCH STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

This research presents a case study of a Namibian non-governmental educational organisation (NGEO), the Primary Teachers Project (PTP), in order to focus on discussing issues of educational change and the role of NGOs in this process. Through reflection on the case study, this research aims to highlight and understand more deeply those factors which helped and hindered the Primary Teachers Project's role in educational change, with a particular emphasis on the following areas:-

The Primary Teachers Project's (PTP) in-service education and training (INSET) model.

The relationship between the the Namibian Ministry of Education and the PTP.

Funding relationships and their influence on the Project's development.

Internal dynamics within the Primary Teachers Project.

Topical reflections on each of these areas are integrated with relevant national and international literature on INSET, educational change and the role of NGOs. In conclusion, this research draws out some central learnings with regard to the PTP and its role in educational change in Namibia. The focus is on highlighting some of the central factors which worked for and against this NGO influencing educational change. Finally, a number of general recommendations

are made with regard to the role of NCEO's in the Southern African context.

This dissertation is motivated by the current importance given to the role of in-service education and training (INSET) of teachers in the process of educational change. It has been acknowledged by academics in Namibia (Auala 1992) and South Africa (Alexander 1985; Ramphele 1994) as well as staff members in the Ministry of Education in Namibia (Angula 1991; Swarts 1993), that NGO's have, and do play, a very important role in educational reform and the provision of services to communities. However, very little research has been done on the nature and extent of the influence NCEO's have had in educational change, and those factors which help and hinder their contribution in this arena. Alexander (1985) in the following quote highlights the need for research in this sector:

We do not really know what degree of impact this sector of the educational system has on official policy or even on the total environment of the oppressed and exploited people. Only once we are able to undertake the necessary surveys will we be able to gauge the potential of this sector more accurately and thus enable ourselves to plan, within the limits and objectives of each organisation, our strategies, tactics and organisational requirements with some degree of realism. (Alexander 1985:87)

Apart from project evaluations of NCEO's undertaken by external evaluators, there is very little that has been written on NCEO's by people who have actively been involved within these organisations. The study by Gray (1990) on the Science Education Project in South Africa provides one of the few examples of this type of research. In writing this dissertation I aim to contribute to the field of research on NCEO's and their role in educational change. On a personal and professional level, my motivation in undertaking this research is underpinned by my interest in understanding my own practice as an NCEO worker, and some of the assumptions in terms of educational change which influence my practice.

INSET has been increasingly recognised as a prime site for the development of

educational and social change. This is supported by the United Nations Institute for Namibia report (1991) and UNESCO Mission Report on the Survey of In-Service Training needs of Teachers in Namibia which conclude that "in-service training of teachers should be regarded as an urgent matter" (ibid. 1991:25).

The research done by the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) in South Africa during mid-1991 on Teacher Education notes INSET to be a key area of focus in terms of supporting educational reform. The 1994 African National Congress draft policy framework on Education and Training argues for teacher development to be at the centre of educational reconstruction. The South African Department of Education made the following commitment to teacher education and development:

The Ministry regards teacher education (including the professional education of trainers and educators) as one of the central pillars of national human resource development strategy, and the growth of professional expertise and self-confidence is the key to teacher development (South African Department of Education Draft White Paper on Education and Training 1994:16).

The growing focus on INSET and its importance in contributing towards educational change, and reconstruction and development, highlights the need for research in this field. The multitude of NGEOS involved in INSET in the Southern African context highlights the need for research into this sector's role in supporting educational change through various INSET initiatives.

This dissertation has grown out of my need to reflect on my past practices as an NGEOS INSET worker, and thus to understand my present reality in school-focused organisational development work and the way it contributes toward educational change. At the time of writing this dissertation I am employed as an INSET Course Coordinator at the Teacher In-service Project (TIP) based at the University of the Western Cape, in Cape Town, South Africa. Prior to this I was the Coordinator of the Primary Teachers Project (PTP) in Namibia, which I was

instrumental in initiating in 1989. I have had the unique experience of working within both contexts as they underwent major political, social and educational changes. In my daily practice I constantly find parallels in the experiences of the PTP and TIP that echo something of the uniqueness of working in an NCEO within the context of a society in transition. Both Namibia and South Africa have been dominated by apartheid ideology and National Party politics. Both societies face the difficult road ahead of building toward reconciliation and development, and creating political and educational systems that will contribute toward nation building and personal empowerment.

The period from 1989 to 1992 was a dramatic period of rapid personal, political, social and institutional change in Namibia's history. In a dissertation of this nature I will not be able to capture the full extent of the change process. However I attempt to capture significant aspects of the macro context as they impacted on the PTP, and its strategies and assumptions about educational change.

Although this dissertation focuses on the PTP as a school-focused INSET project, functioning in the context of a newly democratic African State, I feel that it holds learnings for educationists and NCEO practitioners in South Africa, and other countries, who are concerned with issues related to INSET, innovation and educational change.

2. A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PTP CONTEXT

2.1 Geographical and Economic Context of Namibia

Namibia was formerly known as South West Africa, until the country gained independence from South African rule on the 21st of March 1990. It is geographically located on the southwestern tip of the African continent and has borders with Angola to the north, Botswana to the East, South Africa to the South and the Atlantic ocean to the West. Namibia is a hot, semi-desert country. It is one of the world's most sparsely populated areas, with an estimated

population of about 1.5 million people spread over 319,000 square miles (Nation Building: The U.N. and Namibia 1990:9). The majority of the population is concentrated in Northern Namibia and about 115,000 inhabitants (ibid.:9) live in Windhoek, the centrally located capital city. Towns and isolated hamlets are scattered over the vast distance of Namibia.

Namibia's economy is based on mining, fishing, and cattle and sheep farming, with a very small manufacturing sector. Throughout its colonial history, Namibia's economy was controlled by South African interests. With the country's independence from colonial rule in 1990, the country's economy was boosted by a number of international trade links and the growth of the manufacturing sector and tourism.

2.2 General Historical Context of SWA / Namibia 1924-1990

After the first world war, South Africa administered Namibia (then called South West Africa) under a League of Nations Mandate granted on the 17th of December 1920. In 1945, the United Nations replaced the League of Nations. In 1948 the National Party came to power in South Africa, and according to the Catholic Institute for International Relations publication (1981:11), South Africa "refused to acknowledge the United Nations as the lineal, legal descendant of the League, and made Namibia de facto a fifth province of South Africa." The entrenchment of apartheid policies, which reinforced racial separation and white supremacy, were extended to Namibia. In 1966, the General Assembly of the United Nations called for South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia and terminated its mandate. UN Security Council Resolutions 276, 283 and 284 of 1970 proclaimed the illegality of South Africa's administration of Namibia (ibid.:12).

National resistance to the South African occupation of Namibia was built through the Ovamboland People's Organisation (OPO) formed in 1958 and later renamed the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO). Initially

SWAPO attempted to resist colonial domination through non-violent means, but it eventually resorted to guerrilla warfare in the mid sixties, through the establishment of the People's Liberation Army (PLAN).

In 1977 South Africa ceded power to an Administrator General who was to cooperate with the United Nations in the decolonisation of Namibia. According to Ellis (1984:30), through successive Administrators General, South Africa created a three-tier structure of government in Namibia: municipalities, ethnic governments and central government.

According to the publication *Nation Building: The U.N. and Namibia* (1990:16), the following process unfolded in 1978. First, the United Nations Security Council legislation, as set out in Resolution 435, proposed South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia and the implementation of free and fair elections. Resolution 435 set out the terms of reference for a settlement plan leading towards the independence of Namibia. The South African government decided to proceed with plans to set up Constituent Assembly elections. The outcome of the 1978 elections was the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), a coalition of ten political parties. The United Nations Security Council declared these elections illegal (*ibid.* 1990:16) as the country was not free from South African occupation. The effects of South African strategy culminated in:

...executive authority being vested in a council of ministers, and the Namibian National Assembly adopting Proclamation AG 8, a new constitution that separated the country into different ethnic groups for purposes of "second-tier" administration. Local elections were held for 10 ethnically-based regional governments created by AG 8. (*ibid.* 1990:16)

By the late 1980's the following factors forced the South African Government to agree on a regional settlement: increased international pressure; PLAN intensified attacks in the North of the country with the support of Cuban and Eastern Block military personnel; the growing strength of internal resistance

through organised trade unions and other forces within civil society; and increasing resistance in South Africa against the rule of the white National Party government. During this period, many Namibians were afraid of an escalation of war. Political tensions within the country were high. The Mt. Etjo Declaration was signed on the 9th of April 1989, committing the various parties to a cease-fire. Within this potentially explosive context, political campaigning for Namibia's first democratic elections got under way. The United Nations declared the elections free and fair and under United Nations supervision, Namibia gained its independence from South Africa on the 21st of March 1990.

Conditions within the country during the late eighties provided the context within which the Primary Teachers Project (PTP) developed. The initial groundwork for the establishment of the PTP took place between 1988 and 1989. During this period, the country was still struggling for independence from the South African government. This period was characterised by growing optimism that the country would achieve independence.

By 1990, the PTP was established as a formal organisation with a full time staff and Management Board. The birth of this new NGE0 coincided with the country's independence from South Africa and the establishment of Namibia's first democratic government. The atmosphere within the country and within the PTP was one of joy and excitement as people danced around the celebration fires. There was a feeling of energy, enthusiasm and optimism about the future.

1991 reflected the hard work and struggle needed to rebuild a country after years of oppression. Reconciliation, reconstruction and development were buzz words of the time. Wholesale restructuring and reordering of the once firmly entrenched apartheid structures were taking place in line with the country's newly established constitution. The PTP was in its second year as a formal organisation. It was rapidly finding its feet within the turmoil of its broader social and educational context.

By 1992, the headache and heartache of reconstructing a new nation was beginning to dawn. The vision of a new Namibia was met with the hard reality of the immense amount of work which had to be done. The reality was made more stark by the constraints of human and physical resources and the challenges posed in building a new nation. The PTP's own development reflected the sobering of educational ideals, because scarce resources and personal capacity were stretched to the limit as increasing demands for support came from schools in geographical areas outside of Windhoek.

2.3 History of the Educational Context in Namibia 1948-1989

When the National Party came to power in South Africa in 1948, policies which reinforced racial separation and white supremacy were extended to Namibia. Christian National Education became policy, which was entrenched in law by the Bantu Education act of 1953.

Bantu Education has been documented in detail by numerous scholars including Kallaway (1984) and Christie (1985) and will not be covered in detail here. Through the policies of Bantu Education that spread into Namibia, the intention of the South African Nationalist Government was to promote apartheid ideology and keep blacks in a perpetual state of oppression and economic exploitation. As Ellis (1984:23) puts it, "If blacks were to remain subordinate, their education must, by implication, be limited."

According to Ellis (1984:23), Bantu Education was introduced to Namibia through the Van Zyl Commission in 1958, which was appointed to set up an education system for black and coloured Namibians. The Commission recommended:

the introduction of South African Bantu Education syllabus; the handing over of church schools to the State; an education levy on Africans; and the setting up of separate education departments for Africans. (Ellis 1984:25)

The Education ordinance of 1962 empowered the implementation of the Van Zyl Commission plans and dovetailed with the broader plans of the Odendaal Commission of 1964. These steps provided the blueprint for the establishment of separate "ethnic" states or Bantustans in Namibia (Ellis 1984:25). According to the research done by Ellis (1984) the threefold strategy of the Van Zyl Commission was to:

- (1) Increase the number of blacks with a four year (lower primary) education so that by 1988, 80% of black children would have a basic primary school education.
- (2) Move black education from the control of churches to the State. This strategy would enforce control of the syllabus and plans for educational expansion. It would also serve to suppress the role of resistance which church schools could play.
- (3) Restrict education beyond the lower primary level to black and coloured Namibians. As Ellis (1984:25) states "The very explicit intention of Bantu Education was that blacks should be confined to the lowest grades, with their ambitions restricted to a tribal context."

Writing about the state of education in Namibia in the 1980's Ellis (1984:8) has this to say:

As South Africa's colony, Namibia still experiences extremes of exploitation and racism. In Namibia education has three separate sectors catering for blacks, whites and coloureds. And within each sector there has been further segregation between ethnic groups in a 'divide and rule' strategy. Expenditure on each white schoolchild has been six times that on each black pupil. The paucity of black education is such that illiteracy among blacks is at least 60% (and blacks are 80% of the population). Namibian schools have been places of conflict. Blacks - particularly in secondary schools - have rebelled against a syllabus they find offensive, and against the oppressive regime of school, and wider society. This system of education deprives Namibians of the skills they need to govern themselves and develop as a nation.

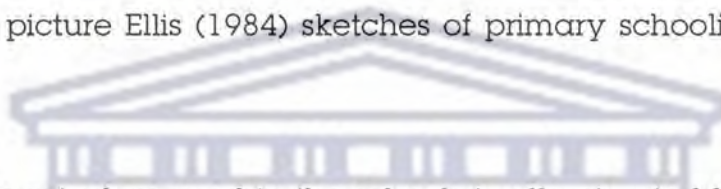
In the mid eighties education was controlled through the National Education Act, No. 30 of 1980 and Proclamation No.8 of 1980. According to Auala, Cocco,

Higgs and West (1993:1), these Acts created the Department of National Education, a National Education Council and Examination Board of South West Africa, which were all controlled by the South African Government.

2.4 The State of Primary School Education in the 1980's

The Primary Teachers Project started as a response to the needs being generated by teachers within the context of primary schooling. I describe here the conditions in black primary schooling in the 1980's.

This is the picture Ellis (1984) sketches of primary schooling in Namibia in the 1980's:



The curriculum used in the schools is offensive to blacks, or at best confusing. Conscription has driven many Namibians out of school, especially as the military authorities have used school registers to recruit. A primary school certificate is not necessarily "rewarded" with escape from migrant labour, or access to secondary school and lucrative jobs. Rote learning and harsh discipline are the order of the day in most schools, which have insufficient books and equipment for work or play. Many children are under pressure to perform domestic duties (often with only one parent at home) or go out and find work themselves. Teachers at primary schools experience many acute conflicts in their work. They have two masters. On the one hand they are entrusted with hopes of parents; on the other, the South African government wants to use them as agents of the apartheid State. They know they do not have the skills or equipment to cope with classes of 40 to 100 pupils. They do not like the syllabus. They must somehow make it clear to their communities that they do not approve of the racist government which provides them with their bread. One result of this conflict is poor morale. Some teachers simply neglect their school work, doing the minimum that they can get away with. (Ellis 1984:83)

In the PTP's project proposal, the following description of the state of Primary School education is given, confirming a number of the issues Ellis (1984) raises:

The administration of schools ensures rigorous national control of the educational system as far as completing the set syllabus is concerned. This coupled with the strict division of knowledge into

isolated subject areas and the limited time allocated for the completion of the syllabus, contributes to a lack of critical analysis and questioning of course material. The content of textbooks and syllabi instil the values of racism, sexism, exploitation, tribalism and indoctrination along the lines of the ruling National Party ideology practised in South Africa today. Phasing in English has led to a crisis situation as most teachers are not proficient in English, and little provision has been made for their upgrading. A large percentage of teachers at primary schools have never received any formal training and most are either underqualified or unqualified, creating a situation where most pupils in Namibia receive a primary school education which does not equip them with skills needed to master the demands made on them when they reach high school level. The building blocks of their cognitive development have been poorly laid down creating a situation which leads to pupils regarding themselves as passive recipients of their own educational development. Parrot learning becomes, and is the norm. (Von Wiese 1989:3)

In most primary schools under the various "ethnic" Departments of Education, financial support consisted of paying salaries and providing assistance with the purchase of some material resources such as text books, providing school buildings and funds for maintenance of these buildings. In some urban centres, predominantly the bigger towns and in Windhoek, Teacher Resource Centres were run by the various "ethnic" authorities. These only allowed access to teachers in schools run by those authorities. Private and church schools could not use these facilities.

All schools were subject to inspections. However, school inspectors and subject advisors were seldom seen in schools. School inspection took place at irregular intervals. Many teachers were afraid of the inspectors, and kept rigidly to the prescribed syllabus and scheme of work for fear of being sacked from their posts. For most teachers, the act of moving beyond the scope of the syllabus and bringing in alternative resources bordered on subversive activity.

Callewaert and Kallos (1989), international researchers who conducted a survey on teaching and teacher training in Namibia in 1989, drew the following

conclusion about the school system:

...an extremely detailed control system from above which in our view is detrimental. The examination system is detailed at all levels and together with a rigid prescribed time-divided system and textbooks it directs and constrains teachers as well as pupils at all grades-levels and in all subjects. (Callewaert & Kallos 1989:6)

Departmental directives which determined school policy and procedures were sent to schools. These ranged from timetables to staff policy, right down to regulations in terms of ordering resources. Most schools experienced a breakdown in communication with the Department due to logistical, personal and organisational problems. The great physical distances between schools and their Departmental structures often caused big gaps in communication as well as administrative inefficiency.

At many schools there was tension between the Departmental personnel and the staff. The Department suffered from a crisis of legitimacy in terms of its role as an organ of the oppressive South African State. It firmly held the power to appoint and retrench teachers who did not follow its policy. Corruption and inefficiency within the different 'ethnic' departments created greater divisions between schools and the communities they served, and the 'State structures'.

2.4.1 The Culture of Black Primary Schools

Black primary schools refer to those schools that were government controlled institutions, segregated along racial lines, and attended only by black learners. As the work of the PTP focused primarily on supporting teachers in black primary schools, a general description of the conditions within these schools provides a context within which to understand the challenges faced by PTP staff members.

In my role as an INSET worker, much of my time was spent in black schools and

classrooms in Katutura (a black location or township) on the outskirts of Windhoek, and in more rural farm, church and State schools in smaller towns vast distances away from Windhoek. Feedback from my colleagues who spent many hours in schools and classrooms over this five year period helped to give colour and depth to this description. Through many years of close association with the teachers and principal of the Community Primary School and with individual principals and teachers at other black primary schools in Windhoek, I was able to experience the culture of schools and the nature of teaching and learning that was taking place within them.

The black schools I visited and worked in from 1988 from 1990, left me with the impression that the general atmosphere in most schools was one of frustration and despair. Schools closed when the bell rang at the end of the last period of the school day. There was a general lack of morale and motivation from the teachers in State run schools.

In many State schools there was a clear lack of effective leadership and management, and schools were run on hierarchical and authoritarian lines. A great deal of teaching time was lost due to administrative inefficiency, as well as teachers not being in their classrooms teaching, or actually engaging students in learning activities.

Many schools operated in a dysfunctional way from year to year. There were limited school funds as parents were poor. There was little funding from the Department of Education with which to purchase resources or improve the physical condition of the school. The schools, in most cases, consisted of prefabricated classrooms or brick structures that were in a poor condition. Many schools did not have electricity and expensive equipment such as overhead projectors, photocopier, typewriters and other audio-visual equipment. In most schools duplicating facilities were limited and there was little access to a telephone.

There were also problems with security in most urban areas. Theft and vandalism happened often where there was not a sense of the school being owned by the community. The run-down state of many urban schools reflected a combination of a lack of funding for maintenance work, poor school management, learner and community vandalism and, in some cases, the after-effects of clashes between learners and members of the South African army. The lack of spending on black education and the relative poverty of most parents left black schools as monuments which reflected the state of the poverty and oppression of the nation.

Most teachers were isolated in their classrooms and did not always have a staff room in which to meet. In most black primary schools there were divisions amongst staff members, with gender divisions standing out most clearly. The majority of teachers in black primary schools were women, whereas most senior managerial positions were occupied by men.

2.4.2 Classroom Culture

In most classrooms the teacher-pupil ratio averaged 1:40. Desks were usually arranged in rows with two or more pupils at each desk. The walls of most classrooms were bare or displayed the odd faded newspaper clipping or Departmental notice.

Lesson preparation focused on following the prescribed syllabus and Scheme of Work for the term and each week. It was usually rigid and emphasised transmission teaching (or the "talk and chalk" method) using the textbook as a base. Schools and teaching were geared toward testing and exams.

In July 1990 I wrote the following report after observation of a number of teachers in a primary school in Katutura. I did classroom observation to conduct a needs assessment to obtain a picture of what the classroom situation was like before beginning with INSET workshops. These were my observations:

Very little group or participatory activities took place in the class. Children were seldom actively involved in deciding the pace or the content of their learning. Some of the children were sitting in groups although they were not doing group activity based learning. Within groups there was also no clear sign of group management or discipline.

Evaluation was chiefly done through the question and answer technique and only a few children who were more confident in the language had a chance to respond. Evaluation by the children of each other's work did not occur...few children had the chance to ask questions and responses were poorly handled. Most children did not have their work individually evaluated by the teacher while they were in the class. It was clear that many children did not understand the content the teacher tried to convey.

Very few writing and reading activities were encouraged, apart from standard rote learning responses. No creative writing or silent reading for pleasure was observed although some teachers spent time developing the reading habit by telling the children stories. There was a high level of boredom shown by the children and this led to discipline problems as children developed creative ways to pass the time. Some of them read their own books under the cover of the tables. (Von Wiese 1990:2)

2.4.3 The Role of the Teacher

In general, the teacher's role was to look up what had to be taught in the Departmental syllabus and to transmit this knowledge to learners in an authoritarian way. This description of the role of teachers comes from my observation report of teachers at primary schools in Katutura in July 1990:

The teacher seemed to spend most of his/her time talking and controlling the class in terms of "discipline". Most lessons were teacher centred with pupils being passive learners.

Questions were predominantly used as a means of assessing if the pupils understood what had been taught. The teachers seldom moved around that class and spent time with individuals. Most classes were arranged in rows with pupils working on their own. Participation by pupils was not encouraged and very little creative independent learning and thinking occurred.

Lesson preparation and planning of the day and the pupils' time was poorly done by most teachers and this tended to mean that teachers left the classes for periods of time without giving the pupils any learning activities to do. Some teachers spent extensive time out of the classroom or at their desks doing their own work while

pupils remained inactive. Most of the school day was taken up by the teachers controlling the class or teaching through demonstration and reading aloud. Class management and lesson planning skills were clearly lacking. Most teachers used dull and unimaginative teaching resources. No creative use of resources around the school were used as teaching aids.

It was very clear that a number of teachers used corporal punishment. In some classes there was a good relationship between pupils and the teachers. The English usage by some teachers was very poor and the children in some classes spoke English better than the teachers. Limited attention was paid to those pupils who had specific difficulties with the English language.

Teachers often dished out work to the pupils to do without demonstrating the reason or the purpose for doing the activity. The experiences of the pupils and the resources which they have were not tapped. In most classes pupils were passive recipients in the learning process. There were a few teachers who encouraged participatory learning and valued the knowledge which pupils brought with them to class. It was clear that some teachers were really committed to the development of their teaching skills and were very concerned about the welfare of their pupils. However these teachers were in the minority. (Von Wiese 1990:4)

2.4.4 Teacher Qualifications

Many primary school teachers had no formal training or, at most, a basic teaching certificate. In Ellis's (1984) research based on the findings of the Human Sciences Research Council report he claims that:-

In 1980, 40% of teachers had a primary school certificate and some teacher training; another 40% had at most, a junior secondary certificate, but no teacher training ... the motivation of some teachers is moreover very low because of their hostility towards the curriculum and authorities.

Ellis (1984:36)

For those teachers who had tertiary qualifications, their only exposure was to a curriculum that entrenched the values of the Bantu Education. Callewaert and Kallos (1989) draw the following conclusion after their investigation of the study guides and educational texts used by the University of Namibia Education Faculty, Department of Distance Teaching and College of Out of School Training:

The texts which specifically deal with pedagogy (educational psychology, philosophy of education, school organisation and administration, etc) do not take into account research findings of the last 10-30 years. The tests are extremely normative in character, they often contain a strange combination of Christian morality, metaphysics and research, and in general provide very few examples of different views. They are accordingly not appropriate for serious reflection and development of an understanding. We found no tests used that presented modern educational sociology or reflected upon the functions of schooling in society nor any texts or passages that introduced a critique of the existing school system in Namibia or discussed alternative strategies. The texts used treated the reader as a child and not as an adult, texts are thus reflecting the rote learning and the lack of opportunity to discuss and to develop understanding that we so often encountered in our classroom observations and that also characterised the lessons that we observed. (Callewaert & Kallos 1989:16)

One can draw conclusions that the curriculum, as well as the role models to which students were exposed throughout their educational careers, promoted transmission teaching that reinforced a lack of critical thinking and challenge to the South African hegemony.

In the Primary Teachers Project (PTP) proposal (1989) the following account of the state of teacher qualifications and abilities was given:

A small percentage of teachers in Namibia are adequately qualified and the majority of teachers are not proficient in English. Teachers with the lowest qualifications teach in schools at the primary level, which means that the initial education which children in Namibia receive is very poor. The high drop out rate after primary schooling can be directly linked to the pupils becoming disillusioned with the type and quality of education they receive. Very little has been done to upgrade the general proficiency of the teacher. In-service training has sadly been ignored. (Von Wiese 1989:2)

In the PTP's initial funding proposal (1989) statistics released by the Department of National Education in 1988 were drawn on to show that 66% of teachers generally had a standard ten (O level equivalent) or lower qualification. Further conclusions about the state of teacher qualification and the impact on

education were:

At present the Department of National Education encourages teachers to improve their qualifications, however, very little is done to upgrade the present teaching skills and proficiency of teachers at classroom level. The majority of teachers at primary schools usually have the lowest qualifications.

The percentage of primary school pupils both senior and junior primary was 78% of the total school going population in 1988. Deficiencies at this level, in particular the inadequate qualifications of teachers, have led to the impaired foundation learning for those who do not go beyond primary school, and academic achievement is harder to attain for those who go on to secondary school and higher education. (Von Wiese 1989:3)

2.4.5 In-Service Education for Primary Teachers

Auala et al. (1993), in their Unesco Mission Report report on In-service Teacher Training in Namibia, sketch the following picture of INSET provision and providers

Prior to independence of the country, in-service training was offered by the various ethnic education authorities, drawing on their own resources, or making use of the personnel of the Department of Education. Many of these training courses were based on problems observed by advisers and inspectors during their visits to schools, on needs expressed by teachers during formal discussions, or on needs identified by participants of an earlier training course. In other instances it was not known with any degree of certainty who would be attending a particular training course and the instructors were compelled to make assumptions about the needs of participants, which frequently proved to have little validity. Even where the content of courses was based on classroom observation or on comment by teachers, the participants in the following courses were not necessarily those whose experiences had helped to establish the course content. (Auala et al. 1990:2)

INSET by agencies other than the Department of Education cited by Auala et al. (1993:2) was provided by the Rossing Foundation (in terms of leadership training for principals), and the Council of Churches of Namibia. The Primary Teacher Project was not mentioned in their research nor was it mentioned in the research conducted by Callewaert and Kallos (1989), although the project was providing a service to schools in the capital city at that time. A reason for this may have

been the PTP's limited public profile (it was only established in 1990) and its focus of work in a limited number of schools during 1989 and 1990.

Callewaert and Kallos (1989) identify the following INSET and teacher up-grading providers in 1989:

Individual studies for examinations in academic subjects (mainly Std 8 and Std 10) by correspondence and distance teaching.
Individual participation in face-to-face courses (both professional and academic) organised by e.g. CCN, Rossing Foundation, the Department of National Education, and various other authorities.
Individual use of Teacher Centres organised by the CCN and the Department of National Education with the help of tutors and facilities.

Courses in academic subject matter, subject didactics, pedagogical and organisational courses organised by various administrations for their own teachers also using vacations and weekends and using locally based personnel and/or subject advisers from the Department of National Education and staff members from the Academy. Visits by subject advisers and inspectors to individual schools. (Callewaert & Kallos 1989:20)

By 1990 there was still no culture of school-based or school-focused INSET programmes in the majority of schools. School-based INSET being INSET is initiated from within a school by the staff, while school-focused INSET is provided for a school by an outside agent.

The following definition of school-focused INSET is provided by Hofmeyr, De Wee and Mc Lennan (1994):

The school, its staff and their needs are the focus for INSET activities while outside agencies are used for additional stimulus, resources and support (Crossley and Guthrie 1987). School-focused INSET is thus a compromise between course-based INSET, in which individual teachers are sent on short courses, and school-based INSET, where the school is left to its own devices and resources (Hofmeyr et al. 1994:4).

Many primary school teachers were, however, attempting to improve their own

professional qualifications through part-time study toward their matriculation or distance education programmes. Auala et al. (1993:13) show in their survey of INSET in Namibia that 64% of all teachers surveyed had had some form of in-service training, although these figures were as low as 33% in the far Northern areas of Namibia.

Apart from the INSET work the Council of Churches and the Rossing Foundation were doing in 1989, I was not aware of any other Namibian based, non-governmental organisation working on this. Within the NGO community in Namibia, there was a perception in some sectors that the Rossing Foundation was not an NCEO, but a unit controlled by the corporate interests of Rossing Uranium. In 1988, the Rossing foundation, in association with the National Education Department, ran a number of English upgrading courses for primary school teachers at a centre in Windhoek. The school week was reduced to four days in some schools in order to accommodate this programme. In the PTP's 1989 proposal I made a negative comment about this model of INSET, namely that " pupils suffered a loss in their own education, as for nearly a year they attended school for four days per week." (Von Wiese 1989:4). I felt strongly then that school time should not be used for INSET, when learners have no alternative educational opportunities. In 1989 these same courses were conducted at the Rossing Centre in the afternoons after school hours.

The PTP project proposal highlights some of the constraints teachers faced obtaining INSET or furthering their qualifications, namely:

Many teachers have to first obtain their matric or O level qualifications before they can go on to further study at the University of Namibia or Teacher Training Colleges. Also because of supporting their households as breadwinners many teachers were unable to leave their job and go and study. (Von Wiese 1989:4)

That proposal notes the following constraints on INSET:

Limited access to resource centres and communication networks

that can provide information on teaching methods and approaches to learning; teachers having never been encouraged to form study groups and collective pools resources and share ideas and experiences (reasons for this are linked to subversive activity that may threaten the job security of teachers); isolation of schools and teachers because of the huge geographical distances between urban centres and schools; lack of INSET providers and limited Departmental support. (Von Wiese 1989:5).

Although there were a number of constraints to institutionalising INSET in schools, and providing schools with INSET support, those teachers who did manage to gain access to INSET found it a professionally enriching experience. Auala et al. (1990) indicate that teachers who were exposed to INSET found it beneficial:

Of all the teachers who said that they had training on-the-job, 95% said it was worthwhile for them to have attended; 64% said that attendance was compulsory. These figures indicate a high level of appreciation for in-service courses received in the past.(Auala et al. 1993:13)

Ellis (1984), writing from exile on the proposed policy on expansion of schooling in an independent Namibia, said

There will be a heavy demand for more teachers, at a time when the ablest are leaving for new jobs in government and commerce. An enormous teacher training capacity will be needed. (Ellis 1984:75)

He outlined as priorities for the reconstruction of Namibian education the need for teacher-training programmes which supported linguistic abilities (especially English), upgraded subject knowledge, methodologies for managing large classes and the identification and development of specific key skills primarily through in-service training. Callewaert and Kallos made the following recommendation in their research report delivered at the National Conference on Teacher Education in Namibia, which took place in Lusaka, Zambia during September 1989: "The real and urgent issue is instead how to arrange necessary in-service training of the existing teachers." (1989:19). They go on to recommend that programmes are needed to enhance the professional capacity of teachers

to cope with problems of teaching as well as with the consequences of "...changes within the educational system in an independent Namibia as far as ideology, methodology, language medium, subjects and contents of teaching..." (ibid. 1989:19). The model which they propose is based on tutoring sessions with small groups of teachers through school-based "development-orientated activities" and vacation or weekend courses, seminars and conferences.

This section provided the educational context within which the INSET work of the Primary Teacher Project developed. Chapter Two gives a more detailed account of some of the changes which occurred due to the restructuring of the educational system. It also highlights some of the relevant changes in educational policy between 1989 and 1992 which pertain to INSET provision and INSET providers.

My own interest in INSET and location within Namibia between 1987 and 1992 had a fundamental influence on the establishment of the Primary Teacher Project. As this dissertation focuses on my written case study and analysis of this organisation's work, it is crucial as the researcher to locate myself within this narrative. I discuss this issue more fully in the closing section of this chapter which deals with my research approach. I provide a background to my work in Namibia, and the beginning of my understanding about the importance of INSET in educational change.

3. PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY AND INTEREST IN INSET

My introduction to INSET was in the context of my first year of teaching at a private school in Windhoek. The school was located in Khomasdal, a group area township on the outskirts of Windhoek which was residentially designated for "coloured" people, or Namibians of "mixed race".

I learnt of a teaching post at this school through friends who worked at the South

African Council for Higher Education (SACHED), a non-governmental educational organisation based in Cape Town.

SACHED was involved in promoting initiatives which focused on an alternative type of education within the South African context. As a student of education at the University of Cape Town, I made use of the SACHED resource centre and would often attend workshops and interesting talks at the centre. My motivation to take up a teaching post at this school was promoted by a number of factors. While completing my teaching qualification, I was keen to find work within a school that was attempting to build an alternative to the present school curriculum and which presented a governance structure that was community based and not directly controlled by the State. Part of my internship as a student teacher involved working in a black Namibian primary school in Arandis.

During the period in which I was completing my studies at the University of Cape Town, South Africa was in a state of intensified violence and resistance towards the National Party government. The banning of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) in 1985 and the increasing unionisation of, and resistance by, teachers and students to the Apartheid State and Bantu Education had virtually brought formal schooling to a standstill.

As a student I felt that I wanted to work as an educator with black school students who were exposed to the brunt of "gutter education" and who were attempting to resist and change the political status quo. This decision held its own difficulties. As a white woman I felt that I would have to prove myself before I would be accepted by black colleagues and students. With the escalating conflict in South Africa, and specifically at State run schools in the Western Cape in the mid 1980's, I felt that it would be easier to find a teaching job in Namibia as the urban conflict was not as violent and polarised along class and racial lines. Teaching posts in the Western Cape were also very scarce during this

period.

Obtaining a post at this school presented me with the ideal niche in which to gain teaching experience and to work as an educational activist. This school aimed to provide an environment in which young Namibians could be supported in becoming critical thinkers and leaders who would support the task of nation building. Its goal was to build an alternative to Bantu Education within the confines of the hostile climate of South African occupation and the ongoing "State of Emergency" declared by the PW Botha government in South Africa during 1985.

I was part of a small staff of six teachers and a principal. The principal initiated the school based INSET programme where we would meet after school once a month to discuss various issues in relation to alternative education and the present political context within which we were operating. I found these sessions very helpful as I got to know my colleagues better and they helped me to understand the contextual realities within which we were trying to work. Although I found these INSET sessions useful they did not concretely help me in my own classroom practice. I note in my first dissertation reflective notes:

We did not address issues within the running of the school itself or really what was happening in our classrooms. We were attempting to set up an alternative to the present system of education. The alternative was not done within any unified vision of where we wanted to go to. I remember grappling with what it means to be an alternative teacher teaching in an alternative school. (Collett 1994:3)

I recall that at this time I felt the need to come to a deeper understanding of my own classroom practice as a newly qualified teacher. I also wanted to learn from the experience of others. When I reflect back on my first year of teaching I felt out of my depth most of the time and desperately wanting support. In a small school like ours where I was the only Geography teacher, I

had no subject support group or head of department to whom I could turn for support. I also felt that if I asked one of my other colleagues for support they would think that I was not a competent teacher. In my final year as a student teacher at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, I and other students felt the need for a support group in which we could exchange ideas and reflect on our own practice, as we had during our practice teaching sessions. In my pre-service training I cannot recall having formally heard about INSET, however, I had an intuition that real learning about being a teacher would come through teaching and reflecting on my own efforts. My graduation as a teacher was only the beginning of the road.

My own schooling was in white, middle class, State schools in South Africa. To varying degrees, these schools all followed the dictates of Christian National Education as laid down by the Department of National Education. After secondary school I attended the predominantly white liberal University of Cape Town. My first real exposure to black education was through my teaching practice experience in black schools in the Cape Town urban area and in Namibia where I worked for eight weeks at a primary school.

After completing my B.Prim Ed, I went on to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Geography and Comparative Religion, in order to increase my job prospects as a teacher. I was then in a position to teach at primary as well as high school level. Although my heart lay in primary schooling I accepted a job offer at the Namibian secondary school, with the hope of being able one day to move over to its feeder school: the Community Primary School (CPS).

Through joint school functions I was able to make contact with teachers at the CPS. In 1988 a number of joint INSET sessions were held between the CPS and teachers at our school to discuss such issues as participatory democracy and alternative education. This really started my school based INSET link with primary school teachers.

As a Geography and English second language teacher, I constantly battled to support students to develop reading and writing skills, as well as study skills, which they had not mastered at primary school level. Students constantly expected me to provide them with notes and answers. They were familiar with transmission teaching methods and so I struggled to devise ways in which to encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning. I felt that this was part of the struggle to develop an alternative. I wanted to help students to become critical thinkers. I attempted to design lessons to get students to question content and how they could translate their classroom learning to an understanding of the context they lived in. Finding the existing text books inadequate and heavily biased, I introduced other materials to substitute the textbook and the narrowly prescribed syllabus on which students would be examined at year end by the Department of National Education in South Africa.

My commitment towards "alternative" was spurred on by events in South Africa during the late seventies and mid eighties. During this period schools were increasingly sites of resistance to the escalating political oppression and violence by the Nationalist Government. Some of my colleagues had been sacked from their posts in State schools in South Africa because of their political activity. People's Education tried to build an alternative to Bantu Education. The following definition of People's Education is given by Moolla and Eckstein:

People's Education, it has been argued, is a process; it is a struggle for non-racialism, democracy, collective input, critical thinking and active participation by all the people. People's Education has encouraged students, parents and teachers to mobilise and to form organisations to participate in the struggle for people's power and to actively manage People's Education. (Moolla & Eckstein 1991:22)

As teachers, we could not separate what we were trying to build in our classrooms and schools from the broader liberation struggle to overthrow the Nationalist government. During the "State of Emergency" which extended its arm

into Namibia and reinforced the South African military presence, one had to tread a very fine line between opposition to State structures and trying to work within their limitations and build an alternative.

The school I taught at provided one form of oppositional "space" within the country that attempted to resist the apartheid State. As a white South African I felt that I could make a contribution toward educational and political change by working within a non-governmental organisation. Here I could be with students and teachers who were committed toward a vision of a Namibia free of colonial domination and a country building toward democracy and nationhood. Like a number of people in community-based organisations and trade unions, I felt that it was important to work from within the country to build towards freedom and democracy. For this to happen, we needed to build strong organs of civil society in order to challenge the status quo and to develop the critical consciousness of people.

My early teaching experiences at this school and my involvement with other community-based organisations who were attempting to contribute to educational and political change formed the basis of the development of the Primary Teachers Project. The development of this project is detailed in the next chapter. The macro political and educational context, as well as my own location in Namibia and interest in INSET, provide the backdrop and starting point for this dissertation.

4. THE AIM OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation had its roots in my need to gain deeper insight into and understanding of my own work in NGEOS involved in INSET and in educational change. This research constitutes a case study of the Primary Teachers Project (PTP), a Namibian NCEO, which focuses on issues of educational change and the role of NCEO's in this process. I present a narrative history of the PTP from 1989 to 1992. By reflecting on the case study, I highlight those factors which helped and

hindered the Primary Teacher Project playing a role in educational change. Within the case study I have chosen to focus on the following four aspects:

The Primary Teachers Project's (PTP) inservice education and training (INSET) model.

The relationship between the the Namibian Ministry of Education and the PTP.

Funding relationships and their influence on the project's development.

Internal dynamics within the Primary Teachers Project.

Topical reflections on each of these areas is integrated with relevant national and international literature on INSET, educational change and the role of NGEO's. In conclusion I draw out some central learnings with regard to the PTP and its role in educational change in Namibia, where I highlight some of the central factors which worked for and against this NGEO in influencing educational change. Finally, I make a number of general recommendations with regard to the role of NGEO's in the Southern African context.

The narrative history of the project is preceded by a description of the research methodology used.

5. THE METHOD AND ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

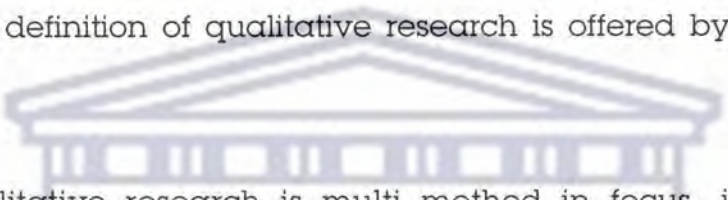
The previous section outlined the aims of this dissertation. This section deals with my research approach and methodology. This section also describes my research approach and methodology, and includes a discussion of qualitative research methods, ethnography, action research and the use of the case study as particular methodology. Data collection methods, analysis and ethical issues are briefly discussed. I conclude by highlighting some of the strengths and limitations of my research approach.

5.1 Research Approach and Methodology

5.1.1 Qualitative Research

This research is situated within the qualitative research paradigm adopted within social studies. It focuses on an historical case study of the Primary Teachers Project within which it focuses on the four aspects of: the project's INSET model; its relationship with the Ministry of Education; funding; and internal organisational dynamics, in order to understand more deeply the role which this NCEO had in educational change in Namibia between 1989 and 1992.

A generic definition of qualitative research is offered by Denzin and Lincoln (1994):



Qualitative research is multi method in focus, involving and interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials - case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional and problem solving moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Accordingly, qualitative research deploys a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand. (ibid. 1994:2)

The multiple theoretical orientations in the qualitative research paradigm of my research approach is based on a constructivist theoretical perspective which holds the view that:

What we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective. Knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by mind. They emphasise the pluralistic and plastic character of reality - pluralistic in the sense that reality is expressible in a variety of symbol and language systems; plastic in the sense that reality is stretched and shaped to fit purposeful acts of intentional human agents... In place of a realist view of theories and knowledge, constructivists emphasise the instrumental and practical function of theory construction and knowing. (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:125)

As researcher, I interact reflectively with my research data to deepen my understanding and generate new meaning in a process where "findings" are created as the investigation proceeds (ibid. 1994:111). Within this approach I acknowledge my own views and ideas as being part of the research process. I also acknowledge the limitations of my own view of "reality" in the process of knowledge production. As researcher, I am concerned with my own subjectivity in relation to the data I gather and analyse, as I was historically involved in the case under study. I therefore interact with other perspectives and views in order to compare and reflect more critically on my own assumptions in the process of meaning making. Through interaction with various perspectives I build in triangulation. This can be defined as:

The use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of phenomenon in question. Objective reality can never be captured. Triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation. (Denzin cited in Denzin & Lincoln 1994:2).

Some of the criticism levelled at qualitative researchers such as myself is that "their work is termed unscientific, or only exploratory, or entirely personal and full of bias" (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:4). In my own research I recognise that there is "an intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry" (ibid. 1994:4), and have therefore sought to use triangulation to provide different perspectives on "reality". My focus has been on understanding the intentions and actions of participants in the research study and not on providing verifiable generalisations which are value-free. I am concerned with raising issues which can undergo further exploration.

Through processes of cross-checking at different levels I have attempted to provide accurate and comprehensive data as a basis for my research. An area of weakness has been the limited extent to which I have been able to enter into further analysis and dialogue with participants in the research. This would have

deepened and refined the level of reflection and meaning-making in terms of the "findings" that can be drawn from this research. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) make the following point in this regard.

The variable and personal (intramental) nature of social constructions suggests that individual constructions can be elicited and refined only through interaction between and among investigator and respondents...The final aim is to distil a consensus construction that is more informed and sophisticated than any of the predecessor constructions (including, of course, the etic construction of the investigator). (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:111)

5.1.2 Ethnography

Within the qualitative research paradigm my approach is ethnographic in nature. Uzzell provides the following description of ethnographic research:

Unlike other areas of social science research where the researcher attempts to explain human action in terms of psychological theories such as attribution theory, ethnographic research lays emphasis on the actor's understanding and theorising about their actions. In other words, the view is not the outsider looking in, but the insider looking out. In ethnographic research we are interested in the questions people are answering for themselves about their life, their relationships and their environment by their actions. Where ethnography differs from other methodologies is the the representation of the world are structured by participants, not by the researcher. It is the participants' structuring of the world in which the research is interested. (Uzzell cited in Breakwell & Hammond 1995:303)

My approach in writing this dissertation is similar to that of Gray (1990) in his study of the Science Education Project in Kwazulu. In his research Gray writes about his work as an implementor of a South African NCEO, using an action research methodology. In his mini-thesis Gray sets out to examine the process whereby educational change was promoted through the implementation of the Science Education Project material and methods amongst secondary school science teachers in KwaZulu Natal over the period 1980-4. Like Gray, I acknowledge that much of what I write is my own history as an implementor working in the PTP. My own research does not take a systematic action research focus as Gray's does, although it is similar in that it involves reflecting on my own

past practice and deepening my own understanding of issues raised.

In this study I am both the researcher and a participant. The advantage of this is that as a participant within this research I am able to provide an insider's view of the culture of the organisation and am able to highlight some of the underlying beliefs and values of the participants. Marsh et al. argue that "the best (but not the only) authorities as to what action is and means are the actors themselves" (cited in Breakwell & Hammond 1995:304). However, it also raises the issue of my own subjectivity and bias in telling the story of the PTP and making meaning of its actions. To counter this, "the ethnographic ethic calls for ethnographer to substantiate their interpretations and findings with a reflexive account of themselves and the processes of their research" (Denzin & Lincoln 1998:292).

5.1.3 Case Study as Particular Methodology

My narrative description of a case study of an NCEO forms the basis of this research study. "The case study is one form of social enquiry. It is an attempt to understand the social processes and meanings implicit in some undertaking in a restricted context" (Millar 1983:115). This coincides with the aim of this dissertation which, in essence, is a case study of the Primary Teachers Project within which I reflect on the role this NCEO had in educational change in Namibia between 1989 and 1992.

This case study takes the form of an instrumental case study where:

the case serves to help us understand phenomena or relationships within it, the need for categorical data and measurement is greater. We will forego attention to the complexity of the case to concentrate on relationships identified in our research questions (Stake 1995:77).

The primary task of the case study of the Primary Teachers Project lies in its

ability to reveal some of those factors which helped and hindered NGE0 from influencing educational change in Namibia.

This case study has a number of characteristics which are outlined by Millar (1983), namely:

A concern with "real" events, in "real" contexts in "real" time.

A concern with the meanings of events for the actors in the situation, as opposed to a concern to measure "behaviour" or attitudes.

A concern with the social processes and wider social functions that provide the context for such personal meanings.

A concern with the intelligent grasp of engagements in specific contexts rather than with the generation of findings or rules that can be widely generalised.

Toleration of a capacity to make use of the widest range of techniques for gaining information, including quantitative methods where possible and appropriate.

Participation to some degree and in some way by the researcher in the social processes he wishes to understand. Case studies can but do not need to be forms of action or participatory research. (Millar 1983:118)

5.1.4 Historical Method

In writing the case study of the PTP I describe and attempt to understand my past. I acknowledge that I have the primary role in directing this dialogue and that my own subjectivity is a limitation. This limitation is acknowledged by Uzzell:

With each description and analysis we inevitably translate other's meanings and world-views into our language,...No historical account can ever capture what is the infinite content of an event...That which is recorded is also only a record of the past and can only be verified through other accounts of the past. (Uzzell, cited in Breakwater & Hammond 1995:307)

Uzzell warns that "historical knowledge, however well authenticated, is

subjective and subject to the biases of its chronicler who in turn is subject to the psychological processes of selective attention, perception and recall" (ibid. 1995 307). My own participation in the case study colours my own perceptions. A similar dilemma was faced by van den Berg (1994) in the writing of his doctoral thesis. In his thesis he acknowledges:

I was not just actor but am also striving to be reporter and meaning-maker of the contexts within which I was an actor. Reading the text, as I have said before, involves also the reading of its author (van den Berg 1994:31)

In a similar vein to van den Berg (1994) I acknowledge that I am part of the research itself, as well as part of making meaning of this experience. "One is dealing here with what might be termed the intersection of autobiography, life history and history" (van den Berg 1994:32). Within this context I have attempted to make explicit my own assumptions, presuppositions and frameworks of understanding. My narrative of the PTP was also read by a few of my ex-colleagues at the PTP. No major alterations were suggested and I was told that it captured accurately a living picture of the organisation and its development. I do believe this process validates this record to an extent.

