

THE MOTIVATION FOR, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF EDUCATION
MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRES (EMDCs) IN THE
WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

By

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ABSTRACT

The motivation for, and establishment of Education Management and Development Centres in Western Cape, South Africa.

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In this minithesis I explore the reasons for the establishment of Education Management and Development Centres (EMDCs) in the Western Cape, South Africa. I explore the problems experienced in the service delivery model of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) since 1995-2000 and look at what improvements EMDCs are supposed to make. The main problems the WCED experienced until 2000 with regards to effective service delivery include the overlapping and confusion of roles, complicated line functions, conflict between departments, frustration and doubling up of workload, low morale, hierarchical and inflexible bureaucracy, undermined and restricted independence of schools, expensive and complex system and gender-skewed senior management appointments. After the first democratic election the National Department of Education developed many new policies and laws to reform the education system. Dramatic development in national policy changes and new laws, such as the South African schools Act, Outcome-based education and National norms and standards for school funding demanded significant changes in all provinces in South Africa and the WCED is no exception. These changes as well as internal pressure within the WCED have been highly influential in the decision to change the service delivery model in mid-1998. The main changes brought about in the WCED since 2000 with regards to structures include the replacement of the inefficient hierarchical model with a process matrix that aims to provide better multifunctional service delivery. The development of a more flexible bureaucracy, and the reduction in the duplication of services were significant changes to the former education system. Racial boundaries have been removed with the establishment of the seven EMDCs in the Western Cape. With regards to communication, extensive in-service training programmes have been arranged at Head Office, EMDC and school level to enhance professional and administrative capacities. Multidisciplinary teams have been established at EMDC level to provide assistance with management support and training. With regards to ethos, the WCED has organised many capacity building programmes to assist teachers with problems they experience in school. These programmes include the Safer School Project that provides training programmes to assist teachers to deal creatively and productively with conflict in schools, the ELSEN project that assists teachers to deal with children with reading disabilities and the Workplace Skill Plan to train governing body members to deal with their responsibilities. Some of the main constraints facing EMDCs are the inadequate provision of human, physical, financial resources, poor transportation, lack of facilities and poor administration. Other problems that EMDCs may encounter are the suspicion and confusion of roles within multifunctional teams. Multidisciplinary teams will be potential sites for deep-rooted problems because of their s multi-racial backgrounds. Until a productive culture is firmly entrenched, multifunctional team members might be subject to internal confusion and strife. Some international experience can play an important role in informing the developmental process in the WCED and EMDCs. Some of the important lessons EMDCs could learn from international experiences are to take cognisance of the fact that different intervention strategies are needed for different schools because sometimes schools are at different levels of development. Successful decentralisation must underpin realistic timeframes. Decentralisation leads to a decrease in state funding and an increase in accountability and community involvement. This may lead to a more market driven and managerial schooling system that could stimulate competition among schools. Broad-based consultation is also an important prerequisite for successful development. In the light of existing constraints it would be beneficial for EMDCs to consider some modifications in order to deliver more effective services to schools. Clearly define roles will prevent conflict and reduce distrust among colleagues. So, further modification with regards to policy is needed. Effective use of resources needs further investigation. Agreed upon procedures on the use of resources must be spelt out more clearly so that better teamwork be establish. More flexible use of time for in-service training should be worked out. Gender equity and redress requires much more consideration in the restructured WCED. More effective ways of sharing information should be explored.

September 2003

DECLARATION

I declare that *The motivation for, and establishment of EMDCs in the Western Cape, South Africa* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Signed



Date: 01.03.2004..

Cecil Joseph Beukes

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List of acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
CDRA	Community Development Resource Association
CMT	Change Management Team
CPRE	Consortium for Policy Research in Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EDULIS	Education Library and Information Service
EMDCs	Education Management and Development Centres
ERS	Education Renewal Strategy
HOD	Head of Department
IMTEC	International Movement for Transformation and the Educational Change Foundation
INSET	In-service Education and Training
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NORAD	Norwegian Aid Organisation
OBE	Outcomes-based Education
OD	Organisational Development
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
SASA	South African Schools Act, SASA No. 84 of 1996
SBM	School-Based Management
SEED	Systemic Enhancement for Education Development
SGB	School Governing Bodies
STEDS	Systemic Transformation for Educational Development and Support
TIP	Teachers In-service Project
TTA	Teachers Training Agency
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

Introduction

The aim of this minithesis is to investigate the motivation for the proposed Education Management Development Centres (EMDCs). Furthermore, it will address what improvements to the current system EMDCs are supposed to make and how EMDCs hope to enhance collaboration between the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and local schools. I shall look at the role of the proposed EMDCs and specifically focus on how they hope to promote better inter-sectoral support between the WCED and local schools.

Since 1995 the South African education system has been through many changes in an attempt to democratise the education system. In spite of the many changes not much has actually been accomplished at school level. In 1995 a process of decentralisation was initiated by the WCED to allow communities to take ownership of their schools. I shall argue that the establishment of the EMDCs was an indication that the WCED was not completely satisfied with its service delivery. The WCED recognised the uneven distribution of resources and dysfunctional schools in its system. In response to the changing of National and Provincial Education Policy Frameworks, the WCED had to address the issue of transformation both within the education department as well as with its links with schools. This meant that structures had to be put in place to facilitate better communication and service delivery between local schools and the WCED.