These measures have enabled me to bring a certain level of reflexivity to my own interpretations and assumptions. By cross-checking my data with different sources, I have sought to practice a level of triangulation in this research.

Fielding gives the following description:

Triangulation puts the researcher in a frame of mind to regard his or her own material critically, to test it, to identify its weaknesses, to identify where to test further doing something different. The role of the triangulator is to increase the researcher's confidence so that findings may be better imparted to the audience and to lessen recourse to the assertion of privileged insight. (Fielding et al. 1986:24-25)

What follows is a description of how data was collected and why these sources were used. I also raise some of the ethical and analytical dilemmas I confronted.

5.2 Data Collection Methods

A number of data collection methods were used to provide a description of the case study, as well as to provide further information and ideas with which to reflect upon issues within the case study itself. Data collection methods used in this dissertation include my own reflective notes; interviews with ex-colleagues and individuals working in other NGEO's; project documents; research reports and policy papers on educational reform; and national and international literature sources. I now provide a more detailed description of the methods of data collection. In the next section I raise some of the ethical and analytical issues I faced in the process of data gathering and selection.

5.2.1 Personal Reflective Notes

Part of the data gathered for this case study came from my own reflective journal which I kept over the five year period while I was doing this research. In these notes I recorded my reflections and those of my ex-colleagues in the PTP, on educational strategies and assumptions about educational change and the changing internal dynamics within the PTP. I also recorded my reflections on my present practice as an INSET worker in the Teacher Inservice Project.

5.2.2 Interviews

Ethnographic data was also collected through structured and unstructured interviews with project workers in Windhoek, Namibia during 1994, 1995 and 1997. Data from interviews was brought into the reflection of issues which I focused on in the case study. The data also provided a source of verification for the writing of the actual case study narrative. This process involved interviews with four of my ex-colleagues and two members of the management board over this period. I also interviewed a project coordinator from another NGEO in Namibia.

In interviewing my ex-colleagues I questioned the degree of validity of the data I collected as the quality of personal relationships do have an influence on what

is said, and not said, in interviews. Acknowledging that the validity and credibility of the interview process "relies upon respondents being able and willing to give accurate and complete answers to questions posed" (Breakwell & Hammond 1995:238), I assured people being interviewed that their identities would not be divulged and that the name of the project itself would be altered in the research study. For the purposes of this study, the project's name has been changed to the Primary Teachers Project. By doing this I hoped to create a climate of openness and trust in those people interviewed. I also interviewed some of the interviewees over a number of years. According to Breakwell (cited in Breakwell & Hammond 1995) this is a strategy in interviewing which can help to build openness and honesty, and assist in establishing the validity of the interview.

I believe that the fact that I was no longer in a position as colleague on a formal level also enabled people to speak out openly on issues. My own history of being a project worker also enabled me to cross-check and verify certain issues as they were raised in the context of the interviews. By using unstructured interviews I also created the opportunity for other issues and points of view to be raised which may not necessarily have been part of my own agenda. In this way I believe I made place for other views to come through.

After each interview I gave interviewees the opportunity to verify or contest the interview record. This assisted in supporting the verification of my interview data.

5.2.3 Project Documents

A number of project documents were used as data sources in this research. These documents were primarily written by people within the project. Project documents consulted were annual reports over the four year period and internal evaluation reports; staff meeting minutes; funding proposals; correspondence; and field reports by education coordinators. A list of these reports is provided in

the bibliography.

5.2.4 Research Reports and Policy Papers

My data gathering also drew on the large body of research reports and policy papers on educational reform generated by consultants attached to the Ministry of Education in Namibia and the University of Namibia. These provided a context within which to locate the case study of the PTP, as well as to cross-check and verify some of the claims I was making.

5.2.5 National and International Literature Sources

I also consulted a large body of literature from both national and international sources on educational change, INSET and NGEOS.

5.3 Analysis of Data

Although a single NGEOS forms the primary focus of this case study I have also reflected on my experiences of working within other NGEOS. I have also brought in literature which reflects experiences of people in other NGEOS in relation to educational change. In this way I have sought to bring in a wider range of perspectives in terms of reflection on the single case study. This highlights the complexity of looking at a number of smaller case studies within a larger case study. This in itself makes for a complex process of analysis. Williams describes this complexity:

If we find, as often, that a particular activity came radically to change the whole organisation we can still not say that it is to this activity that all the others must be related; we can only study the varying ways in which, within the changing organisation, the particular activities and their interrelations were affected. Further, since the particular activities will be serving varying and sometimes conflicting ends, the sort of change we must look for will rarely be of a simple kind: elements of persistence, adjustment, unconscious assimilation, active resistance, alternative effort, will all normally be present, in particular activities and in the whole organisation (Williams cited in Millar 1983:120)

In my analysis I have sought to deal with making meaning of complexity by providing as detailed a level of narrative description as possible and have located the case study within a broader sociopolitical context. By doing this I have attempted to contextualise the case study and provide other perspectives from which to analyse and cross-check issues raised in the case study. As the researcher, I have made as visible as possible my own reflections and assumptions during the collection, writing and analysis of the research data. The data analysis focuses primarily on my reflection and interpretation of the case study in relation to the literature and interviews with colleagues.

The four focus areas I have chosen span issues related to the micro world of the organisation and the macro context within which the organisation was located. This in itself has resulted in cross-referencing and has supported a more holistic analysis and reflection.

In the chapter on the internal dynamics of the PTP, I have used the conceptual framework for understanding organisations developed by Davidoff, Lazarus and Kaplan (1994) and refined by Davidoff and Lazarus (1997). This framework adopts a systemic approach to understanding organisations. It captures the complexity of organisational life as a dynamic interconnected system.

I have sought to practice "wholism" which according to Millar (1983) requires "attention to what goes on outside as well as inside the case" (Millar 1983:121). The macro dynamics within the Namibian political and educational context are reflected upon in relation to their impact on the Primary Teachers Project. Where appropriate I have drawn in relevant issues on a national and global level. In this way I have sought to provide different perspectives from which to cross-check my own assumptions and those of my ex-colleagues.

Qualitative analysis "consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification" (Miles &

Huberman 1984:21). I will briefly describe how I have approached each of these areas of analysis.

Data reduction refers to the process of "selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the raw data" (Miles et al. 1984:21). In my study of the PTP I made choices about which data to include and which to exclude. While writing I was already analysing the data for key focus areas which would form the basis of my topical reflection and further analysis. By cross-checking this narrative history with ex-colleagues I have tried to ensure that a fairly accurate description of the case study has been provided.

As the researcher I decided to display the data in the form of a narrative. Data presentation, or display, is the "organised assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking" (ibid. 1984:21). My decision was based on wanting to "tell the story" of the PTP in as holistic a way as possible. The narrative offers the possibility for rich description which I feel suits the purpose of ethnographic research.

Conclusion drawing is the third aspect of data analysis. This relates to "the activity of conclusion drawing and verification" (ibid. 1984:22). In this study I have selected four focus areas for greater reflection and analysis. In each area I have narrowed my focus to what I consider primary areas of importance.

I have noted areas of overlap and connection between those factors which help or hinder educational change. In the final chapter I have summarised general learnings from each of these minor areas of analysis, in order to once again reflect on the interrelationships between various aspects in the case study. This has provided another level of analysis in which the micro aspects of organisational life in the PTP are reflected upon, in relation to the macro aspect of the INSET model, funding, and the relationship with the Ministry of Education. I conclude by highlighting some of the main factors which helped and hindered

the PTP in influencing educational change in Namibia. Based on these factors I make a number of general recommendations with regard to the role of NGEOS in educational change in the Southern African context.

This dissertation has not sought to provide answers to predetermined questions or to test out a particular hypothesis. Rather it reflects on the practices of the PTP in order to raise a number of questions and deepen understanding of the role of an NGEOS in educational change. As such, the analysis of data focuses on deepening reflection on issues and in generating further questions and insights. The dialogue between myself, the data and the different voices present within the literature forms the context from which new understandings are generated and central issues emerge.

5.4 Ethics

5.4.1 Sharing my Research Findings with Ex-colleagues

As a researcher I was both an insider and an outsider in the Primary Teacher Project. I felt a moral and political responsibility to share my research findings with my colleagues. My own sentiments in doing this research are echoed by Warr:

There are costs in all research, and if a researcher is to intervene in an individual's life, then that person must see that the research has relevance for him or her. (Warr cited in Breakwell & Hammond 1995:309).

When I began this research I intended opening it to scrutiny and reflection by my ex-colleagues in the PTP at an organisational level, in the hope that this would assist both my own understanding of practice, as well as influence some of the thinking and practices within the project. I agree with Uzzell that the researcher's position is essentially a political one as:

In addition to the implications of the research for public policy which will have political implications in a more conventional sense,

the relationships formed in the course of the research raise questions of power, influence, control, responsibility and accountability and even 'public interest' (Uzzell cited in Breakwell & Hammond 1995:309).

Wanting to share my research findings and being able to do this in practice held particular tensions over time. Although I was able to cross-check the narrative history of the PTP with a few of my colleagues as individuals, I was not able to share my research findings with the organisation as a whole. Although this had been formally agreed to at the start of the study a number of factors limited my ability to fulfil this agreement. Not being able to share my findings with all existing PTP staff was partly due to issues of time and distance in terms of my geographical location within another country. However, a greater difficulty was the altered nature of my relationship with the organisation as the new project coordinator took over leadership within the PTP. Issues relating to power dynamics within the organisation, and my own role as the founder leader, created a climate that was not conducive to sharing my research findings with project staff. The progress of time and staff changes had also altered relationships between myself and the organisation on a subtle level.

In his study of the role of an action researcher, Uzzell (cited Breakwell & Hammond 1995:311) states that "the researcher can become actively involved and help shape the future of voluntary and community groups". In my experience of doing this research I was not able to have much of an influence on helping to shape the future of the PTP. I believe that the extent of my past involvement as an insider in the organisation held limitations in terms of the interventionist role I could play. As a staff member who no longer worked within the organisation I no longer had the positional power of an insider to influence change by bringing in new ideas and by assisting the staff in reflecting on their own practice. The closing of the project in 1998 also limited the possibility of sharing my findings with the PTP staff. However, I still intend to share my research findings with ex-colleagues and Board members of the PTP with whom I still have

contact.

5.4.3 Confidentiality

The issue of confidentiality was another ethical issue I had to deal with in collecting data and writing this research. Here two issues confronted me. On the one hand I needed to feel that I could live with what I had exposed of myself. On the other hand I had to consider how much I revealed about my ex-colleagues and the organisation. In order to protect the identities of my colleagues and the organisation I chose to conceal the real identity of the people and the project.

By putting my name to this dissertation I know that this in itself provides a thread which can be traced to the identity of the organisation. Although the constitution of this NCEO acknowledges the need for the organisation to be publicly transparent and accountable, this has not given me the freedom to put issues out into the public arena without first consulting my colleagues. What has made this process of consultation difficult has been the difficulty in gaining access to individuals who have left the organisation over a number of years. I have thus not been able to negotiate issues of confidentiality with all ex-colleagues. However, the narrative history of the PTP has been cross-checked with some of my ex-colleagues and issues of confidentiality have been discussed. I also had an agreement in principle from project staff and Board Members that I could do my research on the project and make my findings public. I feel that what I have written could only advance the causes of democracy and development, and do no personal damage to the individuals who were associated within the organisation.

Like van den Berg I acknowledge that "going public on all the influences exerted upon us does not seem a feasible option" (van den Berg 1994:32). I would agree with van den Berg (1994) that as a researcher it is important to consider and acknowledge this tension. In this research I have attempted to provide as honest and open an account of my experiences and assumptions as

possible. In doing this I feel that I have faced the challenge of "attempting to make public one's biases and preoccupations in such a way that one's readers might 'read' one along with the text" (van den Berg 1994:46)

6. LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS OF THIS RESEARCH APPROACH

6.1 Strengths

In writing the PTP's narrative I have adhered to a number of principles to ensure the rigour and validity of this research. I have portrayed information as accurately as possible although I acknowledge that as the writer of this history, I am subject to my own biases and limited self understanding. I have dealt with my own subjectivity in a number of ways:

- In order to guard against my own bias and misinterpretation I have located my reflection and analysis of issues contextually and reflected on them from different perspectives and reference points.
- I have used a number of primary sources from which to gather data and verify information sources. These range from original project documents to interviews with staff members directly involved in the establishment of the PTP between 1989 and 1992.
- I have opened up my own writing to critical reflection and cross-checking by my ex-colleagues.
- As a basis for this dissertation I have done historical research, drawing in the documentary evidence available from the PTP. Here extensive records in the form of project proposals, evaluation reports, publications, correspondence and minutes of meetings have been used.
- A number of different literature sources have been drawn upon to provide varying, and sometimes contradictory, perspectives to my own.

- I have also located myself within the research context in order that the reader may bring to bear his/her own interpretation of my involvement with issues raised.
- I acknowledge that triangulation does not negate the possibility of my own bias, but it does build in some checks and balances.
- I have respected the confidentiality of my ex-colleagues by negotiating issues of confidentiality with them, and by changing the name of the project and the names of people interviewed.
- Interview data was cross-checked with participants after each interview.
- My supervisors provided a safe and supportive yet critical environment within which I could reflect upon my past practices. Their support also assisted me in facing difficult issues and overcoming my own resistance to finally getting the dissertation completed and putting it out into the public arena. In my notes to my supervisors while writing this dissertation I have acknowledged my own psychological struggles: "Putting myself down on paper is difficult for me. Owning what I do. Putting my name to it. Researching and reflecting on my practice both past and present is exciting and scary" (Collett 1994:1).

This dissertation forced me to reflect on the past and make conscious for myself a number of deep and often painful experiences. Through it I feel I have developed greater insight into myself in terms of my personal and professional life. In her dissertation on supporting the process of action research by teachers, Davidoff (1993) acknowledges the need for sensitivity on the part on the triangulator. She proposes that "personal transformation requires a safe yet challenging environment in order for that transformation to be fostered." (Davidoff 1993:50)

Within my own research I needed my supervisors to play a sensitive yet challenging role. This raises a number of challenges for supervisors who support students in reflecting critically on their past practices at a more personal level. In my review of the research literature I have not come upon much that is written about the role of the supervisors in the research process, particularly the need to provide the researcher with psychological safety. Davidoff makes the point that "the seemingly oft forgotten personal dimension in action research needs to become a conscious aspect of the transformation process" (1993:89). Within my own experience, had my supervisors not been able to acknowledge and support my struggles at a personal level, I doubt whether I would have had the courage to face my past with the level of openness and critique demanded by academic research.

6.2 Limitations

- I had a primary role in writing up the case study and selecting what data to use, as well as what questions and perspectives I would bring to bear upon my reflection and analysis. I acknowledge that, in this dialogue, my own subjectivity is a limitation.
- A level of data capturing which did not occur was the exposure of some of my reflections on the case study to participants within the organisation. I believe that had I captured their reflections and questions the data I could have collected would have been richer. This would also have allowed more perspectives to be raised and would have involved more participants in the analysis. Had this step been taken with more rigour during the research process, it could have had an influence on developing the thinking and practices of project staff, as well as deepening this research study.
- I was unable to interview all my ex-colleagues as some of them had left the project and were unavailable. My ex-colleagues did not all have the

opportunity to cross-check the narrative history of the PTP which forms the basis of the case study.

6.3 Overcoming the Limitations in my Approach

A number of measures have been adopted to counteract my own subjectivity. I locate myself biographically within this dissertation. I also relate the case within the broader sociopolitical environment and relevant literature. I conducted interviews and cross-checked data with a few participants. It is my hope that the triangulation measures I have taken provide a number of checks and balances to support the validity of this dissertation.

I view the reader's own interaction with this text as generating a further level of reflexivity and meaning-making. According to Millar (1983) "Concealment not subjectivity is the crime". It does not claim the status of "truth" or "last word"; it simply invites confrontation by a better analysis" (Millar 1983:122).

7. OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION

This chapter provides a brief geographical, historical and political context to the Primary Teachers Project and Namibian education in general. In my biography I have reflected on my own interest in the field of education and more specifically, INSET and educational change. My research aims, approach and methodology are then described in some detail.

Chapter Two outlines the narrative history of the development of the PTP from 1989 to 1992. I have used the metaphor of "a party" to describe the various yearly growth stages of the project. In the narrative I describe the PTP's strategies and assumptions about educational change, and highlight some of the micro and macro factors which promoted and constrained the PTP's influence in educational change. In the narrative I give greater depth of focus to describing the project's INSET model and its relationship with the Ministry of Education. I also focus on the areas of funding and the changing internal

dynamics within the project.

In Chapters Three to Six I provide a topical reflection on the four focus areas of this dissertation, namely, the PTP's INSET model, the PTP's relationship with the Ministry of Education, funding, and internal organisational dynamics within the PTP. This topical reflection is integrated with relevant national and international literature. At the end of each of these chapters I draw out some of my learnings in relation to those factors which worked for and against the PTP's ability to influence educational change. I conclude by making a number of recommendations based on the PTP's experience in relation to NCEO's and their role in influencing educational change.

Chapter Seven concludes by drawing together some of the links between the four aspects identified above, and draws out some central learnings with regard to the PTP and its role in educational change in Namibia. Here I highlight some of the central factors which worked for and against the PTP in influencing educational change. Finally, I make a number of general recommendations with regard to the role of NCEO's providing INSET in the Southern African context.

The logo of the University of the Western Cape, featuring a classical building facade with columns and a pediment.

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Chapter 2
**A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE PRIMARY TEACHERS PROJECT
1989-1992**

1. INTRODUCTION
2. THE PTP IN 1989 - "Preparing for the Party"
3. THE PTP IN 1990 - "The Party Celebration"
4. THE PTP IN 1991 - "The After-Party"
5. THE PTP IN 1992 - "Cleaning Up After the Party"
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Chapter 2
A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE PRIMARY TEACHERS PROJECT
1989-1992

1. INTRODUCTION

In Chapter One I provided an explanation of the broader educational, geographical and sociopolitical context within which the case study of the PTP needs to be understood. In this chapter I describe the growth and development of the PTP over the four year period from 1989 to 1992. I use the metaphor of a party to assist in capturing the mood and developmental stages of the project. I hope to convey something of the living essence of the project's growth and development.

2. THE PTP IN 1989 - "*Preparing for The Party*"

1989 was a year of hope and optimism as Namibia teetered on the brink of independence from South African rule. The PTP too was in the process of being born. Throughout 1989 the future of Namibia as a free African nation hung in the balance, as negotiations for the implementation of UN Resolution 435 and the withdrawal of the South African Defence Force from Namibia took place.

During 1989 the ground for establishing the PTP as a formal organisation was being prepared. On a day-to-day level the energy which drove the pioneering initiative forward came primarily from my own persistent efforts. In the second term of the 1989 school year I decided to leave my formal teaching job to become more involved in working directly with INSET with teachers at the Community Primary School. I secured a part-time job in tutoring pre-service education students at the University of Namibia. This allowed me to do INSET work with primary school teachers in the afternoons.

The seeds of the establishment of the PTP began with the school-based INSET workshops, coordinated by the principal of the Community Primary School (CPS) and myself. As a staff member of the feeder school to the CPS, I had built up a supportive relationship with the principal and some of the teachers over a number of years. These workshops arose as a result of the expressed needs of parents, teachers and the principal, to find solutions to the difficulties which teachers faced in their classrooms. The initial idea of holding INSET sessions was promoted by the head of the school where I worked during 1988 and 1999. These INSET sessions were called "Alternative Education Sessions" and their purpose was to share teachers' experiences and to become self reflective or, as we used to say, to "study ourselves" (Von Wiese 1988:3). Reports of poor classroom practice, low learner results and a general feeling that something needed to be done about the quality of classroom teaching, motivated the CPS INSET workshops.

These workshops were attended by twenty teachers on a twice-weekly basis during 1988 and 1989. The principal and the School Committee's strong support for INSET helped to make it a reality at the school. A small informal pilot project motivated many of the teachers to attend the workshops, as they faced real problems which they wanted to solve. The few teachers who were not keen to attend these workshops after school hours, had to deal with the coercive pressure of other staff members and the principal. By the end of 1989 INSET workshops had become a compulsory item on the school timetable.

These INSET workshops focused on specific classroom curricular issues as well as general issues of classroom management and pedagogy. The difficulties for which teachers wanted to find solutions included: how to teach large classes; multilingual teaching; classroom management; and the teaching of reading and writing. Teachers at the CPS wanted more appropriate textbooks and teaching materials. Some teachers questioned the relevance of the syllabus content to Namibian children. Others wanted to try out methods of teaching

other than transmission teaching.

Apart from INSET workshops, I conducted classroom observation on request from teachers. Here I assisted teachers to reflect critically on their own practice, and to find solutions to difficulties they faced. Teachers played a central part in suggesting areas of interest for workshops. Workshops therefore related to practical difficulties they experienced. Together with the principal and some of the teachers, workshop sessions were planned. At times I would be asked to run a workshop bringing in a particular perspective such as interactive teaching and learning, or different approaches to teaching reading. During the workshop sessions we all learned from each other.

Observing teachers in class greatly assisted my own ability to understand the nature of the difficulties they faced, and helped me to prepare more adequately for our INSET sessions. Many teachers felt too self-conscious to speak out at the INSET workshops about difficulties they confronted in their classrooms. They found it easier to speak about these issues on a more confidential basis with me after classroom observation sessions, when we would reflect on the lesson.

As news of INSET workshops spread by word of mouth, other primary school teachers in the area also began asking for support. Resources for running the workshops were in short supply as the CPS was a private community-based school with very little funding. The idea of a small funded project arose out of the need to secure and purchase resources to run the workshops, as well as to meet requests for workshops from teachers at other schools.

During 1989 the PTP kept its focus as a small school-based INSET initiative. The vision to establish the pilot project in a more formal way grew through the collective support and motivation of the teachers who attended the workshops at the CPS. Support from the parents at the school came from the adults who

attended the English and literacy classes I held twice weekly in the evenings. I ran these classes on a voluntary basis for parents from the CPS and the broader community. They had been initiated by the principal and parents of this school in 1988 because both teachers and parents felt that, in order that learners might receive more support in their learning at home, parents needed to understand English and be able to read and write. As more teachers from other schools wanted to join the workshops and as resources became more limited, we felt we needed to obtain funding to establish a more long term project, which could expand these activities.

The principal of the CPS and I were instrumental in bringing together supportive people in the community who were keen to see the project get off the ground. We established a formal structure in the form of a Steering Committee in April 1989. This structure later became the Board of Directors in June 1989 (PTP Draft Constitution, Von Wiese 1989:1). Setting up the Board of Directors was part of my strategy to ensure that the project was owned by community interests and needs. I wanted to ensure that it would be accountable to the community and that it would be supported and sustained by its active membership.

We had a number of skilled and experienced community workers on the Board who were committed to seeing the project succeeding. Their experience in community-based and political organisations meant they were committed to the project and what it could mean for Namibia. As a Board it also had leadership credibility in the community and most of the members had high-profile positions within their own organisations and within the community. Many, but not all, of the Board members were official SWAPO members.

Writing a formal project proposal to apply for funding was one of the activities with which the Board assisted me. Supportive links with a number of other Namibian NGO's in terms of human and physical resources assisted me to develop skills in writing the first project proposal. The school-based INSET

workshop at the CPS and the work which I had started with other primary school teachers at their schools in Katutura, were used as a basis for our funding proposal. The proposal was submitted to the newly established Namibian Development Trust (NDT) in the hope of obtaining international funding. The NDT was an organisation which helped to channel international funds to NGO's and community development projects, and which assisted in building the organisational capacity of these projects.

I considered the work we were doing as a pioneering initiative which operated on a lot of commitment and no funding. The work we did, and the energy behind it, was fuelled by the drive to build an alternative to Bantu Education. Teachers also had an immediate need to improve their own teaching skills. At the CPS this was encouraged by parents and the principal, who felt that teacher development would lead to a better standard of teaching. Many parents at the CPS had the strong belief that education held the key to their children's future.

During 1989 I drafted a project proposal which was submitted to the Board for refinement. In this proposal I set out my own dreams and those of a group of supportive parents and community activists who backed the idea of the project. Our aims were to:

1. Run inservice training programmes and workshops in both rural and urban areas, in order to upgrade the educational skills of our primary school teachers.
2. Upgrade the English proficiency of our teachers.
3. Set up an alternative resource centre to provide teachers with ideas and information for effective teaching practice, as well as with resources that expose the values of racism, sexism, ethnicity, colonialism and the apartheid ideology within critical context.
4. Produce our own educational resources through the collective workshopping of materials by teachers, based on classroom activity and interaction with the wider community. This will ensure the authenticity of the material, and its relevance to the Namibian child. (Von Wiese 1989:2)

We also emphasised the importance of forming supportive structures within schools, such as teacher study groups which would promote collegial support, with teachers taking a more active role in their own professional development. The notion of providing ongoing support to teachers in order to bolster the development of their own confidence in attempting innovative classroom practices was an important part of our planned INSET strategy. This idea had developed directly from our own experience at the CPS. The need to support teachers with their own English language proficiency was highlighted as a result of Education Department policy changes in which English was promoted as a medium of instruction in schools.

Our proposal was very clear on providing an alternative to the existing system, which we felt perpetuated what was commonly referred to as "gutter education", or education for oppression. Through our INSET workshops we wanted to participate in building an education system that would prepare learners to be critical thinkers and self-reliant citizens who could participate actively in all spheres of life. We felt teachers needed to think more critically about how they were teaching and what they were teaching. This included critically examining their own values related to race, class and gender.

Another area of concern was to find ways in which teachers could be formally accredited, or be given some recognition for the INSET workshops they attended. We felt that in the long term this would help teachers to upgrade their qualifications, and it would also act as an incentive to attend sessions regularly.

Although in 1989 the PTP's vision was documented in the project proposal, its real identity as an organisation was only beginning to form. The identity of the PTP was very bound up in my own identity and the school-based INSET work at the Community Primary School.

The political commitment of other Board members and their long history of

involvement in grass-roots and community organisations, gave the PTP a "struggle" and "activist" identity. That is, there was a strong common bond between ourselves in our opposition to "apartheid education" and our support of Namibia's struggle for independence.

The evolution of the project from the school-based INSET workshops conducted at the Community Primary School (a community-based, private primary school, sustained by parents and donations from the international community) gave it a sense of community and teacher ownership.

The PTP's vision to build a new education system, linked to "People's Education", was echoed in the visions of other educationalists both inside and outside Namibia at this time. The notion of "People's Education" was strongly linked to student, teacher and parent struggles in South Africa and Namibia. The values of ownership, political freedom, collective action and empowerment underpinned these struggles.

During the year I had begun working with a small group of teachers from other schools in the area who needed support in terms of language teaching to primary school pupils. Very little teacher support was provided by the Education Department in terms of their INSET needs. I was aware of Teachers Centres offering support to teachers by way of short workshops and teaching aids. From my discussions with teachers at other primary schools I perceived that these resources and workshops did not really meet their immediate needs. On scanning some of the teaching resources at the Teachers Centre, I found them to be very Eurocentric and unchallenging for learners and teachers alike. The texts seemed not to engage learners critically and were also very uninteresting. Most of the examples and illustrations reflected a white middle class life style. They did not feel authentically African or Namibian, nor were they related to the daily realities of learners I had contact with.

A number of school principals in Katutura were open to my working with staff members. There seemed to be no fear of what the "Department" might say or think. This was a change from the atmosphere of fear of reprimand by the Department which had prevailed in the recent past. However, as my presence on State school property was not regarded as legal without Department authorisation, it was a risk to both the school staff and myself to hold meetings or workshops without official permission.

At this stage I had very little to do with personnel from the Department of Education, whom I considered to be part of the oppressive South African State apparatus. However, our search for a meeting venue brought me into contact with Education Department personnel at the Teachers Centre. Personnel at the centre were willing to allow me the use of their venue, although it was made clear that any other resources could only be used by teachers who worked at Education Department schools.

Facilities and resources to support teachers at the Community Primary School became increasingly important, and spearheaded the need to obtain funding. During 1989 I was not aware of any other Namibian-based NCEO doing INSET work with teachers. There were a small number of service organisations and units linked to churches and industry which were involved in INSET. These included the Rossing Foundation and the Council of Churches of Namibia. At this time INSET and teacher development were being placed on the agenda at various educational change conferences and workshops both within and outside Namibia's borders.

Outside the Department of Education structures a number of educational change initiatives were taking place. These initiatives aimed at building to a new vision of education in Namibia. At the United Nations Institute for Namibia (UNIN) Conference on Teacher Education in Namibia, held in Lusaka in 1989, the SWAPO secretary for Education and Training, Nahas Angula, stressed the need

for a unified and integrated system of education that would, "help Namibia to be a great nation" (1989:8). His paper reflects a commitment to teacher professional development, opening with this quote by Taker:

The validity of any educational system naturally is dependent upon the quality of the teaching and the availability of competent teachers. In order to meet these demands, each developing country needs to determine the appropriate means for training such qualified personnel. This task is not simply one of finances and recruiting. It also involves the establishment of teacher-training systems which reflect the over-all expectations of the educational system and the country's various social institutions. (Taker cited in Angula 1989:1)

During 1989 Namibia was still in the grips of South African educational policy. The conference in Lusaka, as well as other conferences which took place in Europe in the same year, worked toward establishing an alternative vision for Namibian Education. Namibians in exile and representatives from a number of foreign universities and educational organisations participated at these conferences.

In July 1989, Namibians within the country attempted to organise a conference with the aim of encouraging:

Namibians to collaborate in the critical analysis of the existing education system and remake the idea of education by suggesting priorities and strategies for a desirable future. (Curry, Le Roux & Harlech-Jones 1989:1)

Highlighted at this conference were some of the practical problems which retarded educational change, such as the lack of libraries, reading material and competent English speakers. The picture conference delegates drew of the present education system reflected the fragmentation of the education system through lack of resources for teaching and libraries; racial and class divisions between school and educational authorities; disproportionate funding; South African domination of education; and a general breakdown in the education

system.

The vision which participants at this conference built emphasised the following priorities for education in an independent Namibia:

- Integration of the national system
- One common medium of instruction
- Curriculum development and its relevancy
- Teacher Training - upgrading and inservice training
- Compulsory education
- Rationalisation of resources
- Materials development
- Adult education and literacy
- Vocational training
- Participatory decision-making structures to involve, teachers, students, industry, etc.
- Formulate common goals - nation building

(Curry et al. 1989:25)

Under teacher training in the conference report (Curry et al. 1989:30) a number of strategies supporting educational change were identified. These included upgrading and teacher training; making materials available to teachers in the form of science kits; encouraging the use of available natural resources; and introducing relevant materials with support programmes. It was suggested that teacher ownership be encouraged through the training of local implementors, who would in turn train other teachers, causing a "multiplier effect". The idea was that teacher "cells" were to be developed and supported. Implementors were to be involved in materials development and curriculum development. It was also recommended that local initiatives be given support by external agencies, regional systems and the Education Department structures.

This INSET model proposed at the conference was similar to the one followed by the Molteno project in South Africa, which emphasised primary school literacy and English courses for children with an African language background. Agencies from governmental and non-formal organisations were identified as being able to provide INSET. It was suggested that a positive reward system,

such as promotion, should be built into INSET programmes.

At this stage the PTP was forming its own notion of educational change and INSET practice, based on the work at the Community Primary School. The identity of the PTP was closely linked to the personalities who were involved in the small pilot initiative and the values we held. A common identity we shared was our belief in our role as political activists in the struggle for educational change and a new political order. We viewed the project as providing a way for teachers to challenge apartheid education, and to build an alternative form of pedagogy in their classrooms. We viewed ourselves as "progressive educators" and the pilot project as a "progressive initiative" which would help to support the development of Namibians.

We strongly believed that educational change was fundamentally linked to teacher development, as teachers were the people who had daily access to learners. We felt teacher development needed to take place through INSET that focused on classroom curricular work and subject specific support. We also acknowledged that appropriate teaching materials were needed to support teacher development. However, we felt that the value of the materials in themselves, without appropriate back-up and support through INSET, was limited. With our strong focus on self reliance and empowerment we also felt that teachers needed to develop their own creative potential, through making and using appropriate teaching materials and resources in their communities. Central to our INSET work was the notion of participatory learning, starting with the needs of the teachers. Our model of INSET arose out of our own practice in INSET workshops and schools during 1988 and 1989.

During 1989 control of the educational system was still in the hands of the South African Government. Although debate around educational change and a new vision for Namibian education was taking place, there was no clarity in terms of a new educational policy or a broader agreed-upon vision for education. Most

developmental initiatives which began at this time had a very uncertain context within which to strategise. The PTP began its work in a policy vacuum in terms of future possibilities for educational changes.

By the end of 1989 the project proposal had been submitted to donor organisations and we waited for a reply. Towards the end of 1989 I was fortunate to receive a grant of seed funding to continue the INSET work I was doing, after my contract as a micro-teaching tutor at the University of Namibia's Education Faculty came to an end.

By the end of the year there was no certainty about the expansion and growth of the project if funding still did not come in. I was by now formally unemployed as my contract with the University had come to an end. I did not apply for any permanent teaching positions as I wanted to keep my options open to work with the INSET needs of teachers in Katutura.

By the end of 1989, with Namibia's independence from colonial rule, the whole educational system and structure was poised on the brink of major change. From the 7th to 11th of November 1989, Namibian elections were held. They were declared free and fair under the watchful eye of the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group and the United Nations Special Representative Martti Ahtisaari. By the end of 1989 the air was filled with excitement and disbelief as Namibia was about to realise the fruits of many years of struggle for freedom from colonial rule and oppression.

3. THE PTP IN 1990 - "The Party Celebration"

The year 1990 felt like "the celebration party". This image captures the mood of Namibia's political independence from South Africa. On New Year's day I was informed that initial funding for the establishment of the PTP had been granted by the European Economic Community. I danced with joy as the vision of the project was about to become reality.

On March 21st 1990, Namibia achieved independence after twenty-three years of war and more than a century of colonial occupation. There was much jubilation and excitement. Sam Nujoma was sworn in as the first State President and the new cabinet was elected. The Draft Constitution had been drawn up by the Constituent Assembly, and the stage was set for the drafting of policy that would ground the vision of a free Namibia in reality. The fragile process of nation building at a personal and political level, based on the principles of reconciliation and reconstruction, began.

In January I met with members of the ad hoc Board and was appointed as the Project Coordinator. I was asked to proceed with the setting up of the project. Once a bank account had been established and funding had arrived, I was able to begin the building of a formal organisation. By May that year the PTP was established with an office, technical equipment and a vehicle. Six full time staff members were interviewed and appointed by the Board. Getting the project established, interviewing applicants and providing staff based INSET took up a lot of time during the first half of the year.

Among the staff there was an atmosphere of hope and excitement at belonging to a new team. They were very motivated and committed towards the aims of the project. Most of the staff members were black Namibian women who had been in exile in Europe and Angola, or had been involved in church or political movements in Namibia. It is possible that being an almost all-women project helped to build an atmosphere of informality and sensitivity towards personal feelings. There was also a sense of pride and empowerment at being a team of relatively young women, who had the independence of being in a position to be creative and responsive to the needs of "the community". Part of the vision we shared was to ensure that children had a good education that developed their full potential. We wanted to build an alternative to the South African system.

Being part of an NCEO was new to most staff members as they had come from

foreign educational institutions, refugee camps and church organisations. Principles of democracy and female empowerment were strongly supported within the project. The values we upheld within the project reflected our own hopes for nation building.

At a staff development and orientation workshop held for all of the PTP staff by a host organisation in Cape Town during May 1990, the PTP staff identified the transitional chaos of the current situation as providing them with opportunities to take pro-active steps to influence educational change at schools and in the new Ministry. However, teacher resistance to staying after school for workshops and competition with other NNGEO's in the field was seen as a threat.

This was a busy year for the Board who, after the orientation workshop, were referred to as the Management Committee. This committee met once a month in order to set policy for the running of the organisation. They were involved in interviewing staff members, as well as establishing an organisational constitution and hosting an annual general meeting.

The five new PTP staff members went through a process of initial staff development and orientation by me as the project coordinator. They then began the process of visiting schools, undergoing further internal staff development and running INSET workshops. Staff development on various levels continued throughout the year, in order to build the project's internal capacity to work with schools.

The PTP's work shifted to school-focused INSET from the initial INSET work which I was involved in at the PTP, which I regard as being school-based. This was because INSET initiatives at the CPS had arisen internally within our own school-based context and I initially related as a colleague with teachers at the CPS. The school focused work which the PTP did included the CPS teachers, as well as two other schools in Katutura. Here PTP staff worked as outside facilitators

assisting the schools in their INSET.

The culture of schools was much the same as it had been in 1989, with the exception of a few more parent-teacher-student-associations (PTSA's) being set up in senior schools, where the Namibian National Student Organisation (NANSO) was more active. In general there was still an openness and eagerness by teachers for INSET and the PTP was beginning to receive requests for support from more schools, as a result of the project profiling through school visits and a word of mouth network among teachers in Katutura.

Providing INSET to a larger number of schools was initiated through running short INSET courses. We advertised our first holiday INSET course which was cancelled owing to lack of attendance. We quickly learned that offering INSET courses during the school holidays was difficult and would only work if there was a good combination of incentives and pressure from lines of authority in schools.

The PTP regarded itself as a community-based service organisation that worked on a non-profit basis. We did not charge the schools, or the teachers, for the INSET work we did with them. Many teachers earned small salaries because they were not highly qualified. Schools did not have budgets for staff development.

As the project coordinator, I was responsible for the day to day leadership and management of the project. The Management Committee was responsible for setting broad policy guidelines. Staff participation in democratic policy and decision making was encouraged. Staff members had voting rights and access to the Management Committee through a staff representative. A fairly flat leadership structure was established as we were a small, intimate team making decisions collectively. All project workers met weekly to coordinate work plans and to make decisions about our work in the field.

During 1990, having a motor vehicle and funding helped the project expand its

activities to two other schools in the Windhoek area. The school-focused INSET started to take on a particular shape during the year. Staff visited schools and discussed the project's role with teachers, to determine if INSET support was required. Once needs were identified, needs-based workshops were developed. We were against pre-packaged INSET programmes as we felt they did not take real needs into account. We also felt that they disempowered teachers by giving the message that their own knowledge and experience was of no value. Teachers from different schools were encouraged to meet and share their ideas at PTP workshops.

PTP staff members did classroom observation to assist teachers to reflect on their own progress. We called this "action research" although it was not only reflective practice. After classroom observation and reflection, PTP staff members reported on developmental needs in the school. This report was discussed with teachers as a basis for further development work in the school. We knew that the principal's role of encouraging teachers to attend INSET workshops was an important part of ensuring that the majority of teachers participated. Therefore we spent time speaking to principals, encouraging them to support INSET initiatives in their schools.

After school hours school premises were used for INSET workshops, as they were a convenient distance to teacher's homes. INSET workshops were run for English language teaching, English proficiency for teachers themselves, and Science and Mathematics. A small pilot project on Social Studies was run by myself and a colleague working in another NCEO.

During 1990 teachers were not formally accredited for the INSET workshops which they completed, although we felt this area needed to be investigated. The INSET model which we followed was strongly based on the practice which had been established with teachers at the CPS. It was agreed that it was a good idea for education coordinators to work in pairs and that there should be

continuous reflection on their own practice. During the year the education coordinators did express the fear that this could become contrived and that it needed to happen naturally. A lot of the pressure to actively reflect, share and analyse our actions came from me. I was anxious that many staff members were new to the position and that they needed support with their personal development. However, without appropriate structures and procedures within the project to ensure this, it was difficult for this to happen in any formal way. The flat leadership structure, in which I was not clearly mandated with the responsibility for ensuring staff development and appraisal, led to a situation where there were no procedures for quality assurance and accountability. At another level I was finding it difficult to let go of some of the control of the work which my colleagues did in the field.

Discussion and reflection of our INSET practices raised the issue as to whether the workshops should include more content as well as method, so that teachers could feel that they had actually been given something concrete. Education coordinators were feeling the pressure from teachers who expected a more transmission-type training session where they would be concretely told what to do and how to do it. Education coordinators had to feel their way through their own methodology, in order to move slowly towards modelling a more participatory form of learning and teaching. For many teachers, exposure to more participatory forms of pedagogy had not been modelled in their schooling careers or in their later training as teachers. Through demonstration lessons the education coordinators hoped to model a new form of classroom practice.

All the education coordinators recognised that critical reflection (or action research, as it was incorrectly named) was an integral part of the programme. Although it was time-consuming, they felt it could not be skipped and it helped to deepen their understanding of their work.

When I recall what we actually did in the area of action research, it was not

really action research but classroom observation, with feedback and discussion with teachers on what had been observed. After the lesson the teacher would speak about his or her teaching and what he or she was trying to achieve. The coordinator would give the teacher feedback as to what s/he saw happening in the classroom. Teachers would also discuss what they felt their INSET needs were. After INSET workshops, teachers would ask the PTP coordinators to sit in on their classes and observe the way in which they were trying out an innovation. What we referred to in PTP as action research did not occur in the classical sense of teachers systematically researching their own practice. It could be described more accurately as reflective practice with the support of a triangulator. This process helped the PTP in identifying teacher INSET needs and also gave them a sense of what was happening in classrooms.

The education coordinators also supported each other in the field by giving each other feedback after workshop sessions. These reflections were sometimes verbal and sometimes more formally noted. What was learned from these reflective sessions was built into future planning sessions. We tended to learn and develop as we tried things out.

The feedback we received from teachers and principals, and evaluation forms after workshops, showed a growing enthusiasm for our INSET workshops. There were, however, a number of frustrations which the education coordinators had to face. The Evaluation Report compiled at the end of the year captures these:

Poor feedback from teachers which made planning difficult. Many teachers were involved in other commitments some of which were compulsory. The general response to holiday workshops was not favourable. It was felt that the teachers were probably not used to working in a more participatory way when it came to decision making. The first and the last terms of the school year were a difficult period in which to hold workshops as the schools were either in a process of settling down, or the teachers and students were busy with examinations. Some teachers felt that they did not receive any formal credit for workshops. (PTP Evaluation Report 1990:2)

The PTP thus adopted the following strategy in terms of trying to make more of an impact on educational change through school focused INSET:

Workshops should be held after school hours and during the week. Teachers and school representatives should be consulted and a timetable for the workshops be made available to each school. Workshops would be run on a modular basis so that teachers could attend those workshops which they felt best suited their needs. Teachers would get an attendance certificate if they regularly attended all workshop sessions. No formal evaluation of teachers would take place. Education coordinators would give demonstration lessons. During times of the year when teachers were too busy to attend workshops the education coordinators could do their planning and development of resource materials. (PTP Evaluation Report 1990:2)

As our work with schools expanded, the frequency and availability of coordinators to do classroom visits decreased, and larger scale workshops increased. One of the tensions that was being felt by education coordinators was to have more autonomy from office administrative functions. In this way they could have more time to focus on their work in the field. The flat leadership structure of the project was increasing this tension.

By October 1990 we had decided to issue attendance certificates as an incentive to teachers to attend INSET sessions. We hoped that this would lead to some form of future recognition or accreditation. Towards the end of the year we began receiving requests for support from schools outside of Windhoek, and began doing research visits to determine the needs of teachers and to plan for future programmes.

During 1990 the PTP began a publication for primary school educators called "Primary Focus". This publication was edited and produced at the PTP offices and distributed to all primary, and some high, schools in Namibia. We managed to produce two editions in 1990. We also established a resource centre for teachers in Katutura and started a project to get box libraries into

schools (PTP Evaluation Report 1990:2).

The PTP felt it important to establish links with the new Ministry of Education during 1990. The new Ministry of Education amalgamated the twelve separate education departments which had existed under Apartheid rule. Staff and structural changes occupied much of the Ministry's time. At this time no clear vision or policy had been set for education in general. Neither was there any clarity of vision or policy for INSET provision in schools. Ministry's policy on collaboration with NCEO's and other service providers was also non-existent at this stage. We were aware that the Ministry was planning educational changes in Namibia, but it was not easy to get access to this information.

During 1990 the PTP unsuccessfully tried to obtain a letter of support and recommendation from the Minister of Education in order to encourage schools to make use of its services. In response to letters and a formal visit to the Ministry by PTP staff, the PTP was informed that the Ministry felt they first needed to gain clarity about the PTP's work and to understand how it fitted into the envisaged National Teacher Education Programme, which was in its planning stages. The PTP was informed that the Ministry would appoint a task group to research and inspect the project (Report on the PTP visit to the Ministry of Education: June 1990). During 1990 this task group apparently never followed up their plans and a letter of support was not issued.

In the Organising Committee Minutes (14 August 1990:1) there is reference to further visits to the Ministry of Education in which PTP staff gained the feeling that the Minister of Education did not have a "problem with the PTP. However there was need for co-ordination of in-service training." In the NCEO workshop in Cape Town (1990:14) at which PTP staff conducted their first orientation and strategic planning exercise, the lack of a working relationship with the Ministry and their denial of our access into schools, was perceived as a threat to continued work in schools.

At this time there were differing levels of support within the Ministry for the work the PTP was doing. The support was on an informal basis through personal links with strategic people within the Ministry who felt open to the work which NGEO's were doing. A number of people who had been in the Department of Education were very bureaucratic in their approach to the PTP's requests and seemed to feel quite threatened by the work that NGEO's like ourselves were doing.

In September 1990 the project went through its first organisational evaluation, which we referred to as an appraisal process. Here we also planned for the next years. We made the following observation about our relationship with the Ministry of Education:

Unfortunately it would appear that there is a top down hierarchical structure in the Ministry. It is important that community based structures spend time and energy pushing to get representation at that level to try and change this approach. (Appraisal Report 1990:2)

During the year we therefore tried hard to keep up links with strategic people within the Ministry in order to gain access to meetings and seminars in which new developments were being discussed. There were times when we were not invited to important forums where educational issues were being debated. On the one hand some people in the Ministry felt the need to draw in and consult the NGO community, but on the other hand some people seemed to feel that NGO's should not have a voice in these forums. Our own capacity in terms of human resources often limited our own involvement in Ministry programmes.

In general the Ministry seem to be in a state of reorganisation and restructuring. By the end of 1990 no clear policy or coordinated programmes in terms of INSET had been developed by the Ministry. Internal political struggles within the Ministry seemed to be taking up a lot of time and energy during this phase of its restructuring.

A number of visits were made to the Permanent Secretary as well as other key people in the Ministry. The PTP established a profile and presence in the Ministry through Primary Focus, our publication, which we distributed to Ministry staff members, and through the interviews we did with Ministry staff and which were published in Primary Focus. Through the informal contact which the PTP built up in the Ministry, we received a number of invitations to attend discussions and planning meetings relating to curriculum development and educational change. Access to many of these meetings was not easy as there were a number of people in the Ministry who felt threatened by NGO's and did not see the importance of our involvement. During this year, establishing any formal working relationship with the Ministry of Education was very difficult because of these internal political dynamics and organisational restructuring.

Through the support of other NGO's and some individuals in the student union, we attempted to act as a pressure group to lobby for support on Ministry forums. My reflective notes record my sentiments on this issue:

Together with NANTU we attempted to push the issue of NGO involvement in educational reconstruction at the Ministry level. I know at this stage we felt there was not a serious commitment from the Ministry to involve NGO's and people from grassroots organisations. They were still very top down in their approach and we had to really push hard at times to get invited to important forums. (Thesis Journal, Collett 1994:8)

The Namibian Non-Governmental Forum (NANGOF) was newly established and had not as yet a base through which we could lobby.

Another tension we experienced with the Ministry during the year was created through a request from them that our project expand into the north of Namibia. As a new project we felt that we needed to consolidate our efforts and way of working before we spread ourselves out over huge distances or decided to relocate. We were only a small pilot project at this stage. By September 1990

there was a difference of vision in the team over the nature of the pilot project (PTP Appraisal Report 1990:8). This had occurred as a result of discussions to expand the project. We felt that the project was a pilot project, and that we did not have the capacity to expand to the North of Namibia. This resulted in us turning down the Ministry's request. Our decision not to respond to the Ministry's request was not taken favourably by some people although it was a difficult strategic choice we had to make.

At this time there was no policy for INSET in schools. Neither was there policy regarding relationships between the Ministry and NGEO's in terms of development work in schools. This lack of policy made the work of our project difficult as many schools were afraid to enter into a working relationship with an NGEO's unless the Ministry gave their permission. This fear of authority, as well as the insecurity of schools to take independent initiatives in their own development, were symptoms of having lived through a legacy of State control and oppression.

Although PTP attempted, unsuccessfully, to negotiate a formal letter of recommendation from the Ministry for the work which we were doing in schools, on an informal level there was support for our work from some people. As a result we decided to negotiate a direct working relationship with schools without a formal letter of permission from the Ministry.

A number of the papers and recommendations for educational reform, which had been developed in conferences and through research initiatives, were being taken forward within the formal structures of the Ministry of Education. Within the NGEO sector, as well as in the other tertiary institutions, some programmes were provided to support the INSET needs of teachers. The following picture of INSET provision in Namibia during the 1990's gives one an idea of what was happening in the field of INSET.

In their research on INSET in Namibia, Auala et al. (1993) note the service providers in the field. Rossing Foundation exposed principals to new policy decisions made by the Ministry of Education and Culture as well as English competency courses. Short INSET courses were offered by the Council of Churches of Namibia (CCN) for teachers. Auala et al. (1993) also note cooperation between the CCN and Rossing in providing INSET courses for teachers in mathematics, science and English.

The Academy provided INSET through correspondence-based, distance teaching and follow-up courses in school holidays. The Windhoek College of Education also offered distance teaching for primary school teachers. The Primary Teachers Project is cited (1990:4) as giving INSET support to primary school teachers in the fields of science, English, mathematics and library science. The INSTANT project (In-service Training and Assistance for Namibian Teachers), providing mathematics and science training for secondary and primary teachers, was established through a cooperative venture between the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the Ministry of Education.

In their research, Auala et al. (1993) also mention that the service providers were not able to attend to all the INSET needs of Namibian teachers. They go on to highlight the inadequacies of INSET provision:

In spite of the increasing number of training activities being organised by the above mentioned bodies, the current in-service programmes do not seem to meet the needs of all serving teachers. Teachers interviewed reported that their most recent in-service training has taken place since Independence. However, the unevenness of the training, its ad hoc nature and the fact that some organisations are able to remove teachers from schools for training without the permission of the MEC, means that it remains uncoordinated and undirected in terms of a systematic statement of teacher needs in the country. (Auala 1993:4)

Auala et al. (1993) highlight the importance of teachers having the opportunity

of improving their formal qualifications. They note in their research that 49% of teachers interviewed had an academic qualification lower than Standard 10, and 36% of teachers had no professional qualifications. The priority INSET needs which Auala et al. (1993:15) identified after interviews with teachers included: teaching methods; communication skills in English; child development; and subject knowledge. The teaching methods were the most favoured area of support. Their research also indicated that teachers favoured INSET in the form of short courses with 61% favouring school holidays, and weekends supported by 51%, while after-school or evening courses were supported by 40% of teachers. They concluded that on a nation-wide basis, 50% of teachers preferred courses to be held in local centres away from their schools while 43% of primary school teachers favoured training at their schools.

The following obstacles with regard to INSET were highlighted in the research by Auala et al. (1993:18): lack of transport to venues (47%); financial problems (35%); few teachers stated that part-time study would affect participation in INSET courses; and, only a few principals did not support INSET. Motivational factors for doing INSET were: provision of transport to INSET sites (35%); provision of a certificate of completion (30%); and granting of study leave for course participation (21%). In their research Auala et al. (1993) did not offer any recommendations about the role other INSET providers such as NCEO's could play, in providing INSET or in participating in INSET policy and planning.

The PTP's fieldwork during 1990 confirmed a number of the research findings by Auala et al. (1993), although our own experience of INSET sessions run during school holidays did not reflect the positive response which their research suggests.

During 1990 the PTP established relationships with other NGO's and newly formed NCEO's. These relationships centred around sharing resources and ideas,

and looking at joint strategies for achieving our aims, including more formal networking and forming NGE0 partnerships. During that year foreign and local NGO's and NGE0's mushroomed in Namibia.

During 1990 PTP was active with a number of other NGO's in establishing the Namibian Non-Governmental Organisations' Forum called NANGOF. The aim of NANGOF was as follows:

We the Namibian NGO's and CBO's who share aims of facilitating community development through participatory democracy, perceive the need to establish a forum for better resource sharing and a coordinated development approach. (NANGOF Constitution 1991:1)

By the end of 1990 the staff at the PTP felt that they had achieved an enormous amount. There was growing credibility for the work of the PTP. The PTP was receiving more requests to run INSET workshops. It had achieved a profile at Ministry level as well as at schools through Primary Focus and its work in the field.

Although we had achieved a lot by the end of the year, our internal capacity to make an impact in the field was weakened by two of our staff members leaving to further their studies, or to take on more lucrative permanent jobs. As a fledgling project these staff changes had a dramatic effect, as we had once again to begin finding skilled people who were committed to work in an NGE0. It also meant that internal resources needed to be used, in order to orient and develop new staff members to take on their work in the project.

The difficulty in finding skilled and committed people to work in the NGE0 field, because of the nature of the work and because of other job opportunities, caused tensions. We were unable to provide enough incentive to keep good employees and this made project staff feel insecure. Staff shortages affected our capacity to expand. A further tension that we had to spend time on was internal

staff development and orientation, at the cost of doing work in the field.

A source of security in the project by the end of the first year, however, was the good relationship which we had built up with our primary funder. There had been a number of personal visits between project staff and representatives from our primary funding partners, and we had worked out terms of reference for a working relationship. To increase our funding base, we had also started to tap alternative funding sources. We knew we needed to guarantee the longer term sustainability of the project through active fund-raising. At the end of the first year we had a small project "appraisal" or evaluation at which a representative of our primary funding partner was present. A number of the areas of development and struggle mentioned above were raised in the evaluation.

The high point of our celebratory party was the sense that we had established a formal organisation which we felt was unique in furthering educational change in Namibia. The publication Primary Focus was a success and an important strategy to reach isolated schools, and profile our work. We had run a number of successful INSET workshops and had built up working relations with schools inside and outside the capital city.

Another cause for celebration were the strategic relationships we had developed with a few key people in the Ministry of Education and within the NGO community. Our Management Committee had also played a very supportive role in setting difficult policy and helping to develop the organisation. The increasing difficulty of getting all our Management Committee members to meetings was beginning to be felt, as they all had busy lives.

Although our successes pulled us through many difficult patches, there were other problems we had to face. We needed to develop lot of administrative and management policy in order that the project would function smoothly. The initial lack of policy in terms of conditions of employment, use of resources and day to

day management made staff relations very difficult at times.

As a founder leader I was also finding it difficult to relinquish my own control over the direction in which the project should go and the way INSET should be approached in the field. Moving into the office and less into the field was a difficult transition for me. I was also trying to find my feet in a new position of Project Coordinator with all the new and unexpected demands this placed on me. Facing challenging management decisions within a newly forming organisational policy context was personally difficult.

The year was a real challenge for the staff, as well as the organisation, as it established itself and went about building its vision of educational change into reality.

4. THE PTP IN 1991- *"The After-Party"*

This was the year of living on the "high" of independence and freedom. Namibians had the feeling of being new members of a new nation on the brink of many possibilities. It felt like an after-party with elements of joy and excitement still hanging in the air as the first year of independence was celebrated. Namibia was beginning to emerge as a newly independent nation. Within this context new policies were being developed for the different Government Departments and the difficult and challenging process of nation building was on its way. Just one year after independence the country still seemed to be reeling in its new found freedom. Beneath the surface of the celebrations the hard task of nation building was beginning to dawn under the banners of reconciliation and reconstruction.

During 1991 the work of the PTP expanded outside of Windhoek. Although three staff members had left the project at the end of 1990, three new staff replacements had been appointed. By the end of 1991 we were still unable to find a suitable candidate to fill the position of resource coordinator. At this stage

all full-time project workers were women.

Our perception of schools during 1991 was that they were very open to INSET support. Schools in remote rural areas, and specifically historically disadvantaged schools, had a great need for physical and human resource development. At many of the schools, conditions were similar to those in the years leading up to Namibia's independence. One of the changes we perceived was that teachers more openly expressed hope for curriculum change and an improvement in teaching resources, such as textbooks and teaching aids at their disposal. The demands for support from schools in more remote areas started to come in to the PTP, because of the contact the staff was building up with schools and as a result of referrals from some people in NGO's and the Ministry.

During the year, the project's fieldwork expanded in Windhoek as well as to the South of the country into the small towns and hamlets of Rehoboth, Groot Aub and Khorixas. This presented new challenges for our INSET work. Many of the schools in which the PTP staff worked were situated in villages where there was no formal accommodation for the education coordinators, and teachers themselves were often unable to provide this. In order to overcome this logistical difficulty tents were bought and the PTP staff members camped on the school grounds.

As one of the education coordinators put it:

One of the major problems was that of logistics. Schools are so widely scattered. This means that bringing teachers together for a workshop is difficult because of a lack of transport and accommodation, especially in farm schools. Again running a workshop at each individual school is also difficult because one may find only one or two science teachers in one school. (PTP Annual Report 1991:8)

The number of teachers being reached by the PTP through INSET courses

increased in 1991. Seventy teachers had attended a series of workshops in Windhoek run by the various education coordinators. A support group of science teachers was set up at the CPS. Our Library Coordinator had eight box libraries delivered to schools in the south of the country with the support of INSET workshops. Research on the need for INSET in the area of book education and the need for box libraries had been conducted in twelve other schools. Through our Library Coordinator a strong, cooperative relationship had been built up with the Department of Library Services in the Ministry of Education. Research regarding INSET needs and library resource needs was also being conducted in smaller towns to the south of the country in order to bring back data for planning workshops for 1992.

The INSET model we used followed a similar pattern to the work undertaken in 1991. Education coordinators would begin their work in schools by first conducting school visits where they would have meetings with principals and staff members, where INSET needs would be determined. These visits also involved planning to deal with logistical difficulties faced in the field, such as finding central venues where teachers from schools in surrounding hamlets could meet. Transport arrangements also needed to be negotiated as there was little or no public transport and teachers from small farm or church schools had to be conveyed to workshop sites. Another logistical problem to overcome was the search for accommodation for the education coordinators.

Curriculum-based INSET in the areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Library Science still remained the focus of the workshops. Active participation and problem solving by learners were emphasised in workshops. Activities and games tested in workshops were tested out with learners. Reports from education coordinators indicated that the responses from teachers regarding the workshops were very positive. After each workshop, evaluation forms were handed out to allow the education coordinators to assess their work and to assist them with the development and design of further workshops.

Although education coordinators would still visit schools to assess needs and develop workshop processes based on these needs, a number of modifications were made to the way in which we worked in 1990. Firstly, no formal evaluation of teachers would happen through class visits unless teachers requested them. Education coordinators would give demonstration lessons where appropriate. Secondly, workshops at schools would be run on a modular basis, so that teachers could attend those workshops which they felt best suited their needs. Workshops continued to focus on needs and problem areas raised by teachers and by involving them in sharing their ideas and information. We also encouraged teachers to attempt to address difficulties they faced in practical ways by using role plays and bringing their actual experiences in the classroom into INSET sessions, through the use of videos. To a certain extent our methodology was strongly influenced by some of Paulo Freire's (1972) principles of adult education, and education for liberation, as written about in one of his publications Pedagogy of the Oppressed. We would begin with the needs of the teachers and involve them actively in the learning experience. We would get teachers to work actively on problems they faced in their classroom realities.

After running a number of workshops for teachers in poorly resourced schools in isolated rural areas, the education coordinators also became more focused on the need to develop resources which the teachers could draw from and modify. Although there was a strong resistance to presenting teachers with packages of materials, the conditions at some schools were so poor that it was necessary to bring in some resources and examples. Teachers also increasingly put pressure on the coordinators to provide concrete materials and resources. It was becoming clear to us that a lot of time and energy needed to be spent on developing teacher's skills and resource production. It was often easier, in terms of the pressures of our work, to provide materials in some cases than to workshop the values and skills underpinning the development of good teaching materials. During 1991 education coordinators spent a great deal of time developing materials for their workshops and ensuring that appropriate materials could be

left behind as resources for teachers who often did not even have access to a library facility. In order to promote the development of authentic Namibian teaching resources, we initiated a successful workshop, out of which seven Namibian children's books were later published. Although we felt that INSET workshops were an important strategy in bringing about educational change we also felt that teachers needed to have access to appropriate resources and materials.

Because of the great geographical distances between schools and the PTP offices in the capital city, it was decided to establish PTP local support networks. The PTP staff therefore attempted to create support structures in the form of teacher support groups, whereby teachers could assist and support each other after the workshops in their own schools. Participants at PTP workshops elected liaison people who could communicate with the PTP staff for further support, in the form of resources, information, advice and further workshops. In practice the functioning of these groups varied according to the responsibility taken by group members in coordinating the group.

The staff was beginning to feel the tension between further expansion to schools in more distant geographical areas, and the need for more regular contact with, and support for, those teachers with whom they had already worked. In our internal evaluation of our INSET strategy, the staff noted that the courses run conducted at a distance were short-term training courses (PTP Annual Review, Von Wiese 1991:12). The possibility of working with teachers and training them to teach other teachers was discussed within the project, as a way of supporting the further expansion of the project and longer term sustainability in the field.

According to the teacher evaluations of the workshop sessions there was a general impression that the workshops had enabled them to gain knowledge, and to learn new skills to improve their teaching ability. Through some classroom observation and individual feedback from teachers, the education

coordinators had some sense of the value of their workshops to teachers. However, they did not have base-line data or practically researched interventions to know how helpful the workshops had been, or if the teachers were translating these learnings into real changes in the classroom.

As a Project Coordinator I continued to work in a limited way in the field by running workshops in the area of Social Studies with a small group of teachers in Katutura. I felt that in order to strategise about the work we were doing I needed to understand what was happening in schools. Although a lot of my time was taken up with administrative and management issues, being involved in the field gave me a sense of renewed life and focus.

One of the difficulties which was experienced by the staff was the lack of understanding and support given to INSET by many principals and teachers. As INSET was not done in a formal way at school level, many teachers' first contact with INSET was through the work of the PTP. Another difficulty was the unwillingness of teachers to spend time after school doing INSET work. The culture in most schools was to leave school after the last period of the school day.

Building our own capacity and understanding became an important part of ensuring that we became more effective in the field. Staff development was encouraged and a system was designed in order for us to educate each other. One of our strategies for internal staff development was for education coordinators to give a report-back on workshops and training and to include a list of skills gained so others might benefit from them (PTP Annual Review, Von Wiese 1991:2).

Attendance certificates were being issued to all teachers who completed INSET workshop sessions. By the end of 1991 we had worked with 40 teachers in Windhoek and 70 teachers in Rehoboth. The work with these teachers consisted

of individual support as well as a number of INSET workshops. We had also received requests to work in Keetmanshoop and other areas to the south of the country, where we were in the process of conducting site-based research on INSET needs.

Throughout 1991 we continued English classes for parents and staff at the Community Primary School. We also continued with English classes for teachers at a large pre-school. The demand for English proficiency classes was high and the work of the English Coordinator spread to a hundred teachers in the South of the country. Basic literacy and English classes for adults continued on a twice-weekly basis. The rationale for continuing work in English at the level of pre-school teachers and parents was that English proficiency would provide a strong support for primary school children. The tension of expanding the resources of the project to pre-school teachers and parents, rather than only focusing on the work with primary school teachers, was felt in terms of the personal wishes of some of the project staff. The core purpose of the PTP's work was with teachers. However, some staff members felt that education for adults should be a longer term educational objective of the project (PTP Annual Review, Von Wiese 1991:13).

By this time the Ministry of Education had been formally established and a number of positions in the Ministry were being re-advertised. This made relations with the Ministry rather difficult as whole Departments were being reshuffled. We had succeeded in establishing and maintaining informal relations with certain people within the Ministry and in this way kept abreast of some of the developments within the Ministry. By the end of 1991 there was still no Ministry policy on INSET or collaborative relationships between the Ministry and NCEO's.

During this period the PTP was invited onto a number of Ministry working committees and task groups. Keeping relations going with the Ministry as well as attending to work on the project itself often presented dilemmas for the PTP staff

as we sometimes felt that attending Ministry meetings drew too heavily on our own staff capacity. Strategic choices about our involvement at this level were often only made after efforts in working groups or committees had been unfruitful. However, we were aware that international NGEOS and programmes based within the Ministry, or which were working in partnership with the Ministry, received favourable treatment when it came to access to venues, resources and strategic people. They also seemed to exert a higher level of influence in terms of promoting particular policy in terms of educational change.

Although the Minister of Education was very supportive of the role which NGEOS could play in educational change and development, it was clear that a number of officials did not like NGEOS operating independently of Ministry control and directives. Some officials felt threatened by the work that we were doing and did not feel that NGEOS should be making an input at Ministry meetings. At this time the Ministry was experiencing internal political power struggles between SWAPO and more conservative elements of the old guard which still had a strong foothold in the Ministry. This led to in-fighting which stopped progress and planning steps from being carried out. It was our perception, as outsiders, that each time a proposal was made it could not be carried out as a "working committee" was always established to take discussions further. This gave the impression that nothing was ever going to be put into practice which could support the INSET needs of teachers.

A number of factors did, however, encourage us to continue to set up strategic links with the Ministry. These included our need to obtain access to information regarding school development. Furthermore, funders were very keen that we forged formal relations with the Ministry so that we could become institutionalised within its structures. They felt this would support the sustainability of the project and ensure a way in which the project's initiatives could be replicated. We were very keen to have our INSET ideas taken up at Ministry level. We also felt that support and consent from the Ministry would

increase the authority of the PTP when it wanted to gain access into schools. Profiling ourselves at the Ministry, through attending important meetings and sittings of curriculum committees, was continued, in the hope of building more formal links.

This quote in our evaluation report in 1991 contains something of the tension we felt in our relationship with the Ministry.

There have been meetings and workshops throughout the year though the PTP has not been included in all of them, it has attended several. Most recently NPTP has been asked to be involved in the Committee for Curriculum Development supported by USAID. Whilst we guard our status as an independent NGO, we realise the need for cooperation, but must constantly be wary of compromising our position or being led in directions we do not wish to go. We also need to have a contact person within the Ministry to keep ourselves updated on information; plans for primary education as well as forthcoming meetings and workshops (PTP Annual Review, Von Wiese 1991:3).

Working relationships were developed with other NNGEO's, namely, the Centre for Applied Social Sciences and the Africa Groups of Sweden. The nature of these relationships varied in terms of the joint INSET projects we embarked on. An NNGEO support group was initiated by the PTP with two other NNGEO's with which it worked. Here we discussed joint initiatives, discussed INSET issues and looked at ways of sharing resources. Strong links were also maintained with the Namibian Non-Governmental Forum (NANGOF) which supported the PTP with capacity building of our organisation. Based on the NANGOF contact list in 1991, there were about 56 NGO's and CBO's operating in Namibia. About seven NNGEO's had been established, including the PTP.

The United Nations Development Programme's compilation of a directory of NGO's and NGO associations, revealed that 130 organisations considered themselves to be NGO's (1991:2). The following conclusions were made with regard to the state of NGO's in Namibia:

The mission found that there exists in Namibia a vigorous and dynamic NGO community, which, despite the short existence of many NGOs, had built up an impressive track record in health, education, community development and other fields. The team arrived at several conclusions which we wish to submit to the international donor community, to the future government and to the UNDP (UNDP Report 1991:2).

The NANGOF network became more established by 1991 and provided a network within Namibia for the capacity of NGO's to be built through the sharing of resources and information, as well as in terms of developing common strategies on lobbying Government on developmental issues. The PTP received a great deal of support from NANGOF members in terms of approaching funders and in its own staff development initiatives.

Difficulties that the education coordinators encountered in the field were recorded in the 1991 PTP Annual Review (Von Wiese 1991:10). In the area of book education many teachers felt that this was not a matter of concern as it was not a promotion subject for learners in terms of passing exams. However as schools needed libraries and children were eager to obtain good books, there was a demand for book libraries. It was felt that the way that teachers could be drawn in was through offering more general courses in reading/books in the classroom and linking the books with the subject support offered by the PTP.

Within the project it was felt that clarity was needed in terms of support for parents in the area of English. In the Annual Review (Von Wiese 1991:11) the historic connections of the English classes at the CPS were highlighted and the growing demand was noted. The English coordinator argued that:

taking on the adult English was founded on the evidence that parental support has a direct affect on their children's progress and it was an important area for educational development. (PTP Annual Review, Von Wiese 1991:11)

The strategy adopted by PTP was that parents should be included and it was even suggested that parents could be involved in our short term training courses held outside of Windhoek, although our main focus would still be on teachers. In the Annual Review report (Von Wiese 1991) there was concern relating to the tension between innovation and resources. The following comment demonstrates this tension:

There was also a concern about how far we could stretch and how much we could take on and if extra costs would be incurred, all our work should come under regular evaluation and review.(PTP Annual Review, Von Wiese 1991:11)

Our first Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held in March 1991, at which the first annual report and financial statements were read. Our AGM was well attended by teachers and NGO representatives. We felt proud of the achievements we had made as a new organisation. At the end of the year we held an annual review and strategic planning process. Securing the ongoing life of the project through additional funds was of major concern here as funding on a national and international level to NGO's was already drying up, as the donor community turned its attention to East Germany and South Africa. Our major donor had at this stage promised us funding for another year and we had the support of a number of minor donors.

One of the continued tensions we experienced was with our Management Committee members being unable to attend meetings. Meetings were often postponed because we could not reach a quorum. As a strategy to overcome this problem, it was decided at the AGM to elect new members who could be available to support the development of the project. A decision was also taken to pay Management Committee members a small monthly contribution for their time and petrol expenses.

Within PTP, administrative systems and procedures were being run more

effectively as we began to put workable policies in place. A less collective system of reporting and decision making on every level was agreed to. This meant that different sectors of the staff would meet collectively to make decisions about their areas of work, within the broader policy guidelines and aims of the project.

One of our weaknesses was that we still did not have a detailed or agreed upon method of collecting data on our activities at schools. We did not do base-line studies to determine conditions in schools before we started. This made it difficult to evaluate what kind of impact we had on actual change in the classroom.

In our end-of-year evaluation it was recommended that we introduce some form of internal monitoring or appraisal of education coordinators. However, some felt that a formal system was unnecessary and that people had an accountability to themselves and to the project, and should be adult enough to control their own productivity and output. This was an area of contention among the staff. Education coordinators felt that the support they gave each other in the field, and through the sharing of experiences in staff meetings, would suffice in terms of appraisal.

The leadership structure within the project was still relatively flat. This had begun to cause tensions in terms of lines of authority, as well as in terms of education coordinators wanting more independence with decision-making in the field, and less responsibility for internal management issues on the project.

Although some project members had left, the new project workers formed a supportive team who worked creatively together in the field. We believed in what we were doing and were committed to putting our energy into our work. The new project workers who had joined us felt that by the end of the year they had begun to fit into the PTP, and were strengthening the capacity of the project to do its work in the field. A number of issues of Primary Focus had gone out to

schools and our credibility had grown in the Ministry of Education through our input on committees, as well as through the informal feedback on the work we were doing in schools via teachers and department officials. Our publication had also created a visible public profile for the PTP. Our AGM had been a success and we had managed to put out a successful annual report which reflected the extent of our work and growth.

At the end of 1991 I felt that I needed to have a deeper theoretical grounding for the INSET work which we were doing. The strain of holding a small organisation through three years of dramatic change on a personal, organisational and broader contextual level, was beginning to affect my own ability to work effectively. I decided to take a year's unpaid leave to further my studies at a university in South Africa. During this time one of my colleagues took over as Project Coordinator. As a project leader my decision to take a break for a year was greeted with mixed feelings of regret and support. The project workers and the Management Committee were pleased that one of the project workers was prepared to take on the role of Project Coordinator in my impending absence.

Tensions around the future sustainability of the project were again coming to the surface as our funding base was rather insecure. The expansion of the project to support schools further and further afield were raising questions about the quality and sustainability of our work. Fieldworkers with small children were beginning to experience the stresses of being away from their families for long stretches of time. All of us were beginning to feel the strain of the task we had taken on as well as the energy it needed to sustain the life of the organisation within a rapidly changing social and political climate.

5. THE PTP IN 1992 - "*Cleaning Up After the Party*"

1992 was the year of sobering up after the independence celebrations. The extent of the hard work of reconstruction and reconciliation was beginning to

dawn. Added to this was the headache and the heartache in most peoples lives of creating a new order, in the wake of the chaos left by South African colonialism. There was a lot of work to be done in schools to provide them with support to transform their educational realities, and implementing some of the basic educational reforms that were coming from the Ministry.

More schools began calling on the project for assistance in the area of INSET. Through our publication Primary Focus and through word of mouth contact between teachers and schools, our profile was spreading. A number of new schools in the south and east of the country were reached by the PTP during 1992. Approximately three hundred teachers were reached through workshops and classroom visits in 1992. Nineteen schools were reached in the central and south regions (PTP Annual Report 1992). This as compared to two hundred and sixty teachers and forty-five parents in seven schools in 1991 (PTP Annual Review, Von Wiese 1991), and approximately 100 teachers in five schools and one pre-school in 1990 (PTP Evaluation Report, Von Wiese 1990).

A description of the library coordinator's work gives an indication of the physical and geographical expansion of the project over this period. In 1990 the library coordinator worked with five schools in the central Windhoek district. She distributed 5 box libraries, and ran workshops on library skills and promoting reading for all staff members at these schools. In 1991 she worked with another five schools in the South of the country. She distributed eight box libraries and ran workshops for forty-three teachers in fairly isolated rural schools. In 1992 she worked with another four schools in the central region around Windhoek. She distributed another two box libraries and worked with twenty nine teachers. (Ella 1994:1)

Issues around the expansion of the project and the tensions that were present, in terms of follow-up with teachers who had already made contact with the project were starting to emerge even more strongly. Less time was spent with teachers

we had worked with in 1990 and 1991 in the Windhoek area, as we travelled further and further afield to reach those schools which were in the more rural and isolated areas.

Staff turnover, coupled with two staff members going off on maternity leave, placed a further strain on our internal capacity. At the beginning of 1992 there were five education coordinators doing work in the field. During the year, two of these coordinators left the project and were replaced by new people. One of the staff members whose work permit expired had to return to England in the middle of the year, while another colleague took up a position within the Ministry of Education. The loss of these two staff members had a dampening effect on the life of the project, as these two people were skilled and had been with the project for over two years. Their loss made a significant difference to the project's ability to do follow up work in the field and to expand to other schools. However the staff still managed to contact more schools, and to plan for further expansion to meet the needs of schools in the eastern region of the country.

INSET still took the form of school focused workshops in the areas of Mathematics, Science, English proficiency for teachers and parents, English in the classroom, and Book Education and information skills. The small project I had started in Social Studies was put on hold while I was away on study leave.

Most of the workshops were run in rural schools in the South of the country with, research visits also being made to schools in small towns to the East. After initial reconnaissance visits in which logistical arrangements were made and meetings were held with teachers and principals to identify their INSET needs, workshops were held at schools. The education coordinators would undertake two-week trips to outlying areas, where the PTP staff could work with a number of teachers from primary schools in the area.

The workshops were focused on the principles of learner-centered education.

Within the workshop sessions the education coordinators would model these principles. They repeatedly referred to the saying "Tell me, I forget. Teach me I remember. Involve me and I learn" in their practice of running workshops, as well as in what they tried to teach. Use was also made of videos in which teachers would watch each other teaching and critique lessons in terms of specific pedagogical principles. Through videos they would also watch and critique the coordinators giving demonstration lessons. Teachers would be encouraged to help their pupils learn through problem solving and finding out for themselves. They were also encouraged to use natural resources in their communities as teaching resources. The problems teachers faced with the existing syllabi were also addressed.

A variety of teaching methods were experimented with. Here teachers would identify the advantages and disadvantages of different methods within specific contexts. Education coordinators were not prescriptive about methodology. They wanted teachers to develop the ability to become critical about different methods, and to encourage them to use those methods which they felt were best suited to the learning situation. Classroom visits, encouraging team teaching and introducing action research were used, to support teachers in the implementation of INSET ideas in their classrooms. During workshops there was also a strong emphasis on teachers learning to develop their own resources and teaching materials and aids. At some schools where there was a platoon system of teaching (whereby schools were used in the morning and the afternoon), INSET workshops would be held for three hours in the morning and then again in the afternoon.

The dissemination of materials and Primary Focus in INSET workshops was another way in which support was given to teachers who had attended INSET workshops. Huge distances between schools, and poor telecommunications, made on-going support difficult. All INSET workshops encouraged teachers to network with each other and form support groups where they could meet

regularly. Teachers were also encouraged to identify resource people in their schools and to elect representatives, who would be liaison people between the PTP and their school, if they felt they needed support.

Although many teachers supported the idea of support groups, these groups varied in success according to the commitment of teachers. Many groups did not have the time or inclination to meet after the INSET sessions because of other more pressing commitments. Coordination of logistical arrangements, in terms of finding appropriate times to meet and keeping the momentum of school-based INSET sessions alive, was difficult to sustain. It meant a lot of work and commitment from teachers to hold these sessions together and make them productive. Although the PTP team was able to keep in contact with liaison people in the schools where they had worked, this happened only sporadically. Within the project there were growing concerns about the sustainability of our work, and we had less and less time to work in a focused and sustained way with teachers.

Follow-up visits to four or five schools had occurred, with classroom observation and team teaching taking place. Education coordinators found that the child-centered method of teaching was becoming part of the practice at some schools. The need for support materials for schools in isolated areas was strongly expressed by the coordinators after follow up visits.

The Teachers Resource Centre which the PTP had established in Katutura, as a library and resource centre for primary school teachers, continued to operate in 1992 and was officially launched in January of the same year. The production and distribution of Primary Focus continued with 6000 copies being distributed during the year. By the end of 1992 thirty-six box libraries containing approximately 7 200 books had been prepared for delivery to schools. Four new members were also added to the Management Committee at a very successful AGM. The PTP commitment to be open and transparent, as well as accountable

to the communities which it served, was being practised.

The efforts of the PTP were still primarily funded by our major European Community donor, with the support of a number of smaller Aid agencies. Many donors did not want to support operating costs and funding was becoming increasingly difficult to secure. The acting project coordinator pursued funding channels through the Ministry of Education in order to sustain the project after 1993. Fund-raising and writing funding proposals took up a great deal of the project coordinator's time during the year.

During 1992 links with the Ministry of Education were strengthened with the PTP coordinators serving on different subject committees, such as the Primary English Syllabus Design Committee. The project had also been requested by the Ministry to provide support with upgrading the English proficiency of teachers via a Basic Education Reform programme. By participating on these committees, the PTP kept abreast of the latest developments in Education. The project had also started informing the Chief Educational Officers in the regions in which it was working about the work which it was doing. Developing a good working relationship with the Ministry was always seen as very important.

The Department of Library and Information Sciences at the Ministry was very complimentary about the work the project had done. Through both verbal and written feedback the PTP was given a lot of encouragement for its work in the field. The PTP was fulfilling a need by getting reading material to schools at the primary level. The Ministry at this stage was concentrating their efforts in secondary schools. Through the Chief of Teacher Education in the newly established National Institute of Teacher Education, the efforts of the PTP were acknowledged, and support and assistance for the PTP's work was promised. All PTP coordinators served on different subject committees in the Ministry. This helped the PTP keep abreast of all educational developments. In order to prevent the duplication of resources and facilitate coordination the PTP

informed the regional Chief Education Officer of the MEC in different regions about workshops it conducted.

Although a working relationship with the Ministry was seen as being strategically important, it often created tensions in the project in terms of the project's own limited resources and its own plans for development work in the field. At this stage there was still no policy in place at Ministerial level in the area of working relationship between NGEO's, the Ministry and INSET provision.

A good working relationship was established between the PTP and a number of organisations linked with NANGOF. Through NANGOF, the PTP was able to give critical input on the Government's proposed National Development Plan. The PTP continued to work collaboratively with a number of Namibian NGEO's. These partnerships varied in intensity and focus. The Africa Groups of Sweden, INSTANT, US Peace Corps, World Teach and DANIDA were the foreign NGO's the project had contact with. The work and activities of NANGOF had expanded in 1992 and the PTP had assisted the Namibian National Students Organisation in establishing its resource library. Also the Namibian Development Trust fieldworkers had assisted the PTP with research into educational needs in the South of Namibia. NANGOF's aim to begin to support the development of resource sharing and capacity building between NGO's in Namibia was beginning to take shape.

At the end of 1992, the project underwent a detailed internal and external evaluation process with its primary donor organisation. Although funding was promised for another year, there was a feeling of urgency on the project to raise money to support its expansion.

Some of the positive points noted in the evaluation were that the PTP was recognised by the Ministry of Education and was often asked to supplement the Ministry's own services. The external donor noted that it would take a long time

before the Ministry could meet the INSET needs in primary schools because of the vast demand for support (Funder Correspondence November 1992). The good relationship which the PTP had built up with the Project Implementation Unit at the Ministry, which was responsible for coordinating INSET, was noted (Evaluation Report 1992). Through this unit the PTP could be furnished with contact names of chief education officers in the different regions, who could aid its work. An NGO coordinating committee was in the process of being established in the Ministry. Through this committee project staff had contact with other NGO's and information on INSET work being planned at Ministry level.

A letter to the primary funding partner's representative in November 1992 acknowledges the PTP's progress with the Ministry:

The NPTP has steadily been making progress since its inception in 1990. The project is now recognised by the Ministry of Education, working closely with the Ministry and is often being asked by the Ministry to supplement its own services. There is still no doubt about the need in terms of primary teachers' training. Even though the Ministry is trying to fulfil its responsibility in this field, too, it seems that there is room for everybody and the PTP is not duplicating the services of others. With this in mind, it is special appropriate that the PTP had decided to offer its workshops in mainly in the south and central regions whereas most others concentrate efforts in the north. (Funder Correspondence 1992)

It was also noted that the PTP was collaborating with other NGOs and was not duplicating services. The PTP's participation in NANGOF assisted networking between NGO's and ensured that there was collaboration and no duplication of services. The work the PTP did in the South of the country was praised, as few developmental programmes were offered in rural areas in this region.

The increased distribution and production of Primary Focus was acknowledged with 6000 copies being distributed during the year. The Ministry of Education praised the publication and recommended that it appear more frequently and receive support from Ministry officials. The PTP Resource Centre which officially

opened in Katutura in the middle of 1992, was used by an increasing number of teachers and learners.

Also noted was the support which project workers received in terms of their own personal development, in order to be effective in the field. A number of staff members had received technical support training in computing, as well as in their field of development through attending short training workshops offered by NANGOF and other service providers in Namibia.

Internal leadership dynamics within the project, due to shifts in project leadership roles as well as newly developing dynamics within the project, were creating their own stresses and strains. The PTP evaluation recommended that a stronger leadership role be played by the project coordinator. Although leadership structures were less flat than in the past it was felt that more directive leadership needed to be exercised in order to deal with sensitive personnel issues. A less flat structure within the organisation had made planning and meetings more effective, although it was agreed that having team and individual initiatives required tighter, more intensive planning and a greater degree of organisational effectiveness.

The observation of the representative of the PTP's primary funder (in his correspondence to the PTP), who attended the PTP evaluation in November 1992, confirms the need for more directive leadership and a more clearly defined hierarchical structure in order to improve interpersonal relations and the internal functioning of the organisation:

There is a recurrent theme in the talks that there presently is a lack of leadership in the office which makes it difficult for the staff to deal with sensitive issues like questions of personnel. The office has already changed the collective style of management where everybody had to sit in on all decisions, but there is a further need to identify a leader - and a corresponding expressed willingness to accept having a leader. (PTP Correspondence 1992)

During 1992 it was agreed that staff salary structures needed to be adjusted to levels appropriate to what teachers were receiving. This was done in order to satisfy staff demands so as to ensure their remaining on the project.

The lack of regular attendance at meetings by Management Committee members was still a constant difficulty, although the Committee had attempted to re-elect members if they failed to attend meetings without giving notice. In the evaluation meeting it was recommended that financial incentives might increase their commitment. Some project staff members felt uncomfortable about this suggestion. I felt strongly that the Management Committee members should not be paid for their work in our organisation, and that they should carry out this work as part of their political commitment to the country's future.

One of the difficulties was that we badly needed a skilled person to take over the production of Primary Focus. This task was becoming too big for the staff to carry.

In terms of the work which education coordinators were doing in the field, a number of other difficulties were encountered. This included the difficulty of running workshops within the general administrative chaos of the first school term. The library coordinator was feeling the effects of work overload in terms of the intensive administrative duties of processing book boxes and establishing the resource centre, as well as having to run courses in the field.

By the end of 1992, apart from on-the-spot workshop evaluations, classroom visits, and informal feedback from teachers and other people, no proper system had been developed to evaluate our work in the field. The increase in the number of requests that we received also gave some form of informal indication that our work was valuable and in demand, although this was never formally researched. At the end of the year the PTP conducted an annual evaluation and strategic planning but these issues were never critically addressed.

By 1992 most of the PTP's funding still came from its major funder, although smaller grants had come in from other funders. Being totally dependent on funding from external sources meant that its late arrival caused anxiety between ourselves and the donor organisations. Funding criteria seemed to change with staff changes within donor organisations. A strategy for establishing a more stable funding base was attempted by having our major donor conduct an external and internal evaluation of the project. With their recommendations the PTP project proposal was upgraded and sent for endorsement to the Ministry of Education.

Some of the sobering realities that the project team were having to face were the impact of turnover of staff and the expansion of its work in the field. Questions were raised about the developmental role of the INSET model in terms of continuity and sustainability. Within a context of diminishing funds for NCEO's, the establishment of more developmental working relations with the Ministry of Education were seen as increasingly important.

6. THE PTP IN 1993 AND BEYOND - "The End of the Celebration"

During 1993 the work of the project expanded to schools to the south and east of the country. Three new staff members joined the project towards the end of 1992 and enabled the work within the PTP to proceed fairly smoothly.

At the beginning of 1993 I returned after a year's study leave in South Africa to once again take up the position of coordinating the project. Due to a family tragedy in the early part of 1993, and the temporary status of my residence in Namibia, I made the decision to resign my position as project coordinator and return to South Africa. The person who had acted as project coordinator in 1992

was appointed to my position in June 1993 and her position as a science coordinator was readvertised. Although these staff changes did affect the stability of the project the work of the project continued fairly smoothly with the production of Primary Focus, the running of INSET workshops and the inevitable search for funding to support these activities.

The new project coordinator led the project until the end of 1995. The Management Committee then appointed an individual from outside of the project to take over its leadership. The PTP closed down at the beginning of 1998. In interviews with project staff members and one of the founder Board members (Management Committee), I was able to ascertain that a number of factors had contributed to the closing down of the project. They were:

The end of funding from the primary funder.

The lack of leadership and strategic direction.

The reappointment of new staff who lacked skills and expertise in INSET or a knowledge of the project's history.

Internal staff conflict

The poor management of the project by the Board.

The shift of the project's focus from its core purpose to avenues where funding sources were available.

In this instance, the PTP's desperation for funding may have driven it into this trap: "a consequence of finding any money is that organisations take up projects and emphases that shift them from the core purpose; and for which they don't have the core competencies to do well, this is unsustainable." (Thaw 1998:8).

In an interview with a staff member who had been with the project since its inception the following insights were given. Factors that played a role in the closing down of the PTP included:

The change of so many project coordinators, also some people that were elected could not cope. People that were elected from inside the project were good. When people were brought in from outside things went down. People without management and leadership skills and who had never worked in the field of leading an NCEO just made it fail. Because of so many policy changes in the office by the new staff members and the Management Committee the project just went down. Because of all these changes in the constitution and the focus. As a staff member nobody looks at problems or and acknowledge me keep PTP standing. They don't support me. As a founder member it is hurtful to be treated like an outsider. They will not ask me for any advice. They also appointed new people that are not competent on the project. That has made it go down. They decided to appoint people with degrees by these people hardly have any skills. When we were retrenched because there was no money. This was because the project coordinator did not send out project proposals and there was not money. When bridging money came in they then readvertised posts, and then a whole new focus was decided upon and new roles were advertised. All of the old staff applied and they were not appointed. New roles were advertised for the new focus and new people came in and things just went down. (Interview, Ella: March 1997)

In this chapter I have given a description of the growth and development of the Primary Teachers Project from 1989 when the project was initiated, to 1992 when the enormous challenges of nation building and the ongoing survival of the project became a daily reality. I have included a brief post-script outlining the history of the PTP after 1992. I have used the metaphor of a party to describe the various phases of development the project went through. The historical narrative highlighted the PTP's strategies and assumptions about educational change, and the factors which influenced these strategies. I have also made reference to some of the micro and macro factors which promoted and constrained the PTP's influence in educational change.

In writing this case study I have chosen to focus in greater depth on describing the project's INSET model and its relationship with the Ministry of Education, as well as the areas of funding and the changing internal organisational dynamics within the project. These four aspects form the basis of my topical reflections in the next four chapters.

Chapters Three to Six provide a topical reflection of the four focus areas of this dissertation, namely: the PTP's INSET model; the PTP's relationship with the Ministry; funding; and internal organisational dynamics within the PTP. The topical reflections are integrated with relevant national and international literature on issues raised. In the concluding section of each of these chapters I draw out some of my learnings in relation to those factors which worked for and against the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia. Here a number of central learnings in relation to NGEOS are highlighted.

Chapter Seven concludes by drawing together some of the links between the four aspects constituting a focus, and draws out some central learnings with regard to the PTP and its role in educational change in Namibia. Here I highlight some of the central factors which worked for and against the PTP in influencing educational change. Finally, I make a number of general recommendations with regard to the role of NGEOS in influencing educational change in the Southern African context.

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Chapter 3

TOPICAL REFLECTION ON THE PTP'S INSET MODEL

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TOPICAL REFLECTION ON THE PTP'S INSET MODEL

There are few things in education which offer so much promise and are so frustratingly wasteful as the multitude of inservice activities and proposals across this country, and elsewhere. What we need more than anything else is some conceptual and empirical clarity about the purposes and nature of what amounts to a phenomenon whose complexity is greatly underestimated and misunderstood. (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:266)

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a critical reflection on the INSET model used by the Primary Teachers Project, in relation to current national and international literature on the subject of school-focused INSET and educational change. In the light of the above quote by Michael Fullan, I tease out and understand more deeply the assumptions and practices embedded in the INSET work I was involved in, and the multiple factors which influence innovations of this type by NGEO's. I draw out some central learnings with regard to the PTP's INSET model, highlighting the central factors which worked for and against this NGEO promoting educational change in Namibia. In conclusion I make a number of central learnings with regard to models of INSET in the Southern African context.

2. THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE PTP INSET MODEL AND THE ASSUMPTIONS WHICH SHAPED THE MODEL

I begin this chapter with an introduction to the social and political context within which the model originated, as well as a background to some of the PTP's assumptions which shaped the model. I structure my reflections of the PTP's model within Michael Fullan's (Hopkins 1986:278) six recommended guidelines for INSET planning. I have used Fullan's guidelines as they provide an holistic framework within which to view INSET provision. Under each of these headings I focus in more detail on a number of major issues relating to school-focused INSET. I conclude by drawing out some of my own learnings and recommendations in

relation to the provision of effective school-focused INSET. Here I also attempt to reflect more specifically on the role of NGEOS as service providers in the area of INSET.

In the literature on INSET it is widely acknowledged that not enough is known about effective INSET and the multitude of factors which influence it (Bolam 1982; Fullan 1979 and 1982; Hofmeyr & Pavlich 1987; and van den Berg 1987). What is agreed upon, however, is that INSET cannot be seen separately from the school and societal context within which it is located, and that these factors need to be taken into consideration when planning programmes. What is also being called for (Bolam 1982; Fullan 1986; Hopkins 1986; and van den Berg 1987) is a greater understanding on the part of those planning INSET programmes, of the underlying values they hold about educational change, innovation and the role of teachers.

People involved in the design and implementation of INSET follow some or other change strategy; the only difference is whether they do this consciously or unreflectively. Where INSET activity occurs on the basis of take-it-for-granted assumptions, the risk of failure and disillusionment - and therefore of the wastage of resources - is often great. (van den Berg in Ashley & Mehl 1987:17).

The change strategy underpinning the work of the PTP was not grounded in conscious theory related to educational change, INSET or curriculum innovation. Brian Gray (1990), who implemented and coordinated the Science Education Project (SEP) in KwaZulu-Natal, also acknowledges his own lack of theoretical grounding when he began with the initiative. He comments:

In some ways I feel that my naive entry may have been an advantage in that it did not blinker the way in which I might have seen things, or provide a possible mental straitjacket or prescription for how to operate. On the other hand, it also could have been a distinct disadvantage in the way that van den Berg (1983:16) puts it. (Gray 1990:166)

As teachers, who were also the implementors and designers of the PTP's INSET

strategy, we drew on our own practical experience in attempting to build an alternative to apartheid education. With hindsight, I could say that a conscious awareness and understanding of the complexity of educational change could have had a deep and profound impact, on both our change strategy as well as on moderating expectations of what we could achieve. On the other hand, having this consciousness may have dampened our hopes and increased our fear of failure.

Our rationale for bringing about educational change was based on our belief that teachers were central to changing what went on in their classrooms and in fighting for an alternative to apartheid education through INSET. In my experience of being a teacher, INSET had helped me to understand more deeply my own role as an educator. In my work with the teachers at the Community Primary School (CPS), I observed the qualitative difference in teacher motivation and in classroom practice that resulted from sustained INSET support and classroom-based support. Among the PTP staff, we believed that INSET helped teachers to think more critically about what they were teaching. My experience at the CPS had helped to consolidate the assumption that the site at which teachers worked was an important base for INSET. As a facilitator of INSET this helped me to gain an understanding of teaching conditions. On a practical level, my colleagues felt that going to school and using schools for our INSET workshops would prove most cost effective and convenient, for teachers who did not have transport and who could save on travel time.

We strongly believed in the importance of INSET in providing a forum within which teachers could learn to work collectively with other teachers, in sharing their resources and ideas and in becoming more critical of their own practices. Through INSET we believed that teachers could encourage themselves and learners to think critically about the language and concepts they used, and could keep themselves informed about new educational resources and ideas in the field. Through INSET we believed that a better quality of education could be

provided to all Namibian children and that this would assist in building a new society which would be critical and resistant to oppression.

Our sentiments about the social and political role we saw INSET playing resonated with some of the views held in South Africa by people fighting for alternative education or People's Education. Hofmeyr and Pavlich regard INSET as:

the prime strategy for furthering the academic and professional development of black teachers, accelerating the achievement of equal quality education for all children, and preparing all teachers to participate in the transformation of education and society. (Hofmeyr & Pavlich in Ashley & Mehl 1987:75)

The PTP's model of INSET, which began as a small pilot project in one school and then spread to a number of other schools, would best fit the definition of school-focused INSET, which is defined by Hopkins, below (1986). The INSET support provided by the PTP did not, however, extend to organisational development initiatives within the schools although we did encourage teachers to work collaboratively and to attempt cross-curricular work. Hopkins's definition of *school-based INSET* is as follows:

those continuing education activities which focus upon the interest, needs and problems directly related to one's role and responsibilities in a specific school site. These forms of inservice focus not only on individual teacher concerns and needs, but on matters which demand the coordinated efforts of several, if not all persons in a specific school setting. When appropriate, both members of the larger school community and the student population should have input into decisions about necessary changes in the school and their implications for INSET. These forms of inservice commonly call for changes in the organisational structure and programmatic nature of a school. (Hopkins 1986:46)

The specific focus the PTP had was to work with teachers on classroom-based curricular work which focused on a number of the content subjects. Where we did work with a greater number of people in a school community was when we provided English and English literacy classes to our original pilot school and a

few other schools. Our focus was, therefore, primarily on curriculum-based INSET and teacher development. We did not provide support in terms of the broader development of schools as an organisation, or in terms of the role of leadership in managing change at the school level.