My reason for undertaking this research project is to develop a coherent, informed discussion on the WCED's motives for the establishment of EMDCs. Through such a discussion possible areas for further research and perhaps policy modification can be highlighted. My research project also investigates what improvement to the current system EMDCs are supposed to make. My point of departure will be to look at the conditions and problems that formed the origin of the EMDCs and to give an historical overview of the motivation behind the establishment of the EMDCs. Drawing on Langan (2000:1), I shall investigate the claim that EMDCs are aimed at "developing a bureaucracy that is responsive to the need of its schools, which is fluid and creative and which both recognises and supports schools as the locus of educational change". This statement implies that something must have been wrong with the education service delivery within the WCED.

Also the new bureaucratic system is aimed at assisting schools to manage their own processes of change effectively and ultimately helping schools to become learning organisations. EMDCs will be established to provide hopefully the kind of integrated, holistic and competent management and support that will enable schools to function as learning organisations based on democratic principles. To provide integrated, holistic and competent management in schools, EMDCs will establish multi-disciplinary teams that will aim to work more closely with schools and provide professional assistance to help schools attain good management. Sayed (1997:25) understands democratisation of education as entailing a “broadening of participation in education in educational decision-making”. This is precisely what EMDCs hope to achieve through a school-based management approach.

Centralisation and decentralisation are key concepts that I shall use in my discussion on how they can be used in the democratic developmental process of EMDCs. I shall discuss these two concepts in detail and show how they can coexist to enhance better collaboration between local schools and the WCED. The ideal is that schools should mandate what types of service are needed and, if there is consensus between Head Office and local schools, things might indeed happen. It is important that scope should be allowed for learning organisations to initiate their own developmental programmes in their local communities. Hargreaves and Evans (1997:13) put it this way: “It is time for reformers to reconnect with the profession of teaching and with the expertise of educational research, by working with teachers to build strong professional cultures of shared learning, joint work and collaborative commitment”. Reformers, according Hargreaves and Evans, should work collaboratively with schools and give students, parents and teachers responsibility over their own affairs, to the point of enabling them to administer the education system on their own within their communities. Schools should be given more freedom to build capacity among teachers, students and parents in order to develop and strengthen their own communities. This approach is supported by the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS), as noted by Sayed (1997:26): “While the state will divest itself of sole responsibility for education provision, it will determine policy on norms and standards in respect of various crucial matters”.

I shall indicate who all the proposed role players will be in the EMDCs and what the WCED hopes to accomplish with the new EMDCs. I shall be mindful of Davidoff and Kaplan's (1998:10) argument that "for significant educational reconstruction and development to occur, teachers need to own the process of change." This means that the WCED will have to recognise teachers as the key role-players who can make a meaningful contribution to the reconstruction, which should ultimately benefit the learner. Through the new service delivery EMDCs hope to create and sustain efficient and effective learning at local schools. I shall look at the new service delivery from the perspective of centralisation and decentralisation.

I shall investigate what the policy is in terms of the proposed structure, management and processes of EMDCs. My research will be based on EMDCs in the Western Cape. It will focus on the establishment of the EMDCs in this area and how their new role is intended to enhance greater collaboration between them and local schools. New interim structures were proposed to replace the existing ones in an attempt to establish better working relationships. These structures were called the Systemic Transformation for Educational Development and Support (STEDS) and were being developed towards the establishment of the EMDCs.

My main research question deals with the WCED's motive for the establishment of the proposed EMDCs. Other subsidiary questions include:

1. Why is there a perceived need for restructuring the education support system in the WCED?
2. What process of change for EMDCs was initiated? When? Where? By whom?
3. What is the current and envisaged relationship between the WCED and local schools?
4. How do the EMDCs hope to provide better inter-sectoral support to local schools?
5. What are possible constraints and problem areas for EMDCs?

I shall make use of structured interviews for part of my investigation. I hope that these interviews will highlight the possible constraints and problem areas within the EMDCs. I shall draw on the perceptions of the Mitchell's Plain area STEDS Steering Committee

meeting that was held in February 2000 and the prevailing perceptions and concerns of the members regarding the STEDS project. I also hope to find out what role each departmental official will play in the proposed EMDCs. I shall also interview the area manager, circuit manager, a subject adviser and a school principal, who will include both male and female respondents. My reason for this selection is to eliminate any gender bias that may occur and to develop a relatively broad perspective with regard to levels of administration.

I shall also examine policy documents that are available at the Department of Education to see what current policy is with regards to the responsibilities of the EMDCs. I shall do a literature study on the inter-sectoral support systems and shall draw on Fullan (1993), who argues that “change is a journey, not a blueprint” and that we should embrace change rather than avoid it. This indicates that change is not something that can be achieved overnight and be expected to succeed. People’s willingness to learn might give a certain indication of a willingness to change. Fullan also suggests that we should accept problems as challenges rather than as burdens and should not look for instant results. I hope to gain a better understanding of how to conceptualise the motivation for change in the WCED and how changing the education system might enhance educational change in the school communities. I am aware of the challenges of change and the anxiety this process might place on departmental officials and school principals. I shall handle all information with extreme confidentiality and ensure anonymity in my writing as far as possible.

I have been granted observer status in the meetings of departmental officials in Mitchell’s Plain who have consented for me to report on their views. This status will allow me to include such observation in my research methodology. My observation will help me to develop supplementary access to the way in which participants interpret the policy, proposed processes, structures, aims and role of the EMDCs.

In Chapter One I shall give a brief historical overview of the 1995-2000 structures within the WCED and its service delivery to local schools. I shall also highlight the problems and restrictions with regard to these structures within the WCED and the WCED’s links with schools. I shall then outline the process of initiating change based on the general national

policy and provincial policy. This chapter attempts to answer the question of why there was a perceived need for restructuring the education support system in the WCED.