In retrospect I believe that my own lack of expertise in this area, as well as our own lack of understanding and knowledge of the link between curriculum innovation and organisation development, kept our focus at the level of the teacher. Our own practice as teachers and understanding of educational change from the perspective of the teachers, I believe, influenced our focus on teacher development as the main strategy in educational change.

A deeper understanding of educational change and the complexity of the change process, within the social and political complexity of Namibian society, was not part of our consciousness. The pressing day-to-day realities and the urgency to respond to grass-root needs drove our strategy. Fullan cautions against a neglect of an understanding of change and the complexity of the change process in initiating educational change processes: "Neglect of the phenomenology of change is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most social reform" (Fullan 1982:28, cited in Ashley and Mehl 1987:28).

The change strategy which guided our own INSET model was linked strongly to macro notions of political and social change rather than to a clearly worked out implementation strategy which took into account a range of factors which may affect its implementation. Our own approach was not "based on a reasonably comprehensive plan which addresses the main factors likely to affect the outcome of the inservice programme" which, according to Fullan, is what is necessary to ensure an effective approach to school-focused INSET (Fullan quoted in Hopkins 1986:273).

Operating on blind faith and a will to succeed gave us the courage to forge

ahead in circumstances where community-based initiatives, which attempted to resist the control the apartheid state had over education, were operating within a hostile climate. Living and working within a country on the brink of major political change made it difficult to predict with any amount of certainty what the future would hold. On many levels we lived in the realm of future hope and dreams as we faced the hard reality of conditions on the ground. School-focused INSET became part of a broader strategy to resist the ideological state apparatus, through supporting teachers to become critical about what they were teaching and how they were teaching. With the education system in a state of transition it was difficult to predict anything with certainty, or to find out what longer term plans for the educational system would be. Within both the Namibian and South African context during the 1970's, 1980's and early 1990's, schools were sites of political struggle. The works of Kallaway (1984) and Alexander (1985) are some examples of literature dealing with these issues in more depth.

The social and political context within which this INSET initiative developed influenced both the development of the INSET model and its particular focus. As a project which was run by, and worked permanently with, teachers, and which had its base in civil society, we were in a relatively exposed and insecure position with regard to authority structures within the formal educational system. The focus on teachers as major "change agents" as well as the contested educational and political terrain within which the PTP was operating, made the task of providing school-focused INSET difficult. Van den Berg's (1987) view on INSET provision in South Africa during the 1980's affirms this:

Models of INSET which envisage a more active role for teachers must also be seen as somewhat problematic in South Africa, particularly in the large number of schools where a politically charged environment makes survival rather than innovation the major focus of attention. In this regard it is also sobering but realistic to recognise that INSET cannot be seen as something existing apart from the school order which it seeks to influence, however far a INSET activity may be removed geographically from school premises. One should not expect that a highly sophisticated

and effective system of INSET can easily be grafted on to an educational system suffering from major weaknesses, disparities and tensions..." (van den Berg in Ashley & Mehl 1987:25)

The political transition in Namibia during 1990 made it easier for the PTP to gain access to schools as well as to establish a relationship with the new Ministry of Education in Namibia. With the growing spirit of independence from South African occupation, there was also a growth in the openness by teachers and principals to a non-governmental organisation providing an INSET service. Our ability to function in state schools may have been drastically curtailed through the State bureaucracy if Namibian independence had not been won in 1990. INSET, which directly involved teachers in questioning what they were teaching and how they were teaching, would have been regarded as a threat to the status quo. INSET of this type would have had to be practised as a subversive activity with small groups of innovative teachers at community schools, as had been the case in 1989.

During the 1990's, the political and educational context within which the PTP operated was one characterised by sentiments of reconciliation and nation building. It was also a time of major changes within the education system at a national level. Although there was verbal support from the Ministry of Education for INSET support to schools, and an understanding of the important role which INSET had in upgrading teachers' qualifications and furthering their professional development, there was a lack of clarity in terms of future INSET policy or planning for educational development. Within this context the PTP continued to operate in a few schools without coordinating its efforts with Ministry plans, although we understood the importance of forming a relationship at this level. Once the education system was part of a legitimate government, the PTP sought ways in which it could collaborate with the Ministry in providing INSET to teachers.

Hartshome, in a summary of emergent factors in the HSRC report on INSET in

South Africa, acknowledges that:

INSET is more likely to be effective and successful when there is a sincere commitment to it from the state...to be shown through active support and encouragement of INSET activities, and through the provision of facilities and resources, both financial and human. (Hartshome in Ashley and Mehl 1991:11)

The PTP's INSET model was initially based on working primarily with groups of innovative teachers, at schools who wanted to make changes in their classrooms. When the new Ministry of Education was established, we sought ways of collaborating with the broader system to enable our own INSET work. The literature on INSET acknowledges (Fullan 1979; Hartshome 1985; Hopkins 1987; and van den Berg 1987) that INSET is more effective if there are both top-down and grass-roots initiatives coordinated within a broader framework, for teacher development, curriculum development and educational change.

The PTP operated within a policy vacuum. The lack of policy and clarity of vision for educational change in the country during the first few years of the PTP's existence, made it difficult to strategise in terms of our own efforts in schools as well as in terms of strengthening our relationship with the Ministry of Education. The next chapter deals with the nature of the relationship between the PTP and the Ministry of Education, and some of the factors which helped and hindered closer cooperation with INSET provision.

To provide a more focused framework within which to reflect on the PTP's own model, and some of the factors that influenced it, I have used the following guidelines for INSET planning recommended by Fullan (1979):

1. The need for inservice to be integrated with and part and parcel of a concrete programme of change and problems experienced at the classroom and school level. It should have a project or programme focus.
2. With these programmes inservice should be intensive and ongoing.

3. The ongoing process of professional development must be linked to school building or organisational development efforts. Both teachers and administrators should be involved in inservice.
4. Inservice training should be simultaneously directed at skill specific and conceptual development over time.
5. Teachers may be the best source of skill and practical training, although external to the school consultants should be used for particular purposes.
6. Above all, one needs a plan at the school level, and at the school district level which systematically organises and provides for (1) to (5) to happen in an interactive framework. (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:278).

Within the framework of Fullan's six guidelines I expand on the PTP model, relating it to issues raised in the literature on INSET in a Southern African and international context. At the end of each guideline I draw out some of the main insights and questions raised, and highlight some of the factors which influenced and shaped the PTP's model.

3. REFLECTION ON AND DISCUSSION OF THE PTP INSET MODEL

3.1. INSET Integration

"The need for inservice to be integrated with and part and parcel of concrete programme of change and problems experienced at the classroom and school level. It should have a project or programme focus." (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:278)

The PTP's model did not holistically conceptualise an integrated approach to support change at the level of the classroom and the school or even more broadly. It focused on addressing individual teachers' problems with teaching specific primary school subjects, classroom management, and methodology. These needs were not identified within an overall staff development programme in the school. The link between change at the classroom level and changes within the broader school environment was not clearly understood, or taken into consideration by the PTP staff, in their efforts to assist teachers with implementation of new ideas and practices after the workshops.

Fullan's view is that "teachers are more likely to benefit from in-service activities which are programme or project focused in which staff development is part and parcel of an overall plan to bring about improvement." (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:273)

The PTP's model did not focus on addressing broader organisation development needs in the school. It did not address the issue of staff development and the development of institutional support to enable teachers to access resources and decision making in terms of their own classroom-based innovation. Fullan recommends that careful consideration be paid to the contextual factors which influence implementation and that comprehensive programmes be developed that take these factors into consideration. He says:

It is necessary to view inservice education in the broader context of factors associated with implementation. In other words, inservice training is one factor affecting the outcome of the training (eg. change in classroom behaviour), but so is administrative support at the school and district level, teacher/teacher interaction, time-line, overload and the other factors listed previously. In short an effective approach to school focused inservice must be based on a reasonably comprehensive plan which addresses the main factors likely to affect the outcome of the inservice programme. (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:273)

The PTP's own INSET strategy did not take into account the broader contextual issues in the school or wider environment which would influence and affect changes which teachers may try to make in their classrooms. Our strategy was based on the belief that we were doing the right thing, that teachers enjoyed our workshops and wanted more of them, and that more and more teachers were requesting workshop support. We were more focused on getting to more schools and teachers, rather than on looking at how effective our interventions were in achieving changes in classroom practice, or in achieving our aims. We did not plan to assist teachers to implement their learnings in practice. I believe that we needed to look more creatively at ways of helping them with implementation, both on a personal and organisational level. Gray

commenting on the Science Education Programme's success relates this to the "holistic nature of the implementation strategy." (1990:146)

Had the PTP's strategy been informed more deeply by an understanding of the complexity of educational change, its model of school-focused INSET would have been different in scale, and in the quality and type of support provided to teachers. I would agree with Gray (1990) that a holistic implementation strategy is important, in order to ensure that the necessary support for curriculum innovation by teachers is in place at various levels of the school and broader educational system.

If the PTP had asked the right questions as to why particular initiatives were taken and how they supported teachers in making changes in their classrooms, and had not been so focused on the what and how of expansion, the PTP's school-focused INSET model may have included a greater degree of support for classroom-based change. In my current work in organisation development work at schools I have begun to understand that a high degree of organisational development and support is needed in order to support classroom-based change by a single teacher. The PTP's own INSET model did not even conceptualise the need for work at the level of leadership and management within schools, nor did it focus on the development of the school as a whole in order to support educational change.

I would agree with Fullan (in Hopkins 1986:273) therefore, that INSET needs to be conceptualised as part and parcel of a concrete programme of change at a school. Although the PTP did attempt to work with teachers in relation to problems experienced at classroom level, we did not take our work a step further, to look at problems within the school and how they impacted on teachers trying to make a change in their classrooms. The issue of leadership and leadership support is of importance here. We did not focus on how we could support teachers to strategise around overcoming these problems. Had we

done this, I believe we would really have begun to look at issues of individual and collective empowerment.

Within an environmental context where the PTP was supporting predominantly rural schools, spread over a vast geographical distance, and where human and physical resources were scarce, I believe the need for strategising more holistically in terms of INSET provision becomes all the more important. In the fourth chapter on internal dynamics within the PTP I focus on some of the dynamics with the PTP which influenced its strategy in the field.

3.2. Ongoing INSET

"With these programmes inservice should be intensive and ongoing." (Fullan in Hopkins 1986: 278)

In the literature on INSET (Fullan 1982; Hofmeyr et al. 1994; Hopkins 1986; van den Berg 1987) it is widely acknowledged that "once off" INSET workshops are not effective and that there is a need for ongoing support if teachers are to implement new ideas and practices. Fullan (1982) affirms this in the following statement:

Research on implementation has demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt that these processes of sustained interaction and staff development are crucial regardless of what the change is concerned with. People can do change but it requires social energy. School districts can help generate extra energy by developing or otherwise supporting continuous staff development opportunities for teachers, administrators and others. (Fullan 1982:67)

A similar view is expressed by Gray 1990 in terms of his implementation of the Science Education Programme within a South African context, where he notes that "ongoing support, peer-interaction and a framework for that interaction are crucial for the success" (Gray 1990:179).

During 1989 and 1990 the PTP still had a geographical focus in four schools in

the capital city. Here we worked with groups of teachers at individual schools as well as conducting short INSET workshops at one school site, to which other interested teachers were invited. Support to teachers at these school would comprise regular workshops, classroom visits and small group meetings. During 1991 and 1992, as teachers in schools located in more remote, rural areas outside of the capital city began to request our services, the logistical arrangements became more complex and the ability to provide follow-up support, as well as support which was ongoing and intensive, became more difficult. Gray (1990:83) notes a similar tendency in the INSET support provided by the Science Education Project (SEP), when he says "...when SEP expanded its activities it was more difficult to provide support in the same quality and frequency as it had done before."

Severe limitations on the amount and quality of support the PTP project was able to provide occurred, as a result of the increased geographical distance between schools, and more schools being added to those already served by the project. Our own limited resource capacity in terms of human and physical resources also limited our ability to provide ongoing INSET support.

Providing INSET at a distance altered the PTP's model to a more centre-based one in order to assist us in coping with the constraints on our resources and the logistical limitation in the field. One of the PTP education coordinators describes her dilemma in these words:

One of the major problems was that of logistics. Schools are so widely scattered. This means that bringing teachers together for a workshop is difficult because of transport and accommodation, especially farm schools. Again running a workshop at teach individual school is also difficult because one only finds one or two science teachers in one school. (Interview, Kandi, July 1996)

Our new strategy meant that INSET was provided at a specific location for a number of teachers from different schools. In the second year of the project's

existence we began to work with a cluster of schools in a given geographical area. Teachers at all these schools would attend INSET courses at one of the school sites. The INSET we provided still supported the direct classroom-based needs of these teachers, as research visits were conducted in each school before the workshops. After INSET workshops were attended by teachers at a specific school site, then classroom visits would take place to support teachers in the implementation of what they had learned. Constraints on our resources meant that only teachers who had classrooms close to where the workshops took place had support from education coordinators in their classrooms. We also continued to work in individual schools where there were a sufficient number of teachers to attend INSET workshops in the specific content areas. Within the project we thus used a number of different INSET models to suit the contextual needs.

Our limited resources did not allow us to provide support through individual classroom visits to all teachers who attended our INSET workshops. As an increasing number of teachers began requesting support, and the financial costs and time for individual classroom-based support increased tensions within the project, site-based INSET workshops took on a greater focus. Ongoing support, in terms of classroom visits to teachers with whom we had had contact, was not strategically built into our planning. Even follow-up workshops to groups of teachers at schools started to become less frequent, as PTP expanded to more and more schools who requested support. Our fieldwork became increasingly driven by a focus on two week long INSET workshops.

Being able to provide intensive and ongoing INSET support was influenced by a number of factors. Some of the major factors were: the number of teachers at a school; different INSET needs; having to service the schools we had already made contact with; the distance to a school and between schools; the lack of transport and accommodation facilities; and our own limited capacity in terms of human and physical resources.

The concern about the lack of follow-up and support to teachers in the more remote rural areas led the PTP to form support structures. Teachers were encouraged to build contact between schools by maintaining contacts that had been established in workshops, and to elect representatives who would keep in contact with the PTP office by communicating INSET needs and arranging for further INSET support. In some schools we encouraged teachers to work together in teacher support groups which would meet on a regular basis to pursue staff development.

In the PTP's experience, at most schools only the contact person remained a link with the PTP coordinators. At most schools, ongoing staff development did not continue after the workshops, as there was not a culture of school-based INSET. Capacity building and financial support for the support groups themselves was needed, in order that teachers could play a more active role in providing on-site support to other teachers. The PTP had not developed a coherent strategy to support teachers at a distance. However the project was increasingly feeling the tension created by more schools wanting INSET support in remote rural areas and the lack of follow-up visits to schools where initial INSET workshop and classroom visits had been carried out.

The zone programme developed by the Science Education Project does provide a viable model for supporting teachers to provide INSET support in a more sustained way, especially in more isolated rural areas. Gray (1990):85) in describing the rationale behind the zone programme, recommends the following:

Responsibility for providing ongoing support should shift more towards the teachers themselves. Support needed to come from the body of teachers itself rather than from outsiders. Teachers were more permanent than the outside "experts" and what was needed was to develop the necessary organisation, infrastructure and expertise that would facilitate and enable this support system to develop. For developmental reasons, too, it was more empowering for teachers to be self-sufficient and responsible for their own

development than to be dependent on outside resources for continued growth. (Gray 1990:85)

Similarly to Gray's (1990) experience on the Science Education Project where their INSET model needed to adapt to contextual needs, the PTP's model shifted away from being purely *school-focused* to being more multi-dimensional. Gray notes:

The limitations of the context imposed on the SEP programme meant that the INSET model needed to be multi-dimensional: involving centre-based, school-based, school-focused, group-focused and individual focused strategies. To have done otherwise would, I believe, have been to court failure. (Gray 1990:179)

As a small INSET project with five staff members in the field for two week periods, we had not considered carefully the implications of working in a more developmental way, with teachers who were separated from the PTP support structures by large geographical distances, and who required ongoing support. The PTP had not carefully conceptualised distance learning strategies, and strategies for ongoing support with regard to INSET.

Hartshorne makes the following recommendations with regard to distance learning strategies.

There is a need to develop basic principles in the setting up of distance learning strategies, e.g. the necessity to go beyond the individual teacher to working together with teacher's centres, tutorial groups, groups of teachers working cooperatively in a local situation, and all the ways of providing people support without which distance teaching strategies are likely to be ineffectual. (Hartshorne in Ashley & Mehl 1987:9)

Where the PTP worked within a more rural context during 1991 and 1992 most schools were great distances away from local resource centres. New teacher centres were only just being established in major urban towns and there was very little evidence of Education Department personnel having visited some

schools for a number of years. As the resources of the PTP began to be stretched by working at a distance it increasingly tried to find ways of working cooperatively with other NGO's and using the local logistical network of the Ministry to contact schools.

I would agree with Fullan (in Hopkins 1986:266) that once-off workshops do not work and that INSET programmes should be intensive and ongoing. Providing this type of INSET provides a great challenge for the Ministry of Education in Namibia and for NCEO's. The "Zone Programme" (Gray 1990), which emphasises teacher ownership within a cluster of schools, provides a possible INSET strategy for schools spread over large geographical distances, such as in Namibia. A "training trainers" model such as that developed in the Zone programme required a lot of support for the trainers. In the PTP's experience of attempting to build support groups of teachers, we found that this strategy in itself needed support: to build teacher ownership, confidence and commitment. Ideally there is a need to coordinate different resources and programmes within the system as a whole. However this requires both an overall coordinated programme and the necessary resources.

In the research by Auala (1992) on INSET in Namibia, distance teaching strategies through the media are recommended. Auala (1992) recommends that INSET be supported by developing a central curriculum development and teacher training unit in which the specific needs of curricula are established, the objectives of an instructional programme developed, teaching materials prepared and tried, and teachers trained to use materials. (Auala 1992, cited in De Wee 1995:2).

This proposed strategy may go somewhere towards providing a support structure for INSET which is sustained, ongoing and coordinated. However I do not think that it will necessarily assist the more isolated rural schools, and teachers dealing with the contextual problems related to managing and

initiating educational change initiatives within schools. Greater support structures need to be set in place within schools to encourage the institutionalisation of INSET. Teachers and schools need to take on greater ownership for their INSET development. I do not feel that a centre-based initiative of this type will establish a culture of INSET in schools although it may act as a resource base for those teachers who are able to obtain access to it.

3.3. Professional and Organisation Development

"The ongoing process of professional development must be linked to school building or organisational development efforts. Both teachers and administrators should be involved in inservice." (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:278)

As I mentioned earlier, the PTP's model of INSET was not linked to broader organisation development efforts. However, when the project initially began there was a recognition that support in terms of staff and community development needed to extend beyond work with individual teachers, in order to support the needs of learners. It was within this context that English language and basic literacy classes were run for parents and other staff members. As the work of the project expanded to other schools and our human resource capacity became more stretched, it became increasingly difficult to sustain these classes on an ongoing basis, and some staff members felt our focus should remain with teachers.

The importance of integrating curriculum-based INSET work with organisation development, or linking what goes on in the classroom with the development of the school as a whole, is noted in the research done by Bolam (1982), Davidoff et al. (1994), Fullan (1979 and 1986), McLaughlin and March (1978), Schmuck (1974) and van den Berg (1987).

In the following quote Richard Schmuck succinctly outlines the importance of organisation development in relation to INSET initiatives.

My own research and experience have indicated that many educational reforms have collapsed or have been absorbed without effect mainly because of the limited attention given to the organisational context in which the reforms have been attempted. Any major innovation in curriculum or instructional technique implies a change in the "culture" of the school (Schmuck in Hopkins 1986:278).

Although inservice education courses have sought to deal with teachers' attitudes, little emphasis has been placed on how the teacher's new knowledge, attitudes and skills can be implemented within the social context of the school. Moreover, while inservice education has sometimes successfully brought about changes in the individual teacher, it has not tended to help teachers develop the sorts of communication and problem-solving norms and skills that would increase their adaptability as an organisational unit. This is where organisation development comes in (Schmuck in Hopkins 1986:280).

The PTP's INSET model did not focus in a formal way on broader strategies which provided teachers with a more enabling environment within which to attempt to implement any of the new ideas which they had gained at INSET courses. The PTP may have benefited by having read the research of Fullan (1979) and others who found INSET to be ineffective where:

programmes involve teachers from different schools with no recognition of the impact of the positive and negative factors within the organisational systems into which they must return and use the ideas from the programmes. More generally there is an absence of structural support time and resources, etc.) (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:267)

In most schools in which we worked there was not a culture of staff development nor was staff development linked in a more coherent way to broader school development initiatives. The top down system of control of education did not encourage initiatives in the area of staff development, other than the development of the teacher's own qualifications. The concept of ongoing professional development and the development of schools as learning organisations were not part of the culture of schools in which the PTP was working.

In his work on the context of school improvement in the Britain, Hopkins (1996) speaks about the importance of staff development activities being more organically linked to school development initiatives:

Staff development is inextricably linked to school development, powerful strategies are required which integrate these two areas in a way that is mutually supportive. These strategies need to fulfil two essential criteria: first of all they need to relate to and enhance ongoing practice in the school and, secondly, they should link to and strengthen other internal features of the school's organisation. Unless the staff development programme leads towards overall school improvement then it tends to become a series of marginal activities. Further, it seems reasonable to assume that improving the conditions for supporting the learning of teachers in school will have an impact on the conditions they provide for their pupils. In our work with IQEA schools we have accordingly been keen to promote a systemic and integrated approach to staff development. (Hopkins 1996:10).

Although no conscious strategy was developed to focus on organisation development, the PTP coordinators were conscious of the important role which the principals played in the school, in terms of allowing service providers offering INSET onto the school premises, and in terms of motivating teachers to attend INSET sessions. Principals were often encouraged to attend INSET sessions to motivate their staff. Both Ngcongco (in Ashley & Mehl 1987) and Gray (1990), who refer to INSET initiatives in South Africa, emphasise the importance of gaining the support of the principal and even encouraging him/her to participate in INSET activities. Gray says that in the implementation of SEP "headmasters had the power to make or break efforts made by teachers, so that their support was crucial" Gray (1990:135).

Fullan, quoting the research by McLaughlin and March (1978), says that:

the researchers found that the attitude of the building principle was basic to the long-term results of implementation. In brief, the climate, resource support and legitimacy provided the organisational conditions necessary for staff development to occur in a cumulative and sustained way. (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:275)

Within the South African and Namibian context, the role of the school principal should not be seen as unproblematic. Many principals are not perceived to be role models of educational excellence or professional competence. In the past, some principals were also viewed as collaborating with the old regime, in order to attain their position of privilege. The interpersonal dynamics between staff members and the principals within schools also have an impact on their role as INSET trainers.

However, in the PTP's experience, the principal has a key role in providing the necessary pressure and support in the school, for change to begin to take place. In its own INSET model the PTP did not focus sufficiently on the role of staff members in positions of authority, such as department heads and the senior leadership, in supporting the curriculum innovations which teachers learnt on INSET courses.

There clearly needs to be a basis in INSET programmes where there is a focus on assisting teachers to solve problems, and to develop strategies for implementation of new ideas within the constraints of these conditions. The focus here would be on empowering them to take initiative from within their classrooms and standard or subject groups. This, however, is not enough. There are countless examples of teachers leaving the system because they do not get support within the school. There is also a need to look at working within the school environment in order to provide a more supportive environment for teachers. Both top down and bottom up strategies need to be developed. For INSET providers this means that support needs to be provided for the teacher as well as, at the same time, for the school as a whole.

Organisation development work needs to take place in schools to support teachers to make changes in the classroom. However, without the provision of necessary resources and resource people, within and outside formal State

structures, to do this type of work, the chances of INSET succeeding are limited. These sentiments are echoed by South African educationalists:

Conducive working conditions, availability of resources, opportunities for teacher growth through taking responsibility for in-service programmes or aspects thereof, are some of the factors that are necessary to reinforce the effectiveness of INSET programmes for teachers. (Ngcongco in Ashley & Mehl 1987:47)

In a similar way David Hopkins (1986) raises the impact of teachers' job conditions and job satisfaction on INSET:

Unless we alter significantly the basic conditions of schools in many situations we will do little to advance the notion of continuing education in general and school-focused inservice specifically. The question of how to achieve effective inservice is directly related to the job conditions and the job satisfaction of the teacher. One can find limited examples of such schools. (Hopkins 1986:50)

In my present work with the Teacher Inservice Project (TIP), in Cape Town, South Africa, the focus of our INSET work is:

essentially one of holistic organisation development. We understand an organisation as a system of interweaving, interdependent elements. Any intervention towards building capacity of the system needs to take place within an understanding of these interdependent parts, rather than as one-off events or pre-packaged programmes. This implies working from a perspective of the whole school (a particular school) into the discrete parts, as opposed to attempting to provide discrete "solutions" without sufficient regard for the holding context which frames them." (Davidoff 1997:3)

At TIP we have observed a significant increase in the level of staff motivation and professional commitment through organisation development initiatives in schools. Organisation development has an influence on building a climate of collegiality and a collective vision for organisational change. I have witnessed the demoralising effects of teacher rationalisation and professional incompetence on the broader educational support system, and on INSET programmes in schools. Therefore I believe change initiatives which support

INSET need to focus on building congruence within the different levels of the educational system as a whole.

At the same time as developmental work is being done at schools, strategies for working at higher levels within the educational system also need to be developed, to support what is able to happen at this level of the educational system. Bolam (1982 in Hopkins 1986:314) recommends that effective INSET can be achieved if "...participating teachers can contribute collaboratively to decisions about general INSET policies and programmes at all stages - planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up" at all levels within the system.

Davidoff (1997) emphasises the importance of work, both at the organisational and system level, in order to support change at the level of the classroom.

If we want to ensure that schools provide quality education, and quality classroom practice, we need to provide an environment which supports excellence, innovation and commitment. Focusing on individual classroom change without taking into account the contextual realities within which teachers are working, will best offer superficial short term change. (Davidoff 1997:3)

3.4. Building Knowledge and Skill over Time

"Inservice training should be simultaneously directed at skill specific and conceptual development over time" (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:278).

In his research on conditions which contribute to effective school-focused INSET in Canadian schools, Fullan (Hopkins 1986:40), recommends that "...activities go beyond the sharing of information and include such activities as demonstrations; supervised trials, and feedback; and when more complex teacher behaviours are the focus of inservice." Providing INSET, which develops both the teacher's knowledge, skill and ability, requires intensive work in schools, individual support and follow-up on a continuous basis.

Much of the PTP's energy in terms of INSET provision was centred on conducting

collaborative workshops with teachers. Workshops encouraged teachers to challenge their own assumptions, as well as learn new knowledge in relation to content and methodology in their specific subject areas. Skills development was also encouraged, with teachers practising to develop educational resources and trying out new ways of teaching through simulation and role play in workshop sessions, as well as through demonstration lessons or sessions by the facilitators or other participants in some instances.

Feedback was provided to teachers by the coordinators as well as by their peers during workshop sessions. Time constraints and the large number of teachers in workshop sessions meant that not all teachers received group feedback or had the opportunity of actively practising and reflecting on their practice within the workshop setting. Where possible, education coordinators would conduct classroom visits where they would either give demonstration lessons or assist the teacher in reflecting on aspects of his or her practice. Once again, there were no planned or sustained programmes for ongoing support for teachers after workshop sessions. Classroom-based support was usually done with teachers on a voluntary basis and depended on the availability of the education coordinators and suitable conditions within each school. Support in the form of INSET workshops and classroom visits was infrequent and would usually occur about twice a year at a specific school.

The research by Joyce and Showers (in Hopkins 1986: 296) found that an inservice programme needs to contain a combination of all of the following training components, if it is to be effective in assisting teachers to alter their classroom practices:

- Presentation of theory or description of skill or strategy;
- Modelling or demonstration of skills or models of teaching;
- Practice in simulated classroom settings;
- Structured and open-ended feedback provision of information about performance);
- Coaching for application (hands-on, in-classroom assistance with the transfer of skills and strategies to the classroom.

Through workshops and classroom visits, as well as through demonstration lessons, a number of the elements suggested by Joyce and Showers were covered. However, this was not systematically done nor was there concerted planning and provision made for ongoing coaching and individual feedback. The limited resource capacity of the project team, as well as financial and logistical constraints, made it difficult to provide more on-site support. The project's own expansion to more schools affected both the quality and intensity of support which it could offer to teachers.

Joyce and Showers (in Hopkins 1986:301) acknowledge the cost and labour intensive nature of coaching. They recommend a realignment of resources committed to inservice education and the development of a cadre of trained coaches at school sites. The development of a training of trainers programme, where principals and committed teachers are involved, may have increased the possibility of teachers being provided with ongoing support. The Science Educations Project's, Zone Programme (Gray 1990) provides a model for this.

Although the PTP conducted detailed workshop evaluations in which teachers generally commented on the value of the learning experience, there was no real way of determining if any of these new ideas and practices were implemented in practice, except in some of the cases where on-site support was provided. Joyce and Showers (in Hopkins 1986:301) feel that for an innovation to be attempted by teachers, on-site coaching is needed. For INSET models to be effective they should plan for and provide support for teachers in their schools and in their classrooms.

Within the South African and Namibian contexts the self confidence and self esteem of teachers was undermined by the oppressive contexts within which they lived. One could argue for the need for more intensive on-site support to build the self confidence of teachers to try out new ideas in practice. In our work we often underestimated the level of support on a personal and psychological

level that teachers needed to live into the role of being innovative within their own classrooms and schools.

Fullan (in Hopkins 1986:273) identifies a number of factors which may cause the failure of teachers to implement learning, namely: pre-history; distinction between content and role change; clarity of goals and means; inservice training linked to implementation problems; regular meetings; local materials adaption and availability; overload; time-line; and administrative support. The amount of ongoing support which the PTP coordinators were able to offer teachers was a limitation in its INSET model.

Both Fullan and Hopkins (1986), stress the importance of INSET requiring intensive and ongoing support if it is to be effective. The focus of the PTP's work with teachers was neither intensive nor ongoing. This raises serious doubts as to the effectiveness of these INSET initiatives in terms of teachers actually having learnt new knowledge and skill and having been given support in the actual implementation of new innovations.

Hopkins (1986) quoting the findings of the research by Hall and Loucres (1978) which studied teacher reactions as they engaged in innovation, says the following:

data suggests that teacher development and the utilisation of new strategies or materials, especially those of a more complex nature, is a developmental process of learning which frequently takes place over two or more years." (Hall & Loucres cited in Hopkins 1986:41)

Fullan, makes a similar point when he says:

The primary contention is that inservice is a process not an event - a process of role change which involves new knowledge, new skills, new behaviour, new theories or conceptions and new attitudes. The integrating features of all of the research stresses learning,

socialisation or organisational theories...effective inservice programmes essentially involve a resocialization process whether this is externally, self or collaboratively induced. (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:277)

PTP's INSET model did not provide for intensive nor ongoing support over time. Thus, although teachers may have felt that they gained a great deal on the courses, there was not adequate provision for a supportive context in which teachers could practice newly learnt skills and experiment with trying out new ideas. Although the PTP attempted to initiate teachers working together in support groups or doing peer teaching, this was not effective in practice as these innovations in themselves needed specific support and training, which was not effectively planned for in the model. In retrospect, this type of strategy would require the PTP staff to have made a number of interventions at the level of the school itself.

The PTP's own strategy in terms of expansion was another factor which worked against project staff being able to provide deeper support. I believe that had we as project staff had a better insight into the importance of on-site support, this may have curbed our own strategies in terms of expansion.

3.5. Role of Teachers and External Facilitators in INSET

"Teachers may be the best source of skill and practical training, although external to the school consultants should be used for particular purposes" (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:278)

The PTP model was primarily based on the premise that teachers were of central importance in changing both what was taught, and how it was taught, in the classroom. We thus worked primarily with teachers, and specifically with primary school teachers as we felt that they laid the basic foundation of the learners' own ability to learn. Within the Namibian context, the drop-out rate after primary school was very high. We thus felt that by having an influence on primary school teachers we would have an influence in shaping the quality of

education to which Namibian youth were exposed.

Central to the planning of our workshops and to the relationship which the project had with a school, was that the teachers at the school needed to own the need for support and that they needed to identify what their needs were. We also held the belief that teachers had knowledge and experience which they could share with each other, and which could contribute to building collegiality within a school environment.

3.5.1 Promoting Teacher Ownership

The PTP INSET workshops conducted at schools were based on site-based research which the education coordinators conducted through classroom visits and by speaking to teachers about their individual needs. Logistical planning for workshops would involve the teachers and the principal. This helped to ensure teacher commitment and support, and built a sense of ownership and enthusiasm. Although this process was time-consuming it did make teachers feel that their needs and concerns were important and were being taken seriously. Fullan comments that "...programmes in which teachers participate as planners and decision makers regarding inservice activities are more likely to have greater success" (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:268).

Gray (1990) attributes a large degree of success of the SEP programme to the development of ownership of the programme by teachers. He says:

the fact that significant elements of it continue to function effectively six years later, I think, largely can be attributed to the foundation laid through deliberately opting to engage teachers, as far as possible, in the processes considered necessary for development. It helped to secure commitment and ownership through increased understanding. However, this was a time-consuming process, resulting in an increased time-scale for operation. (Gray 1990:170)

3.5.2 The Role of the External Facilitator

Although we regarded the input of teachers in their professional development as essential, we also felt that as education coordinators we needed to play a critical role, in helping teachers to reflect on their own ideas and assumptions. We also felt that we had an important contribution to make in bringing in alternative ideas. We were very concerned about not setting ourselves up to be "experts" or that our ideas were the only ideas to be taken seriously. Our workshop methodology therefore encouraged collegial sharing and critical interaction.

The value teachers gain by learning from each other and being involved in the planning and implementation of INSET is recognised in the research into INSET by Fullan (1979), Ingvarson (cited in Hopkins 1986:42), Forrest (cited in Hopkins 1986:39), and Gray (1990).

The role of external agents in school-focused INSET and other INSET models is regarded as vitally important in guarding against "...either the confirmation of existing prejudices and the sharing of ignorances or discipleship of some influential individual; or an ad hoc response to superficially diagnosed problems superficially explored" (Forrest cited in Hopkins 1986:39). The important role of external agents is confirmed in the research by Henderson, Fullan and Hopkins (in Hopkins 1986).

The PTP's model allowed for both the role of teacher and that of education coordinators in contributing towards a deeper understanding of issues under study in workshop contexts. However, I would argue that a number of factors would have an influence of how assertive the voice of teachers would be in these settings. Some of these factors are the confidence of teachers themselves; the level of trust and relationship between teachers and the PTP coordinators; the teacher's own expectations of the education coordinators and their understanding of their role in the learning process; as well as access to

knowledge about new educational trends.

In his experience on the Science Education Project Gray (1990) notes that external agents play both a positive and negative role in any innovation. He says:

On the negative side the most problematic issue concerns teacher ownership and dependency and the notion of outside "expert". On the other hand, as in the SEP case, the outside agent was clearly both resourceful and in a position of relative power and thus better able to facilitate situations in which teachers were often constrained. (Gray 1990:177)

In the PTP, the education coordinator played a similar contradictory role. By being more interventionist, the outside facilitator may play a successful role in initiating or helping to facilitate change processes. However, within the PTP's work, there was a strong value-base which supported teacher involvement and ownership.

In his thesis on the SEP, Gray refers to the zone programme and the issue of sustainability. He is of the opinion that:

responsibility for providing ongoing support should shift more towards the teachers themselves. Support needed to come from the body of teachers itself rather than from outsiders. Teachers were more permanent than the outside "experts" and what was needed was to develop the necessary organisation, infrastructure and expertise that would facilitate and enable this support system to develop. For developmental reasons, too, it was more empowering for teachers to be self-sufficient and responsible for their own development than to be dependent on outside sources for continued growth. (Gray 1990:85)

Although I agree with Gray (1990) that the responsibility for providing ongoing support should shift more towards teachers themselves, I do feel that it is essential that this is complemented by the input of external consultants, Ministry officials, NCEO's and others. This I feel is necessary for a level of critique and

reflection in terms of current values and practices. However I feel the way in which these learning processes are structured should not encourage or perpetuate a one-sided notion of learning. Van den Berg (1987) cautions against non-State agencies in the field of INSET adopting power-coercive strategies in their approach towards teachers, as "most INSET proceeds from the assumption that there is something wrong with teachers, and that INSET is a way of attempting to correct that wrong" (in Ashley & Mehl 1987:21).

Within a social and political context where teachers had been oppressed and deprofessionalised by the "top-down" control structures under apartheid education, the PTP actively sought to build teachers' confidence in themselves, and provided them with some support to address the difficulties they identified. In retrospect I feel that had PTP staff strategised more carefully around the type and quality of support they needed to give teachers, we may have more effectively helped to build personal confidence and empowered teachers. The PTP needed to set aside more time to provide on-site support.

3.6 Holistic Planning of INSET Initiatives

"Above all, one needs a plan at the school level, and at the school district level which systematically organises and provides for (1) to (5) to happen in an interactive framework" (Fullan in Hopkins 1986:278).

The PTP's model was not integrated within a broader programme of change at a school, district or national level. The INSET initiatives we began with teachers were not supported by a framework of staff development or linked with broader school development plans. Changes within the social and political environment meant that on a national level there were no concrete plans or policy framework related to future educational change within which the PTP could strategise. Fullan (1986:41) recommends that INSET be intensive, sustained and developmental in nature and that it be viewed as a process and not an event. The PTP's model was not systemically linked with capacity building

programmes to bring about school improvement, or within future plans of the education system as a whole. Operating within a social and political context of change within Namibia made holistic planning complex. Schools did not have formal policy on professional development through INSET; neither was there a culture of INSET at most schools.

No policy on INSET at Ministry level had been formulated, nor was there any policy on the role of NCEO's in INSET provision. Although the PTP did attempt to coordinate its efforts with other NCEO's and the Ministry to avoid duplication, the PTP's initiatives in building capacity for individual teachers, through school-focused INSET, were not supported at an institutional level by schools or by the Ministry of Education.

The lack of systemic integration of the PTP's work was symptomatic of the conditions of change within the country. This held a number of advantages for the project, as the staff did not have to account officially for the work it was doing, nor did it always have to seek formal permission through administrative channels within the Ministry. However, because there was such a poor level of developmental support for schools within the system, it made the work done by the PTP much more difficult. For example it was not mandatory for staff members to attend staff development courses, nor was it expected that schools draw up developmental plans into which our INSET work could be included. The work which the PTP did often operated in a vacuum, in terms of new curricular changes and plans for training by the Ministry. This made coordination and cooperation between ourselves and the Ministry very difficult. Had there been more integration, there may have been a more clear niche for us to provide more intensive in-depth work with schools, knowing that support towards similar educational development needs was being provided at other levels.

4. CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

In this section I pull together a number of learnings and issues that have been

raised in relation to the PTP's INSET model. I hope to shed some light on some of the factors which helped and hindered the PTP's ability to provide INSET within the context of educational change in Namibia. I conclude by raising some general learnings for INSET providers in the NCEO sector.

4.1 Factors Helping the PTP's Ability to Influence Educational Change

Despite a number of shortcomings the PTP did achieve a measure of success in playing a role in the process of educational change within the Fullan framework (in Hopkins 1986:278).

One of the strong features of the PTP's INSET model was that it worked directly with teachers, and it took their needs and concerns seriously in the design of the capacity building workshops. Where possible, project staff attempted to draw school leadership actively into the INSET workshops and to gain their verbal support in encouraging teachers to attend workshops. School staff members were encouraged to become involved in the logistical planning of INSET sessions and in identifying the content. This built ownership and commitment to attend INSET sessions. Working on school premises provided INSET education coordinators with a real understanding of the contextual constraints and possibilities within which teachers had to innovate. The PTP's model made place for both the role of teacher, as well as that of education coordinators in contributing towards a deeper understanding of issues under study in workshops. In this way it sought actively to promote teacher confidence and valued teachers' own knowledge and experience within a critical context. The methodology also sought to break down notions of the education coordinators as "the experts" in the learning experience.

By working in clusters of schools in a given geographical area, the PTP's model encouraged teachers from different schools to share ideas and build relationships. Through classroom-based visits by education coordinators, there was a form of support for teachers to try out new ideas in practice, although this

did not happen in a long term way nor was this form of support available to all teachers.

The PTP sought ways to inform Ministry of Education officials about the work it was doing in schools, in order to ensure that there was no duplication of INSET support services. In order to inform its planning, the PTP kept in touch with new developments and plans at Ministry level. The PTP also attempted to work collaboratively with other NCEO's in running programmes at schools, and in sharing resources and ideas.

4.2 Factors Hindering the PTP's Ability to Influence Educational Change

One of our major weaknesses was the way in which our INSET model was conceptualised. Our model was based on what we felt worked well in our practice at one school. It was not deeply informed by an ongoing critique of our practice and values in relation to educational change. The conceptualisation of the INSET model was narrowly focused on the role of the individual teachers in bringing about change in his/her classroom. The PTP's model was not informed by a deeper understanding of educational change and the complexity of the change process, within social and political complexity of Namibian society.

The strategy behind the model became more and more driven by pressing day-to-day realities and the urgency to respond to grass-root needs, than a real understanding of what we were doing and if it was in fact promoting educational change. As I mentioned at the start of this chapter, Fullan (in Hopkins 1986:28) cautions against a neglect of an understanding of change and the complexity of the change process, in initiating educational change processes, "Neglect of the phenomenology of change is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success." This I believe was a fundamental flaw in our model which, had it been heeded, may have prevented the rapid expansion of the project and assisted us in focusing on the depth of support required to enable educational change to take place, at the level of the classroom and the school.

The INSET model was not holistically conceptualised, taking into account those factors within the school and broader educational and social context which would influence the outcome of the INSET initiatives we embarked upon. Had the model been conceptualised in a more integrated way, we may have looked more strategically at the different forms of support after INSET courses; within our work in schools; and through the Ministry, in order to enable the implementation of new practices in the classroom.

Our own lack of experience and knowledge of the link between curriculum innovation, organisation development and broader systemic change kept the focus of our INSET model on what we had experienced as teachers. I believe that had the PTP's strategy been led more by asking questions in relation to why particular initiatives were taken, and how this supported teachers in making changes in their classroom, rather than on the what and how of expansion, the PTP's model of school-based INSET may have included a greater degree of support for implementation of changes at classroom level.

For these important strategic questions to have surfaced I feel that a stronger element of researching and evaluating our practice needed to have been built into our work. We also would have needed greater access to current literature on INSET and people with expertise in these areas, to assist us in critically reflecting on our practice in a more rigorous and academic way.

A number of factors external to the PTP affected the development of our INSET model. The restructuring of the Ministry of Education; the lack of INSET policy; the lack of an INSET culture or policy on INSET in schools; and the social and political changes within the country; all created a climate of uncertainty. As I have mentioned previously in this chapter, research on INSET (Fullan 1979; Hartshome 1987; Hopkins 1987; and van den Berg 1987), make the point that INSET will be more effective if there are both top-down and grass-roots initiatives which are coordinated within a broader framework for teacher development, curriculum

development and educational change.

Within the policy vacuum in terms of broader plans for educational change within Namibia, the PTP's own INSET model was primarily developed through our experience in schools. The PTP INSET model had no clear strategy to link its own capacity building initiatives, with longer term capacity building initiatives, by the State through INSET support.

The PTP model did not contain strategies to link the curriculum-based INSET we were doing in schools with the development of the capacity of the school as an organisation to take on these changes. We did not think systemically about our interventions and the kinds of changes they would require as change in the classroom required changes in the school as a whole.

Apart from involving the principal in meetings to discuss INSET programmes for the school, and encouraging them to attend workshops, very little work was done on building an understanding and capacity by management within the school to support curriculum innovation by teachers. In my current work in organisation development at schools I have begun to understand that a high degree of organisational development and support is needed in order to support classroom-based change by a single teacher. I would agree with Fullan (in Hopkins 1986:273) that INSET needs to be conceptualised as part and parcel of a concrete programme of change at a school.

Although the PTP did attempt to work with teachers in relation to problems experienced at classroom level, we did not take our work a step further to look at problems within the school and how they impacted on teachers trying to make a change in their classrooms. Leadership and leadership support is important in building the necessary support at school level, to enable teachers to make changes within their classrooms. School leaders are directly involved in supporting or hindering change. Here their role in obtaining resources

required for new innovations or making changes in teacher workload is vital.

The PTP's model did not focus on addressing broader organisation development needs in the school, including such issues as staff development and school wide development. The PTP's model did not focus on the development of institutional support to enable teachers to gain access to resources and decision making in terms of their own classroom-based innovation. I believe, had it done this, it would have helped teachers to address real empowerment issues. In the absence of any school-based policy on INSET, linked to a broader vision of the development of the school, INSET becomes an ad hoc and voluntary activity for those teachers who feel the personal motivation to attend professional development courses. The PTP's model was based on the voluntary participation of teachers, and it failed to address the link between capacity building for teachers and the capacity of the school as an organisation.

Another weakness in the PTP's INSET model, was the lack of ongoing support it provided to teachers in assisting them in trying out new ideas in practice. Only a few teachers were given classroom-based support and even this was only in the short-term. Although we encouraged teachers to work together at schools and provide peer support, we did not equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to practice this form of support. At an organisational level the problems of providing peer support were not structurally assessed and dealt with. The innovation in the model, to develop teacher support groups, was in itself not well considered in relation to the type of capacity building and support this would require.

The PTP's own strategy in terms of expansion worked against project staff being able to provide support. In the PTP's experience of attempting to build support groups of teachers, we found that this strategy in itself needed support to build teacher ownership, confidence and commitment. Ideally, there is a need to coordinate different resources and programmes within the system as a whole.

However this requires both an overall coordinated programme and the necessary resources.

One of the main weaknesses in the PTP's model in terms of the INSET workshops conducted and in providing support in the field, was that we did not plan for the support required in implementation and learning of new skills and knowledge. Had we done this we would have looked more seriously at the need for ongoing mentoring support for teachers, as well as assisting them within the INSET courses to implement their learnings in practice. I believe that we needed to look more creatively at ways to help them with implementation, both on a personal level and organisationally.

Although the PTP aimed to build teacher empowerment, and did succeed to a certain degree, I believe that, had we focused in more detail on psychological preparation of teachers in terms of their taking on new roles as innovators and activators of change, we would have fostered greater teacher confidence to make changes in their classrooms. In my current experience of running INSET courses for school governing bodies, the importance of psychological preparation in capacity building has become an important focus.

It became clear that there was a need to support School Governing Body members as individuals. So, the individual level serves as another starting point from which course design on governing body operations should build. It became clear that some individuals could benefit from attention in the form of individualised "therapy" such as assertiveness training (Collett & Paterson 1997:9)

The PTP's model did not build the necessary support structures or capacity to assist the schools with which it worked, which is what Fullan (in Hopkins 1986) and others say is necessary in order to support sustainable change.

Although I would agree with Gray (1990), that teacher ownership through a training of trainers model such as the "zone programme", provides a possible

INSET strategy for schools spread over large geographical distances, such as in Namibia, I feel that the focus of INSET ownership should shift to the school and to the school staff, with the support of NCEO's and the Ministry of Education. The need for strategising more holistically in terms of resources and personnel, with the entire educational system which can assist in terms of INSET provision, becomes all the more important. This would also need to include the overall conceptualisation of the way in which these capacity building initiatives will coordinate with one another, and how they will work collectively towards building an improved educational system.

Had the PTP operated within a clearer policy context, which provided a broader vision for educational change, and had the various Ministry structures been in place, the PTP's INSET model may have been informed by a clearer idea of what it was attempting to build capacity towards. The limited resource capacity of the project team as well as the financial and logistical constraints it had as an NCEO, made it difficult to provide INSET to many schools. However I believe that had the PTP's own model focused on providing a more intensive and focused programme at fewer schools, it may have had greater impact in terms of promoting educational change, through school-focused INSET. By spreading its resources too thinly and trying to support as many requests in the field as possible, both the staff and the capacity of the organisation became overextended. This limited the PTP's ability to nurture its own capacity and hence provide adequate on-site support to those teachers with whom it had already made contact.

5. CENTRAL LEARNINGS FOR NCEO'S PROVIDING INSET

The following quote by Hartshorne captures some of the learnings of PTP's experience in terms of providing INSET which can promote educational change.

INSET will be most effective if:-

- * it is seen as only part of a total teacher education strategy;
- * its major concern is for the teachers and the schools in which

- * they work, and not for "the system";
- * it operates close to where teachers are and with their full involvement and participation;
- * it is democratic and co-operative in its style and nature; and
- * if it is seen as one of the strategies for achieving equality; (Hartshorne in Ashley & Mehl 1987:13)

Based on my reflections of those factors which helped and hindered the PTP's role, in providing INSET within the context of educational change in Namibia, I would make the following recommendations to improve INSET provision to schools by NGEO's.

- Building teacher ownership of the content of INSET courses, as well as the logistical arrangement surrounding INSET provision, is important in building incentives for teachers to attend courses. Although it is important to start from the needs of teachers it is equally important for INSET providers to assist teachers, to extend these needs in the building of knowledge and skills. INSET sessions need to encourage teacher participation and opportunities for teachers to learn from each other. Here workshop methodology should model new ways of teaching and learning, as well as new roles for learners and teachers in learning situations.
- Once-off workshops or school visits have limited effect. Strategies to build support for ongoing INSET activities are important for INSET courses, as well as for support at classroom level by INSET facilitators. A combination of the schools initiating internal INSET sessions which happen on a monthly basis, and INSET by external agencies, may be a possible strategy in promoting continuity.
- NGEO's need to develop follow-up strategies to find out if what teachers say they understand and learn in INSET workshops is being practised in classrooms. This will entail a system of factoring in time for classroom-

based observation, action research and other forms of peer or personal mentoring. In designing INSET workshops, greater attention needs to be paid to assisting teachers with personal and collegial strategies in terms of planning initial change steps when they return to their classrooms or schools. A focus on the psychological preparation of teachers to build their own confidence to make changes and to take on new roles is an important aspect of INSET support.

- Forms of collegial support such as peer support, subject group support and support from leadership and management need to be developed through INSET training. Organisational development and development of leadership and management needs to complement the capacity building of teachers through curriculum-based INSET courses.
- NCEO's need to find creative ways of collaborating with Ministry of Education personnel in order to provide support to schools and ensure that their activities complement each other. This requires NCEO's to find ways of working towards common goals in terms of educational change.
- Within policy environments where there is no policy in terms of INSET, NCEO's need to be proactive in terms of formulating and proposing policy around INSET and the role of NCEO's in INSET. Within a newly forming policy framework I believe that the PTP could have taken much more of a strategic advantage in the opening of the policy window, by lobbying for support among the NGO communities and making formal proposals.
- Ongoing evaluation on INSET programmes should focus on both what is done and how it is done. The type and quality of impact which the NCEO is having in achieving its aims should be evaluated. More detailed fieldwork based action research, or site-based research by INSET fieldworkers, could assist in obtaining valuable data in relation to those

factors which help and hinder teachers in effecting classroom based changes. Fieldworkers could also be capturing some of the changes in values and practices teachers are making.

- The capacity building of teachers through INSET should be complemented by a strategy to build the capacity of schools as organisations. This may necessitate a number of service providers working collaboratively at different levels within the school as a coordinated programme for school development, which incorporates professional development of staff through school-focused INSET.
- In a country like Namibia, where schools in more rural areas are spread over large geographical distances, the challenge in terms of providing sustained and intensive INSET support are great. With the limited capacity of NCEO's to provide services and to raise funds in an ongoing way for their work, greater collaboration is needed between NCEO's and the Ministry of Education. This could ensure that INSET is spread to all schools in need of support, and especially to those schools in isolated rural areas. The type of INSET models used should be realistically related to the developmental needs of school. Models should be based on a thorough understanding of the complexity of educational change, and what is needed by INSET to provide the necessary pressure and support to enable teachers to make changes in their values and practices. Capacity building through school-focused INSET needs to be conceptualised as a long term process and not as a once off event, or short programme.
- Within this context, a number of different INSET models may be necessary, as was found in the experience of Gray's (1990) Science Education Project as well as in the experience of the PTP. The PTP's own INSET model shifted from a school-focused model to a more centre based model as its

resources became more limited and it attempted to reach more and more teachers. Both school-focused and centre-based models have advantages and disadvantages, to both teachers as well as NCEO's. Owing to the flexibility NCEO's have, they may be best placed to build closer school-focused INSET relationships, while the Ministry could provide more centre-based support.

- By implementing a number of the strategies outlined above, I believe that NCEO's, schools, and a Ministry could provide an environment which could lead to schools developing a culture of INSET. However, I feel that unless INSET support is holistically conceptualised, within a systemic view of educational change, most INSET initiatives would have short-term effect.

The overall INSET model should be holistically conceptualised in relation to a number of factors. Here I list a few in relation to the PTP's experience. A holistically conceptualised INSET programme should:

- * Be based on an understanding of the complexity of the change process in initiating educational change processes.
- * Take into account those factors within the school and broader educational and social context which would influence the outcomes of the INSET initiatives embarked on.
- * Be conceptualised in an integrated way in which policy, in terms of educational change on a national level, is integrated with capacity building initiatives through INSET at district and school level.
- * Ensure that long and short-term plans for INSET provision and support to schools are systematically built within a framework of negotiation with schools in terms of their INSET needs.
- * Ensure that schools and teachers are centrally involved in taking ownership for determining their INSET needs. but there should also be

input from outside INSET providers and consultants.

- * Build in support structures within and between schools necessary to sustain ongoing INSET activities.
- * Provide for INSET in the form of organisation development of the schools and ongoing professional development for teachers.
- * Coordinate initiatives with other INSET and service providers.
- * Take into consideration the amount of INSET support which schools already have, in their future planning.
- * Foster developmental links with the Ministry of Education on a local and national level.
- * Build in levels of accountability, reporting and decision making and evaluation of the programme in a continuous way.
- * Access funding sources, in order to support INSET by NGEO's, need to be sought through Ministry of Education and Government channels.

Within the climate of social and political transition in which the PTP's model was conceived, it was not possible to conceptualise the project more holistically. I do, however, believe that had the project staff had a deeper understanding of the complexity of change and what was required in order to support it on a personal, interpersonal and organisational level at schools, this would have deeply influenced the scale the project tried to achieve. In retrospect, I feel that had we attempted our model as a pilot and researched it more deeply before going to scale, we would have built our own capacity more adequately to understand and support change at schools. As a small NGEO the PTP did not have the capacity to go to scale, and should not have been expected to take responsibility for INSET provision, for which the Ministry of Education needed to take responsibility.

6. CONCLUSION

This chapter is a critical reflection on the INSET model used by the Primary Teachers Project in relation to literature on the subject of school-focused INSET

and educational change. I began this chapter with an introduction to the social and political context within which the model originated, as well as a background to some of the assumptions which shaped the model. My reflections on the PTP's model were structured within Fullan's (in Hopkins 1986:278) six recommended guidelines for INSET planning.

I have concluded this chapter by highlighting some of the strengths and weaknesses of this NGE0's INSET approach within the context of Namibia. I have ended this section by drawing out some of the central learnings with regard to the PTP's INSET model and implications for INSET in the Southern African context.

In the next chapter I focus on the relationship which the PTP built with the Ministry of Education in order to support the INSET work it conducted in schools, and in order to influence educational change at other levels. I attempt to integrate some of the issues I have raised about INSET in this chapter, within the broader picture of changes in the Ministry of Education and the changing relationship which the PTP had with this Ministry.

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Chapter 4

TOPICAL REFLECTION ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PTP WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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TOPICAL REFLECTION ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PTP WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

A positive "climate" for INSET might be created by considering basic guidelines and priorities, the minimum structures necessary for INSET to operate effectively, and a broad, flexible regional model within which individual programmes would have room to respond to particular needs and situations in their own particular ways. (Hartshorne in Ashley & Mehl 1987:13)

1. INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Three I briefly touched on the relationship between the Primary Teachers Project and the new Ministry of Education in Namibia after 1990. In Chapter One, I indicated that during 1989 education in Namibia was under the control of the South African Ministry of Education. In this chapter I take a more indepth look at the nature of the relationship between the PTP and the Ministry of Education from 1989 to 1992, in terms of its role within the context of educational change in Namibia.

I explore some of the factors which helped and hindered the relationship between NCEO's and the Ministry of Education and therefore had an influence of the role the PTP could play in educational change. I compare the PTP's experiences with the relevant national and international literature on the subject. I conclude by drawing out some central learnings about the relationship between NCEO's and Ministries of Education in relation to influencing educational change. I draw together some of the issues I raised in relation to the PTP's INSET model and how this is influenced by a relationship with the Ministry of Education.

2. REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PTP AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The essential nature of the relationship between the Primary Teachers Project and the Ministry of Education was one between a non-governmental educational organisation and a State department. Prior to 1990, the PTP's relationship with the State could be described as oppositional and non-collaborationist, owing to our political stance against South African occupation of Namibia. With democratic elections and Namibia's independence from South Africa in 1990, the relationship with the newly formed Ministry of Education in Namibia was one of increasing cooperation.

The role of NCEO's and NGO's in providing an oppositional space for resistance towards the South African government is captured in the words below by Alexander (1985). The PTP felt that within the Namibian context it played a similar role in developing the critical consciousness of teachers and learners. Alexander says:

Indeed, it is clear from our very history that practical interventions by independent educational instances have been a major contributory factor to the growth of political consciousness among our people. And without such growth in the consciousness of people, we cannot expect any political change at all. (Alexander 1985:81)

As I mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation, the role of NCEO's in contributing to educational change has been acknowledged by people working within these organisations, as well as by people within the formal State bureaucracies. Gray (cited in MacDonald 1993) acknowledges the contribution which NGO's have made towards educational change in South Africa in the following words: "It is widely recognised among educationalists in South Africa that most of the creative and innovative work carried out in schools over the past two-and-a-half decades has been through the involvement of these NGOs" (Gray cited in MacDonald 1993)

Prior to 1990 the PTP staff did not attempt to form any formal working relationship with educational structures which were an extension of the South African Ministry of Education. We saw ourselves in opposition to the policies and practices of that State Ministry and its various Departments. We regarded the South African State as an illegitimate government and took a non-collaborationist stance towards it. Our position as an NGE0 working within a hostile political climate was similar to that experienced by other NGE0's in South Africa and Namibia, who were attempting to build alternative educational structures and practices under the banner of 'People's Education'.

2.1 Access to Schools

Access to schools under State control by outside agencies was usually sanctioned by the State. During 1989 this was one of the factors which prompted the PTP to work in a more subversive way in State schools, without the permission of the State. After 1990, the PTP was concerned about obtaining endorsement for our project from the new Minister of Education, in order to assure principals and teachers that we had legitimacy to come into schools and offer INSET support although we were not Ministry officials.

There was a strong feeling among members of the PTP Management Board, myself, and the teachers at the Community Primary School, where the PTP began, that we wanted to have control of our educational future and this was part and parcel of our struggle for liberation. These words by Sebidi on the values underlying "People's Education" capture something of the spirit of resistance which drove the establishment of the PTP.

When black people talk about people's education today it is in the context of their long history of disenfranchisement. They want to see an end to the unlimited control the government has exercised over their educational matters. And in so doing they only want to reclaim what is their inalienable right - namely, the right to have control over their education." (Sebidi 1988:56)

Within the political climate of a newly emerging democratic government, there was a renewed spirit of optimism and motivation among people working in the Namibian NGO sector, to participate actively in policy debate and in forums which planned the future direction of the country. Within the PTP, there was a drive to forge links with strategic people in the Ministry, and to be included in forums where NNGEO's could voice their concerns and views. In the next section I deal with the nature of the relationship between the PTP and the Ministry. In my reflections I will not be including the year 1989, as the PTP was in an embryonic stage of development and had no formal relationship with the State structures during this time. I have covered the nature of this "oppositional" relationship quite extensively at the beginning of chapter three, where I discuss the INSET model.

2.2 The Nature of the Relationship between 1990 and 1992

Between 1990 and 1992 the relationship between the newly founded Ministry of Education and the PTP was at an informal level. This ranged from attending meetings where information and ideas were shared, to running workshops in collaboration with the Ministry and participating as an NGO representative on some of the working groups dealing with basic educational reform. By the end of 1992 there was a perceived need within the PTP for a more formal relationship with the Ministry. In this section I highlight some of those factors which promoted the shift from the position of the Ministry and from the position of the PTP.

2.2.1 The Relationship with the Ministry in 1990

In the project's first Annual Report it is acknowledged that the "staff have made a number of contacts with the Ministry of education and they have commended our efforts" (1990:5). During the first year of the project's operation we felt it was strategically important to make links with people in the Ministry, in order to keep in touch with educational reform developments and to create a profile for the new project within the Ministry. Our relationship with the Ministry during 1991 was assisted by the personal links of project staff members with a number of

newly appointed Ministry staff members. These relationships had been developed over many years during the period of political struggle in the country.

One of the frustrations we experienced with the Ministry in our first year was their own lack of organisation, which made it difficult to access information or to form strategic links. The Ministry was in the process of establishing itself as a new bureaucratic organisation which would represent the seventeen previously separate Departments of Education established under apartheid legislation. Staff members in the Ministry were being moved into new positions and the Ministry was in a state of restructuring. It was therefore very difficult to try and establish any formal working relations with Ministry staff, or to gain any clarity, with regard to future policy or planning, in terms of INSET. At this time there was no Ministry policy regarding INSET or the coordination of INSET by the Ministry.

This frustration is clearly illustrated by the incident of the project's application for a formal letter of approval to sanction our work in schools. One of the project documents notes:

The Ministry of Education as yet was not organised and had not produced a long promised letter which would authorise the PTP to work in schools. There had been a disappointing meeting with the Ministry where it was stated that members of the old National Education Ministry would be sent round to evaluate the PTP and look at its deficiencies." (PTP Appraisal Report 1990:2)

The old bureaucratic and conservative attitudes of some Ministry staff towards the role of NCEO's was viewed by project staff as hampering our efforts to obtain a letter of endorsement for our work in schools. During some of the Ministry meetings to which we had gained access we had come across a number of staff members questioning NCEO involvement at Ministry level. Within the Ministry there were different attitudes towards the role NCEO's could play in supporting educational change. The new Minister of Education and his Permanent

Secretary were, however, very supportive of the role NCEO's and NGO's could play. This helped to build links between our project's work and the efforts of the Ministry. De Wee (1995) in his research on INSET provision in Southern African found a similar trend in the Ministry of Education in Botswana.

There is limited NGO involvement in INSET. The attitude towards NGO's is said to vary from one official to another. However, some officials seem to be of the view that the State would welcome NGO involvement if it is done in consultation with the Ministry of Education." (De Wee 1995: 2)

During our first year of operation the project made a strategic decision to turn down a request from the Ministry that we assist schools in the far north-eastern sector of the country. We felt that this would put too much strain on our project's resources and that we did not wish to become part of the Ministry's own crisis management. This decision did not make us popular with some staff within the Ministry, but it assisted the newly founded project and newly appointed staff in building their own capacity. This incident however did raise the tension between ourselves as an autonomous NCEO and needs of the Ministry. Within the project there was a strong drive to maintain our autonomy and identity as an NCEO. The 1990 Appraisal Report notes this tension. "There was also pressure from the Ministry in that they had referred a problem of no school books to the PTP, believing the organisation's book boxes could solve the problem." (PTP Appraisal Report, 1990:2).

We decided to go ahead and work in schools without a letter of endorsement from the Ministry. Through our publication Primary Focus and through regular informal contact with staff members in the Ministry, we continued to build an informal relationship with Ministry staff.

2.2.2 The Relationship with the Ministry in 1991

By 1991 staff members in the project participated in running a workshop for the

Department of Literacy and sitting on the Mathematics and Science teams at the Ministry which were involved in the Basic Education Reform programme. These developments arose out of our contact with ministerial officials in 1990. A good relationship had been established between our project and the Department of Library Services during the year.

In the project's annual review at the end of 1991 it is noted that although a more formal working relationship had been established between the project and some sectors within the Ministry, there was still a strong feeling of maintaining our autonomy, and not compromising ourselves by being aligned too closely with other programmes and partnership which the Ministry was involved in.

Some of the project staff were very negative about the Ministry's involvement with USAID because of the poor track record which USAID had in the rest of Africa, and the suspected political agenda this agency had in providing funding towards the reform of basic education. The 1991 Annual Review notes the following sentiments about our relationship with the Ministry.

There have been meetings and workshops throughout the year though the PTP has not been included in all of them, it has attended several. Most recently the PTP has been asked to be involved in the Committee for Curriculum Development supported by USAID. Whilst we guard our status as an independent NGO, we realise the need for cooperation but must constantly be wary of compromising our position or being led in directions we do not wish to go. We also need to have a contact person within the Ministry to keep ourselves updated on information, plans for primary education as well as forthcoming meetings and workshops. (PTP Annual Review Report 1991:3)

Another tension which we constantly felt within the project was the limitation of our own human resources base. With a small staff and a growing body of work outside of the capital city it was becoming more difficult to commit time to participating in relevant Ministry forums. It was also becoming increasingly difficult to maintain a sense of continuity in terms of our involvement in some of

the task groups. Many of the meetings we attended at the Ministry were felt by staff members to be a waste of time as nothing seemed to get done which we felt would fundamentally support teachers. We often had to ask ourselves whether it was strategically more important to be at a Ministry meeting or out in the field with schools.

As the Ministry became more settled within its new organisational framework it was easier for project staff to form links with Ministry representatives in the geographical regions within which they worked. This helped to keep Ministry officials informed of the work we were doing and to support with logistical arrangements, such as contacting schools and using venues.

2.2.3 The Relationship with the Ministry in 1992

In the PTP 1992 Annual Report it is noted that "Participation and Coordination with the Ministry of Education had taken place through attending workshops offered by the MEC" (1992:17). By 1992 a more ongoing relationship formed with the PTP and the Ministry, in terms of the sharing of information on activities as well as coordination of programmes. The PTP staff informed Regional Chief Education Officers about the workshops it intended running in the various regions. This was done in order to prevent duplication of services and improve coordination of programmes. The PTP staff were very involved in representation on various subject committees at the Ministry in the areas of Science, Mathematics, and English. Information was shared more readily between the MEC and the PTP with regard to educational reform processes. The 1992 evaluation notes "The MEC sent PTP a copy of a draft document entitled, *Curriculum Document for The Reform of Basic Education* which the PTP had to review and comment on." (Evaluation Report 1992:1). From the side of the Ministry there was clearly a growing intention to build good relations with NCEO's, and to keep them informed about the latest policy documents.

A new unit, the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), had been established within the Ministry to coordinate and plan educational change initiatives. By 1992 the

Ministry had established an NGO coordinating committee on which the PTP was represented. This committee acted as an information sharing and coordination forum linked to the PIU. The 1992 report notes that the PTP "is thus well informed of plans. We also act in an advisory capacity."(Evaluation Report 1992:17).

During 1992 the PTP had also attended a meeting of the Project Implementation Unit, where a report on the project's activities were presented to the Minister, the Permanent Secretary and the Director of the PIU. Through the PIU, the PTP was able to get a sense of the work other NCEO's (both foreign and local) were doing in the field, as well as to ask questions about future Ministerial plans. In terms of planning future strategies the project staff saw it as strategically important to foster closer links with the Ministry.

Another factor promoting stronger links between the PTP and the Ministry during this year was the subtle pressure from our primary funder. To safeguard the future sustainability of the work which the PTP was doing, this funder was keen for us to investigate the possibility of some of our work being formally taken on by the Ministry. The financial sustainability of our project and institutionalisation in some form within the Ministry was discussed between project staff and the major funder. By the end of 1992 no formal strategies had been pursued although there was amongst the staff a willingness to look at closer collaboration in terms of the future prospect of the project. The issue of funding and funding agenda is covered in greater detail in the next chapter.

As the PTP's own resource capacity became increasingly limited, providing support to schools further and further from the capital city, there was growing concern about the amount of time project staff were spending on the Ministry task teams. Representation on these task teams did not provide the project with any financial incentives. However, it held the possibility of staff members having an influence on the decisions and direction which the Ministry might take, in terms of curriculum reform and INSET at school level. There was a growing

tension as to where the project members needed to be focusing their attention and time, in terms of influencing educational change.

During 1991 and 1992 the PTP had built up a good profile in the Ministry through its work in the field and through its publication Primary Focus, which had received formal praise from the Ministry. The fostering of a good working relationship between the PTP and the Ministry was outlined as being strategically important. The following sentiments were expressed in the 1992 Evaluation report:

Our priority with regard to the MEC is to continue our good relationship and to further cement this working relationship by increasing the PTP's involvement in educational activities in collaboration with the MEC where feasible." (PTP Evaluation Report 1992:1).

The following extract from a letter dated August 1993, from the Chief of Education (in the National Institute of Educational Development at the Ministry of Education) to the PTP, indicates the Ministry's sentiments with regard to the role of NGO's and the PTP in particular. It also indicates the willingness of the Ministry to write letters of endorsement to funders to assist NCEO's in raising funds.

The Ministry welcomes the assistance of non-governmental organisations in the process of educational reform as resources, finances and expertise to effectively and efficiently implement the reform are limited. However, all inputs and in-service training activities organised by NGO's should be in line with the Ministry's policy and should be coordinated by the Project Implementation Unit. Thus the PIU should be kept informed of your calendar of activities and would appreciate reports on these.

The Ministry believes that the PTP has the capacity to complement the effort of the MEC and would thus like to urge the PTP to concentrate in the areas where the MEC is at present not very active, e.g. in rural and remote schools, supplying them with books and materials (to complement the efforts of the local resource centres) and could monitor the training and do follow-up work.

The PTP should also try to disseminate its magazine Primary Focus, to rural and remote schools as it can be an important vehicle for spreading of information, debates, and teaching hints, etc.

Attached please find a letter that you could present when seeking funding for your activities.

The Project Implementation Unit would like to thank you for your work with teachers in the past and would like to see that you continue with your activities in supporting the teachers. (Swartz 1993)

By the end of 1992 the profile of the PTP in the field and in the Ministry had been raised. This is reflected in the praise extended to the project by the Ministry representative at the PTP AGM early in 1993. The PTP was congratulated for its efforts in contributing to the upgrading of teachers. The organisation was also praised for having unique characteristics as an organisation which responds to various needs of society, and as being a grass roots organisation employing indigenous staff and being a truly Namibian NGO. The Ministry representative also noted that the PTP kept in line with Ministry philosophy and displayed a constant high standard of professionalism and commitment in its work.

3. REFLECTIONS ON FACTORS SUPPORTING AND CONSTRAINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PTP AND THE MINISTRY

3.1 Factors Supporting a Relationship Between the PTP and the Ministry

A number of factors motivated the PTP to build stronger links with the Ministry. Below I provide a more detailed description and discussion of these factors in relation to issues raised in the literature on the relationship between NGO's and the State.

3.1.1 Political Credibility of the Ministry

After democratic elections in the country and the employment of a number of more politically progressive staff members within the Ministry of Education, the political status of the government and the Ministry changed. This opened the way for NNGEO's like the PTP to make contact with Ministry staff and to reconsider their own relationship with the Ministry. The PTP's attitude towards the new Ministry could be described as open and receptive, as opposed to its non-

collaborationist stance during the apartheid era.

In his research into INSET in the Frontline States, De Wee (1995:9) found that in Botswana, Zimbabwe, there was limited NGO involvement in INSET with most INSET being run and coordinated by the State. In Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho there was a greater degree of NGO involvement in INSET although there were varying degrees of coordination and cooperation between NGO's and the State in INSET. De Wee notes that in Swaziland there is:

A strained relationship between the State and NGOs has contributed to a very centralised bureaucratic system of INSET. However the State has managed to sustain its INSET efforts by entering into a consultative process with parents and teachers. (De Wee 1995:7)

Both Hartshorne (1987) and van den Berg (1987) have acknowledged the need for cooperation between NNGO's and the State in order to support educational change initiatives through INSET.

3.1.2 Access to Information Regarding Educational Change

Gaining access to information about current developments in educational change was a key motivating factor in forming a closer relationship with Ministry staff members. The period 1989 to 1992 was one of rapid change within the country, and within the Ministry of Education and a number of policies related to educational reform were being drawn up. By remaining in contact with key people in the Ministry we were able to gain access to some information regarding educational reform, as well as the Ministry's planned INSET initiatives and areas in the country where INSET support was vitally needed.

Accessing this information was important in terms of the PTP's own strategic planning. The PTP's participation on the Ministry's INSET coordinating structure enabled the project staff to gain access to information, and to ask questions

about future educational changes. Representation at Ministry meetings and workshops, as well as meetings with individual staff members were other ways in which information was accessed.

3.1.3 Having an NCEO Voice and Profile in the Ministry

Through maintaining links with staff members within the Ministry as well as by keeping a profile at Ministry level, the PTP staff gained access to some important forums where educational reforms were being debated. In this way project staff were able to raise important INSET issues, based on their experience of providing INSET to schools. The extent to which the PTP's presence within the Ministry influenced Ministerial INSET policy or planning is difficult to determine, as staff members were not involved at any important decision or policy making level.

The PTP's presence in the Ministry, their requests for participation in important workshops, and their meetings with the Minister of Education and the Permanent Secretary, (regarding a letter of endorsement for the PTP's work in schools), raised the need for the establishment of the NGO coordination forum in the Ministry and raised issues around NGO involvement in educational change.

3.1.4 Influencing Policy and Decision Making around Educational Change

Another factor which motivated the PTP staff to establish a closer working relationship with the Ministry, was access to information and debate with regard to INSET policy formulation. Rhetoric at Ministry level indicated the importance of the voice of teachers in planning for educational change. In practice, however, the level of influence we had in terms of policy debate and formulation was minimal. Project staff were not included in the really important forums where policy around INSET and basic educational reform were debated and drawn up. The lack of real consultation and involvement of NCEO in policy making is confirmed by the research of Chetty et al.:

The realisation by the MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture) of the importance of teacher participation and empowerment in INSET. However the inclusiveness implied here challenges the fact that policy-making is based in the ministries and is primarily expert-led. (Chetty et al. cited in De Wee 1995:2).

Our representation on the Namibian Non-Governmental Forum had some level of influence on educational change initiatives, as we had the opportunity to comment on some policy proposals with regard to educational reform.

By maintaining links with Ministry staff we hoped to obtain clarity on their policy in terms of the future coordination and control of INSET in Government schools. We also hoped to influence what the nature of this policy may be by negotiating a working relationship with the Ministry.

In retrospect, I believe the PTP would have been in a much stronger position to influence Ministerial policy making had it worked more pro-actively together with other NGEO's and suggested the type of INSET policy which would enable educational change at the school level. In this way I feel we could have placed ourselves in a position to interact with policy debate at a Ministry level. The PTP's strategic lack of focus on the role it could have played with regard to policy, was one of the reasons staff members were not more pro-active. The PTP had a stronger focus on influencing educational change at the classroom level than at Ministerial level. A number of other factors also influenced the organisation in not investing too much of its time at Ministerial level. I discuss these constraining factors in the next section.

3.1.5 Access to Schools and Endorsement of our Work

One of the initial motivators for the PTP to make contact with the Ministry was the issue of access to schools, and endorsement of its work. The staff felt that a letter of endorsement from the Ministry would build the PTP's credibility at schools and ensure the project official access to schools. Staff members also felt that a letter

of endorsement from the Ministry would increase people's awareness of the importance of INSET.

As the PTP considered some Ministry staff to have a negative and authoritarian attitude towards NGEOS, we were not prepared to have the Ministry investigate or "inspect" the PTP. For this reason the PTP never received a letter of endorsement. The PTP did, however, continue to build up a credible profile in the Ministry through its work in the field, and its access to schools was not limited.

3.1.6 Access to New Work Opportunities

New work opportunities arose out of the PTP's contact with Ministry staff members and its representation on the Ministry's NGO coordinating committee. Through this forum, the PTP staff were able to network with other NGEOS which led to cooperative work in the field.

3.1.7 Building Links for Future Sustainability of the PTP

Another factor which motivated the PTP to establish a closer working relationship with the Ministry was a concern for the project's long term sustainability. The PTP's primary funder was keen for it to form a closer allegiance with the Ministry in terms of future institutional links, which could guarantee access to government funding. The project staff felt that a good relationship with the new Ministry was an important drawcard for trying to secure future funding. However, the PTP did not want to compromise its independence as an NGEO. In the section which focuses on constraining factors in the relationship with the Ministry I elaborate on this issue more deeply. Although it is a fascinating avenue for deeper exploration, within the scope of this dissertation I will not be reflecting in depth on the relationship between the State and civil society.

In his work as an implementor on the Science Education Project, Gray (1990) also notes the tension his NGEO felt in terms of forming links with the State

educational structures under the apartheid State structures. He says:

It was felt that, in order to secure a more permanent future for the project, ways needed to be found to lodge the project more firmly within departmental structures. In this way it was hoped that a basis could be worked out for securing the necessary ongoing support for the teachers. How this was to be achieved was critical as it was felt that the progress that had been up to that point, as well as the project's capacity to continue to be innovative, were directly related to its independent position. Interestingly there were a number of senior officials within the department who recognised this state of affairs and privately encouraged the project to retain its independent status as far as possible. (Gray 1990:89)

Entering into a proper partnership relationship with the Ministry of Education was not something which the PTP had considered strategically. In retrospect I believe this may have been a route to access Ministry resources and personnel. In the experience of the Science Education Project (SEP), a way of accessing State resources without compromising the position of the NCEO was found through:

persuading the DEC to establish a permanent post for an "implementor" to work alongside the SEP implementor and eventually to take responsibility for coordinating and resourcing the ongoing support for science teachers in the area. It was also decided to canvass tangible support from the DEC for the local science teacher (zone) leaders. SEP as an organisation, could then continue to provide a resource back-up to the system as long as it was possible and appropriate to do so (Gray 1990:87)

3.2 Factors Supporting the Relationship between the Ministry and NCEO's

A number of factors may have influenced the Ministry's openness to having contact with NGO's and NCEO's.

3.2.1 Important Contribution made by NCEO's

Firstly there were a number of people within the Ministry who acknowledged the important role which NGO's played in supporting developmental initiatives. With political change in the country there was a degree of openness at the level of government to organs of civil society. In 1991 the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP) published a report after research was done on NGO's in Namibia. This may have played a strategic role in the Ministry's own openness to working with projects such as the PTP. In the conclusion to this report the following recommendations were made with regard to future development, funding and the role of NGO's.

1. That all donor agencies reserve a certain percentage of their aid contributions to Namibia for NGO's..
2. That assistance to Namibian NGO's be rendered, using a participatory approach.
3. That foreign NGO's, unless specifically asked to assist in transitional tasks; refrain from opening offices and elaborating long term plans in Namibian during the transitional period.
10. That the future Namibian Government recognise Namibian NGO's as partners in development.
11. That relations between government and NGO's be developed in certain specific areas.
12. That a future Namibian government establish an institutional framework conducive to NGO development and NGO-government interaction.
15. That the UNDP be prepared to support an effective umbrella (UNDP Report 1991:1)

3.2.2 Political Importance

Another factor which may have influenced the Ministry's willingness to develop a closer working relationship with NGO's and NCEO's was their level of political influence. In Namibia the NGO's and NCEO's had organised themselves into a coalition which represented a political lobby group through NANGOF.

3.2.3 The Expertise and Resource-Base within NCEO's

It was acknowledged by a number of people within the Ministry that NGO's and NCEO's had built up a body of resources and expertise upon which the Ministry could draw.

In Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho, like South Africa, the involvement of non-governmental agencies seems to have been motivated, at least in part, by the inadequacy of resources, both financial and human. The involvement of a variety of agencies in this regard is useful as such agencies augment the limitations of the State in terms of resources. (Chetty et al. 1992 quoted in De Wee 1995:9)

The Namibian Ministry recognised that it needed to draw on NGEO's and NGO's to support the INSET needs of schools. NGEO people were often more in touch with issues on the ground, and brought fresh new perspectives into meetings. There was also a willingness by NGEO staff to work on Ministry task teams to boost the resource capacity of the Ministry.

3.2.4 Flexibility and Responsiveness

Another factor which promoted the Ministry's support and openness to NGEO's was the ability of NGEO's to respond more quickly to requests for support from schools. The lack of bureaucratic red tape involved in the running of NGEO's ensured their flexibility in being able to respond to requests for support fairly quickly.

4. REFLECTION ON FACTORS CONSTRAINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PTP AND THE MINISTRY

4.1 Factors Constraining the PTP's Relationship with the Ministry

As mentioned in the section above there were a number of factors which did constrain the PTP from forming a closer relationship with the Ministry.

4.1.1 Perceptions of NGEO's as a Threat

Some people in the Ministry felt threatened by a number of NGEO's and NGO's because of the role they had played in political resistance to the old apartheid State. The PTP staff felt that some Ministry staff members who had been part of the "old order", still believed that government departments needed to make the important decisions about educational change, and that this was not the domain of NGEO's.

Although there were personal tensions between PTP staff members and some of these bureaucrats, these tensions were eased by the open and inclusive attitude of other members of the Ministry who saw it as important to draw on the resources and expertise of NGEO's. It is difficult to determine what factors

excluded the PTP from forums where there was real decision making, programme planning, or policy making. The following observations are made in De Wee's (1995) research:

The Namibians argue that the content of particular INSET programmes should be informed by the experiences of teachers who are going to participate in those programmes. If not, the experience that informs INSET programmes will have very little validity and will be lacking in terms of relevance (Auala 1992 cited in De Wee 1995). This signifies the realisation by the MEC of the importance of teacher participation and empowerment in INSET. (Chetty et al. cited in De Wee (1995:2)

This indicates a level of openness and willingness to involve the voice of teachers in INSET planning. However, within the Ministry formal processes had not been developed to enable this to happen effectively.

4.1.2 Control and Coordination of INSET Programmes

Control over the coordination of INSET in government schools was another area of tension. While the Ministry was still in a state of disorganisation and reorganisation, the PTP experienced tension through not having a clear idea of the Ministry's policy in terms of coordination and control of INSET in State schools. As the Ministry organised its staff and began formulating plans for the development of basic education and INSET support, there was a stronger desire from the Ministry to have an idea of what INSET support was being provided by which NGEO's.

The desire of some Ministry staff to "inspect" what the project was doing, before they would endorse its work, created tension within the PTP. The attitude of "inspection" held connotations of bureaucratic control and prescription which had been used in a negative way under the apartheid government. The PTP staff were open to being accountable for the work they were doing in schools and were aware that endorsement of their work would require the Ministry to have an idea of what they were doing in the field. However, the way in which

this was communicated by Ministry officials did not encourage the PTP to want to cooperate. Hartshorne (1987) recommends that coordination by the State should be based on a spirit of co-operation and not an insistence of control (in Ashley & Mehl 1987:11).

Although the PTP recognised the need for the Ministry to coordinate NCEO activities and for NCEO's to account for the work they were doing in the field, staff were resistant to their decision making power being eroded. We wanted to make our own strategic decisions about where and how we worked with schools, although we recognised that we would need to work within broader policy and constitutional guidelines for educational reform in Namibia. We were also aware that we needed to work cooperatively for the benefit of schools.

By entering into a more formal working relationship with the Ministry, the PTP staff felt that they may be able to access funding sources. However a closer working relationship would also mean the loss of autonomy and mobility. Staff were concerned that becoming associated with a bureaucracy would limit the PTP's ability to be innovative and responsive to need in the field. Staff were concerned about being caught up in meetings, administrative work and formal bureaucratic red tape and having less time to work with teachers. Similar concerns were raised by Brian Gray (1990) in his work in the Science Education Project:

It was hoped that a basis could be worked out for securing the necessary ongoing support for teachers. How this was to be achieved was critical as it was felt that the progress that had been made up to that point, as well as the project's capacity to continue to be innovative, were directly related to its independent position. (Gray 1990:87)

4.1.3 The Limitation of our own Human and Physical Resource Capacity

The limitations of the PTP's human and physical resource base meant that it was not possible to attend all Ministry meetings and to keep up to date with recent

developments. Missing out on one Ministry meeting often meant that staff members were not part of decision making processes, or that there was little continuity in their understanding of issues under discussion. Staff resources were focused increasingly on making an impact in the field, in place of lobbying for change at Ministerial level.

In April 1997 I interviewed a project director of a fairly large Namibian NCEO to find out whether his organisation experienced similar tensions in their relationship with the Ministry. In the following description I explain some of these tensions:

One of the tensions we experienced was taking time to sit on these task groups and having to make a trade off between time spent at the Ministry and time spent on project activities. You sit in on these committees because you get access to information, it has a role in profiling your NCEO, you find out what is happening in the field, and this can help your own strategic planning. A lot of time we used to feel frustrated in this relationship as we were using our resources, we weren't getting much out of these meetings, on these working committees there was a lot of talk and nothing was getting done on the ground, people would often say we can't move ahead we need to put it to a sub committee and there was a lot of political infighting in the sub committees and nothing would move forward. (Jack, April 1997)

In response to my question about the nature of his organisation's relationship with the Ministry he said the following:

It is still like this, we are very lucky we have two or three people who don't spend eighty percent of their time in the field and they are able to do this type of work. And that's why it has kept us ahead of what is going on in the educational sectors in which we are working. For a smaller NGO, you just can't keep up or get access to all these things. What I found very interesting is the lessons that can be taken from the national literacy programme because it has been a successful model of NGO, Government and the private sector. They have people in leadership positions that see the importance and value of this. (Jack, April 1997)

Having limited organisational capacity did reduce the PTP's ability to have a

more influential role within the Ministry. With project staff focusing their activities on providing a service to schools, we were less able to play a pro-active role in INSET policy formulation and contestation at Ministry level. Chetty et al. acknowledge this tension within NGEOS:

Despite what the NGO's see as strong evidence that they can deliver education services and resources more effectively and efficiently than the State, the latter has taken on a role of providing and regulating all services. This had an effect of undermining the development of a critical or alternative education lobby. (Chetty et al. cited in De Wee 1995:9)

The director of the NGEOS I interviewed acknowledged that NGEOS could play a role in policy activity. This was, however, not the experience of the PTP as our limited staff capacity made it difficult for us to have representation at Ministry level. pro-active involvement on task teams did allow some NGEOS to influence educational change at a policy level. Although NGEOS could contribute to task group reports or working documents which may later be incorporated into formal policy, I would argue that the NGEOS real level of participation and influence on policy in terms of educational change was limited. The research of De Wee (1995) and Chetty et al. (1992), confirms this within the Namibian context.

4.1.4 Lack of Clarity on Ministry Policy Regarding INSET and Educational Reform

Not having any clarity about Ministry policy on INSET support in schools and the coordination of INSET by the Ministry also made it difficult for the PTP to plan strategically. This tension was also felt by other NGEOS. In an interview with a Namibian NGO director in April 1997, his perceptions of the influence of a lack of INSET policy were the following:

There was basically no policy and all we had was good will. To a degree we still operate like this. probably one of the strengths of Government was they were open to NGO participation. Some Ministries more than others. I think that one of the offshoots of the

working groups has been a growing relationship between the NGEO's and government. This has been a life line for NGEO's. There is a general assumption that social partners will be involved. At the moment there is no clear coordinated well thought out plan with contacts and people we work through. Probably one of the critical things there was a willingness to involve NGO's. This allowed NGO's to get involved in quite a lot of policy activity through the different task groups that were set up. Such as the INSET working group. There was room for local and foreign NGO's. There was also another working group for teacher management and support. Policy really formed the basic thinking of what INSET would look like. It was not a formalised policy. It was adopted by the Ministry as a working document not really as a policy document. NGO's were able to sit on decision making boards and policy making boards, for instance like ACTEN. The problem of these boards is the ability of NGEO's to service all these committees. You literally need a big organisation to be able to sit on these NGO's. Smaller NGO's will never be able to have the resources to sit on these committees. (Interview, Jack, April 1997)

By 1997 there was still no official working policy in terms of INSET in schools, although there were a number of basic educational reform plans that focused on pre-service education or upgrading, through a combination of distance learning and course-based INSET.

In the absence of any clear policy framework with regard to educational change in Namibia, INSET and the role of NGEO's, it was very difficult for the PTP to enter into a more formal working relationship with the Ministry of Education. In the research by Fullan (1987), Hartshorne (1987) and McLaughlin and Marsh (1978), the importance of cooperative relationships between the State and other service providers in planning INSET programmes are recommended. Hartshorne (1987) suggests that:

a positive "climate" for INSET might be created, by considering basic guidelines and priorities, the minimum structures necessary for INSET to operate effectively, and a broad flexible regional model within which individual programmes would have room to respond to particular needs and situations in their own particular ways. (Hartshorne in Ashley & Mehl 1987:13)

I agree with Hartshorne that basic guidelines and priorities need to be provided,

within which NCEO's can have the flexibility to respond in terms of their individual programmes. The PTP staff were afraid of what Hartshorne refers to as a "political-administrative top-down strategy" (Hartshorne in Ashley & Mehl 1987:11), in terms of INSET control by the Ministry where the State prescribed what we should do and how we should do it, without agreement or consultation.

4.1.5 Reorganisation within the Ministry of Education

One of the frustrations which PTP staff members found in trying to establish a relationship with certain staff members within the Ministry, was the state of disorganisation and reorganisation which the Ministry was going through between 1990 and 1992 as it underwent organisational changes. A number of separate departments of education which had existed under the apartheid government had to be merged into a new Ministry with a single vision and identity. During this period Ministry staff members were reappointed into new positions and new directorates were being formed. This made it difficult for the PTP staff to access information and often frustrated efforts to make contact with appropriate people who could assist us with our requests.

Internal political differences within the Ministry during this period also caused a number of passive resistance strategies by staff members. The slow progress of many of the task teams frustrated the PTP staff, who felt they were just wasting their time on committees. Work was frequently passed on to yet another working committee, which in turn often failed to come up with concrete proposals which could be endorsed. Power dynamics within these task teams further slowed progress. Our staff were accustomed to being active and responding more directly to needs in the field. Many staff members felt that they were making more of an impact working with a group of teachers at a school than in "wasting time in Ministry meetings that went nowhere."

4.2 Factors Constraining the Ministry's relationship with NGO's

Although no in depth interviews were conducted with Ministry personnel in order

to gain an in depth understanding of those factors which constrained their relationship with NGEO's such as the PTP, the following possible constraining factors from the perspective of the Ministry have been drawn from the PTP's experience of trying to establish a relationship with the Ministry.

4.2.1 The Reorganisation of the Ministry

The process of organisational development within the Ministry during 1990 and 1992 made it difficult for the Ministry staff to attend to all the demands which were placed on them. Developing INSET policy and coordination with NGEO's were only a minor aspect of educational reform processes to which Ministry staff had to attend.

4.2.2 The Lack of INSET Policy

The lack of INSET policy in terms of INSET provision and coordination made it difficult to establish a framework within which NGEO's and the State could work cooperatively.

4.2.3 The Limits on the Ministry's own Funds and Resources

The Ministry's own finances and resources were limited in terms of INSET provision to schools. This reduced the Ministry's ability to fund NGEO work in schools. As there were no formal working agreements between some NGEO's and the State, this made coordination and control of NGEO activities difficult.

4.2.4 The Geographical location of NGO's

Those NGEO's based outside of the capital city had less access to Ministry staff members and were unable to attend regular Ministry meetings and workshops where important debates related to educational change were taking place.

4.2.5 Attitudes towards NGEO staff

Some Ministry staff members were not open to cooperation and consultation with NGEO's in terms of educational reform.

5. SUMMARY OF FACTORS SUPPORTING AND CONSTRAINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MINISTRY AND NCEO'S

5.1 Factors Supporting the PTP's Relationship with the Ministry

A number of factors helped to foster the PTP's willingness to have a good working relationship with the Ministry. These were:

- The political climate of change and new political credibility of the Ministry of Education.
- The open door policy that many Ministry staff members had towards staff in our organisation.
- Access to meetings with Ministry personnel.
- Invitations to attend Ministry workshops or meetings.
- The establishment of the INSET coordination committee at Ministry level which encouraged sharing information and ideas on teacher development programmes in which NCEO's and the Ministry were involved.
- Maintaining good relationships with key people in the Ministry through formal meetings or regular personal contact, as well as the distribution of project brochures and the publication Primary Focus to Ministry staff members and schools.
- The distribution of information on the PTP's activities, through attendance at information sharing meetings; PTP publications; inviting Ministry officials to attend functions such as our AGM.
- In initiating a few cooperative initiatives with Ministry staff we were able to support the Ministry in delivering a service to schools. Our work with the Department of Library services in the Ministry is an example of this.
- Project staff representation on various curriculum working committees within the Ministry established a more formal relationship.
- Financial return for the project based on a number of minor workshops in curriculum-based areas facilitated for Ministry staff.
- The PTP's primary funder was keen for it eventually to be institutionalised

within the Ministry in terms of long term sustainability of project initiatives.

- The need to share human and physical resources in providing support to schools.

5.2 Factors Supporting the Ministry's Relationship with the PTP

- An openness by key figures in the Ministry to the participation of NGEO's in Ministry task groups and in discussion forums.
- Unofficial "open door policy" in terms of access to Ministry officials by NGEO staff. This enabled information to be shared between the two sectors and for a relationship of cooperation and trust to be built with certain Ministry officials.
- The establishment of the NGO coordinating structure in the Ministry enabled NGEO's and Ministry staff to meet each other and find out in which activities they were involved. It was also a forum in which some information could be shared and plans coordinated.
- The Ministry staff endorsed the PTP's project proposal, which provided the project with support in terms of being able to access funding.
- Through Ministry structures at the local and district level the PTP was assisted in contacting schools and forwarding resources.
- An openness by some Ministry staff to allow the NGO's access to using some of its venues and resource centres for workshops when space was available.
- The political influence of NGEO and NGO's in Namibia made them an important stakeholder in whom to consult.
- The resource base and experience of NGEO staff.

5.3 Factors Constraining the PTP's Relationship with the Ministry

Some of the factors which constrained a relationship with the Ministry of Education were:

- The suspicion with which NGE0 staff were treated by some Ministry Officials who perceived NGE0's as a threat.
- The PTP staff were not always available or invited to forums where discussions with regard to new educational policy and planning occurred.
- Our own internal capacity limited our availability to attend strategic Ministry meetings or to be available to participate on task teams and working groups.
- Our own strategy to focus on our work in the field and not to focus our attention on lobbying for change at Ministry level also limited our own influence there.
- The state of disorganisation and reorganisation at the Ministry, with the integration of different departments into a new Ministry, made communication and access to Ministry staff difficult at times.
- The length of time it took for decisions to be made within the Ministry made PTP staff feel that it was more productive to spend time working with teachers in the field than trying to have an influence at Ministry level.
- The coordination and control measures by the Ministry raised fears about the autonomy of the PTP.
- The PTP did not have an explicit strategy to build a closer and more formal working relationship with the Ministry.
- On a political, ideological and education level there were particular decisions taken by the Ministry which the PTP staff felt would compromise the values of the project if there was a formal working relationship.
- The PTP felt it would lose its independence and be compromised if it worked in collaboration with some of the agencies with which the Ministry had entered into aid and development agreements.