In Chapter Two I shall discuss what EMDCs are, their aims, structures and processes. I shall also discuss the evolution of the EMDCs and how policy developed. This chapter deals with the process of change and who initiated it, and when and where it was initiated. I shall discuss how EMDCs hope to address the problematic legacy of the previous dispensation. It will also indicate how the EMDCs hope to provide better inter-sectoral support to local schools. I shall tentatively sketch some of the problems the EMDCs could encounter. Here I shall make use of interviews with EMDC staff and literature on similar restructuring. This chapter will highlight some of the possible constraints and problem areas for EMDCs.

Chapter Three looks at the EMDC policy as a response to problems in WCED structures and service delivery. I shall discuss the problems the WCED is experiencing in its structures, communication and ethos and shall look at the proposed EMDCs' responses to these.

Chapter Four looks at possible obstacles and problems pertaining to effective service delivery by EMDCs to schools. I shall investigate problems, constraints and ambiguities encountered by similar educational centres nationally and internationally. I shall also look at the prevailing concerns, gaps, weaknesses and tensions that exist within EMDCs

In Chapter Five I shall look at possible modifications to EMDC policies and areas for further research. I shall focus specifically on the structures, communications, and implementation processes.

CHAPTER 1

WCED structure and service delivery until 2000

This chapter deals mainly with the problems that existed within the previous WCED in terms of its former structures, communication and ethos in relation to local schools. In this chapter I give an outline of the structures of and service delivery from the WCED Head Office before the establishment of EMDCs. This will constitute a historical overview of the WCED since 1995. This chapter will attempt to answer the question of why a perceived need existed to restructure the education system within the WCED.

1. Structures within the WCED Head Office: 1995- 2000

Educational reform in South Africa has gone through many turbulent years since 1995, which brought significant changes to the structures and processes of public schooling. With the dawn of the new democratic dispensation, a new National Department of Education was formed in 1995 with the unification of the seventeen former Departments of Education. In the new dispensation, nine provincial education departments and one unified national department of education were established. A single Department of Education within the Western Cape has since been structured into five different departments with an overall Superintendent General, who heads the WCED. Two Deputy Directors General assist the Superintendent General. Five Directors assist these two Deputy Directors General. These five Directors each head a department and are accountable to the two Deputy Directors General. The organogram (see Appendix A) provides the structure of the WCED's Head Office between 1995 and 2000.

1.1 Professional Auxiliary Services

The Departments of Physical Resource Planning, Special Education Needs, Para-Educational Services and the Media Services are all accountable to the Chief Director of Professional Auxiliary Services.

1.2 Administrative Services

The Departments of Labour Relations, Personnel Administration, Examination and

Education Administration report to the Chief Director Administration Services.

1.3 Education Development and Support Services

The Departments of Non-School and Community Education and Curriculum Management are accountable to the Chief Director of Education and Support Services. The above-mentioned three Chief Directors are accountable to the one Deputy Director General.

1.3.1 Non-School and Community Education

The Non-School and Community Education department facilitates a programme called the Safer Schools Project. This project aims to create safety and stability in local schools by training teachers in a certification course in conflict resolution and mediation. At the end of the course, participants must conduct workshops at their local schools and communities and also form support groups in their local communities. Funds are made available by the WCED through the Safer Schools Projects to create safety awareness at schools and to empower parents in the community to take ownership of school buildings and gardens.

1.3.2 Curriculum Management

The Chief Curriculum Adviser is at the head of this department. The Curriculum Management Department is made up of different Curriculum Advisers according to the learning areas in learning sites. Learning areas include: Languages, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Arts and Culture, Biblical Studies, Life Orientation, Economic and Management Sciences. Curriculum Advisers are responsible for the support and co-ordination of functions pertaining to Curriculum Development, material resources and support to local schools or learning sites.

1.4 Professional Staffing Services

There are nine Area Offices within the Western Cape. At the head of each Area Office is an Area Manager, who is accountable to the Director of Professional Staffing Services. The Director of Professional Staffing Services, in turn, is accountable to the Chief Director of Education Provision.

1.4.1 Area Offices

The most direct link of service delivery between the WCED and local schools are the Area Offices. The Area Offices work more closely with local schools. The primary function of the Area Office is to provide specific education services such as:

- Education Guidance Services;
- Personnel services and Financial Administration;
- Education Administration.

At the head of the Area Office is the Area Manager. Three assistant directors who each represent a specific division within the Area Offices assist the Area Manager.

1.5 Finance

The Department of Budget Administration and the Department of Financial Administration are accountable to the Chief Director of Finance. The last two Chief Directors are accountable to the other Deputy Director General. The two Deputy Directors General are accountable to the Superintendent General, who is also at the head of the WCED.

2. Departments within WCED Head Office that are linked directly with local schools

Of the above, the two main departments that have the most direct links with schools are the Department of Education Development and Support Services and the Department of Professional Staffing Services. These two departments provide the following services:

2.1 Personnel Service and Financial Administration

This division is divided into two sub-divisions, namely Personnel Services and Financial Administration. Personnel Services are responsible for personnel provisioning and service conditions like leave application, while the Financial Administration is responsible for salaries, budgets and account services. The Personnel and Finance division only serve schools that were members of the former House of Representatives (Coloured schools). Their work includes organising housing subsidy, furlough and general provisioning.

2.2 Education Guidance Service

The Circuit Manager, who works under the Area Manager, plays a leading role in the Education Guidance Service. The job of the Circuit Manager is to support and assist with the development of effective, self-sustaining management of schools that provide quality education and that satisfy the requirement of national and provincial education. Circuit Managers are responsible for the management and development of learning sites in their districts. They must establish effective communication between schools within their districts and see that the vision of WCED is clearly followed. They work in close collaboration with the Labour Relations Council in solving job disputes. The Circuit Manager reports to the Area Manager.