5.4 Factors Constraining the Ministry's Relationship with the PTP

- The lack of policy in terms of INSET provision and coordination

- The negative attitude some Ministerial staff had towards NGEO's.
- The lack of resources and funds available at Ministerial level.
- The reorganisation of the Ministry.
- Innovation overload at Ministry level.
- The physical location of NGEO's
- General availability of NGEO staff.

6. GENERAL REFLECTIONS ON THE ROLE THE PTP PLAYED IN EDUCATIONAL CHANGE THROUGH ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MINISTRY

With no formal policy on the relationship between the Ministry and NGEO's, and with no clarity on the future direction of educational change and INSET in the country, the relationship between the PTP and the Ministry could be described as one of informal open communication. The relationship focused on the building of trust and the sharing of information with regard to our current activities. Through this form of information sharing, the PTP was able to access some information with regard to plans to reform basic education and some of the new policy documents.

It is not possible to determine what effect the relationship between the PTP and the Ministry had, on thinking within the Ministry around INSET or educational change more broadly. However, the PTP's presence in the Ministry and its requests for endorsement of its work did, I believe, create an awareness at Ministry level of NGEO's providing INSET and the need to set up forums in which there was information sharing, and the start of some form of coordination of activities. The PTP staff were also able to access up-to-date information on new Ministerial policy and plans and distribute this to teachers with whom we worked. The PTP's presence in the Ministry kept an awareness of INSET and the role of NGEO's on the Ministry agenda. The establishment of the INSET coordinating committee built this in at an institutional level.

A number of factors which both constrained and supported a closer working

relationship between the PTP and the Ministry have been highlighted in the section above. The lack of a policy framework in relation to INSET provision and coordination was one of the major factors which constrained cooperative working relationships between the State and the PTP.

In 1990 and 1992, new policies and plans for educational reform were in their infancy. Within the Ministry no clear vision of an educational future existed, nor was there any policy with regard to INSET and the professional development of schools and teachers. Within this context it was difficult for the PTP to strategise more carefully in terms of a more cooperative and formal relationship with the Ministry. Institutionalising INSET at schools had not been put on the policy agenda. With hindsight, I feel that the PTP could have played a more pro-active role in terms of proposing policy in terms of INSET, and the role of NCEO in INSET provision. However, this would have required the project staff to adopt different strategies in terms of their understanding of their role in influencing educational change at a Ministerial level.

Hartshorne (1987) makes the following proposal that there is a national development plan for teacher education, including INSET:

this should include targets and time scales, as well as consideration of the structures needed to facilitate the implementation of the broad policy and plan, and also the processes of co-operative action and the resources that will have to be made available. (Hartshorne in Ashley & Mehl 1987:11)

The proposal by Hartshorne (1985) emphasises a more holistic approach to the coordination and integration of plans and programmes on the national and local level throughout the educational system. Hofmeyr (1991 cited in De Wee 1995:11) proposed improved coordination through a central INSET agency. Through such a structure, NCEO's such as the PTP would be required to have a greater degree of cooperation and accountability to the Ministry. The Ministry would possibly require that INSET programmes be conceptualised in a more

long term and developmental way. I agree with Hartshorne's (1987) proposal, although I believe that in order for real cooperation to occur, fundamental issues would need to be addressed in terms of the different value bases of these different organisations. Different methodological approaches and understandings about educational change would need to be shared in order to determine how these organisations could support each other and work in a coherent way in supporting change at the level of the school. The building of good working relationships and a level of trust between the State and NGEO's is fundamental to being able to carry out effective work in the field.

7. CENTRAL LEARNINGS ABOUT BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NGEO'S AND MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION IN FOSTERING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Some of the main learnings which can be made in terms of building relationships between NGEO's and the State in promoting educational change are:

- Structures need to be put in place so that NGEO's and the Ministry can coordinated and share ideas, resources and plans in terms of INSET provision. This could be fostered through establishing forums for coordination or embarking on joint programmes. Holding informal meetings and formulating policy with regard to the relationship between NGEO's and the Ministry may go some way toward promoting more formal and developmental links.
- For cooperative working relationships to be established between the State and NGEO's, deeper underlying issues relating to political and educational values would need to be explored.
- A basis for trust and cooperation would need to be established, through careful negotiation around the issues of control and influence.

- Through pro-active initiatives on NCEO forums, draft policy on NCEO relationships with the Ministry can be developed and negotiated. An example of this is the initiative taken by the INSET Providers Coalition (IPC) in Cape Town, South Africa, and the draft document (1997) they developed on INSET provision.
- NCEO's need to develop creative partnerships with other NCEO's and the Ministry, so that funding can be accessed jointly while maintaining the relative independence of NCEO's.
- NCEO's need to lobby as a group for an active voice and presence in terms of Ministry policy on educational change. "The Namibian situation also suggests that where a multiplicity of agencies are involved in INSET all must be represented in policy-making." (De Wee 1995:9)
- Collaborative work with Ministry officials should be built into project planning in order to ensure that new ideas and information can be carried into the Ministry of Education and, indirectly, their capacity will be built as they learn from NCEO's and NCEO's learn from them.
- Ways to financially support NCEO's should be pro-actively sought through Ministry channels. Funding needs to be channelled to NCEO's at the appropriate time and in appropriate ways in order to sustain their organisations. The State, through the Ministry could, find appropriate ways of supporting NCEO's financially. Taylor (1997) is of the view that "Government agencies have a chance of becoming reasonable conduits of funds, but are fundamentally unsuited to being able to provide differentiated and developmental funding." (Taylor 1997:6). Increasingly donors wanted to see cooperation between these sectors, and increasing NGO involvement in accessing funds from government sources.

- INSET programmes should be conceptualised in a more holistic way (Hartshome 1987), connecting service providers and the Ministry of Education in joint funding ventures. This may mean that funding could be accessed more readily through government and donor sources.

8. CONCLUSION

This chapter looked at the nature of the relationship between the PTP and the National Ministry of Education and the way this changed between 1989 and 1992. I then reflected on and discussed some of the factors which helped and hindered the relationship between the PTP and the Ministry of Education and therefore had an influence on the role the PTP could play in educational change in Namibia. I compare the PTP's experiences with the relevant national and international literature on the subject. In conclusion, I highlighted some central learnings about the relationship between NCEO's and Ministries of Education, in relation to influencing educational change.

In the next chapter I deal with aspects of funding and relationships with donors, and the effect this had on the PTP's ability to provide an INSET service to schools, and to build its organisational capacity.

Chapter 5

TOPICAL REFLECTION ON FUNDING

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TOPICAL REFLECTION ON FUNDING

I have often likened funding to the "life blood" of an organisation. Alone it cannot sustain the life of an organisation, but without it survival is not possible. Healthy organisations depend on the effective and efficient functioning of many "organs", but too much or too little blood in the system is life threatening, as is blood of the wrong "type" (James Taylor 1997: 5).

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with factors related to funding and donors, which had an influence on the role the PTP played in educational change in Namibia between 1989 and 1992. I begin by providing an overview of the funding context and the type of funding relationships which the PTP established. I focus on some of the issues and tensions experienced as a result of funding and how they affected the overall functioning of the organisation. Data from project documents, interviews with project staff members, and my own journal notes are drawn upon in my reflection and analysis of these factors. Here I compare the PTP's experiences with relevant national and international literature on the subject. Where appropriate, I integrate my reflections on funding with the influence it had on the project's INSET model and on its relationship with the Ministry of Education. In conclusion, I draw out some key factors in relation to funding and donor relationships which helped and hindered the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia. I conclude by highlighting a number of central learnings with respect to funding and the relationships between donors and NCEO's.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE PTP'S FUNDING CONTEXT

2.1 Funding of the PTP and the Funding Context

The issue of funding is fundamental in providing the resource base for NCEO's to do their work. In their research Chetty et al. (cited in De Wee 1995) note the

following in relation to NGO's and funding in Namibia:

NGO's in Namibia played a vital role as a focus of resistance to apartheid education. They provided resources and services on which a number of disadvantaged communities depended. As oppositional organisations, NGO's were also principal recipients of aid and donor funding in Namibia. However since independence the NGO's have been strangled by a loss of funding and they now compete with the State for funding. (Chetty et al. cited in De Wee 1995:9)

The initial funding to start the PTP, as well as our ongoing major funding source came from the European Community's Special Programme to support organisations involved in the struggle against apartheid. This fund was administered in Brussels by Danish Church Aid (Danchurch Aid) whose representatives had direct contact with the project leader and members of the PTP Management Board. The Namibian Development Trust had initially vetoed the PTP project proposal and submitted it to the European Community for support.

Within the context of pre-independence Namibia, the area of providing development aid, and applying for it, was a politically sensitive one. Before independence it was difficult for NGO's to access foreign funding. This was due to the policy maintained by international donors to withhold funds until Namibia broke free from South African rule.

For many years it had been SWAPO's policy to discourage the development of NGO's and organs of civil society within the country before democratic elections. This made efforts by Namibian NGO's to access international funding sources even more difficult. Within this politically charged context, the strong SWAPO profile of some members on the PTP Management Board, may have been a factor which helped to establish the credibility and legitimacy of the PTP in the eyes of external donors.

With the signing of Resolution 435 and the election process under way, the

attention of the international community and development agencies was focused on Namibia. These factors helped Namibian projects to gain international support and aid.

There were, however, some aid and solidarity agencies in Europe which had formed developmental relationships with individual organisations within the country before independence. These foreign donors strongly supported the development of a civil society within Namibia long before its liberation from South African occupation. The establishment of the Namibian Development Trust (NDT) as a coordinating body to support funding to NGO's and CBO's, helped Namibians to access international funds. The NDT also provided a legitimate channel through which European and Northern donors could gain access to projects. Namibian projects were approved by the NDT Board, represented by key social and political figures who were in favour of Namibian independence and supportive of Namibian's in exile.

The initial grant of funding from DanChurch Aid for a three year project came through in 1990, and the PTP became an organisation with staff, resources and specific longer term project goals. As a service organisation which worked predominantly with teachers from historically disadvantaged communities, the PTP had a policy not to charge for its services to schools. Raising funds to secure its existence was therefore of primary importance to the future sustainability of the project, and its ability to influence educational change.

The PTP Management Board decided in principle not to raise funds through local businesses or large multi-national companies. It felt that most businesses in Namibia were politically questionable in terms of their funding agendas as they had South African links and were regarded as having supported the status quo before independence. This limited the focus of our funding base to foreign donors and development agencies who were strongly committed to Namibia's liberation and the building of a democratic society. The PTP Management

Board also wanted to ensure that funding partners had authentic developmental agendas, and a credible track record in terms of supporting NGO's with whom they entered into partnership. I do not, therefore, focus any attention on funding relationships between NCEO's and the business sector as this was not part of the PTP's reality. I focus primarily on the funding relationships between NCEO's and foreign funding partners.

2.2 Shifts in the Funding Context

Between 1989 and 1992 the funding environment in the North changed markedly. During 1989 it was difficult to access international donors directly unless one was able to travel overseas and build up contacts. Between 1990 and 1992 a number of international aid and development agencies established organisational bases in Namibia, and direct access by NGO to donors became easier. However, it was still difficult to ensure that funding would be granted to support projects. From the NANGOF contact list in 1991, there were about 56 NGO's and CBO's operating in Namibia.

During the early nineties with the fall of the Berlin wall and attention beginning to focus on Eastern Europe and South Africa's liberation from Apartheid rule, there was already less funding available to support Namibian projects. Many donors were keen to give seed funding to support small projects, but were less keen on funding the organisation's operating costs. Raising funds for salaries and maintenance budgets was thus a difficult task.

After Namibia's independence from South Africa in 1990, foreign donors shifted from supporting resistance and solidarity work to focusing on development projects. Care was taken by foreign donors not to supply funding for initiatives which would duplicate the developmental responsibilities of the new government. At this time many foreign funding agendas were focused on developmental concerns in rural areas with particular emphasis on the advancement of women. Shifts in funding agendas made competition for

funding between NGO's even harder.

Within a year of Namibia's independence, many NGO's experienced foreign donors moving their focus of interest to country's like East Germany and elsewhere in Africa. A number of South African NGO's and CBO's experienced similar funding realities after South Africa's independence.

With the ending of apartheid, South Africa has largely fallen off the broad sheets of the world press, and hence out of the public eye. It is the people of "North" who are largely responsible for providing the donations upon which many South African NGO's have come to depend. The money that is available is increasingly allocated for emergency situations such as Rwanda rather than for long-term development. The recession in the UK over the past year has also resulted in a drop of donations to the UK NGO's. (Jacky Leach 1995:5)

The inevitable end to "soft funding" influenced the PTP's decision to consider diversifying its funding base and working towards building a closer working relationship with the Ministry of Education. Entering into funding relationships with businesses within Namibia was still not considered an acceptable way of securing funds as this was a politically sensitive area. Reliance on "soft funding" did affect the human resource capacity of the PTP as it made it difficult to offer employees long term working contracts. It also made the task of management in raising funds and planning for the longer term sustainability of the project, a stressful and trying one.

2.3 Funding to the State and less to NGO's

With the establishment of new government departments, a number of international governments and large aid organisations began to establish direct funding relationships with these departments. During this time US Aid, The Swedish Development Agency (SIDA), Norad and Danida were among the many agencies which sought to build funding relations directly with the Ministry of Education. There was great concern at this time, among the NGO's and CBO's

affiliated to NANGOF, about the future availability of funds to the non-governmental development sector.

A number of tensions arose related to NGO's obtaining funds through government ministries instead of through direct access to outside donors. One of these tensions being the relationship between the organs of civil society and the State at a political and economic level. An example being the bilateral funding agreements entered into between State departments and foreign donors, which limited funding to NGO's and CBO's,

Another factor which added complexity, was the fact that State departments were in a process of restructuring and reorganisation. This made longer term planning for developmental partnerships with the State very difficult. Similar frustrations were experienced with South African NGO's as they attempted to form more developmental partnerships with the State, or access State funding for development work. Meintjies (1995) illustrates this tension as follows:

Various components of personnel and functions are being integrated and restructured. There is role confusion and institutional lack of clarity. In that context, communities and service organisations don't know where the resources sit and are unable to get information needed for effective strategic planning. (Meintjies 1995:3)

During 1990 and 1991 the number of NGO's in Namibia increased dramatically. This increased the competition between NGO's for funding sources. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) research into compiling a directory of NGO's and NGO associations identified 130 organisations that considered themselves to be NGO's (UNDP 1991:2). The following conclusions were made with regard to the state of NGO's in Namibia:

That there exists in Namibia a vigorous and dynamic NGO community, which, despite the short existence of many NGOs, had built up an impressive track record in health, education, community development and other fields. The team arrived at

several conclusions which we wish to submit to the international donor community, to the future government and to the UNDP. (UNDP 1991:2)

In their report (1991:1) some of the conclusions which the UNDP comes to in terms of future development, funding and the role of foreign NGO's and organisations are:

1. That all donor agencies reserve a certain percentage of their aid contribution to Namibia for NGO's.
2. That assistance to Namibian NGO's be rendered using a participatory approach.
3. That foreign NGO's work through indigenous NGO's, support their structures and promote local control.
4. That foreign NGO's, unless specifically asked to assist in transitional tasks, refrain from opening offices and elaborating long-term plans in Namibia during the transitional period.
10. That a future Namibian Government recognise Namibian NGO's as partners in development.
11. That relations between government and NGO's be developed in certain specific areas.
12. That a future Namibian government establish an institutional framework conducive to NGO development and NGO-government interaction.
15. That UNDP include local NGO's in their future country programming in Namibia.
16. That UNDP be prepared to support an effective umbrella or coordinating body of Namibian NGO's.

These findings and recommendations by the UNDP may have influenced a more open and collaborative approach by some Ministerial staff members towards organisations like the PTP. They may even have influenced the establishment of the NGO coordinating committee in the Ministry of Education in 1992.

2.4 Funding Agendas

Different donors had different funding agendas, and this affected the types of partnerships they contracted into. Negotiating the terms of reference of partnerships with donors became part of the funding world which the PTP had to deal with, in terms of its own political and ethical values. In general, all our funding partners agreed to the PTP's own developmental agenda and some

attempted to assist us in building our own internal organisational capacity. Other donors only provided funding grants. Leach (1995) makes the following observations about the different developmental agendas donors have:

Some recognise the importance of building the capacity of NGO's and they acknowledge the important role they play in building civil society. Some donors have multiple funding strategies where they will work with the State in order to affect policy debate; regional service organisations who are reaching a wider number of organisations, and NGO's and CBO's (Community Based Organisations) directly. (Leach 1995:5)

Further complicating factors in the funding field at this time were the differing personal, ideological, and developmental agendas held by donors and their funding partners. As indicated earlier, the PTP did not enter into funding partnerships with business organisations or multinationals on a local or international level. We viewed these organisations with suspicion in terms of the values which drove their developmental agendas. Many of these national companies we saw as having collaborated with the South African government during its occupation of Namibia. Our own political and ethical values influenced the type of funding relationships we entered into. They also influenced which donors we entered into funding partnerships with. Thus we consciously limited our own access to funding sources at a local, national and international level.

3. REFLECTION ON EFFECTS OF FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING WITHIN THE PTP

This section deals with the most important internal organisational tensions the PTP experienced with regard to fundraising and relationships with donors. These are:

- Time required for fundraising
- Administrative and managerial systems to support fundraising
- The time lag between funding coming in and development needs

of the project.

- Short term funding agendas vs longer term plans
- Funding "partnerships" and capacity building in the PTP.
- Financial insecurity and strategies for sustainability

3.1 Time Required for Fundraising

Securing funds to run the project, setting up procedures to administer and manage funds effectively, writing funding reports, and meeting with donors took up a large proportion of the project coordinator's time. As a newly established organisation whose survival depended on "soft funding", ensuring that this 'life blood' kept flowing, was a constant source of tension. These words by a South African NGO leader affirm my own experiences of the "funding game".

Funding is an essential part of the organisation's context and produces a tension with organisational coherence. It consumes a substantial amount of management time and an unexpected funding crisis can upset planning and provoke a ripple effect through the whole organisation. (Botha 1998:4)

I experienced personal tension concerning the amount of time fundraising required, as did the person who succeeded me as project coordinator. This led to a limited amount of time being available for other educational and management activities of the project. Because the PTP had an average staff count of seven, the responsibility for fundraising fell primarily on the shoulders of the project coordinator.

As funding sources began to dry up in 1991 and 1992, donors and development agencies were contacted directly through local or international visits. This meant that an increasing amount of time had to be spent away from the internal workings of the organisation and educational work in the field.

The personal strain on people in leadership positions within small NNGEO's like the

PTP, is severe. Within the context of diminishing funding resources, these pressures increased. The amount of money the PTP was able to raise had a direct effect on the new educational projects it was able to embark upon. Funding also affected the job security and benefits which could be offered to employees. These factors made the responsibility of securing the financial future of the project a heavy and unappealing aspect of the work

3.2 Increased Administrative and Management Responsibilities

With raising funds came the increased responsibility of setting in place structures and procedures to ensure financial accountability. This was vital in terms of securing further funding, as well as ensuring that the money which was raised for development work addressed the needs of the people to whom we were providing a service.

On a management and administrative level we needed to build accountable relationships with our funding partners. This involved an increase in the number of reports and evaluation procedures required, as well as ensuring that good financial records were kept. The PTP was aware that establishing a good track record with donors was important for future funding prospects. Donors are attracted by the ability of NGO's to manage projects accountably: " the fact that lots of NGO's are very sophisticated, articulate and can deliver the goods is an advantage because it needs partners who they can depend on to use funds well" (Leach 1995:5).

The specific and individual requirements of each donor required time to be set aside for effective communication and detailed reports. During 1991 and 1992 the PTP attempted to diversify its donor base. It gained the support of a number of minor trusts and solidarity organisations. Although this increased our financial resources, it also intensified the administrative and management responsibilities that went with these partnerships, as well as the amount of emotional labour that went into maintaining these relationships.

3.3 The Gap between Funds Available and Developmental Needs in the Project

In the first six months of the PTP's existence one of the difficulties encountered was accessing funding at the appropriate time to pay for project activities and to support new development plans. The PTP Evaluation report, noted this difficulty:

We have struggled this year because of late funding and therefore we must urge that payments are prompt in future. We also need to make sure that there is an equal partnership between the project and the donors. (PTP Evaluation Report 1991:4)

Funding came in at staggered intervals and this often caused insecurity in terms of job security and our overall planning. This continued throughout the life of the project. Many of the bureaucratic and administrative functions which our donors needed to attend to held up the steady flow of funds. James Taylor, a South African NGO manager, makes the following comment in relation to funding agendas from Northern hemisphere donors.

Even if the diagnostic ability exists, the policies and procedures of donors and those who fund them often make differentiation of the way in which funds are disbursed almost impossible. Unless donors take seriously their ability to fund developmentally, and develop confidence in its value, they will always remain vulnerable and insecure in their role. (Taylor 1997:6)

The amount of time it took for the transfer of funds from international bank accounts into our local account was one of the difficulties we experienced with the flow of funding. The limited amount of capital we were able to draw on, due to funding being provided at staggered intervals, also created tensions in terms of long term planning. Our own plans for expansion of the project did not always fit with the amount of funds available at a particular time.

In our first year we did not have the organisational capacity to act in all the

areas which we had identified for development. This held us back in terms of spending the money we had budgeted. Realities within the project as well as broader contextual constraints, such as the lack of suitably qualified and skilled applicants to fill positions, were factors which made it difficult to coordinate planning and the optimum use of funds.

Within the first two years it took a great deal of energy to get the PTP established as an organisation. This put a great deal of pressure on the organisation to reach its developmental targets in relation to funding agreements. There was not always a correlation between items or programmes budgeted for and money spent. Nor was there always a correlation between funds needed for development work and the funds accessible in our account. These views expressed by project staff in the 1991 internal evaluation express some of the tension related to funding:

It was noted that we had underspent last year but this stemmed from the fact that we were unsure of where funding was coming from...Is there a way of spreading or deploying funding to make us less dependent on one particular donor and making our own decisions on areas of spending? (PTP Evaluation Report 1991:5)

Another factor which made communication between the PTP and its funding partners difficult was changes in staff members employed by our funding partners. This meant that new people who had little understanding of our organisation or its activities had to be communicated with and new relationships established. Our main funding partner also had difficulties in accessing funds and dealing with administrative hitches between their organisations and the European Union. This caused delay in project funds being transferred timeously into our bank account. The following comments are made in the 1992 Evaluation Report on the financial state of the PTP with regard to donors:

Late funding has at times caused anxiety between both ourselves and the donors in the area of criteria demands for funding which

seem to change with staff changes within donor organisations. (PTP Evaluation Report 1992:3)

Delays in funding affected the PTP's ability to plan strategically. It also limited our ability to put into action a number of our plans. These factors hampered the PTP's general ability to influence educational change.

The PTP's primary donor was supportive and attempted to be of assistance to the organisation in facilitating its development. In retrospect, the support we received from this funding partner might have been greater, had they understood the developmental stages which the PTP had to go through as an organisation in its early pioneering years, and the complexity of the environment within which the PTP was operating. This may have helped to build the strength of the organisation and the programmes it embarked on. The following advice offered by Taylor (1997) to donors may have enabled the PTP's funding to be distributed more developmentally:

To disburse funds developmentally attention must be focused on how (and how much) money is given and also a concern for the capacity of the recipient organisation...Donors should first ensure that their core activity of funding builds capacity, before they diversify and move into other activities. In order to achieve this there are two fundamental abilities that donors need to have incorporated as part of their essential practice. The first is the knowledge and ability to understand the phases of organisational development, to diagnose the particular needs that organisations have at any point in their development, and how those needs change over time. The second is the ability of donors to differentiate their funding response in order to meet the specific developmental needs of their recipients as they evolve and change. In this way they will be directly contributing to the development and capacity of organisations. (Taylor 1997:6)

3.4 Short Term Funding Agendas vs Longer Term Plans

Although our main donor only made a commitment to support the project for a three year period, the project staff and Board did not see the PTP as a project

which would be of short term duration. During 1990 and 1991 we began to draw in smaller donors who would support some of the minor projects. Most of these funding relationships were in the form of small, once-off grants, or were for a period of a year or so.

Having short term funding relationships did affect our ability to undertake educational support work in schools, which was predominantly short term and sporadic in nature. In my reflective journal notes on the project in 1991, I note:

Tensions around future sustainability of the project were again coming to the surface as our funding base was rather insecure. The expansion of the project to support schools further and further afield was raising questions about the quality and sustainability of our work (Von Wiese 1991).

At the same time as we were looking for longer term funding, we were also innovating on many levels within the project and looking for alternative funding. These words by Davine Thaw, an organisation development consultant based in South Africa, describe an aspect of our funding reality:

An organisation does not deal with only one problem at a particular point in time. Rather, particularly in the NGO sector, an organisation emerges in response to a complex set of problems that are being tackled, and are not likely to be dealt with by a single project. (Thaw 1998:8)

We often had to curtail our activities as long term funding was not guaranteed. Our own lack of deeper developmental and strategic thinking influenced the type of funding relationships we entered into. On the one hand we were keen to access short term funding, while on the other hand we were aware of the amount of energy required to maintain these partnerships. Thaw offers the following challenge to NGO's, "we need to envisage our organisations being around for a long time to have long term impact. The three year planning cycle suits donors, but we need to think beyond this with far more courage and foresight " (Thaw 1998:8). As a newly established project it was not easy to gain access to long

term funding relationships which went beyond a three year span, as we were still attempting to establish ourselves in the field. We were only beginning to build our confidence in dealing with donors.

3.5 Funding "Partnerships" and Capacity Building in the PTP

The word "partnership" was used loosely by both NGO's and donors in Namibia. In order to build more sound developmental relationships between donors and funded organisations Smith recommends that donors should: "take responsibility for moving beyond the rhetoric of 'partnership' and to specify exactly what particular kind of partnership they are making - for what, for what quality, what division of labour, and for how long." (Smith 1997:16)

Within the PTP we had what we termed "a good partnership" with our primary funding partner. We had direct contact with this funding partner at least once a year as well as frequent written communications in terms of project reports, funding correspondence as well as in terms of jointly planning for evaluation sessions. This helped to build the partnership. Funding partners also visited projects in which we were involved. They met individually with project staff and participated in project evaluations. On one or two occasions they were involved in the PTP's own organisation development processes which assisted in building internal capacity.

An open and accountable relationship was built up between the PTP and Danchurch Aid. We did, however, feel that in order to make our association with a primary donor a real partnership, transparency and accountability were required at all levels. We wanted access to the reports which our funding partner wrote to the sources they accessed funds from such as DANIDA and the European Union. The following extract from one of the PTP Evaluation reports indicated that transparency at all levels did not exist.

Danchurch Aid still acts as our administrators, although funding now comes from DANIDA until 1992. We have a good working

relationship with Christian - though we never see their reports on us, so it is not always an equal partnership. (PTP Evaluation Report 1991:3)

In retrospect, I feel that the notion of having an equal partnership is unrealistic in a relationship where one party is the recipient of funds and the other holds access to direct funding sources. Unless the terms of reference in the original funding agreements are outlined very clearly and NGO's have more confidence in asserting their needs, it is very difficult to establish an "equal" partnership relationship.

An important aspect of our partnership relationship with our primary donor was that there were shared values in terms of the development work we were involved in, as well as how we went about doing this work. This helped to build a working relationship and lessened the chances of conflict between our primary donors and ourselves. In discussion of our developmental strategies, project staff did not have the feeling that our "partners" were putting pressure on us to follow a particular agenda. Their constant support really helped to build our confidence and capacity as an organisation.

The PTP's primary funding partner was concerned about the future sustainability of the project. They attempted to support us in looking at strategies for sustainability such as cooperation with the Ministry of Education, and in generating income from our efforts. In this respect they attempted to work in a developmental way with us as an organisation. They were concerned with supporting us to build our future capacity which was more than most donors were prepared to do. The following advice from Smith on relationships with donors, supports a certain extent the type of "partnership" relationship we had with our primary donor.

The donor should take some responsibility for working with partners to understand what 'sustainability' might mean for a particular organisation, and for contributing what it can to the longer term

health, and healthy environment, of partner organisations. (Smith 1997:16)

The three year time span for an organisation to establish itself and enter into productive activity to ensure its ongoing sustainability is unrealistic in development terms. Although we were aware that funding from this main donor would come to an end, we did not strategically plan more carefully in terms of our own long term sustainability. This hard-nosed advice from Smith (1997) in relation to funding partnerships, is useful in putting "partnership" relationships in perspective:

We need at the beginning of funding relationships to talk seriously about the eventual withdrawal from funding and about what we really mean by "sustainability". Exit planning helps to establish a commonly understood time frame for collaboration. (Smith 1997:16)

3.6 Financial Insecurity and Strategies for Sustainability

By 1992 the bulk of the PTP's funding was still received from its primary donor although the PTP had attempted to diversify its funding base by gaining the support of a number of other smaller donors. Many donors did not want to support operating costs and had a preference for supporting "projects" or specific "activities" and "outputs". Funding for long term programmes and the sustainability of the organisation was becoming increasingly difficult to secure. The acting project coordinator was pursuing funding channels through the Ministry of Education in order to sustain the project after 1993. A strategy for gaining a more stable funding situation had been attempted by:

having an external and internal evaluation by Danish Church Aid; Project proposals had been updated and sent to a number of donors and a meeting was held with the representative of the Ministry's Project Implementation Unit in which they suggested that we make amendments to the project proposal which would facilitate the PTP's proposal meeting criteria set by the PIU for endorsement to enable the PTP to receive assistance from bodies such as SIDA. (Von Wiese 1992:3)

By the end of 1992, PTP staff had gained a certain amount of experience in terms of dealing with donors, fundraising and accounting for funds. Originally the community profile of the founder members of the organisation had played a very important function in terms of assisting in drawing funds to the project. However, the public profile of the project and its accomplishments in the field became the more important factors in securing ongoing funding. The PTP was a potentially attractive project to donors as it had, within a short period of time, participated actively in carrying out its aims in the field. It had also built up an impressive public profile in the Ministry of Education and in the communities it served.

One of the major issues the PTP had to deal with in justifying its existence was to assure donors that it was not duplicating work done by other NGO's or the Ministry of Education. Increasingly donors wanted to see cooperation between these sectors, and increasing NGO involvement in accessing funds from government sources. Although the PTP received a warm letter of endorsement from the Ministry for its work, the ability to access long term developmental funding was difficult, in relation to the competitive funding context.

4. FUNDING FACTORS WHICH HELPED AND HINDERED THE PTP'S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

4.1 Funding Factors which Helped the PTP's Ability to Influence Educational Change

One of the PTP's strengths in terms of generating further funding was in ensuring that it was doing the job it set out to do effectively. As Thaw points out:

If we are not making the difference we intend, why should the system (organisation) continue to be financed? For sustainability, I argue we are measured on the effectiveness of and impact of our work and not how well we write a funding proposal. (Thaw 1998:8)

Building the internal capacity of the organisation and planning strategically for

future financial sources were important concerns for the PTP. These factors helped to build the PTP's capacity to plan for future sustainability, in relation to funding at an organisational level. Here organisational capacity was built in terms of dealing with donors, having accountable and transparent management structures and procedures, and setting up an efficient administration system in relation to processing and accounting for funds.

The PTP began to generate funds through subscriptions to its publication and through small consultancies it undertook for the Ministry of Education. This built up an element of financial sustainability.

Strategies embarked on by the PTP to ensure longer term funding included diversifying its funding base; getting its project proposals endorsed by the Ministry; and making contact with new funding sources.

Our main donor played a developmental role in supporting the capacity building of the organisation through ongoing support and physical participation in our internal processes.

Our main donor assisted the PTP in thinking strategically about longer term sustainability as well as assisting us to build our internal organisational capacity.

The PTP's ability to control the flow between funding we raised and our activities in the field improved with our development and growth as an organisation.

The Ministry supported the PTP initiatives by endorsing its proposals through the National Institute of Educational Development's, Project Implementation Unit.

4.2 Funding Factors which Hindered the PTP's ability to Influence Educational Change

The PTP needed to strategise more carefully in order to survive in the future.

The PTP had not attempted to work more cooperatively with other national and international NGO's nor had it tried to access other funding sources at a local level.

The short term nature of funding had a major effect on our ability to plan for the long term. Here I would support the recommendation by Taylor that "donors can best impact on the capacity of recipient organisations not through being all things to all recipients but by taking seriously their core responsibility of providing funds developmentally" (Taylor 1997:6).

PTP had no strategy to accessing local funding sources, such as big multinational companies within the country, or local business initiatives.

An avenue which the project did not pursue in terms of future sustainability was to enter into a partnership with the Ministry of Education in which the Ministry would pay the project for its services. The PTP did not explore the viability of this type of partnership, nor did it take any pro-active steps in this direction.

5. CENTRAL LEARNINGS FOR NCEO/DONOR PARTNERSHIPS

Within a context where soft funding is no longer readily available, and with development aid from the "North" drying up or being channelled to other underdeveloped countries, NCEO's need to focus on their longer term capacity and strategies for self-sufficiency. "We need to prepare for the day when foreign funds are no longer available" (Smith 1997:17). So what lessons are there from the PTP's experience, for donors and for NCEO's in Southern Africa? I would make the following recommendations:

- Within a competitive funding environment it is important for NGEOS to develop the capacity both to access funding and to ensure that the funds they raise are spent on the clients they serve.
- Accountability to donors and to NGEOS clients helps to ensure that NGEOS build credibility in the field. This in turn helps to build a base for future support from donors. Thaw (1998) is of the opinion that delivering a quality service ensures future income. "Rather than focusing on the inputs side of an organisation (e.g. finance), I suggest that it is the quality and relevance of our outputs that largely determine whether we continue to get our inputs!" (Thaw 1998:8)
- Developmental partnerships with donors help to build the capacity of NGEOS to manage their funds and to plan for future sustainability.
- NGEOS need to make donors more aware of the developmental stages of their own organisation, in order to build donor sensitivity to the organisational capacity of NGEOS to deliver a service in the field.
- Diversifying funding bases helps to reduce dependency on primary donors.
- NGEOS need to ensure that donors channel funds in a developmental way in order to support the work NGEOS are doing in the field, as well as promote stability within their organisations.
- NGEOS need to develop creative funding strategies which tap into local and international funding sources. One of these strategies could be to work in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the private sector in accessing funding for educational change.

- A coalition of NGEO's providing developmental programmes may support NGEO's in accessing larger amounts of funding. A number of other stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education and business partners could be drawn into these coalitions.
- Through Ministerial commitment to creating policy and incentives for financial support of NGEO's providing INSET to schools, NGEO projects could access national and international resources.
- Developmental partnerships between NGEO's and the Ministry should be more actively pursued by both parties.
- Sustainability of NGEO's within a complex funding context requires focus on the internal capacity building of these organisations, as well as on NGEO's providing a relevant and valuable service to the community.
- NGEO's need to build their own internal capacity in terms of dealing with donors and raising funds. This requires staff development in terms of report writing; accountable systems of financial management and competence in liaising with donors.
- Strategies in terms of the long term sustainability of NGEO's need to be sought, within a context where soft funding is drying up.
- NGEO's need to ensure that funding continues to be raised to support schools which are unable to pay the NGEO directly for services.
- The quality of what an NGEO is delivering in the field is not the only factor involved in an NGEO being able to access funding. However, I believe it is of paramount importance in the NGEO's ability to raise funds.
- Providing a quality service in the field in turn requires a strong

organisational base and the necessary financial inputs to make these services possible.

Thaw offers an insightful perspective here. She feels that sustainability of NGEO's involves much more than just inputs with regard to funding, when she recommends that:

Inputs are also new ideas - are you up to date on approaches and theories - why others' efforts have been successful or failed...It's also information - about stakeholders, changes in government policy, shifts in donor policy, emerging conflict...And it's about feedback - on your impact - are the intended changes taking place; on your effectiveness - are your outputs relevant, needed or dispensable; on your performance - do your staff cohere around a core purpose, understanding their role, have the capabilities for the task? Do tasks get done on time? (Thaw 1998:9)

6. CONCLUSION

This chapter explored some of the factors relating to funding and the influence donors had on the role of the PTP in educational change in Namibia, between 1989 and 1992. The funding context and the type of funding relationships which the PTP established were described. Some of the issues and tensions experienced as a result of funding and how they affected the overall functioning of the organisation were then explored. Data from project documents and interviews with project staff members were drawn on in my reflection and analysis of these factors. The PTP's experiences were reflected on in relation to relevant national and international literature on funding and funding partnerships between NGEO's and international donor. Where appropriate, I have integrated my reflections on funding, with the influence it had on the project's INSET model as well as on its relationship with the Ministry of Education.

Some of the main factors related to funding which helped and hindered the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia have been highlighted. In conclusion I highlighted some central learnings about funding

relationships between NCEO's and donors in relation to influencing educational change.

In the next chapter I explore some of the internal dynamics within the project which enabled the project both to raise resources to support its activities and to strategise in terms of its work in the field. I specifically deal with the issues related to leadership and strategy in relation to the internal functioning of the PTP.



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Chapter 6

TOPICAL REFLECTION ON THE PTP'S INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL DYNAMICS

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TOPICAL REFLECTION ON THE PTP'S INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL DYNAMICS

In every organisation there are particular aspects or elements which make up that organisation, and each of these need to be functioning healthily for the whole to be healthy. Any malfunctioning element will have a ripple effect throughout the whole system. Without becoming familiar with and being able to identify the different elements, it is difficult to understand where the particular strengths and weaknesses of an organisation lie, and where for example, one needs to focus for effective change. (Davidoff, Kaplan & Lazarus 1994:17)

1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I focused on factors in relating to donors and funding which work both for and against the overall functioning of the organisation and its ability to influence educational change in Namibia. In this chapter I explore a number of internal organisational dynamics within the PTP which enabled the project both to raise resources to support its activities, as well as to strategise in terms of its work in the field. I have chosen to focus my reflections on two specific aspects of organisational life: leadership, and strategy, (which relate to organisational goals and planning and evaluation). My rationale in singling out these areas is based on the prominence they had in the daily life of the project, and the influence which they had on our intervention strategies in the field. Within the narrative of the PTP in chapter two, these areas have stood out as central areas of focus. In my present work within an NCEO and in my relations with NCEO's in Southern Africa, the aspects of leadership and strategy are viewed as key areas of importance in relation to the capacity of NCEO's to influence educational change.

In my analysis I draw links between the work which the PTP did in the field in terms of educational change and its internal capacity to manage this work. The PTP's INSET model, its relationship with the Ministry of Education and with funding

are reflected upon in relation to aspects of leadership and strategy within the PTP. Where appropriate I relate my reflections to data obtained from interviews with PTP staff and project records, as well as relevant national and international literature on the subject. I highlight a number of factors related to leadership and strategy which helped and hindered the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia. This chapter concludes with some of the central learnings in relation to the internal functioning of NGEOS and their ability to influence educational change.

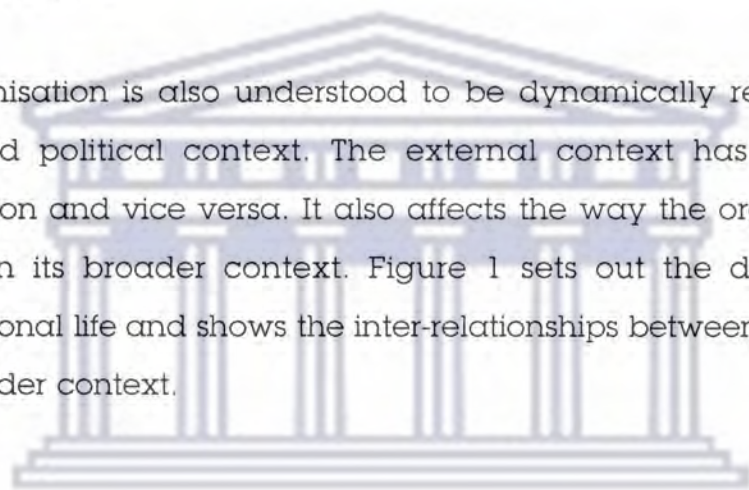
As a basis for reflecting on these three aspects, I use the Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) framework for understanding elements of organisational life. I begin with a general overview of some of the organisational dynamics within the PTP, which both enhanced and reduced the project's capacity. I then provide a brief description of the framework mentioned above, and proceed with reflections on aspects of leadership and strategy, in relation to project data and relevant national and international literature on the subject. As the body of literature in relation to these areas is broad and varied, I have selectively drawn on the literature where it has enabled me reflect more deeply on issues.

2. FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING ELEMENTS OF ORGANISATIONAL LIFE

Following is a description of the Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:23) framework (Figure 1) for understanding organisations. I have used this framework as a guide and analytical tool to understanding the way in which leadership, evaluation and strategic planning interrelate with other organisational elements and influence the capacity of the organisation as a whole. By focusing on the interrelationship of these three aspects and their influence on other elements within the organisation, I hope to convey a "living" sense of the organisational dynamics within the PTP. This will in turn serve to understand more deeply those factors internal to organisation, which helped and hindered the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia.

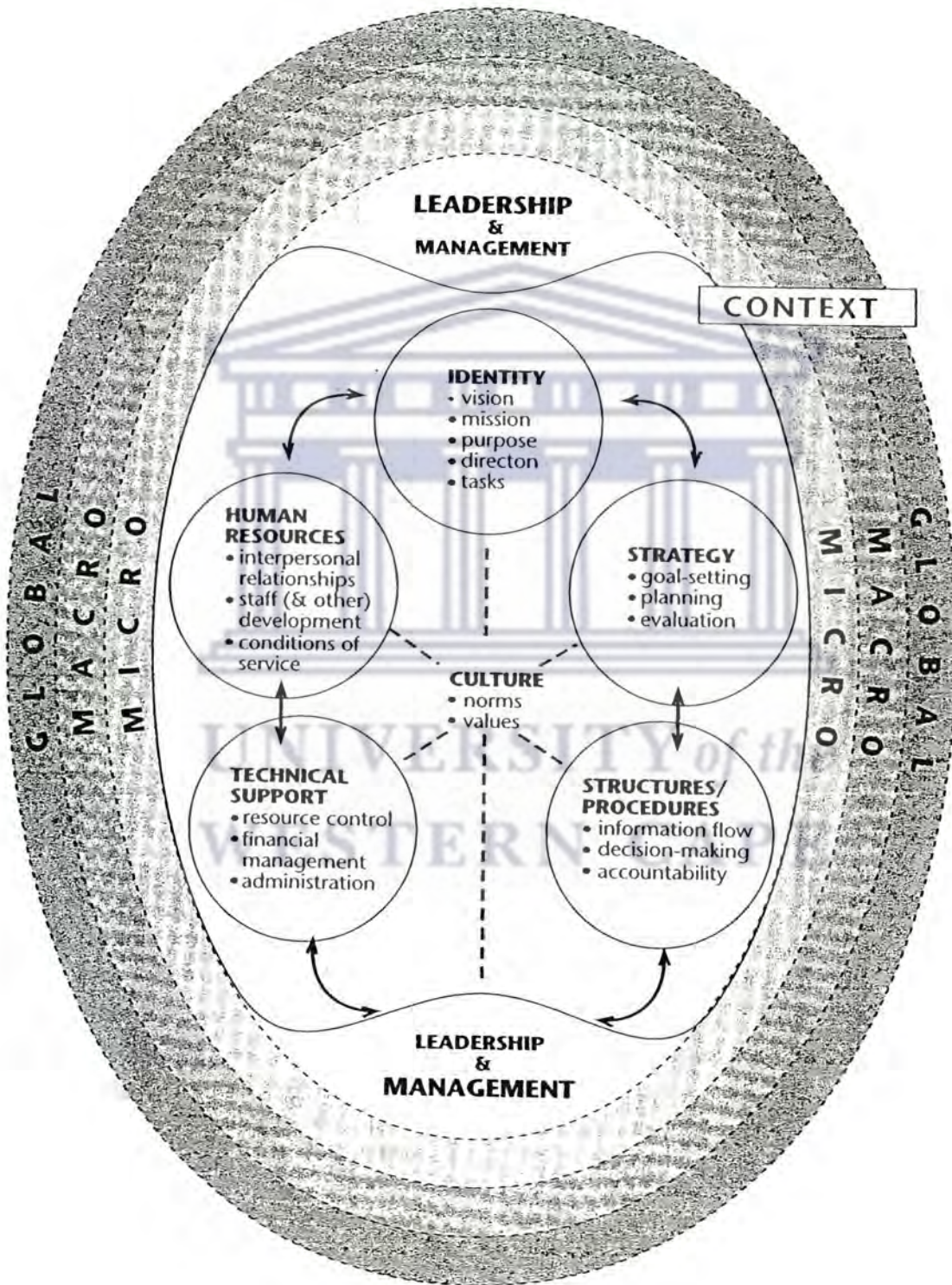
According to Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:23) each organisation is made up of various elements and aspects that need to be functioning healthily for the organisation to be healthy. Any element which is not functioning well will have a negative effect on the organisation as a whole. Every organisation is comprised of the following elements which are interrelated and interdependent. These are the organisation's *identity, strategy, structures and procedures, technical support, human resources and leadership and management*. The *culture* of an organisation pervades all these elements and is a reflection of the organisation's norms and values.

The organisation is also understood to be dynamically related to its broader social and political context. The external context has an impact on the organisation and vice versa. It also affects the way the organisation is able to impact on its broader context. Figure 1 sets out the different elements of organisational life and shows the inter-relationships between these elements and their broader context.



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Figure 1: **Diagram of Elements of Organisational Life**
 (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:18)



2.1 The Organisational Culture

The *culture* of the organisation is placed at the centre "because it determines how the elements of organisational life develop. The culture comprises the values, the overall climate..." (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:26). Aspects of the culture of an organisation are reflected, for example: in motivation, involvement of role players, general attitude towards work, punctuality, discipline and staff relations. The culture of the organisation reflects both external and internal values and norms of the society within which it is located.

2.2 Identity

Every organisation has its own *identity*. This is the way in which it is viewed from outside as well as within the organisation. Its identity is reflected in the direction in which the organisation feels it is going and what it aims to achieve. This would identify the purpose of the organisation, which is set out in its vision and mission as well as in its aims and tasks. The organisational policy also indicates principles which act as a guideline for practice. Review of policies in relation to organisational values and practices is an important aspect of change within organisations.

2.3 Strategy

The element of strategy reflects organisational goals and planning, as well as evaluation of these outcomes and processes. The systematic setting of goals, planning and evaluation is known as strategic planning. This process would include strategic decision making in which an organisation would attempt to understand broader contextual changes, anticipate future trends, set appropriate goals and trends and plan strategies to achieve these goals. It would also include evaluation of staff and the organisation as a whole, and the way in which implementation is being related to goals set. This element would relate to all other aspects of the organisation, as strategic planning would include the following: a review and development of the organisations identity and culture; the development of procedures and structures to support goals set;

development and access to technical and human resources. It is dependent on effective leadership and management. (ibid. 1996:29)

2.4 Structures and Procedures

This element provides the basis for the way in which the organisation relates to itself and its broader context. "Structures and procedures should allow the various aspect of organisational life to interrelate in a coherent way." (ibid. 1996:31). Structures consist of lines of responsibility and authority, or units and departments and how they relate to one another, and how individual and team contributions are combined. They also consist of lines of communication and responsibility.

Procedures refer to the rules, regulations and methods whereby these structures relate to one another. Three central aspects of structures and procedures are: a) decision making which is related very closely to issues of control and management of the organisation; b) accountability: this is primarily the system of responsibility and reporting systems; and c) information flow/formal communication. This aspect relates to systems that provide a link between the different aspects in the organisation. This would include communication between departments or units, management communication with the rest of the staff, the way information is shared, who has access to it, and the type of information which is shared.

2.5 Technical Support

Technical Support is the element which includes administration, financial and other resources as well as resource allocation and control. This element is intricately linked with the other elements. Strategic planning processes focus directly on human and physical resources in implementation of new plans. Without adequate financial and administrative support resources are difficult to control and regenerate.