2.3 Education Administration

The Education Administration division is divided into three sub-divisions, namely: Provisioning Administration, Institution and Student Administration, and Office Services.

2.3.1 Provisioning Administration

The Provision Administration provides maintenance of school buildings and grounds, sanitation, bus services, etc. One of the main functions of the Provisioning Administration department is to serve Article 20 schools. The school services in the Western Cape are divided into two types of schools, namely Article 20 and Article 21 schools. The WCED is responsible for financial assistance to both Article 20 and 21 schools, while Area Offices attend specifically to Article 20 schools. The Provisioning Administration at the Area Office assists Article 20 schools with their budgets. Although Article 21 schools are financed by the WCED, they are granted permission by the Head of Department (HOD) to fulfil certain functions in terms of the South African Schools Act (SASA) (Republic of South Africa Government Gazette 1996:16) such as:

- Maintenance and improvements of school's property, building and grounds;
- Determining the extra-mural curriculum of the schools and the choice of subject option in terms of provincial curriculum policy;
- Purchase of textbooks, education material or equipment for the school;
- Payment of services for the school; and
- Other functions consistent with this Act and any applicable provincial law.

The Provision Administration department of the WCED administers the budget of Article 20 schools. The Provisioning Administration department at the Area Office is responsible for the physical ordering, and delivery of all textbooks and the payments of all other accounts. The School Management Team at the Area Office works directly with Article 20 schools. Members of the School Management Team visit these schools on a regular basis to assist them with institutional development that will make them eligible for Article 21 status. When schools have sufficient capacity to perform the functions of Article 21 schools, the school governing body (SGB) may submit an application to the Head of Department (HOD) for Article 21 status. The primary function of the School Management Team is to assist with the day-to-day running of the school, and to develop schools to acquire Article 21 status. This status will give schools the authority to manage their own financial affairs and be more autonomous with regards to management. Schools can apply for Article 21 status by completing a questionnaire provided by the WCED. The School Management Team then visits the school to see if it has the necessary systems in place to comply with the requirements for Article 21 status. The principals and deputy principals of schools are the direct link between local schools and the WCED. The principal or his/her deputy communicates with the Provisioning Administration in the area office in terms of the annual allocation.

The annual resources allocated to schools include: textbooks, prescribed books, modules, worksheets, maps and library books. The recommended amount that the WCED allocates per learner is R100,00. Other resources that are also provided are stationery, textbooks, learning material, furniture, cleaning materials, garden equipment, toiletries, labour-saving devices typewriters, computers, photocopiers and consumable items (for Woodwork, Home Economics, Biology).

2.3.2 Institutional and Student Administration

This department is sub-divided into two divisions, namely Institutional Administration and Student Administration. The institutional administration component provides logistical support with administrative functions. Student Administration is responsible for the subsidies of learners at primary and pre- primary level.

2.3.3 Office Services

The Office Services are responsible for assisting with telecommunication and transport services, photocopying services, typing services, registry services and security services.

3. The problems and restrictions with regard to structures within the WCED between 1995- 2000

The above-mentioned departments represent a very complex bureaucratic system. The legacy of the past has left a very uneven distribution of resources. There are still many dysfunctional schools in the WCED that need attention. The elements of distrust, dependence and rejection that were generated by the former **racially-based** education system will require careful change management. The idea that “We don’t need Departmental officials in our schools” will have to be replaced with a spirit of collaboration. Because of its inherited fragmented structures, the WCED experienced a lack of shared vision. Many departments within the WCED worked in isolation and there was a lack of coherence among departments. A need existed to bring these services together in a more holistic approach. Another challenge that needed consideration was how to transfer ownership and responsibility to schools, in keeping with a general thrust towards democratic structures and processes.

In an unpublished document, Langan (2000:1) noted that the WCED Head Office wanted to decentralise some administrative services to move them closer to schools. New policy developments such as the South African Schools Act and Curriculum 2005 had the intention to devolve some services closer to schools, so that they could be dealt with at school level. On the issue of how to empower schools, the WCED felt that school-based management (SBM) would best serve the empowerment issue. SBM would promote closer collaboration between the WCED and schools. The South African Schools Act (SASA) (Act 84 of 1996) promotes the idea of SBM by empowering schools to determine their own future in certain areas. It makes provision for devolving many functions to school level together with the necessary power to become more autonomous. This demands greater participation in the policy and decision-making process of the school from staff and parents. A more detailed discussion of the problems that existed in the WCED before 2001 follows

below.

3.1 Overlap and confusion of roles

A lack of a clear job description may lead to confusion of roles. Research done by Robinson et al. (2002:42) also confirms that “potential problems can arise when people work collaboratively, specifically as a consequence of lack of understanding about roles”. In terms of the work provision there was a great degree of overlap between the different departments within the pre-2001 WCED. According to an interview conducted at Head Office in 2001 the interviewee said that many times this led to misunderstanding and disrespect between individuals in different departments. Confusion of roles between departmental officials sometimes resulted in duplication or delays in services. Different departments worked in isolation and reported to different directors at the WCED Head Office. Overlapping may impact negatively on resources such as time, money and personnel. This in turn may result in high expenditure and frustration of clients.

3.2 Complicated line functions

The complicated line functions within the WCED resulted in a slow response to the needs of schools. During the winter of 1997 a school situated in a former disadvantaged area was vandalised. The matter was reported to the relevant authorities at the police station and Area Office. Classes in the pre-fab buildings were deprived of electricity and water and all windows were broken. Teaching became unbearable in those classes. Two weeks later a contractor was sent to assess the damage. It took the WCED almost 2 months to take a decision on those classes. Meanwhile, the principal made regular enquiries about the building, which had become a danger to the children. He was sent from one department to the other. Eventually it was decided to remove the pre-fab building because it would be too expensive to repair the affected classes. In the meantime teachers had to occupy any available space in the main building, including the staff room and hall. Six months later, after a serious crime was committed in those dilapidated buildings, some members of the community eventually broke them down.

3.3 Conflict between departments

Conflict between Head Office and Area Office sometimes influenced service delivery to schools negatively. Based on interviews conducted at Area Office and observations at meetings with departmental officers I noted conflict between Head Office personnel and Area Office personnel. It appears that there was tension between Circuit managers and Curriculum Advisers in terms of working together. This was especially notable in a workshop I attended at the Cape Town Teachers Centre, where a heated debate broke out between circuit managers, subject advisors and office administration pertaining to workloads and the importance of the job.

3.4 Frustration and doubling up of workload

Frustration about workloads sometimes occurred when one Area Office had to serve other areas outside its boundaries where a particular service did not exist.

In an interview conducted at one of the Area Offices in July 2000, one of the administration personnel unloaded his frustration about Head Office personnel. He said that Head Office personnel did not do the amount of work done by Area Office personnel. So, for example, one Area Office administers the bus services in another area. In a discussion document called WCED Organisational Design, (Kraft, 1998:4) it is suggested that “information systems that support effective planning, correspondence, data retrieval and issue resolution as well as instructional support among all education units” be developed and distributed. This will reduce workloads substantially and allow easy access to Head Office services, especially for rural areas.

3.5 Low morale

A lack of professionalism can hinder the efficient functioning of the administrative system. This in turn may affect the morale and performance of personnel. Timely and useable data can greatly enhance the performance and morale of all personnel. Often Area Office workers are under a great deal of pressure from school principals if the needs of their schools are not being seeing to.

3.6 Hierarchical and inflexible bureaucracy

A hierarchical and bureaucratic system is not in itself negative. However, when it results in inefficient service provision, then it becomes negative. In an interview conducted in 2001 at Head Office with one of the STEDS task team co-ordinators, the interviewee said that the WCED functioned in a rigidly hierarchical, centralised and inflexible bureaucratic way, geared towards control. He said it was because of this inefficient hierarchy and bureaucracy that the WCED embarked on restructuring. The WCED Head Office organogram of 1995 reflects a highly hierarchical structure that was too extensive and complex to interact at all levels (see Appendix A). The challenge was to flatten the inefficient hierarchical structure and to bring Head Office closer to schools. The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service (1997) calls on national and provincial departments to give priority to service delivery. In response to this call, the WCED restructured its service delivery in 2000 to respond to the rapid changes in the National and Provincial Education Policy framework. The restructuring focused on developing effective and efficient learning sites by decentralising some administration functions to schools and by giving schools easy access to certain administrative services. Efficiency refers to the use of resources to achieve a given level of output. Effectiveness refers to the comparison between outcomes and intentions. However, Dalin (1998:24) claims “decentralisation will never be an effective force unless the individual school culture is changed”. This means that the absence of values such as trust, openness, transparency, inclusiveness, honesty and accountability will make decentralisation very difficult to achieve.

3.7 Undermined and restricted independence of schools

The strongly centralised Apartheid Education system created a large amount of dependence. The high level of dependence of schools on the WCED resulted in more administrative duties for the WCED. For the post Apartheid Education system this means more energy and resources must be channelled into capacity building. In an unpublished document, Langan (2000:2) argues that the WCED recognised the need to transform its organisational structure and to develop capacity to build a supporting system that would assist schools to become more independent institutions. The gap between Article 20 schools and Article 21 schools is an indication that the WCED needed to pay more

adequate attention to the development of some schools. It must be noted that this problem was inherited from the former education system.

3.8 Expensive and complex system

Research done by Robinson et al. (2002:62) indicates that structures at Head Office were fragmented “with different directorates having different budgets and different agendas”. These expensive and complex systems made it difficult for schools to access important services effectively and timeously. In June 1998 the WCED indicated its commitment to organisational development with decentralisation and school-based management as its primary objectives. The intention was to move services closer to schools by relocating personnel from Head Office to various Area Offices as well as hiring additional personnel for the nine Areas.

3.9 Gender-skewed senior management appointments

The most important aim of education policy since 1995 has been to achieve equity and redress. A gender-skewed management system reflects discriminatory practices. The organogram of the WCED between 1995-2001 reflected major gender imbalances. In an unpublished discussion document (2000:2) Langan notes “Gender issues are not being adequately addressed...and it is feared that this status quo will be reflected in the ‘new’ dispensation”. The restructured WCED Head Office (see Appendix B) shows no significant difference from the previous one in terms of gender equity because the top echelon is still male dominated. This means that gender bias has not been adequately addressed since the amalgamation of the four education departments and continues to be reflected in the restructured WCED management.

- In summary, the above-mentioned problems are interconnected and all of them have an impact on schools on one way or another. All these problems need interventions in order to achieve the desired outcome the WCED hopes to achieve.

4. Motivation for change

4.1 General national policy

The WCED is currently attempting to respond to the National Department of Education's request for efficient and effective service delivery by restructuring its service delivery model. EMDCs were established throughout the Western Cape to facilitate the restructuring process of service delivery. At the same time the WCED also aims to adhere to the Batho Pele White Paper's (1997:10) request for the "reduction of unnecessary governmental consumption and the release for production investment and the redirection of resources to areas of greater need." The ultimate aim of the restructuring programme within the WCED is to create an education system where the autonomy, authority and power of many functions are devolved down to the level of the schools. This will be a big challenge, since the historical problem of inequality inherited from the previous regime has left the education system with many inequalities in terms of resources, qualification of teachers and quality of educational service delivery. It appears that the WCED has to adjust its way of service delivery to accommodate the new demands that developments in legislation on education are leading up to.