2.6 Human Resources

This element includes the staff and other role players such as the governing body. Three basic areas belong within this element. They are staff development which focuses on the internal developmental needs of staff members through INSET and staff appraisal. Another aspect within this element is concerned with informal and interpersonal dynamics, and relations within the organisation such as conflict and communication. Conditions of employment are another feature of this element. Conditions of employment would provide guidelines for organisational conduct and professional expectations.

2.7 Leadership and Management

According to Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:37), leadership and management functions have a leading role in containing the organisation and in guiding it. They are of the view that this aspect is at the heart of the organisation. These aspects ensure that all other aspects are held together and developed. Leadership assists in directing the organisation or ensuring that it does the right thing at the right time, while management focuses on maintaining the organisation and ensuring that the organisation does things right. (ibid. 1997:38) This element involves particular aspects of leadership such as leadership styles, functions and qualities of a leader as well as the development of leadership capacity. Under management the focus would be on strategies and functions of management and training.

2.8 The Macro Context

This aspect includes an understanding of the organisation within its broader social, educational and political context at a local, national and global level. Issues within the organisation need to be understood within this broader context. The external context impacts on the life of the organisation and in turn is influenced by organisations. According to Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:40) organisations " ...must also be understood and responded to within the context of societal dynamics, including issues of power relations, race, social class,

gender, and other areas of potential exploitation and oppression.”

3. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SOME OF THE ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE PTP

The PTP's development as an organisation between 1989 and 1992 was in the pioneering phase:

This phase of an organisation's life is exciting, somewhat insecure, and very creative. It is really about developing something out of an idea, a hope and seeing it grow into an institution with services or products, a physical space, and staff. (Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) Manual of Readings 1995:3)

Although as project staff we were not conscious of our organisation as being in this phase, we were aware of a number of features within our own internal dynamics which affected our ability to provide a service in the field, as well as build our own internal strength.

With hindsight I feel that had I acquired a knowledge of the phases which development organisations go through, from a pioneer organisation to a mature organisation, as well as an understanding of internal dynamics within organisations, I may have been better prepared to understand and manage my role as a project leader in building the internal capacity of the organisation. I also feel I would have been able to hold those periods of tension and crisis within the organisation with a deeper sense of understanding and confidence, in terms of leadership and management strategy.

The Community Development Resources Association (CDRA) which works in the area of organisation development based in South Africa, makes this telling observation:

In working in NGO's, it is often surprising how little awareness initiative-takers have about their whole organisation and about its stage of development. How relieved they are when they recognise

that their organisation, while unique, shares characteristic phases of crisis and development with other organisations, (Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) Manual of Readings 1995:1)

The following are my personal reflections of some of the strengths and weaknesses within the PTP as a pioneering organisation. They give a general view of the internal capacity of the project to influence educational change initiatives in the field. These reflections are not directly related to elements in the framework described above.

3.1 Factors which Facilitated the Organisational Strength of the PTP

The following factors helped to assist the PTP in building its organisational strength:-

- The organisation was new and there was a high level of creativity and commitment by staff to make a contribution to the broader task of nation building.
- Because the organisation was small it was relatively easy for team spirit to be built by project members, and for communication to take place.
- Project staff had personal responsibility to innovate and take up leadership roles, and as a result, there was a high level of creativity and innovation.
- The Management Committee of founder members were key gate keepers, in terms of profiling the project and opening up opportunities for funding. They also provided an extra resource base and support to the staff and new leadership.

- The leadership was committed to the project's development and success. The project coordinator was innovative and in touch with political and educational realities in the country, and fed this information back into the project. She was also "output" oriented and focused on the project contributing and delivering what it promised. She was also concerned with the smooth functioning of the organisation.
- Mechanisms were put in place to promote organisational development, such as strategic planning and staff development initiatives.
- The staff tended to learn and build skills and understanding, as the project grew and developed.
- A good working relationship was established with our primary donors.
- The project staff increased the public profile of the organisation, through distributing a publication to schools and through attending key educational forums.

3.2 Factors which Weakened the Organisational Capacity of the PTP

Some of the factors within the organisation which constrained our capacity were:-

- Our lack of clarity in terms of the nature of the project. On the one hand we saw it as a "pilot" project with a limited life expectancy, focusing its attention on a specific number of schools, and on the other hand we saw the PTP as a NCEO with a long future which would attempt to expand its activities, and replicate itself in other geographical areas.

- Careful strategic planning, in terms of our own sustainability and the nature of our intervention was lacking, in terms of asking deeper questions about the rationale underlying our practices.
- There was limited ongoing evaluation of impact made in the field.
- Within the project there was more of an emphasis on doing than on critically reflecting in a more systematic way on our action.
- Finding the right staff with appropriate skills and expertise was difficult. Within a climate of rapidly opening job opportunities for Namibians, in the private and government sectors, it was difficult as an NCEO, with unstable funding and limited financial resources and benefits, to attract and hold on to staff.
- Staff turnover destabilised the group dynamics within a small project.
- Rapid expansion of the project took its toll on the human and financial resource capacity of the organisation. On a day-to-day basis staff found it very difficult to turn down requests for support from teachers. The project had not developed clear criteria in terms of saying "No", to further expansion.
- The broad geographical distance over which we worked placed a great deal of stress on our resource base.
- There was a lack of capacity to sustain support for schools who participated in our INSET activities.
- Within the project we had a weak theoretical and practical base, in terms of understanding issues related to curriculum innovation and

educational change and INSET.

- Conflict within the staff over personal and organisational policy issues caused tensions. The lack of clarity in terms of leadership roles and collective strategies in managing conflict tended to exacerbate the conflict.
- A lot of project energy and time was taken up over concerns in terms of our longer term sustainability through soft funding from international donors.
- Project staff members carried a heavy workload.
- The Management Committee members were not always available to give appropriate support or to attend meetings, as many of them held high profile jobs with heavy personal work commitments.
- Within a policy vacuum in terms of INSET and broader plans towards educational reform, it was difficult to plan strategically in the longer term.

I now focus my reflection on the two aspects of leadership and strategy in more depth, and relate them to the building of the capacity of the PTP and thus its ability to influence educational change in Namibia. I begin by reflecting on aspects of leadership within the PTP and then move on to the element of strategy and how this influenced the PTP's role in educational change. I highlight the relationship between the organisational elements of leadership and strategy, and how they impact on the PTP's INSET model and its relationship with the Ministry of Education and donors. Both sections conclude by highlighting factors related to leadership and strategy which helped and hindered the PTP to influence educational change. In conclusion, a number of

general learnings are highlighted, in relation to the way in which the internal dynamics of NCEO's affect their ability to influence educational change.

4. LEADERSHIP

In this section I have chosen to focus on two aspects of leadership within the PTP, in order to understand the role this had on the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia. They are: my ability, as a leader, to hold the balance between leadership and management functions; and the flat leadership structure within the PTP.

Good leadership is widely acknowledged in both national and international literature (e.g. Kaplan 1995, 1998; Davidoff & Lazarus 1997; Senge 1991; Kouzes & Posner 1995), as being a critical factor in building the capacity of organisations. By reflecting critically on leadership aspects within the PTP and my role as the project leader, I have been able to understand more deeply my own influence in building the internal capacity of the PTP and thus its ability to influence educational change in Namibia. My reflections are related to data obtained in interviews with colleagues as well as from project documents. I draw on relevant literature in the area of leadership and management in order to deepen my own understanding of my leadership role.

In this section I also reflect on aspects of leadership in relation to the influence they had on shaping of the PTP's INSET model, and the PTP's relationship with the Ministry of Education and Funding.

4.1 Reflection on Aspects of Leadership and Management

4.1.1 Background

I was the founder leader of the PTP and held that position for four years. During that time I learnt about leadership through practical experience. Opportunities to reflect critically on my practice in an ongoing way, or to undergo some form of leadership internship or mentoring, did not take place at the PTP. Nor did I

have the opportunity to attend formal capacity-building courses. What I learnt about leadership was through the experience of being the project leader and learning from my successes and failures. The following quote by Kaplan (1998) captures something of the reality of my own experience.

Much of what the leader needs to know cannot be learned theoretically, before the job is begun. Experience and reflection on that experience, is the true guru from which to learn (Kaplan 1998:17)

I had never before held a position of senior or middle management in an organisation. My own experience in working in a community-based school had provided me with some role modelling in collective decision making, and to some extent democratic management. My involvement as a participant in a number of non-governmental organisations also provided me with a base for project management and a model of collective decision making. In an interview with one of my ex-colleagues she had this to say about my abilities as a leader:

Once decisions were democratically taken at OC meetings you stood by them and saw that they were implemented. You always followed things through and saw that what was planned had been accomplished. You were very innovative and you were always in touch with things happening in education and with people inside and outside of the project ...its networking ...we had lots of meetings in the project and everything got discussed and everybody knew exactly what was going on ...you were always active ...you were also quite firm if you needed to be but were also very democratic ...the project and its success was very close to your heart and you were very committed to its success ...you needed to develop conflict management skills, I thought your health would suffer because you worked too hard ...you could have kept the team focused on our goals although you did this, you always kept us informed of our progress, using things like the notice board and reports ...you were very supportive of women and pro women ...to me you were like a fellow comrade this showed in what you did, you treated me as an equal, it showed in the project where we all got paid the same, also this was not an organisation fully white but mostly of blacks. (Kandi 4th April 1997)

Leading an NGE0 within the context of a newly independent country requires a

number of skills and abilities to cope with the complex environmental and organisational challenges. In retrospect I can say that to lead an NGEO one has to be a skilled artist, as well as an expert juggler, soothsayer and above all, have the ability to be open to change. Being "spun out", or "on the edge" were the phrases I often used in describing my reality as a leader. Kaplan's quote (1998) captures a sense of my own reality in leading the PTP.

The management of development and service organisations demands more than the usual portion of leadership mix ... Management often finds itself caught between maintenance of the systems and demands for system adaptation. This is not a problem which will disappear with time, or with the well-managed organisation. As with leadership, the need to keep on one's toes comes with the territory. (Kaplan 1998:27)

A central aspect of my coming to terms with my leadership role was learning to recognise the various roles I had to play, and the attention I had to give to the different aspect of organisational life. Botha, an NGEO leader in South Africa, highlights this leadership challenge when she says "You can't let go of tension. If you do you are in retreat." (1998:4). Like me she had no prior experience in managing an organisation and had to find her feet quickly as she had to "learn the nuts and bolts of organisational life by putting an organisation together - setting up a Board of Trustees and putting in place systems for financial, personnel and administrative management." (Botha 1996:3)

4.1.2 My Understanding of Democratic Leadership

My own sense of my leadership role was influenced by my values of building a democratic and accountable organisation. In practice I had no clear notion of what this would mean in terms of my leadership role. I did, however, have a notion of what it meant in terms of collective decision making. Although these were strongly felt sentiments I was also driven at a deeper level by wanting to build an efficient system, which would assist in translating resource inputs into developmental outputs in the field.

My notion of democratic leadership was strongly tied to the notion of collective participation at all levels, acting individually within a collective mandate. A strong belief in personal responsibility and professional accountability expected from myself and my colleagues was also part of my vision in leading a democratic organisation.

4.1.3 Holding the Balance between Leadership and Management

One of the constant tensions I held in the project was in finding the balance between leadership and management functions as the organisation grew. I did not have a deep theoretical understanding of these functions at the time. I was aware of having to work on the internal functioning of the organisation, as well as ensuring that we were in touch with educational developments in the field. The following quote by Kaplan (1998) highlights the aspects of leadership and management which require focus in terms of the development of organisations.

It is incumbent on leadership to ensure that the organisation is effective in what it does; that its strategies, and the way in which it gives effect to these, are appropriate and have impact. It is incumbent on management to ensure that the organisation is efficient in what it does; that its internal systems function logically and smoothly. To put it simplistically, it has been said that while leadership ensures that the organisation does the right thing, management's responsibility is to ensure that things are done right. (Kaplan 1998:25)

A. Leadership Aspects

As leader of the PTP, I played a strong role in developing the initial vision of the project, and building this vision into reality by ensuring that the aims of the project were realised through our work in the field.

Once all staff in the project were appointed, I initiated a process with a South African NGO where the staff went through a collective vision building and strategic planning process. In order to monitor our progress and to strategise in terms of the current context within which we worked, the project went through

an annual internal appraisal and planning process, where the collective vision of the project would be reviewed by all project members, and our core donors.

Having an annual strategic planning process did assist the PTP to a certain extent in thinking more strategically about the various initiatives it was involved in, relating to its impact on educational change. Under the aspect strategy I will reflect more deeply on our strategic planning processes in relation to the influence they had on the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia.

My leadership style encouraged staff involvement in collective decision making. This built ownership, transparency and accountability in the project, and a shared sense of our future commitment toward influencing educational change. An NCEO leader in South Africa affirms the importance of democratic procedures, in terms of encouraging building the collective energy to make the project vision a reality. She says:

Democratic structures and processes put managers in touch with staff as people. It has rich rewards both in personal and organisational terms. Because people participate in decisions, they commit themselves to the work. (Botha 1998:4)

As a leader I did attempt to build a team vision of where we were going and instituted procedures, in order to assist us as a project, in evaluating our progress in terms of our goals.

Being a good leader means making sure that all people in your organisation can share your vision, or build upon it, challenge it and make it their own. Vision building is essentially a collective activity, but requires that someone has a feeling for the road ahead and can steer the organisation accordingly. Leadership is associated with movement, direction and purpose. (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:156)

As a leader one of my strengths was networking and always making contact with and being in touch with, broader developments in our field of work. This

enabled our organisation to plan ahead and make use of opportunities.

Although I did not have the theoretical understanding of open systems theory, I did have a sense of it in practice. I intuitively knew that for the survival and growth of the organisation we needed to continually adapt, and be in touch with conditions within our rapidly changing environment.

Open systems theory sees organisations as living systems and argued that for any system to remain viable and healthy over time, it needed to maintain an open and actively adaptive relationship with the environment it sits in. (Harding 1998:5)

My ability to see important opportunities, inspire others and obtain their support, and to take the risk to innovate, helped the PTP to make strategic decisions. "Leadership is about creating a new way of life. And to do that leaders must foster change, take risks, and accept the responsibility" (Kouzes & Posner 1995:39). As a leader I did have the ability to inspire my colleagues to achieve some remarkable gains. In their study into leaders with the ability to initiate extraordinary changes, Kouzes and Posner found in their research that these leaders made use of three essentials:

- Arousing intrinsic motivation
- Balancing the paradoxes of routines
- Using oversight: looking outside for stimulation and information. (Kouzes & Posner 1995:39)

Kouzes and Posner (1995) identify five fundamental practices of exemplary leadership. These were leaders who were able to:

- challenge the process
- inspire a shared vision
- enable others to act
- model the way
- encourage the heart

The leadership practice of inspiring a shared vision involves being forward-looking and inspiring. By challenging the process, leaders enhance the perception that they're dynamic. The practice of

modelling the way includes the clarification of a set of values and being an example of those values to others. The consistent living out of values is a behavioural way of demonstrating honesty and trustworthiness. We trust leaders when their deeds and words match. Trust is also a major element of enabling others to act. (Kouzes & Posner 1995:29)

In reflecting on what my colleagues said about my leadership abilities in relation to Kouzes and Posner's five fundamental practices, I feel that in many respects I was working towards all of them. However, one aspect to which I should have paid more attention was in the area of "encouraging the heart", and focusing on human resource development. I did not focus enough attention on the personal developmental needs and struggles colleagues went through. Nor did I focus enough attention on my own needs for developmental support as a project leader. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) emphasis the importance leaders need to place on "people and process" needs within organisations, in order that organisations may develop and build their capacity to achieve their goals.

Management is also, and very importantly about looking after the people. If we are too intent on "doing the right things out there" and not sufficiently aware of how they are being done and how people feel about doing them, those deeds will probably be accomplished in a less effective way. (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:156)

In NCEO's like the PTP there is often a high degree of burn-out as some staff members take on more than they are able to cope with. This in turn affects the ability of the project to deliver a service in the field. I would go so far as to argue that, had my own leadership capacity been more developed, I believe the PTP's ability to think more carefully about its own strategies to influence educational change would have been strengthened.

In my leadership position I tended to be very focused on using time productively, and stressed the need for the organisation to demonstrate that it was making an impact in the field. This did assist the project in developing a reputation for hard work and impact in schools. However, as I mention in the section under the PTP's INSET model in Chapter Three, the extent to which the PTP

was influencing educational change at this level is uncertain, as we did not research the impact of our work in any depth.

B. Management Aspects

As project leader I spent a great deal of time focusing on management issues, in relation to getting systems and policy in place during the first few years of the PTP's existence.

Relevant management issues would be systems management (ensuring the relevant systems are functioning effectively); time management (prioritising) stress management...; and conflict management. (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:157)

Ensuring proper policies were in place, with regard to the use of project resources and personnel aspects, helped to build the internal capacity of the organisation to function more smoothly. I also ensured that the project kept accurate and accountable records of our work in the field and managed its finances well. These factors helped to build the capacity of the project to raise funds and draw in donor support. They also helped the PTP to expand its work in a number of schools through INSET workshops; providing teaching resources; supplying schools with box libraries and building up a resources centre for teachers.

Interviews with project colleagues revealed that their perceptions of me were that I was able to hold a balance between leadership and management, and that I did inspire a sense of team work and confidence in my colleagues. This interview with an ex-colleagues, Ella (1997), gives some indication of this:

As the project coordinator you had managerial skills, and the project was your first priority. You were not concerned about money but the job. You used your own resources. You could take major decisions and did not have to always call the MC in. You were open and honest you had no hidden agendas, and we all

gave our comments. You were not top down, and we were aware of everything and that is why there was a close relationship between people. The atmosphere was nice there was harmony peace and success. You were strong as a leader you could handle and run the project, you had self confidence and were creative and could take the lead, and you were always open to share to give good advice and you tried to keep the team together. (Interview, Ella, March 1997)

An area within management which I did not strongly develop was ensuring that the organisation built in enough time to gather data on its influence in the field, in terms of educational change. Nor were there properly developed procedures within the project through which we could analyse and reflect on our work in the field, in terms of the educational aims the project had set for itself. These factors had a direct influence on the limitations within our own strategic planning processes, which in turn influenced our strategy in the field in terms of influencing educational change in Namibia.

Had I been more conscious of notions of change and innovation as well as the phases in organisation development, I would have had a much more nuanced and developmental understanding of my role, in leading a project which was centrally involved in the process of curriculum innovation. This understanding would have critically influenced the planning strategies of the project in relation to its INSET model, the day-to-day functioning of the project and the growth and development of the organisation.

4.1.4 Leadership and Management Structures and Decision Making

The leadership structure within the PTP was very flat, as the staff was very small. All staff members were involved in day to day decision making. As the founder leader of the project I was in a position of de jure leadership. I also had a measure of de facto authority built on my experience in the field and the length of time I had been involved in the project. The credibility I had built up, with teachers and other people involved in the NGO community, also gave me a measure of de facto authority with my colleagues. The structure of the project

also influenced the level of authority I carried in the project.

Along with the Management Committee, I had been involved in drawing up the constitution of the project which set up a fairly uncomplicated organisational structure, based on models used by other NGO's and CBO's in Namibia. Constitutionally our organisation was structured in a rather flat way. As project coordinator I was a member of the organising committee (as other project members were). This committee was the only structure internal to the day to day workings of the organisation. My responsibility on this committee was to ensure that project activities were coordinated. An elected colleague and I had voting rights on the Management Committee where major policy and some management decisions within the project were made. The Management Committee was accountable to our donors and to an annual AGM of members who represented schools and teachers with which the PTP worked, as well as representatives from the broader NGO community and members of the public.

Although I was appointed into a position of leadership as project coordinator, I viewed myself as a team member on a par with other staff members. In terms of power relations I viewed all as being equal. We were paid equivalent salaries and within the project there was a notion of individuals carrying collective responsibilities in their areas of work. Even my title as project coordinator rather than director, reflects the flat structure of the project, and the resistance toward hierarchical notions of leadership. Constant consultation with my colleagues or Management Committee members would take place before decisions were made. I was very conscious of operating within the mandate I received from the Management Committee, and from the Organising Committee (OC).

Because leadership roles and responsibilities were not clarified this made my own leadership role as project coordinator very difficult. Issues in relation to authority and leadership, in terms of managing conflict and ensuring accountability, became problematic, which in turn affected the internal

capacity of the PTP to function effectively in the field.

The flat structure of the OC did prevent me from taking on a more directive role with regard to personnel management and pro-actively providing a stronger leadership and management function with regard to the project. Real authority lay in the hands of the Management Board members who voted on major decisions. The 1990 project evaluation notes:

The leadership structure within the project was still pretty flat with decisions being made by all the OC members and the project coordinator. The Management Committee still played a role in major decision making on the project and in setting policy as well as checking on the work that was done. (Project Evaluation Report 1990)

The flat structure within the daily functioning of the project began to create tensions among the staff. These were related to time commitments, as well as staff members wanting designated areas within which they could take on more independent leadership functions in line with the project goals. I feel that the PTP's concept of democracy did not effectively promote personal accountability. Kaplan, in his work in NGO's, makes the following observation, "The attempt of many organisations to develop a democratic organisational form is often interpreted as the need to allow each person full freedom, without accountability" (Kaplan 1998:26).

With no staff appraisal system, no formal agreement in respect of the project coordinator's authority in this area, and no specified personal goals within broader project goals, it was difficult for leadership to exercise a directive role. With regard to the importance in building democracy through accountability at all levels of the organisation, I would agree with this view by Kaplan:

Democracy is a fragile entity which demands the protection of systems and procedures if it is to work and not degenerate into anarchy and chaos. At the same time, excessive structure and

rules can lead to extreme forms of bureaucratic absurdity where people's creativity and motivation are stifled under the weight of relentless systems and procedures. Balance is vital. (Kaplan 1998:26)

In retrospect, I feel that sharing leadership too early within a newly formed organisation, combined with my resistance as a leader to take on a more directive role, led to a number of tensions and difficulties. Assuming that colleagues would all take on leadership and responsibility for the organisation was naive, in the absence of an organisational culture in which control and responsibility were shared. "In a mature organisation ...which has developed all its elements over time and is functioning coherently and effectively, - leadership and management should diversify and not rest in one person." (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:156)

The following are my own reflections of leadership factors which helped and limited the PTP's capacity to influence educational change. I draw on what a few of my colleagues said about my leadership abilities in my interviews with them.

4.2 Leadership Factors which Helped to Build the PTP's Capacity to Influence Educational Change in Namibia

- As a leader I played an important role in introducing new ideas and in being innovative, as well as profiling the project in the field. I displayed visionary leadership and built collegial support and ownership, around the aims and functioning of the organisation.
- As project leader I ensured that the PTP focused on the impact it had in the field in terms of service delivery. This helped to build the reputation of the project as well as to secure funds.
- Building up a network of resources and resource people who helped to

support the development of the project ensured that the PTP kept abreast of current developments within educational change at various levels. This in turn helped to support our future strategies in terms of educational change.

- Ensuring management systems and processes were put in place helped to ensure accountability to our donors, and to provide a level of internal stability to the project.

4.3 Leadership Factors which Limited the PTP's Capacity to Influence Educational Change in Namibia

- As project leader I did not ensure that processes were put in place, to assist the organisation to reflect critically on its practice in terms of the impact which it was making on educational change.
- Very little time was made for the staff to keep abreast of the field in terms of educational theory and debates related to the field of educational change and INSET. This affected the PTP's ability to ask strategic questions in terms of its own practice
- Diversifying leadership too quickly within the PTP limited its organisational strength.
- Little attention was focused on strategising around the appraisal and capacity building of the PTP's human resources. This highlighted a weakness within the organisation in relation to its capacity to provide service in the field. It also limited the capacity of staff members, to develop the necessary skills and expertise to take on new projects and innovate in their areas of responsibility.

5. STRATEGY

In broad terms, strategy refers to the organisational aspect of setting goals, planning and evaluation. It focuses on the organisation's understanding, why it exists, and how it can best achieve its aims within the changing environment in which it is situated.

To strategise we may well need to review our core purpose, the reason we exist. Or assess whether we are hiring the wrong skills. Perhaps our strategies are the right ones but we do not have the capabilities to implement them effectively (or efficiently) Most critically, perhaps, because our strategy worked four years ago, we assume it still does. But we don't know because our feedback systems are weak. I believe this is about paying attention to all aspects of the organisation and its work; caring about what you do; keeping a collective focus; building a collective commitment; enabling staff to contribute to the core purpose and having the flexibility to adapt when there is cause. (Thaw 1998:9)

In this section I provide a general description of how the PTP set goals and conducted its general planning. I reflect on the evaluation and planning processes which informed our strategy in relation to our work in schools, and how this impacted on the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia. The nature of the PTP as a pilot project, as an organisational strategy to influence educational change, is also discussed. I have focused on these two aspects of strategy as they were particular areas of tension and weakness within the project, in terms of its internal functioning. By reflecting on them more deeply I hope to understand my own practice and to shed some light on those factors within the PTP which helped or hindered its ability to influence educational change. I conclude by drawing out some of the central learnings in terms of the element of strategy which may be of benefit to other NCEO's doing similar work.

5.1 Planning and Evaluation Processes and how they Informed the PTP's Strategy in Relation to working in Schools

The project staff would undergo an annual internal evaluation and strategic planning process. Here we would review aspects of the internal functioning of

the organisation, as well as focus on our work in the field in terms of our overall project aims. This process would be facilitated by staff members. Once a month staff members would meet for a day and review and evaluate the month's progress, as well as plan for the month ahead. The project underwent an external evaluation by our primary donors in our second and fourth year of operation. All goal setting, vision building, planning and evaluation was done collectively. This reflected the democratic and collective culture of the project.

On a personal level staff members would provide a system of peer supervision to each other in the field, giving each other feedback on their performance. They would also discuss their work in the field and write reports based on the INSET workshops and school visits they had conducted. Evaluation of project staff by teachers took place through questionnaires and evaluation forms which were filled in after workshop sessions. Education coordinators would also have monthly meetings to collate their findings from visits to schools and to plan further interventions. One of the education coordinators I interviewed gave the following account of the way in which she assessed the quality of her work and the influence it had on teachers bringing about change in their classrooms.

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We did workshop evaluations and got feedback. Through continuous assessment of teachers in their classrooms when we did follow-up visits for a few days. We would go into classes and do observation. Teachers would present and we would see where they still needed assistance. We asked teachers at a school to elect a contact person from their school. We contacted this person for feedback and to find out what their needs were and if they wanted materials. But from our side we did not follow-up much after workshops with a group of schools. In some areas it could take a year for follow-up. Sometimes we could not determine the impact of workshops. Only at the place where there were follow-up workshops and visits could you see that there was a change or progress. We would see signs of a change in attitude, the things teachers asked for; the style of teaching. Physically you could see that there was a change in the way a classroom looked, like a reading corner and pictures on the walls. (Interview, Ella, March 1997)

Another factor within the organisation which influenced our strategic thinking

was that staff members shared their knowledge and resources at collective meetings. This provided us with an opportunity to reflect on our practice in an ongoing way and to modify our work in the field. Ideas which staff members gained from educational resources such as books and educational kits, as well as staff development workshops, helped us to be innovative. These innovations were in themselves strategies to achieve our broader aims in terms of influencing educational change. Remaining in contact with teachers and their needs also helped us to plan more strategically in terms of meeting their needs. Within the project, staff had the opportunity to try out new ideas and approaches. Here the PTP's own flexibility in terms of allowing new initiatives to take root made room for innovative practice.

Processes of evaluation and planning within the PTP assisted us to take stock of where we were and to plan new programmes. They also served to build forums for accountability and renewed motivation and focus, and provided a basis from which we could problem solve in an ongoing way. These processes assisted us to build an understanding of some of our strengths and weaknesses and to take the opportunity to bring new innovations into the project. A South African consultant in the area of organisation development confirms the importance of processes of feedback and planning within organisations:

We need to get critical feedback throughout the system ...We need it to survive. So we need to make feedback cycles an objective, put money behind it and ensure that we are in touch with our stake holders. Time, too is needed to review the feedback and adapt, change, or withdraw. We need to plan to get feedback to remain relevant and effective. (Thaw 1998:8)

Although we built in a number of evaluation and planning processes within the project, one of our weaknesses was the type and level of information which we captured in relation to our work with teachers. In an evaluation of the Science Education Project (SEP), the project coordinator felt that one of the strengths and

successes of this project was the systematic and rigorous way it recorded its progress in the field:

A lot of attention was paid to the process of feedback and research ...Not only were formal studies relied on (such as analysis of examination results) but information on teacher attitudes and frequency of performing practical work were noted after school visits and meetings. (Gray 1990:149)

Unlike the SEP project, the PTP did not have a systematic way in which formal research data was collected, to evaluate the impact of our work on classroom or school wide change. Regular reports from PTP fieldworkers did give an account of what they were doing in the field and how teachers felt about workshops, as well as the number of teachers and schools which had been reached. However, these reports did not contain any information about what changes were actually occurring within the classroom practice of teachers, or the way in which learners were learning.

Had we gathered this type of information and fed it back into our planning and reflection processes, we may have had a clearer base from which to strategise in terms of our INSET model. We would also have had an idea of the type of influence our work was having on educational change. These processes of data gathering, feedback and reflection would also have developed our understanding of those factors which influenced educational change.

I believe that if we had evaluated the influence of our practice in the field more systematically, our thinking in terms of our project's short and longer term strategies would have been more developmental. In retrospect I feel that the way in which the PTP was conceptualised as a "pilot project" influenced the lack of focus on researching and documenting the impact we were having on educational change. I reflect more deeply on this issue in section 5.2.

Other factors within the organisation which limited our ability to strategise and

plan critically in relation to our influence on educational change were: Limitations in our strategic thinking and planning processes; limited access to organisation development processes; limited exposure to other voices and ideas; lack of exposure to current literature and research on educational change; the phase of the PTP's development as an organisation; and the lack of national educational policy. I briefly expand on each of these points with regard to their impact on the PTP's ability to strategise effectively in relation to influencing educational change.

5.1.1 Limitations in our Strategic Thinking and Planning Processes

In our strategic planning processes we did not ask the deeper critical questions about how our INSET model was in fact supporting educational change. To a large degree we took it for granted that by providing INSET courses we were influencing educational change. Because we were not collecting data which gave an indication of what impact our work was having in classrooms and schools, we did not have any real evidence in terms of evaluating our impact on educational change. Neither did we have any concrete data upon which to base our strategic thinking.

Our strategies for educational work in schools were based on the INSET needs expressed by teachers and principals and the comments in workshop evaluation reports. To a large extent our strategy was driven more by supporting the INSET needs in the field and less on whether we were in fact reaching our educational aims or strategically influencing educational change. Expansion of the PTP's activities to more and more schools, thus became the factor motivating our impact on educational change, and an indication of our "success" in achieving this.

5.1.2 Limited Access to Organisation Development Processes

The PTP's own inability to think strategically about its work in relation to how it was impacting on educational change, was due to the organisation not having

the internal capacity at that time to think more critically about its strategies. In retrospect I believe that with access to a resource pool of individuals with expertise in the area of strategic planning and organisation development, we may have made more developmental choices with regard to our overall strategy in terms of influencing educational change. James (1997) notes the rising use of organisation development by NGO's in Africa. He says. "Many African NGO's are having to adjust to radically new environments and are struggling to deal with the inherent tensions of their own growth and development - they are looking to OD for support" (James 1997:3).

Without proper processes of organisational support the PTP continued to expand its services to more schools. This encouraged staff to set unrealistic goals in relation to running workshops and raising funds. These factors in turn limited the organisation's own internal capacity to function effectively. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) recommend that within an organisation development approach, a review of goals be done within a SWOT analysis. This can assist the organisation to set realistic goals which relate to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Had the PTP done this, its strategies to influence educational change may have been more effective in promoting change.

5.1.3 Limited Exposure to other Voices and Ideas

Our own strategies in terms of our INSET model were developed very much from sharing resources as colleagues, and introducing each other to different aspects of our own understanding of innovative teaching or progressive classroom practice. We also built a base for creative and innovative fieldwork practice by forming links with other NGEOS. Although this helped us to share resources and approaches, there was very little critique of the real value of what we were doing in terms of its impact on educational change. As NGEOS we tended to operate very strongly on the level of it being taken for granted that the requests for continued support from teachers, for INSET courses, demonstrated the impact we were having on influencing educational change. I believe that our own lack

of understanding of the complexity of the change process, meant we lacked a level of critique in terms of own work.

A lack of strategic reflection on our INSET practices in relation to their influence on educational change also plagued other NGEOS. In an interview I had with a director of an N GEO these sentiments were expressed. "There is very little happening within N GEO's where people think critically about what it is they are doing. In the intellectual vacuum provided by academic institutions this provides a further stagnation and uncritical focus". (Interview Jack, April, 1997)

The importance of proper systems of feedback and evaluation are noted by Senge (1991) and Thaw (1998), in promoting the development of organisations as learning organisations. Thaw is of the view that honest feedback is vital for strategic planning. However she raises the complexity of this process within individuals and organisations where feedback and critique raise fear. "Honest, critical feedback enables an organisational system to adapt, reorganise and reposition itself for increased effectiveness. But can we handle feedback? Do we fear it?" (Thaw 1998:8).

In relation to my own work in organisation development, I believe that a climate of openness and trust can be created within organisations through the support of external facilitators. These facilitators can also act as critical external voices which can help organisations to focus on critical questions and issues, in relation to their own functioning. Had the PTP been exposed more to the support of external voices, which brought in critical questions and made the organisation think more deeply about its own practices, I believe this could have influenced the role the PTP played in educational change.

5.1.4 Lack of Exposure to Current Literature and Research on Educational Change

Within the PTP our own lack of access and exposure to current literature and

research on educational change, limited the level of critique to which our practice was exposed. As ex-teachers we knew best how to work in classrooms and with other teachers. However, we did not have a deep theoretical knowledge related to the area of curriculum innovation and educational change. We did not have an orientation to thinking critically about our practice, in relation to current literature on educational change, nor did we think of researching our practice in any depth. In retrospect, I believe that had we done this, the strategies which the PTP adopted in terms of influencing educational change may have been more theoretically grounded and based less on our hunches.

5.1.5 The Phase of the PTP's Development as an Organisation

The PTP's own development as a newly established organisation also contributed to the weakness in its own systems of planning and feedback of information from its work in the field. The pioneering phase of the PTP's own development was evident in the lack of informed processes of feedback and evaluation informing strategy within the project. Within pioneering organisations "decision making is intuitive. Things are decided more by hunch or by feel than through a long process of rational analysis." (Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) Manual of Readings 1995:3).

5.1.6 Lack of National Educational Policy

The lack of clarity relating to the Ministry's policy in terms of INSET and basic educational reform also influenced our own strategic thinking. Although we were aware of some Ministerial guidelines around educational reform, we did not have any stable policy context within which to plan strategically. This difficulty was also experienced by other NGEOS. In terms of their own strategy around INSET a project director in another NGEO in Namibia had this to say:

We flopped around doing lots of things. Our main focus was working with English for teachers. We still do this we run courses

from the centre. We also ran mobile courses, worked in collaboration with the Council of Churches in running English classes. We did head teacher training. We ran a two year pilot project for the Ministry, with the hope that they would take it over, in developing material on better school improvement programmes. Then it got quiet when the Ministry lost focus of where we were going, we actually backed off and said no more of this before the Ministry sorted itself out. (Interview Jack, April 1997)

The lack of policy direction in terms of the future vision for education change in Namibia did limit the PTP's own strategic thinking as we did not have a clear macro policy context within which to plan.

5.2 Strategy in terms of the "Pilot" Nature of the PTP

The way in which the PTP was conceptualised as a "pilot" project had an influence on our strategy in terms of expansion, as well as the research and dissemination of our findings in relation to our role in educational change and our relationship with the Ministry of Education.

The PTP was initially conceptualised as a "pilot project" which would attempt to influence educational change in Namibia. However, within the project there was a lack of personal and organisational clarity about what this meant in practice. In the initial project proposal the PTP had a future vision of working in a small and contained way in a specific geographical area, and then expanding to establish small offices in other areas of the country, based on the success of the initial programme in Windhoek. Within our initial conception of the pilot project there was no understanding of project staff researching their own practice in a systematic and focused way, in order to inform the future expansion of the project. We thus did not see the "pilot" project as having a clear end point, nor did we develop a strategy to capture and disseminate findings from our experience.

Within the first year of operation a request from the Ministry of Education that we support schools in the North of Namibia helped to raise the question of the

strategic nature of the project. In the external facilitator's (1990) report to the PTP she made the following comment:

Was the work inside the project "pilot" or was the whole project and method of working "pilot". Is the primary aim of the PTP to replicate lots of examples all over the country or was it to have a few strong examples which could affect a change in Ministerial policy? ...depending on which was decided then much of the conflict of whether spending time at the Ministry was deflecting from the purpose of getting into as many schools as possible would fall away. (PTP Internal Workshop Report, 1990:3)

During the appraisal in September that year the PTP staff decided that:

The project itself, not just the methodology was "pilot". This is why so much emphasis is placed on feedback and evaluation of where the project itself is going. It also means that instead of many "baby" projects shooting out from the centre, the experience of the centre should be carried to the next region, improved, adjusted etc; otherwise there would be no process of carrying the experience on. It also meant restricting what the project could do in the initial stages or there would be too many variables to test. It was also recognised that the project wished to have an impact on the way the Government regarded education and training. To do this it was just as important to have a strategy for dealing with the teaching situation. e.g was it the role of the PTP to lobby the Government, to serve on advisory boards, to give feedback to Government on experience gained etc.? (PTP Evaluation Report 1990:8)

Although we went through this strategic thinking process we did not establish a clear concept of what it meant in practice to work as a pilot project. Neither were our strategies to influence educational change informed by this. In retrospect, had we done this (with the external support of an organisation development facilitator), the PTP may have had a greater influence on educational change in the schools and at the level of lobbying for change through the Ministry of Education.

5.2.1 Relationship with the Ministry of Education and its Influence on Educational Change

As discussed earlier (Chapter 4), the PTP did have a profile at the Ministry through its representation on a number of working committees and structures. However, it did not consider ways in which it could pro-actively influence educational change at this level. In retrospect I feel that the PTP could have achieved wider influence on educational change by working in a more focused way, and disseminating its findings and learnings through Ministerial and other channels, rather than in trying to reach more and more schools. This may also have enabled the PTP to have more of a strategic influence in terms of impacting on policy at Ministerial level. By strategising more carefully in terms of the "pilot" nature of the project, the PTP would have identified more appropriate ways in which to balance its resource base with wanting to make a wider impact. Instead of expanding into more and more schools, we could have worked in a more focused and strategic way with a limited number of schools and made our findings public. As Leach (1995:5) says, "... increasingly, the challenge for NGO's is not only in the design and development of projects, but also in integrating lessons learnt at local level into national and international structures."

5.2.2 Researching our Practice and its Influence on Educational Change

The tendency within the PTP to expand without researching and evaluating its practice more deeply limited its own strategic thinking, and the project's ability to make public its own learnings in relations to those factors which influence educational change. The PTP had not thought strategically about the importance of its own research and publication as a strategy to influence educational change. This would have helped us to focus our own energies strategically in terms of the expansion of our activities. It would also have helped us in developing a more rigorous way of researching our practice in terms of the influence we were having on educational change in schools. This in turn would have enabled us to reflect more critically on our own INSET model.

5.2.3 Funding

The PTP's tendency to expand to more and more schools in order to attract more funding was also related to it not having long term clarity as to how we understood the strategic nature of the PTP as a "pilot" project. Working in a focused pilot project would have required us to think through how our own learnings about educational change, could have been taken to scale, through strategic interventions with the Ministry of Education. Had the PTP conceptualised the "pilot" nature of the project more carefully, the use of funds could have been more clearly motivated. Examples include research and publication, lobbying at a Ministerial level for change, and more intensive support work in schools.

5.3 Aspects of Strategy and Leadership which Helped to Build the PTP's

Capacity to Influence Educational Change in Namibia

The PTP did attempt to develop a number of organisational procedures and processes to enable it to strategise in terms of achieving its aims. There were processes of individual and collective evaluation and planning, which were coordinated and focused on achieving a collective vision. There was also an openness to critique and stockholder involvement in the process.

Within a shifting educational and policy context the PTP kept abreast of changes in its broader field which were important to informing its future strategies. Accessing relevant information within the Ministry of Education, sharing resources and information with other NCEO's, and finding out the INSET needs from teachers all assisted in informing future strategies.

Although the PTP was not research-based in its work, our intuitive, streetwise activist backgrounds assisted considerably, in supporting the innovative nature of our work and the influence we had at a community and Ministerial level.

5.4 Aspects of Strategy and Leadership which Limited the PTP's Capacity to Influence Educational Change in Namibia

Systems for recording relevant information from our work in schools, in terms of the influence we were having on educational change, needed to be managed and improved. Within the project there were no appropriate management information systems or roles which assisted and supported data gathering in the field, which could then be used in the development of organisational strategy.

The recording and processing of relevant data in relation to achieving our aims of impacting on classroom change, and feeding this into our processes of evaluation and planning, could have been more deeply informed. Although quantitative data was captured in relation to workshop participants, very little qualitative data was gathered, in terms of the changes which took place within classrooms or schools.

Within the PTP there was a need for appropriate organisational development support, to assist the project in its strategic planning and in developing its internal capacity.

Poor conceptualisation of the "pilot" nature of the project led to the PTP's own strategy to expand and innovate in order to attract more funding, and guarantee its future survival. Had the project worked in a more focused and thorough way and researched its impact on educational change, its influence on educational change could have been greater. Being able to motivate donors the importance of working in a focused pilot in order to disseminate our findings and inform decision making and policy at Ministry level, would have attracted funding.

Lack of understanding of good INSET practice and innovation, as well as the complexity of educational change, led us to innovate within our organisation,

and in the field, without a sense of what was needed to support and sustain these changes. Had we asked different questions of our practice, and specifically questions related to the assumptions which drove our practices, we may have built our own capacity and those of the clients we served more appropriately.

Although project workers in the PTP developed their strategy in terms of reflecting on their practice, this was limited to the self understanding of project members. Although information relating to policy and change in the broader educational arena was accessed in the strategic planning process, this did not really assist project staff in critically reflecting on their practice.

Building a discussion group with NGEO's did assist us as a forum to share ideas and resources. However, I feel that it did not go deeply enough into the PTP and other NGEO's reflecting critically on their practice.

Having access to up-to-date literature and debates in the area of our work could, I believe, have greatly influenced our strategy, and helped us to reflect on our practice.

Strategic Planning processes which the project underwent were limited. They did not really encourage a deeper level of questioning about whether the PTP was actually achieving its core purpose in terms of its educational aims. Nor did it effectively balance internal capacity with goals, to provide external support. The project thus began to expand at a rate which could not be sustained.

6. CENTRAL LEARNINGS IN RELATION TO THE INTERNAL FUNCTIONING OF NGEO'S AND THEIR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Based on the PTP's experience in relation to the area of leadership and strategy, the following learnings can be made in relation to building the internal

capacity of NGEO's, to enable them to influence educational change more effectively.

- Strategic planning processes need the support of external organisation development consultants to assist NGEO's in asking challenging questions, to achieve their educational and organisational aims, and to support the healthy functioning of these organisations.
- Organisation development of NGEO's can build their internal capacity and support them in making appropriate strategic decisions, in terms of their expansion and development. Funding and resources for these types of processes need to be raised.
- NGEO's need to build in time and processes to reflect critically on whether their strategies are helping them to achieve their aims in relation to educational change, if that is their goal. Here they need to ask questions that highlight what they are doing, as well as why they are doing things in a particular way.
- In order to open their organisations to a level of critique and growth in relation to their practice, NGEO's need: to make time for project staff to attend conferences; encourage staff members to pursue their studies in relevant areas; invite people from the academic community to make contributions to the life of NGEO's; organise public platforms within which NGEO's can debate and reflect on their practices; and form working partnerships with other NGEO's or universities.
- NGEO staff members need to familiarise themselves with the current literature and research in the area of curriculum innovation and educational change. This would assist them to critique their own assumptions in relation to strategies they embark on.

- Good leadership within NGEO's is a key issue in relation to educational change processes. It assists in building a vision, and appropriate strategies to realise that vision as well as the internal capacity of NGEO's to do this work.
- Those in positions of leadership need to keep in touch with current policy and other educational developments, at a national and international level, through a system of networking and gaining access to current literature and research, on issues related to educational change and INSET.
- Leadership needs to ensure that the project's vision for educational change is kept in focus, and continually reshaped, in line with its practices and strategic shifts in the macro educational context.
- Leadership needs to be diversified within a shared vision of the future aims of NGEO's. However, I believe diversifying leadership within the pioneering phase of the NGEO's development can work against the effective functioning of the organisation. Leadership needs to be diversified as the capacity of staff is built to take on appropriate leadership roles. This requires the organisation to have developed a number of procedures to ensure accountability, appraisal and personal development.
- NGEO leaders need to have the autonomy and space within democratic structures and procedures in which to make decisions and take directive leadership within the broader mandate of the project.
- Leaders should focus both on developing the capacity of the organisation internally, and on being in touch with ensuring that the

project is fulfilling its aims in the field. Leaders need to hold a balance in terms of leadership and management functions.

- Formal and informal processes within the organisation need to be developed in order to ensure ongoing personal and professional appraisal and staff development. This will assist in developing the internal capacity of the NCEO to provide a quality service in the field.
- Leadership needs to pay careful attention to strategic planning processes, to ensure that NCEO's expand at a rate they can sustain.

7. CONCLUSION

This chapter explored some of the internal organisational dynamics within the PTP, which enabled the project both to raise resources to support its activities and to strategise in terms of its work in the field. I focused on the organisational aspects of leadership, and strategy. I began this chapter by giving a general overview of some of the organisational dynamics within the PTP which both enhanced and limited the project's organisational capacity. Davidoff and Lazarus's (1997) organisational framework assisted my analysis of aspects of the PTP's internal organisational life. I then proceeded with a reflection on the two organisational aspects of leadership and strategy, in relation to project data and relevant national and international literature on the subject.

My analysis of the organisational aspects of leadership and strategy draws links between the PTP's fieldwork in terms of influencing educational change, and its internal organisational capacity to manage this work. Where appropriate the PTP's INSET model, its relationship with the Ministry of Education and Funding, have been reflected on in relation to aspects of leadership and strategy. I highlight a number of factors related to leadership and strategy which helped and hindered the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia. In

conclusion I have drawn out some of the central learnings, in relation to the internal functioning of NGEO's, and how this impacts on their ability to influence educational change.

In the final chapter I draw links between the PTP's INSET model, its relationship with the Ministry of Education, funding, and internal organisational dynamics, in order to understand more broadly the role of the PTP in influencing educational change in Namibia. I conclude by drawing out some of the central factors which worked for and against the PTP in influencing educational change. Finally I make a number of recommendations with regard to the role of NGEO's in educational change in the Southern African Context, based on the case study of the PTP.




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Chapter 7

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation I set out to reflect on and examine a case study of a Namibian NCEO, the Primary Teachers Project from 1989 to 1992, focusing on issues of educational change and the role of NCEO's in this process. It aimed to highlight and understand more deeply some of the factors which helped and hindered the Primary Teachers Project's role in educational change. The study focused on the following four aspects:

- The PTP's inservice education and training (INSET) model.
- The relationship between the Namibian Ministry of Education and the PTP.
- Funding relationships and their influence on the PTP's development.
- Internal dynamics within the PTP.

Chapter One provides the social, political and educational context within which the PTP originated. Chapter Two is a historical narrative of the PTP between 1989 and 1992. Chapters Three to Six focus on a topical reflection of the four areas outlined above.

In conclusion, some links are drawn between these four aspects and central learnings are highlighted, including central factors which worked for and against the PTP's influence in educational change in Namibia. Finally, I make a number of general recommendations for NCEO's providing an INSET service in the Southern African educational context.