4.1.1 *White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service*

The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service contains three important issues that the WCED had to respond to. These include broad service standards, the implementation of wide-ranging service programmes and the establishment of a service charter. This legislation had a significant impact on the service delivery model in the WCED and also fundamentally influenced the eventual structures within EMDCs in the Western Cape.

Since 1995 the National Department of Education has developed a number of policies as well as legislation aimed at transforming the education system in South Africa. These new policies and the legislation have redefined the meaning of school governance and management. One such piece of legislation is the South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996). The underpinning philosophy of the SASA is that schools are encouraged to become self-managing and self-reliant.

4.1.2 *South African Schools Act*

All nine provinces in South Africa are trying to come into line with the new education policies and legislation and the WCED is no exception. It appears that the aim of the South African Schools Act is to address the remaining general problems that all Departments of Education have to address. These problems include:

- The remaining inequalities of resources;
- The inherited unsatisfactory learning culture;
- The continuing high absenteeism among teachers;
- The slow and ineffective school management transformation (such as effective SGBs);
- The dysfunctional schools in general.

The implications of the South African Schools Act for the WCED are that the service delivery and management of the WCED were fundamentally changed.

Other national challenges that pressurised change within the WCED is the empowerment of schools in terms of the decision-making process. In terms of the SASA this includes the promotion and “acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the State” (Government Gazette 1996: 5). The SASA has given SGB significant powers to take control and responsibility for educational and organisational matters in their own schools. However, as a former member of an SGB, I noted that many parents especially in formerly disadvantaged communities are not equipped to handle these responsibilities. This results in the abuse of power by some school principals. The implication of this policy for the WCED is that capacity-building programmes will have to be arranged to equip parents to handle their responsibilities.

4.1.3 *Outcomes-based education*

Curriculum 2005 was introduced in 1999 in all nine provinces to improve the standard of education in South Africa. Curriculum 2005 also demands that teachers be trained in Outcomes-based Education (OBE). Teachers are expected to understand their role and responsibilities in a new way of teaching. This requires training and adequate resources that will have major financial implications for the WCED. These financial implications may work against the budgetary constraints that the WCED must follow. This also means

that the EMDCs will have more contact with schools as the in-service training programmes for teachers are rolled out. These service programmes need thorough co-ordination and even curriculum advisers need training in their new roles

4.1.4 *National norms and standards for school funding*

The National Norms and Standards for School Funding were introduced in 1998. In terms of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding the WCED must provide schools with adequate funds in order to resource them and to pay for essential services. The National Norms and Standard for School Funding aims to address to the problem of unequal distribution of resources. This policy has very sound objectives, but when it comes to implementation, these objectives are in danger of either becoming diluted or disappearing completely. This policy allows the WCED to distribute funds proportionately to the needs of schools. It also allows unequal but equitable distribution of funds.

4.2. Provincial policy

4.2.1 *Mission statement*

The mission statement of the Provincial Government of the Western Cape (2000:1) indicates that “implementation of national development and education policy by means of education and training must ensure that the best educational climate and conditions are established to enable all learners and educators in the Province to develop in mind, body and spirit toward mature and valued members of the South African nation”. Change in the WCED is necessary if this Provincial Department mission is to be realised. The WCED realises that schools and other learning institutions in the Western Cape have the potential to produce the human resources that are needed in this country so that this country can develop economically and socially. The WCED acknowledges service delivery improvement in the public sector as a pressing provincial priority.

4.2.2 *Systemic enhancement for education development*

The Systemic Enhancement for Education Development (SEED) programme was initiated late in 1997 and implemented in January 1998 with the assistance of the Teachers

In-service Project (TIP), Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) and the International Movement for Transformation and the Education Change Foundation (IMTEC Foundation). The Norwegian Aid Organisation (NORAD) funded the SEED project. The SEED programme involved approximately one hundred representatives from schools, area offices, subject advisory services, administration and head office personnel. The aim of the SEED programme was to develop a bureaucracy that is responsive to the needs of schools, that is fluid and creative and that recognises and supports schools as being at the centre of change in education. The SEED pilot project started in January 1998 in three areas, namely Mitchell's Plain, Paarl and the West Coast. The project was intended to run over a period of three years, after which it would be assessed and, where applicable, introduced into the education system of the WCED.

In an interview with a departmental official at Head Office in early 2000, he said that the WCED realised its responsibility for creating the opportunity to assist local schools in dealing creatively with change. The interviewee claimed that the previous WCED was hierarchical in nature and focused mainly on control and producing dependence in schools instead of development. He said that there was no coherent communication between departments within the WCED. According to him, departments within the WCED were competing for status and resources. The WCED still fails to reflect the diversity of its teachers and its learners. He says that services of the four basic support groups – namely Curriculum Advisers, School Clinics, Teachers Centres and Circuit Managers – must still be combined as part of a holistic approach. He expressed the confidence that drawing on the experience of SEED, the newly formed EMDCs would establish multi-disciplinary teams to achieve this objective. He advocates that transference of ownership and responsibility must be handed over to local schools. Schools need to be empowered and resources must be spread proportionately to schools that need them most.

I argue that many of the comments made by the interviewee are justified, because at the time of this interview the WCED was not transformed and was hierarchical, centralised and fragmented. Robinson et al. (2002:3) also reiterate that EMDCs have been established especially for the purpose of “transforming the formerly hierarchical and fragmented

model...to respond to the developmental needs of schools”. However, the transference of ownership and responsibilities to schools will take time because a capacity-building programme must first be put in place. Also, the aspect of relationship building should not be ignored. I argue that in time and with the necessary support and nurturing from the WCED and EMDCs these objectives can be achieved.

4.2.3 Systemic transformation for education development

Following the SEED investigation, the WCED drafted a Theoretical Framework for Systemic Transformation for Education Development and Support (STEDS) early in 1999. The objectives of the STEDS Task Team were to define the aims of the WCED so that policy could be worked out for future functions and service delivery that would transform the WCED effectively.

The education system during 1995-2001 was characterised by an inflexible and inefficient top-down approach. The WCED hopes to eliminate this top-down approach through the establishment of EMDCs. In an interview with one of the directors at the WCED Head Office in 2000, the sentiment was expressed that the new education system hopes to address tangible issues like culture and collegiality that are not very visible, where everybody can work as a co-operative group. Fidler (2002) argues that, although changing the culture of organisation is very important, it is not easy because of the different cultures that exist in an organisation. Subject Advisers, Circuit Managers and Psychologists should all combine their resources in striving for a common goal. I argue that working together with individuals you do not know or even mistrust because of the historical baggage takes effort and much time. Tolerance, patience and respect for each other will determine the outcome of this idealistic view. This is especially true in the current system that lacks the collegiality, which is so vital in taking the WCED forward into unity.

Davidoff and Kaplan (1998:2) argue that the structural changes in the education system after 1995 were seen by many to be the “fundamental solution to the educational problems and challenges facing the country in general and the Western Cape in particular.” However the merging process was more complicated and difficult than was expected, because no

mechanisms were put in place to deal with unanticipated emerging issues. Although different racial groups were united by legislation, there were no real changes in the “hearts and minds” of the people. To a large extent the people who governed the Apartheid Education system still occupied positions of responsibility in the new education system. This resulted, these two authors argue, in business as usual. The only difference was that all racial groups from the former racially-based Departments of Education were joined together, but the racial tensions remained. Furthermore, the merger of the former Departments of Education, took place at a time when the education system nationally was very fragile and the following conditions prevailed:

- 1) Drastic budgetary cuts were proposed by national government. The cuts in budget were felt especially in the Western Cape, because schools from formerly disadvantaged Departments of Education felt betrayed. Expectations had not been met, while more pressure was placed on the WCED for improved service delivery with few financial and human resources;
- 2) The rapid change in the educational context made it unclear for the WCED what ‘delivery’ meant and what exactly it was that the Department needs to deliver. The process of rationalisation resulted in the loss of many teachers over a short period of time.

The change that the WCED has been attempting since 2001 is a more intrinsic change, a new approach to service delivery. In an unpublished document presented to the proposed EMDCs directors on 1 February 2001, the STEDS committee claims that the functions of the WCED are inappropriately hierarchical and centralised. All the current Area Offices perform mainly control and monitoring functions. The vision of the STEDS project was to establish a system that would promote a supportive culture (such as basic norms and values) and practices throughout the WCED.

5. Summary

If the WCED wants schools to become learning institutions, it has to create an environment conducive to support and service that is needed in schools. South Africa’s participation in global markets demands an effective education system to produce skilled labour to keep up

with international demands. Many new policies and pieces of legislation are aimed at bringing education and the labour market closer together. This move is intended to introduce practical effectiveness into the international, and especially in the South African, environment. The key principles behind these reforms are equity, democracy and effective service delivery. The WCED considers school-based management (SBM) to be an effective way in which these reforms can be addressed. SBM attempts to move away from centralised power towards devolving power to local schools. Schools are becoming the primary unit of improvement. Serious challenges await the new structures in terms of equal distribution of resources and effective and efficient service delivery. The issue of gender also needs serious consideration, because the current structures are still male dominated.

I noted in this chapter that the amalgamation of the former departments of education was a fundamental move to address racism that was an immediate challenge to the education system. These former departments of education were divided along racial lines. Thus the first initiative was to remove the racial boundaries. The WCED knew that these structural changes would bring about many new challenges, but challenges that needed to be embarked upon. The establishment of EMDCs within the WCED is seen as the next phase in the restructuring process.

The factors impacting on the restructuring process were both national and provincial policies and legislation. I noted many deficiencies in the WCED between 1995-2001. These challenges include, among others, inefficient bureaucratic line functioning, inflexible, inefficient and ineffective centralisation and lack of client orientation service. These deficiencies led to the SEED investigation to find more effective and efficient ways of service delivery. The SEED investigation via the STEDS culminated in a full scale-restructuring programme that was taken over by the WCED.

The policies pertaining to restructuring aim to improve the imbalances that were created by the previous education system. They also attempt to capacitate local schools to undertake self-management, while at the same time attempting to improve the service delivery programme. The implementation of these policies requires time and commitment on all

three levels, namely Head office, EMDCs and schools.

CHAPTER TWO

Background to the development of policies relating to the establishment of EMDCs

Chapter One pointed out the problems and restrictions in the WCED with regard to structures and service delivery during the period 1995-2001. Chapter Two aims to focus on the evolution of the EMDCs. In this chapter I shall give a summary of a report entitled *Western Cape Provincial Administration Report: Western Cape Education Department: Branch Operational Education Management: Organisational Redesign of Education Management and Development Centres (EMDCs) Project 1 (a)/2000*. This report will be referred to as the WCED Report. The chapter will pay special attention to the question as to why there was a perceived need to change to EMDCs.

1. Why the move towards EMDCs?

According to an unpublished document (Kraft, 1998:1) relating to the WCED Organisational Design, the WCED felt that the conditions during 1998 were favourable to modify the WCED's vision to be compatible with national goals and legislation. Changes in the educational, legislative and policy framework brought many challenges to the WCED. This situation necessitated a change of vision and strategies that would fundamentally challenge the WCED to "produce the desired changes in education" (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:2). Hargreaves (1997:107) observed, "in any change effort, teachers and schools should know where they are going... they should be agreed on where they are headed". The WCED report is an attempt to create such a vision. This vision applies to all three levels, i.e. Head Office, EMDCs and schools.