I have tried to capture something of the living nature of the PTP as an organisation within a historical period of change. Multiple factors both influenced and shaped the PTP. The PTP in turn had varying levels of influence

on the social and educational context in which it operated. The education system within which the PTP originated was complex. The change processes which the PTP attempted to initiate were influenced by this complexity and, in turn had an influence on the broader system.

Complex systems are non-deterministic - that is there is no determined future for them from any present activity. You have to look at the whole as a whole, and try to see the patterns, connections and the possibilities there. (Harding 1998:6)

2. CENTRAL FACTORS WHICH ASSISTED THE PTP IN INFLUENCING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE IN NAMIBIA

2.1 Understanding the Contextual Realities and Needs of Teachers

The PTP's INSET model worked directly with teachers, taking their needs and concerns seriously in the design of the capacity building workshops. Attempts were made to draw school leadership actively into school-focused INSET initiatives. School staff members were involved in the logistical planning of INSET sessions and in identifying the content. This encouraged teachers' ownership of INSET activities. Working on school premises provided the PTP staff with an understanding of the contextual constraints and possibilities within which teachers had to innovate. Both teachers and education coordinators contributed towards a deeper understanding of issues under study in workshops. Workshops aimed to build teacher confidence through valuing teacher's own knowledge and experience within a critical context. The PTP's workshop methodology sought to break down the notion that the education coordinators were "the only experts" in the learning experience.

Working in clusters of schools within the same geographical area assisted teachers in sharing ideas and relationship building. Both school-focused and centre-based INSET models were used to adapt to the contextual needs and constraints. In limited instances, classroom visits by education coordinators

provided teachers with the support to practice new ideas and behaviour learnt during the INSET courses.

The INSET courses, combined with follow-up work with teachers in their classrooms, did have a level of influence in changing classroom practice and the quality of teaching and learning. To a limited extent, the project assisted teachers with change related problems experienced at classroom level. School-based INSET, combined with centre-based courses and on-site support in classrooms, provided a level of support for teachers to gain access to new ideas, and to develop the confidence to implement them in practice.

2.2 Strategies of Coalition with other NGEO's

The PTP staff collaborated with other NGEO's in running programmes at schools and in sharing resources and ideas. This relationship enabled the project to save on its own resources as well as to ensure better cooperation and support from some of its donors. Collaboration ensured a greater degree of ongoing, on-site support for teachers, as NGEO's could provide INSET support at different levels to the school as a whole. Through collaboration, responsibility for follow-up support was shared between NGEO's. This enabled NGEO's such as the PTP to address the needs of more schools.

2.3 Co-operation with the Ministry of Education

Some effort was made by the PTP to inform Ministry of Education officials about its work so as to avoid duplication of INSET support services, and to assist with coordination of INSET services to schools. This did have an influence on the distribution of INSET services to schools which indirectly could have had an influence on educational change.

An accountable and professional working relationship was developed with Ministry officials at a local and national level through regular personal visits and distribution of PTP publications, reports and other information regarding our

work in schools. Ministry officials were invited to attend project functions. PTP staff participated on various curriculum working committees, and conducted minor workshops for the Ministry officials in curriculum-based areas. These initiatives helped to support the cross pollination of ideas between the NCEO and the Ministry.

This enabled the PTP to keep in touch with new developments and plans at Ministry level and informed the teachers it worked with on new educational developments. The role the PTP played, in accessing this type of information and distributing it to teachers, assisted with exposure to new ideas regarding educational change.

Our major donor was very supportive of the PTP building a good working relationship with the Ministry as this provided prospects for long-term sustainability of the project. This was also a strategy to ensure that some of the INSET ideas and practices of the PTP would be incorporated into the Ministry's own INSET work in schools.

The openness of key figures in the Ministry to the participation of NCEO's in Ministry task groups and discussion forums, helped to establish a free flow of ideas and information between NCEO's and the Ministry. The establishment of an NGO coordinating structure at the Ministry facilitated a cooperative relationship between NCEO's and the Ministry, as well as the coordination of INSET services to schools.

The willingness of Ministry to endorse the PTP's project proposals assisted the PTP in accessing funding. This in turn helped to build the capacity of the PTP to sustain itself and plan for INSET support to more schools.

The Ministry supported the project with logistical arrangements in terms of contacting schools, forwarding resources and accessing venues. These factors

boosted the resource capacity of the PTP and enabled it to expand its activities to more schools.

It is not easy to determine what effect the relationship between the PTP and the Ministry had on INSET or educational change. An awareness of the role of NCEO's providing INSET, and the need to set up a forum for information sharing and coordination of INSET activities, was motivated in part by the presence of PTP staff members in the Ministry, as well as our requests for project endorsement and a letter of recommendation for our work in schools. The coordinating structure at the Ministry did provide a basis for collaborative planning and coordinated INSET support. This enabled INSET support to be more evenly spread to schools in both rural and urban areas.

2.4 Building the Internal Capacity of the NCEO

By building its own internal organisational capacity the PTP was able to provide an INSET service to schools. This was done through attending to future financial needs of the project by fund-raising, diversifying funding partnerships and generating a small income from its publication Primary Focus and consultancy work. The following factors helped to secure funding relationships and provide a measure of internal stability: accountable and transparent management structures and procedures; an efficient administration system for processing and accounting for funds; setting organisational policy in place; developing a joint organisational vision; diverse leadership responsibilities; attending to staff development needs; and annual evaluation and planning processes.

2.5 Keeping Abreast of Changes in the Educational Context

Keeping abreast of changes in the educational field helped inform the PTP's future strategy to influence educational change. This was done by accessing relevant information within the Ministry of education, sharing resources and information with other NCEO's, and conducting school visits to determine the INSET needs of teachers.

2.6 Visionary Leadership and Networking

Visionary and supportive leadership helped to build the internal strength of the organisation and to foster a sense of team spirit and commitment. Staff were encouraged to bring in new ideas and to be innovative.

Leadership by the project coordinator focused on developing the capacity of the organisation to function across all elements, and ensured that the project fulfilled its aims in the field.

The project leader's networking with other NCEO's and the Ministry established a profile for the project, and this generated work opportunities. The project leader's attention to fund-raising, and building and maintaining relationships with donors, helped to ensure the sustainability of the PTP and its ability to provide an INSET service.

2.7 Organisation Development

A number of organisational development processes of limited duration were initiated within the organisation. Although these initiatives were not sufficient to assist the staff in understanding and managing development and changes within the project, they did have an effect on promoting staff ownership of the PTP vision for educational change.

To a degree, the PTP reflected aspects of a learning organisation in terms of its development. There was a collective openness to looking at what was going well or badly within the organisation. A number of systems were set up to establish feedback and information flow channels from our work in schools. Although the PTP was still in the pioneering stage of an organisation's development, it had established a level of maturity in terms of its internal functioning.

Building the PTP's internal capacity helped to assist the project in carrying out its aims in the field. This in turn assisted the project in raising funds for future INSET support in school.

2.8 Demonstrating Results in the Field

PTP's staff were committed to demonstrating visible results of their work in schools. Visible signs of our work were: a quarterly publication to most primary schools; providing box libraries to schools; an increase in the number of school workshops; and classroom visits; and expansion to schools in geographical areas beyond the capital city.

These visible indicators of our activities helped to generate funding and credibility. Although the PTP could demonstrate how much work it was doing in schools, there was no in-depth research conducted into these activities. Had this been done, the level of influence they were having on educational changes in classrooms or in schools could have been more accurately assessed.

2.9 Publication and Distribution of Information on INSET

By publishing and distributing a quarterly magazine on aspects of curriculum-based INSET, the PTP was able to gain access to most primary schools in Namibia. Although there were a growing number of subscribers over the years, it is difficult to assess the level of influence this publication had on the changes in classroom practice, or on the ideas which teachers held.

3. FACTORS WHICH WORKED AGAINST THE PTP HAVING AN INFLUENCE ON EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

3.1 Poor Conceptualisation of the INSET Model

Weaknesses in our INSET model had an effect on the PTP's ability to influence educational change in Namibia. The PTP's INSET model was not holistically conceptualised, taking into account those factors within the school and broader educational and social context which would influence the outcome of the INSET

initiatives we embarked upon. The school-focused model did not carefully take into account the amount and level of on-site support which teachers would need to receive after school or centre-based workshops. Nor did it consider the influence of schools or the broader educational context, on the ability of teachers to innovate. The school-focused model only concentrated on the role of the individual teacher in bringing about change in his/her classroom.

Had the model been developed in a more integrated way, we may have looked more strategically at the different forms of support we would need to provide within our INSET courses, within schools and with Ministry and other service providers to enable change. The PTP's model was not shaped and developed by an ongoing critique of our practice and our values in relation to educational change. Our lack of experience and knowledge, in relation to the link between curriculum-based INSET work and organisation development work in schools, kept the focus of our INSET model on the individual curricular needs of teachers in their classrooms.

3.2 Lack of Exposure to Current Literature and Research on Educational Change

A stronger element of researching and evaluating our practice was not built into our work. Project staff did not pro-actively access current literature on INSET (or people with expertise in these areas) to assist us in critically reflecting on our practice in a more rigorous and academic way. Had we done so we may have identified problems in our practice earlier, and developed a more appropriate INSET model.

3.3 Lack of Capacity Built at the School Level to Sustain Change

Lack of focus on building the capacity of school leadership to support curriculum development by teachers, was a weakness. The PTP's INSET model made no link between curriculum development and organisation development. We failed to take our work a step further to look at problems within the school

which worked against innovation and change, although we were well placed within the school context to assist teachers in this direction. We did not focus on addressing broader organisation development needs in the school, including staff development and school wide development, which would have been necessary if teachers were to start working at a cross-curricular level. Development of personal and institutional support to allow teachers to access resources and decision making (in terms of their own classroom-based innovation) was not built into our INSET model.

Our own planning focused more on running workshops than on providing on-site support to individual teachers. This is cited in the INSET literature as a key element in supporting educational change. Although we did build new knowledge and skills in terms of materials development and new teaching methods, we did not equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge for them to practice forms of peer support, or skills for ongoing professional development. Although we encouraged peer support this was not addressed structurally. An understanding of the role of action research, in providing a basis for professional development and collegial support, was only beginning to take root within the project itself by the end of 1992.

In the PTP's own model there was no ongoing mentoring support for teachers, nor was there any guidance within the INSET courses on how to strategise around implementation of their learnings in practice. Although our aim was to empower teachers, there was very little focus on psychological preparation for their new roles as innovators and activators of change within their classrooms and schools.

3.4 Rapid Expansion

The PTP's own strategy in terms of expansion worked against project staff being able to provide follow-up support. The innovation in the model to develop teacher support groups was in itself not well conceptualised, in relation to the

type of capacity building and support that teacher support groups would require.

3.5 Weak Strategic Thinking and Planning

Weaknesses within our own internal strategic planning, and the lack of systematic evaluation of our practice, drove the expansion of our INSET in schools. Our plans for expansion were driven by the urgency to respond to grass root needs, rather than on a real understanding of why particular initiatives were taken and how these supported teachers in making changes in their classrooms. Had our strategic planning been more informed at this level, PTP's model of school-based INSET may have built in a greater degree of support for implementation of changes at classroom level.

Strategic planning processes required the support of external facilitators to enable us to ask challenging questions in relation to our educational change strategies. The PTP's overall strategy as a pilot project was poorly conceptualised. With the appropriate organisational development support we could have made strategic choices, with regard to focusing time and resources more appropriately, thus making an effective impact at a school and Ministerial level.

A lack of clarity in terms of the long term nature of the project, and our own strategy to expand and innovate in order to attract more funding, were contradictory to the project working in a more systematic and thorough way.

3.6 External Constraints

A number of external factors made it difficult for the project to plan more strategically in terms of the INSET support it gave to schools. The restructuring of the Ministry of Education; the lack of INSET policy; the lack of an INSET culture, or policy on INSET in schools; and the social and political changes within the country. All these factors created a climate of uncertainty within which grass-

roots initiatives like the PTP had to operate. The Ministry had no coordinated framework for teacher and school development which could inform the PTP's own strategic planning.

The country was in the process of establishing a new democratic and self governing structure after years of colonial occupation. Within a policy vacuum in terms of broader plans for educational change in Namibia, the role of NCEO's, and INSET, the PTP's own INSET model was based on our experience in schools. We had not developed a strategy to link our INSET activities more coherently with those envisioned by the Ministry of Education.

The large geographical areas separating schools made the provision of INSET on an ongoing and sustained basis very costly. This required a combination of centre-based and school-focused INSET to be offered. These factors also limited the amount of on-site support schools received. The more the PTP expanded, the less on-site support it was able to offer. This limited the effectiveness of its programme.

3.7 NCEO's Perceived as a Threat by some Ministry Officials

Although there was an openness in some quarters of the Ministry, we did experience suspicion by some Ministry officials, who perceived NCEO's as a threat. The PTP was not always invited to forums where discussions took place with regard to new educational policy and planning. This limited the PTP's ability to play a role in informing new educational policy.

3.8 Lack of Strategy Related to Influencing Change at a Ministerial Level

The PTP lacked a clear strategy in terms of playing a more interventionist role at Ministry level. Our focus on expanding our work in schools, and our limited internal capacity, resulted in our inability to attend strategic meetings at Ministry level. Another contributing factor to the PTP's lack of strategic initiative at Ministry level was the state of disorganisation within the different State

departments, due to restructuring processes. The length of time which decision making took in the bureaucracy, as well as office politics within the Ministry, acted as deterrents to our closer involvement with the Ministry during the early stages of reorganisation.

The project never actively pursued entering into a more developmental partnership with the Ministry of Education, in which the Ministry would remunerate the project for its services. The PTP had not creatively explored this type of partnership as an avenue to future sustainability.

PTP staff feared that by forming a closer working relationship with the Ministry the project would lose its independence and its ability to be innovative and responsive to the needs of teachers at schools. We had ideological differences with some of the funding partners with whom the Ministry already had developmental relationships. Had we worked more closely with the Ministry, and accepted funding from these channels, we would have felt politically compromised.

Although the PTP recognised the importance of forming a closer working relationship with the Ministry, we were resistant to control in terms of being instructed to work in particular areas. We wanted to make our own strategic decisions, although we recognised the need for coordination. The PTP had no strategy around building a closer and more formalised working relationship with the Ministry.

3.9 Lack of National Educational Policy

In the absence of any clear policy framework with regard to educational change in Namibia, INSET, and the role of NCEO's, it was very difficult for the PTP to strategise in terms of entering into a more formal working relationship with the Ministry of Education. (In the research by Fullan (1987); Hartshorne (1987); and McLaughlin & Marsh (1978), the importance of cooperative relationships

between the State and other service providers in planning INSET programmes is regarded as a important factor in supporting educational change).

3.10 No Clear Long-Term Funding Strategies

Lack of a long-term funding strategy weakened the PTP's capacity to sustain its INSET service to schools. The PTP never formally planned to cooperate with other national and international NGO's, in terms of joint projects and in terms of accessing larger funding sources over longer periods of time. No funding strategy had been developed within the project to access local funding sources, such as big multinational companies within the country or local business initiatives after Independence.

3.11 Need for Refining Systems of Authority, Feedback and Accountability within the PTP

A flat leadership structure, within a newly forming organisation, created tension regarding role clarification, with respect to the development of the organisation itself. This internal instability affected the PTP's ability to function effectively as an organisation and influenced the INSET service it was able to provide. As project leader, I needed clear levels of authority which operated within structures and procedures and which encouraged accountability and democratic decision making.

Systems for keeping track of relevant information and the management of this information could have been improved. Although quantitative data was captured in relation to workshop participants, very little qualitative data was gathered in terms of the changes which took place within classrooms or schools. There were no management information systems or roles, to assist and support data being gathering in the field and to be used later in the development of organisational strategy. On-going evaluation of INSET practice is identified as a key feature in determining the influence INSET has on educational change, "it is difficult to link the effect of an INSET programme to the teaching-learning

process in a classroom, methods to investigate these should be identified or devised" (Hofmeyr & Pavlich 1987:91)

3.12 Making our Practice Visible

The PTP did distribute a quarterly magazine to schools which helped to share innovative ideas about educational change with teachers and other educators. However, there was no strategy within the project to have an influence on educational change, through the publication and distribution of resources and ideas generated within the project.

3.13 Limited Ongoing Reflection on our Practice and Exposure to Critical Voices

The lack of systematic reflection on our practice limited the PTP's ability to strategise carefully in terms of the influence it was having at school and Ministerial level. Although project workers reflected on their practice in an ad hoc way, these reflections were not supported by properly researching the influence of our work in the field. Building a discussion group with other NCEO's did assist in the sharing of ideas and resources. However, it did not help the PTP or other NCEO's to reflect critically on their practice, as this was not the focus of these meetings. In the PTP there was very little engagement by staff with current literature in the field of INSET, school improvement and educational change. This limited the level of critique to which the PTP subjected its own practice. These factors played a role in limiting the PTP's ability to think more strategically about its own strategies, in relation to their influence on educational change.

4. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO NCEO'S PROVIDING INSET SERVICES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Based on the experience of the PTP and those factors which both worked for and against its influence on educational change in Namibia, I would make the following recommendations to NCEO's:

4.1 Conceptualising INSET Models

- The way in which different school level capacity building initiatives coordinate with one another and how they work collectively towards building improvement should be considered in the design and implementation of INSET programmes by NCEO's, schools and the Ministry. NCEO's and other role players involved in INSET need to strategise more holistically in terms of resources and personnel within the entire educational system.
- INSET providers need a strategy to provide the necessary follow-up, in order to enable teachers to make changes in their values and practices and for these to be implemented in the classroom and school.
- The capacity building of teachers through INSET should be complemented by a strategy to build the capacity of schools as organisations. This may necessitate a number of service providers working collaboratively, at different levels within the school. Thus a coordinated programme for school development which incorporates professional development of staff through school-focused INSET would be put in place.
- NCEO's need to develop strategies to determine whether what teachers say they have learnt in INSET workshops is being practised in classrooms. This will involve a system of building in time for classroom-based observation, action research, and other forms of peer or personal mentoring. In designing INSET workshops, greater attention needs to be placed on assisting teachers with personal and collegial strategies (in terms of planning) to make initial change steps when they return to their classrooms or schools.

- A focus on the psychological preparation of teacher, by building their own confidence to make changes and to take on new roles is an important aspect of INSET support.
- INSET needs to help individual teachers to address real issues of empowerment. This requires on-site support and follow up after INSET courses. It also requires a school-based policy on INSET which is linked to a broader vision of the development of the school so that INSET is not a voluntary activity for teachers.
- Teacher ownership of the content of INSET courses, as well as the logistical arrangements surrounding INSET provision, is an important incentive for teachers to attend courses.
- Schools and teachers should be centrally involved in taking ownership for determining their INSET needs. However, there should also be input from outside INSET providers and consultants.
- While it is important to start from the needs of teachers, it is equally important for INSET providers to assist teachers in extending these needs in the process of building new knowledge and skills. INSET sessions need teachers to learn from each other. Workshop methodology should model new ways of teaching and learning, and assist teachers to practice new roles and relationships.
- Once-off workshops or school visits have limited effect. It is important to have strategies in place to provide ongoing support at classroom level and in schools. A combination of the schools initiating internal INSET sessions which happen on a weekly basis, and INSET offered by external agencies on a monthly basis, may promote continuity.

- INSET models should realistically address to the developmental needs of schools and the capacity of NCEO's to sustain their work in schools.
- INSET models should be based on an understanding of the complexity of educational change across classroom, school and broader educational system levels. INSET models need to undergo continual refinement in how to best support educational change at classroom and school level.
- Capacity building through school-focused INSET needs to be conceptualised as a long-term process, and not as a short-term programme or series of short courses.
- Forms of collegial support, such as peer support, subject group support and support from leadership and management, need to be developed through INSET training.
- Organisational development, and development of leadership and management, needs to complement the capacity building of teachers through curriculum-based INSET courses.
- INSET models should be based on understanding of the complexity of educational change processes.
- INSET should be provided in an integrated way so that policy in terms of educational change on a national level is integrated with capacity building initiatives through INSET, at district and school level.
- Support structures within, and between schools need to be developed to ongoing INSET. Support for the development of these structures needs to be built into the planning for INSET capacity building and support.

- INSET provision of different types is necessary to support change at the level of the school and classroom. INSET provision at the level of organisation development of the schools, as well as the professional development of teachers and other staff, is needed. This requires collaboration between different service providers.
- Coordination between INSET and other service providers as well as the Ministry needs to occur to ensure that schools are developmentally supported. Coordination is required at both district and local level.
- Levels of accountability, reporting and decision making, and evaluation of INSET programmes need to happen in a continuous way.
- NCEO's (because of their flexibility and mobility) seem best placed to support school-focused INSET. However, this can only be sustained in a limited number of schools at a time. NCEO's therefore need to think strategically about expanding their influence on educational change through exchanging ideas and learnings. This could take place through Ministerial channels and educational forums, as well as through the mass media.

4.2 Relationships with Educational Ministries

- NCEO's need to find creative ways of collaborating with Ministry of Education personnel in order to provide support to schools and to ensure that their activities complement each other. Ways of working towards common goals in terms of educational change will need to be developed.
- In countries where schools in rural areas are spread over large geographical distances, the challenge in terms of providing sustained

and intensive INSET support are great. With the limited capacity of NGEO's to provide services and to raise funds in an ongoing way for their work, greater collaboration between NGEO's and Ministries is needed to ensure that INSET is spread to all schools in need of support.

- Unless INSET support is holistically conceptualised, and supported at different levels within the educational system, most INSET initiatives would have short term effect on educational change.
- A clearer policy context in terms of a broader vision for educational change, and a more stable Ministry organisational structure could provide a more stable context, within which NGEO's could strategically plan for INSET provision which is more sustainable.
- Where there is no policy in terms of INSET, NGEO's need to be proactive in terms of formulating and proposing policy around INSET, and the role of NGEO's in INSET.
- Methods must be found for NGEO's and Ministry structures to share ideas, resources, and plans in terms of INSET provision. This could include forums for coordination; joint programmes; informal meetings and the formulation of policy with regard to the relationship between NGEO's and the Ministry.
- Cooperation between Educational Ministries and NGEO's would foster a greater degree of INSET support to schools. Cooperation and coordination of activities at this level could provide an avenue for NGEO's to access State funding.
- Between NGEO's and Educational Ministries, an agreed-upon framework of building towards educational reform could provide a basis for longer

term cooperation and coordination of INSET provision. Hartshorne (1987) recommends that coordination by the State should be based on a spirit of co-operation and not an insistence on control (Hartshorne in Ashley & Mehl 1987:11).

- NGEO's need to lobby as a group for an active voice and presence in terms of Ministry policy on educational change.
- Collaborative work with Ministry officials needs to be built into NGEO project planning as this provides for an exchange of ideas and practices in relation to educational change. These strategies can also boost the resource capacity of NGEO's and the State.
- By running capacity building workshops for Ministry Officials and working in collaboration with them in providing INSET processes to schools, NGEO's could find ways of disseminating their own learnings, in relation to educational change at a Ministerial level. In this way NGEO's could play a role in capacity building at other levels of the educational system. This strategy could also support the work of NGEO's in going to scale.
- NGEO's could play a more proactive role in terms of proposing policy in terms of INSET, and the role of NGEO's in INSET provision. However, this would require NGEO's to adopt different strategies, in terms of their understanding of their role in influencing educational change.

4.3 Funding and Donor Relationships

- More creative and innovative thinking at Ministry level, in terms of creating policy and incentives for financial support of NGEO's in providing INSET to schools, could assist the long-term sustainability of NGEO's. NGEO's could be drawn into developmental partnerships with the Ministries.

- The limited resource capacity of NGEO's, as well as the financial and logistical constraints they face, make it difficult for them to go to scale with their programmes. Providing a more intensive and focused programme at fewer schools may have greater impact in terms of promoting educational change through school-focused INSET. However, strategies for dissemination of information and researching their practices will then need to be more rigorous, in order to ensure that the work of NGEO's is able to be taken to scale by other role players such as Ministries of Education.
- NGEO's need to develop funding-focussed partnerships with other NGEO's and the Ministry without compromising their independence. A more holistic conceptualisation of INSET programmes, which connects service providers and Ministries of Education, would assist funding being accessed more readily through government and donor sources.
- A number of NGEO's could form a coalition in terms of developmental programmes. This would enable them to access larger amounts of funding, for development programmes which involve a number of stakeholders and the Ministry of Education.
- NGEO's need to develop their capacity to access funding, and to account for it, in order to ensure their own sustainability. They also need to focus sufficient time and energy on fund raising activities.
- Funding needs to be channelled developmentally to NGEO's by funding partners if NGEO's are to be sustained. The short term nature of funding has major negative effects on the ability of NGEO's to plan in the long-term. Here I would support the recommendation by Taylor that "donors can best impact on the capacity of recipient organisations not through

being all things to all recipients but by taking seriously their core responsibility of providing funds developmentally" (Taylor 1997:6).

- External donors can play a developmental role in supporting the capacity building of the organisation through, ongoing support and physical participation in internal organisational processes. As external agents they can assist NGEO's in strategically thinking about questions of longer term sustainability; support for organisational capacity building; providing funds developmentally; providing open, honest and critical feedback in terms of strategic initiatives.
- In order to sustain their existence within competitive funding environments, NGEO's need to focus on building the internal capacity of their organisations, and on providing a relevant and valuable service to the community.
- NGEO's need to ensure that they are providing a quality service in the field in order to draw funding support. However this also necessitates evaluative and capacity building processes within the organisation.
- External donors who wish to fund developmentally, need to be sensitive to the timing of funding in relation to project planning, as well as the control of funding in terms of the developmental stage of the organisation
- NGEO's need to develop creative funding strategies which tap into local and international funding sources. One of these strategies could be to work in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the private sector, in accessing funding for educational change. However, in order to ensure that funding continues to be raised, to support schools which are unable to pay the NGEO directly for the services, other strategies in terms of the long term sustainability of NGEO's need to be sought.

- Although the quality of what an NGE0 delivers in the field is not the only factor involved in an NGE0 being able to access funding, this should be of paramount importance to the NGE0's ability to raise funds. Providing a quality service in the field, in turn, requires a strong organisational base and the necessary financial inputs to make these services possible.

4.4 Internal Organisational Dynamics

- Through organisation development support NGE0's can be assisted to build their own internal capacity, and ensure that their strategies in terms of educational change are appropriately conceptualised. This in turn can assist NGE0's to have a more strategic influence on educational change at different levels of the educational system. Funding and resources to support the development of NGE0's as organisations need to be factored into their INSET training budget.
- Within NGE0's there needs to be ongoing evaluation of INSET programmes in terms of what is done and how it is done, and also in terms of asking more strategic questions in relation to the type of impact it is having on achieving the aims of the programme in relation to educational change.
- More detailed fieldwork-based action research or site-based research by INSET fieldworkers could assist in obtaining valuable data, in relation to those factors which help and hinder teachers in implementing classroom based changes. Fieldworkers could also be capturing some of the changes in values and practices teachers are making.
- Leaders need to have autonomy to make decisions within the broader vision of the organisation. Not every decision needs to be brought to a collective meeting. However, autonomy in terms of decision making

needs to be seen within the context of leaders operating within the overall mandate of the project. Systems of accountability and information flow, as well as levels of decision making within the project, need to be developed. These factors could ensure that the internal capacity of NGEOS is built in a continuous way and that NGEOS are able to deliver a professional service which can influence educational change.

- Leaders need to create a balance in terms of leadership and management functions in all aspects of organisational life. Human resources and their development are in fact the powerhouse of the project. The leader needs to keep a meta level of awareness alive in the project, about what it is we are doing, how we are doing it, and why we are doing what we are doing, in terms of the changing contextual and educational realities, and their strategic aims. These leadership functions can ensure that programmes embarked on by NGEOS remain at the cutting edge of educational change, and that NGEOS as organisations develop the appropriate internal capacity to respond to these contextual needs.
- NGEOS staff members and organisations need to make time to keep abreast of the field, in terms of the educational theory and debates related to their field of work.
- In order to have an influence on educational change at the policy level, and more broadly at the level of changing the practices and values of teachers and educators, NGEOS need to focus some time on investigating their practices more deeply and making their findings visible through various channels. The Ministry, academic and NGO channels, as well as educator seminars, are some of the avenues for the publication and dissemination of findings.

- Internal strategies within NGEOS need to focus on encouraging critical reflection on working practice and recording relevant data with regard to meeting INSET aims. Externally related strategies need to be embarked upon to disseminate findings, in relation to supporting educational change.
- NGEOS involved in INSET need to have a theoretical understanding of curriculum innovation and educational change, in order to check and critique their own assumptions in relation to strategies they embark upon. Access to academics and literature focusing on the area, on a national and international level, could play a greater role in influencing strategies of NGEOS.
- NGEOS should be encouraged to open their organisations to a level of critique and growth in relation to their practice. This could be done through making time for project staff to attend conferences; encouraging staff members to pursue their studies in these areas; inviting people from the academic community to make contributions to the life of NGEOS; organising public platforms within which NGEOS can debate and reflect on their practices; and forming working partnerships with other NGEOS or universities.

5. A SUMMARY OF MAIN LEARNINGS FOR NGEOS AND THEIR ROLE IN INFLUENCING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

This dissertation set out to understand more deeply some of the factors which helped and hindered the PTP in its ability to influence educational change in Namibia. A number of factors at the micro level of the organisation, as well as at the macro level of the social and political context within which this organisation was situated, shaped the PTP's strategies to influence educational change. These words by Harding (1998) express something of the complex dynamics

within which NGEO's are operating, as they attempt to support the development of educational change:

Organisations and systems are complex and dynamically complex - its difficult for any one person to fully understand even a snapshot of one point, let alone the system in motion. Change in these systems is ever present, but does not move in straight logical lines. Rather it loops and spirals around. Openness to a turbulent environment implies both a greater scale of change and that change often invades from without. Humans are not passive cogs in a machine, but active carriers of energy and relations. This is what gives the organisation its life, but also essentially makes change management a political process rather than a technical one (Harding 1998:5).

The links between personal change and organisational change and broader systemic change must be recognised, in order to understand the process of educational change more deeply. These constantly changing dynamics will be part of the reality of any NGEO attempting to influence educational change.

Based on the experience of the PTP, the amount of influence an NGEO will have on educational change depends on its ability to understand the context within which it is operating, and to learn effectively from its experiences, in order to strategically focus its resources. This will require NGEO's to be more critical of their own practices, which are driven to do more and more rather than pausing to reflect continuously on their current strategies, and their effectiveness in promoting educational change.

NGEO's like the PTP have the ability to provide on-site support to schools and to develop their INSET practice. This flexibility and creativity provides them with the scope to meet the real need for support in classrooms and schools. The strategies they use to influence educational change within schools must be sound, and based on a theoretical and practical understanding of the complexity of educational change processes, at a personal and organisational level.

The PTP's experience has highlighted that focused on-site support and follow-up are fundamental factors in influencing educational change in schools. The type of INSET models NCEO's use needs to adapt realistically to the contextual demands. This may mean that a combination of school-based, school-focused and centre-based INSET is practised. A focus on providing support at the level of the classroom, and the school, will need coordinated support from a combination of service providers if there is to be fundamental change.

Collaborative partnerships between different stake-holders are required to provide for effective INSET support. Here NCEO's need to think creatively about working with State departments, other NCEO's and donors. Based on the PTP's experience it appears that the State could provide infrastructural support and focus more on centre-based courses, with NCEO's being best placed to provide on-site support in schools. Collaboration could also assist NCEO's with their own future sustainability in terms of accessing funding.

On-site support at schools provides NCEO workers with the opportunity to conduct research into the effectiveness of their own interventions. It also ensures that they are able to access important information with regard to educational support needs. Here NCEO's need to strategise around researching their practice and disseminating their findings. In this way, they can have a wider influence on policy and practice related to educational change, through departments of education, national ministries, academic institutions and other educational forums.

This requires that NCEO's ensure that their practice is theoretically sound, as well as continually developing. This means allocating time to research their influence on educational change in schools. At an organisational level NCEO's need to build in time to reflect critically on their own understanding of their practice and to plan strategically, in order to focus their activities on reaching their educational aims. For this, NCEO's require support in terms of their own

internal capacity building. Organisation development processes can assist NNGEO's in building their own capacity, in order to support their effectiveness in terms of internal and external strategies to support educational change.

Finally, at a macro level Ministries of Education in collaboration with other stakeholders need to set INSET policy which supports INSET practice in schools. Collaborative strategies for raising funds to support INSET provision will enable NNGEO's to sustain their work. Policy and structures to foster collaboration between service providers and the State, in providing appropriate INSET support, needs to be developed at a National and district level in order to support the role of NNGEO's in influencing educational change.

6. STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH FOR THE ROLE OF NNGEO'S IN EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

This dissertation grew out of a need to reflect on my past practice as an INSET provider within an NNGEO, and to understand some of the assumptions, in terms of educational change, which influenced my practice. I also wanted to understand those factors which helped and hindered the PTP's influence on educational change in Namibia in particular, and thus the influence which NNGEO's can have on educational change in general.

Another motivating factor was that very little research has been done on the type and extent of influence NNGEO's, have on educational change. In writing this dissertation I aimed to contribute to this field by drawing out some of the central learnings for educationists and NNGEO practitioners who are concerned with issues related to INSET, innovation and educational change.

6.1 Limitations and Constraints

The scope of this research is limited to the role of NNGEO's and specifically NNGEO's seeking to promote educational change through school-focused INSET in primary schools. For NNGEO's seeking to influence educational change through

other strategies, this research may be of limited value. This research has focused on a single case study of an NCEO over a four-year period. A multiple case study may have added to the validity of this research. However, this case study has provided an insight into the role of an NCEO influencing educational change in Namibia, which can form the basis of further research work. As such "the quality and utility of this research is not based on its reproducibility but on whether or not the meanings generated, by the researcher or the reader, are valued" (Stake 1995:135).

Although a great deal of writing and research has been done in the field of educational change, very little that has been written on the role of NCEO's in promoting educational change. Literature in relation to my field of research was thus difficult to obtain. Literature sources not directly linked to INSET and educational change had to be consulted, in order to assist with the reflection of issues internal to the functioning of the PTP.

Methodologically, this dissertation has a number of limitations. Although the historical narrative was cross-checked with my ex-colleagues, the topical reflections on the PTP were neither read by them nor discussed with them. I feel that this would have brought in a deeper level of analysis and reflection on issues. It may also have resulted in this research influencing the PTP's own future strategic thinking. I initially hoped to open my research findings to the PTP staff on an organisational level, but this is not possible, as the organisation has closed.

I was not able to interview all staff who worked in the PTP between 1990 and 1992 as some staff members had left the country or were not available at the time I was gathering data. This may have limited the number of ideas and opinions raised in my reflection and analysis of issues. In retrospect, I feel that I should have conducted interviews with staff members at the Ministry of Education in order to verify my own assumptions about their perceptions of

NGEO's. Identifying those factors which helped and hindered the PTP's influence on educational change was a complex process of analysis, as within any educational change process a multitude of factors influenced each other. The scope of this dissertation limits the number of aspects in relation to the the PTP's ability to influence educational change. While there was an attempt to identify the relationships between these different aspects in relation to educational change, it is inevitable that other factors would have been excluded, due to the complexity of factors influencing any change process. The debate between the State and organs of civil society was one I did not engage in at any depth in terms of the literature related to this issue, although I am aware that this could have highlighted important issues in relation to cooperative relationships or partnership at this level.

6.2 Strengths

This research has documented a case study of a Namibian NNGEO, focusing both on its internal growth and development, and on the INSET work it did in schools. As the project no longer exists, this is at least a record which could provide the basis for further reflection and research. This research has highlighted a number of factors which help and hinder the ability of NNGEO's to influence educational change, which provide learnings for other NNGEO's doing similar work.

On a methodological level I have attempted to remain aware of my own subjectivity in writing the narrative history of the PTP and in my reflection and analysis of issues. Through various triangulation measures I have attempted to build the validity of the data presented and its analysis. I have drawn on primary data sources in the form of various project documents and conducted interviews with ex-colleagues. The narrative history of the PTP was cross-checked with colleagues. I have also located myself contextually within the research study. In my reflection and analysis of issues I have drawn on project data, as well as reflected on issues in relation to national and international literature. In my research and in the writing of this dissertation I have respected the

confidentiality of my ex-colleagues by negotiating issues of confidentiality with them, and in changing the name of the project and individuals involved.

6.3 Potential Significance of this Research

The body of research on NGEOS and their role in educational change is limited. This research on the PTP makes a contribution to this field, in that it provides some insight into the internal strategies and assumptions this NGEOS made, in its attempt to influence educational change. Where it provides a different focus to other research on NGEOS, is in its attempt to raise issues internal to the functioning of an NGEOS, and how these factors affected its ability to influence educational change.

This research may benefit people in Ministries of Education and donors seeking to work in partnership with NGEOS in providing INSET support to schools. NGEOS with which I am in current contact, are experiencing similar difficulties to those experienced by the PTP, as they attempt to influence educational change in South Africa. The issues raised in the PTP case study will be of value to these NGEOS, as well as other NGEOS providing INSET in the Southern African context. This provides opportunities for me to share some of my research findings.

It has also helped to raise issues in relation to the functioning of the PTP. I hope to share these with some of my ex-colleagues who are currently involved in education and development work in Namibia, in the hope of deepening their own reflection on the role of NGEOS in educational change. On a personal level, this research has broadened my own understanding of my practice in the field of INSET and educational change. I will draw on this research to inform my current practice, and better define the strategies in relation to educational change and INSET provision on which the NGEOS I am currently working in embarks.

7. CONCLUSION

A number of factors, both internal and external, to the functioning of NGEO's providing an INSET service to schools, influence their ability to make an effective contribution towards educational change. The educational policy context; conditions in school; the INSET model; funding for INSET and the internal functioning of NGEO's are only a few.

The case study of the PTP has highlighted the need for NGEO's to have an understanding of the complexity of change processes, in order to plan strategically as to how to influence educational change. The importance of building the organisational capacity of the NGEO through organisational development processes is a key factor, in supporting NGEO's to reflect critically on their own strategies to influence educational change. This affects their organisational capacity to innovate and expand. The PTP's experience has highlighted the importance of research and reflection on INSET practice, in order to inform the development of INSET models and strategies in relation to educational change.

The rapid expansion of INSET activities to schools, without a clear strategy informed by an understanding of educational change, limited the PTP's ability to provide sustainable INSET support in schools. This, coupled with a lack of follow-up support, raises questions as to the influence the PTP's work in schools had on educational change at the classroom and school level.

The curriculum-based INSET work on which the PTP focused, needed to be complemented by work at other levels of the school system and broader educational system, in order to support the changes teachers wanted to make in their classrooms.

The PTP's experience has highlighted the importance of NGEO's creating opportunities within their organisation's, between NGEO's, with the Ministry and

at other levels, to critically reflect on their INSET practices and their contribution towards educational change. The need for NGEO's to research and disseminate their understanding of their practice therefore becomes critical. It also provides another strategy, enabling NGEO's to expand their level of influence in relation to educational change beyond schools to service providers. This would also provide NGEO's with opportunities to influence educational policy.

Although the PTP acknowledged the need to work in a collaborative partnership with the Ministry, and with other NGEO's, in order to support its INSET work in schools, this was not strategically conceptualised in terms of providing holistic support to schools, or in terms of accessing future funding. Collaborative partnership between the State, NGEO's and other stakeholders is acknowledged as an important factor in supporting educational change. The need for collaboration and coordination of INSET activities becomes even greater in relation to schools in rural areas, as sustained follow-up support is costly. The nature of these partnerships needs to be developmentally conceptualised in order to ensure appropriate support to schools. This requires enabling INSET policy, as well as a commitment from the various role players to work developmentally with each other.

The lack of a clear policy context in terms of INSET provision, as well as a future vision for educational change in Namibia, coupled with organisational changes within the Ministry, made it difficult for PTP to plan strategically and to form more developmental relationships with the Ministry in relation to INSET support in schools. The need for an enabling policy context with regard to INSET is an important aspect, supporting the ability of an NGEO to influence educational change.

A multitude of factors impact on the ability of NGEO's like the PTP, to influence change at classroom level. For NGEO's providing school-focused INSET, the challenge is to ensure that teachers are supported with the implementation of

new learnings after courses or classroom visits. A number of factors within the classroom and beyond, and even the teacher's personality, could affect implementation. It is therefore necessary for NGEO's to think strategically in relation to influencing educational change, and to work creatively and appropriately, with the human and physical resources that are available to them.

Southern African NGEO's have been acknowledged as making a valuable contribution towards educational change. The challenge for NGEO's is to remain at the cutting edge of these developments as they move into the new millennium. This demands that they reflect critically on their strategies to bring about change, and to deepen their understanding of the complexity of educational change processes. I conclude with these words by van den Berg (1983):

People involved in the design and implementation of INSET follow some or other change strategy; the only difference is whether they do this consciously or unreflectively. Where INSET activity occurs on the basis of take-it-for-granted assumptions, the risk of failure and disillusionment - and therefore of the wastage of valuable resources - is often great (van den Berg cited in Gray 1990:166).

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* In my reference to project documents and interviews I have used fictitious names for my colleagues to ensure confidentiality. I have used my own surname Collett, as well as my previous surname Von Wiese to identify information sources for which I am responsible.

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INTERVIEWS:

Project Colleagues:

Ella,	Windhoek:	July 1996
Ella,	Windhoek:	March 1997
Kandi	Windhoek:	July 1996
Lindiwe,	Windhoek:	July 1996

Management Board Members:

Kandi,	Windhoek:	July 1996
Kandi,	Windhoek:	April 1997
Nano,	Windhoek:	July 1996
Nano,	Windhoek:	March 1997

NGEO Director:

Jack, Windhoek:	April 1997
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APPENDICES

- A. Structured Interview Questions with PTP Education Coordinators.
- B. Unstructured Interview Focus Areas with PTP Education Coordinators.
- C. Structured Interview Questions with PTP Project Coordinator who took over Leadership in the PTP after 1992.
- D. Structured Interview Questions used in an Interview with an NCEO Project Leader in Namibia.
- E. Unstructured Interview Focus Areas with Members of the Management Board.



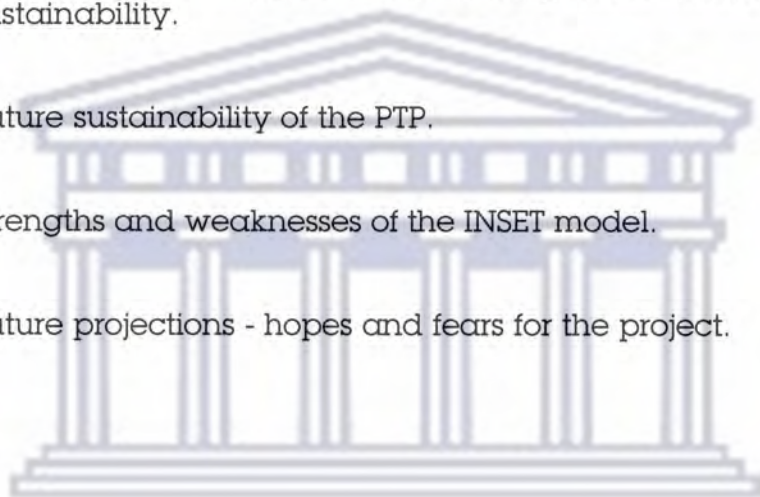
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Structured Interview Questions with PTP Education Coordinators.

1. Describe how you worked in school in order to promote educational change.
2. What was the content of your workshops? What were the specific educational aims of your workshops?
3. Do you think the work you did made a difference?
4. How would you know if you did or did not have an impact?
5. How was development sustained? Was there follow up?
6. Did you have indicators of success?
7. Can you recall any peer assessment or other assessment of your performance or the quality of your workshop material?
8. What do you recall about our relationship with the Ministry Education? What was positive and what was negative?
9. Was any policy in place regarding INSET in school or coordination with NGEOS and the Ministry?
10. What were the strengths of the PTP's relationship with the Ministry and what were some of the weaknesses?
11. What do you feel my strengths and weaknesses were as a project leader in building the project's ability to influence educational change?
12. What do you like and dislike about your job as a worker within an NGEOS?

Unstructured Interview Focus Areas with PTP Education Coordinators.

- A. Present state of the project.
- B. Perceived strengths and weaknesses in terms of the internal functioning of the PTP.
- C. PTP's relationship with the Ministry of Education
- D. Relationships with funders, and funding issues in relation to the PTP's sustainability.
- E. Future sustainability of the PTP.
- F. Strengths and weaknesses of the INSET model.
- G. Future projections - hopes and fears for the project.



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Structured Interview Questions with PTP Project Coordinator who took over Leadership in the PTP after 1992.

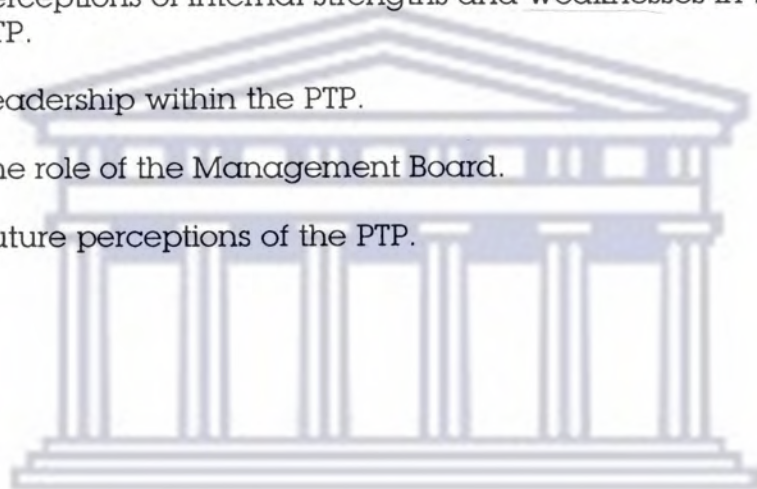
1. What is the present status of the project?
2. What do you feel have been some of the reasons for the present state that the project finds itself in?
3. What is your present relationship with the Ministry?
4. Are you aware of any policy guidelines by the Ministry for working relationships with NGEO's?
5. Is there a forum where NGEO's network and share resources?
6. Describe the way in which you do your INSET fieldwork?
7. What did you do about sustainability of the work you did in the field?
8. Did you have any criteria to evaluate if you had been successful or not?
9. What do you remember as some of the strengths of the project in its first three years?
10. What do you remember as some of the weaknesses of the project during this time?
11. What have you liked about your job in leading the PTP?
12. What have you disliked? Describe some of the challenges.
13. What do you feel my strengths and weaknesses were while leading the PTP?

Structured Interview Questions used in an Interview with an NGE0 Project Leader in Namibia.

1. Is there a clear Ministerial policy in place (in terms of INSET) in schools, that is both curriculum-based and focused on school development?
2. In 1990 Nahas Angula recognised the role of NGE0's in educational change. What was done by the Ministry to assist NGE0's?
3. What factors within schools and within the Ministry made it difficult for NGE0's to operate?
4. Is there policy in terms of NGE0, cooperation with the Ministry of Education and in terms of NGE0's working in schools?
5. Describe your model of INSET provision?
6. How do you sustain your work in distant and outlying areas?
7. How do you know if you are having an influence on educational change?
8. Is there an NGE0 forum? Do NGE0's collaborate to form partnerships and share resources?
9. Have you experienced difficulties in terms of getting skilled people to work on a project.?
10. What are some of the organisational strengths you have in being able to influence educational change in Namibia?

Unstructured Interview Focus Areas with Members of the Management Board

- A. General perceptions of the PTP's successes and failures in achieving its educational aims.
- B. Funding and relationships with donors.
- C. The PTP's relationship with the Ministry of Education.
- D. Future sustainability of the PTP.
- E. Perceptions of internal strengths and weaknesses in the functioning of the PTP.
- F. Leadership within the PTP.
- G. The role of the Management Board.
- H. Future perceptions of the PTP.



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