According to the WCED report the challenges that necessitated change were the development of schools to deal with the many functions that had been devolved to schools in terms of the South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), Curriculum 2005 as well as the National Norms and Standards for School Funding. For schools to be able to use these powers effectively requires training and support in administration,

resource allocation, teachers skills, management and leadership, which the WCED has to provide. The devolved functions include the employment of teachers in ordinary and promotion posts, curriculum matters, administrative and management functions.

The above challenges called for drastic changes in the way schools are governed and managed. Demands like these have a direct impact on the way the WCED provides services to schools and the type of control it exercises over schools. There is also an emphasis on the premise that if schools are to change, it is important that the education system as a whole should change and develop the capacity to enable schools to become accountable learning organisations that can manage themselves effectively, efficiently and economically. In mid-1998 the WCED reviewed its Decentralisation Model because it felt that it would change the current bureaucracy in parts rather than transform it altogether. The WCED felt that the modification could suit the new form of support and control required by schools and the broader education system. The WCED realised that it had to change its organisational structures if it hoped to provide effective service delivery in the future and address the imbalances of the past.

2. The transformation process

The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:2) indicates that after much deliberation between the WCED and the public sector unions about the implementation of a decentralised service delivery model, an interim arrangement was agreed upon. The interim arrangement entailed the establishment of a three-tiered organisation, consisting of a Head Office, three Regional Offices and nine Area Offices to provide service delivery to schools. This differed from the previous organisational structure, which consisted of four different racially-based education departments. In June 1998 a School-Based-Management Model (SBM) was proposed by the WCED. The aim was to devolve some power down to schools. This model would bring the WCED in line with the South African Schools Act, which recommends the devolution of finance, administration and curricular powers directly to schools.

The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:4) indicates that the need for transformation within the

WCED was fleshed out in consultation with different organisations. These organisations included the Teachers In-service Project (TIP) based at the University of the Western Cape; the Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) based in Cape Town; and the International Movement for Transformation and the Education Change Foundation (IMTEC Foundation) based in Norway. Together they explored issues around decentralisation. Discussions with the above-mentioned organisations resulted in the establishment of a programme called the Systemic Enhancement for Education Development (SEED). The SEED programme organised change and development programmes in certain areas within the WCED education system in order to provide the kind of ongoing support and development that schools and communities need. The SEED programme was responsible for developing the WCED's services to school into a more responsive and creative service that is needs driven and which recognises schools as the main component of educational change. The first phase of the SEED programme was a pilot project that started in January 1998 and included area offices in Mitchell's Plain, Paarl and the West Coast. Each circuit within an area had one school represented in the project, which received training and support from circuit managers, subject advisers and TIP. In an unpublished document called "EMDCs evolution, vision, aims, principals, values and current status", Langan (2000:4) claims that increased pressure by both TIP and IMTEC consultants on the WCED to take ownership of the transformation process made the WCED aware of its need to transform its organisational structures in order to provide better service delivery to schools so that schools could become more independent organisations. The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:5) states that the implications of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), internal and external pressures forced the WCED to speed up the transformation process in a different way.

In 1999 a Change Management Team (CMT) and other task teams were created within the WCED to take the change process further. The process was then renamed Systemic Transformation for Educational Development and Support (STEDS). The WCED Report 1(b) states that the CMT was responsible for the overall management of the STED process within the WCED. The CMT was also responsible for assessing and approving the overall plan of all STEDS Task Teams. All STEDS task teams were to operate under the

supervision of the CMT. This move allowed the WCED to take over the development process and extended the involvement of other important stakeholders. All STEDS Task Teams were to present their recommendations to the CMT. In February 2000 the Directorate Organisation Development proposed a plan to the WCED that would pave the way for Organisational Development (OD). The intention was to finalise this plan by the end of 2000 so that implementation could commence by early 2001. The OD plan focused mainly on the organisation restructuring part of the transformation process and would eventually lead to the organisation and establishment of the EMDCs.

The following task teams, among others, were set up:

2.1 Theoretical/ philosophical framework (STEDS Task Team 1)

STEDS Task Team 1 was given the responsibility to design the theoretical/philosophical framework of the entire transformation process. It had to ensure that the developmental process and the recommendations contained in the report were in line with the Draft Theoretical Framework. I shall return to this in more detail later in the chapter.

2.2 Functional analysis (STEDS Task Team 4)

Functional analysis refers to analysing and setting up a job description for the three different levels, namely Head Office, EMDCs and Learning Sites: The main purpose of STEDS Task Team 4 was to formulate functions in terms of legal and procedural requirements. It also had to look at functions which were not currently operational but which are compulsory in terms of legal and procedural requirements. The Task Team had to minimise or eliminate duplication of functions. The functional analysis task team was aware that, during the development stage, extreme caution had to be taken not to compromise the authority and control of the WCED Head Office. This team started work on 1 March 2000 and presented their final product to the CMT on 26 April 2000. This means that the task team had only two months in which to put together this analysis.

2.3 Boundaries and location of EMDCs (STEDS Task Team 5)

STEDS Task Team 5 was responsible for the establishment of boundaries for the EMDCs.

Task Team 5 started their work on 1 March 2000 and presented their final product to the CMT on 26 April 2000.

2.4 Organisation and establishment (STEDS Task Team 9)

STEDS Task Team 9 was responsible for developing the provisioning of posts to all EMDCs. This team started their work on 2 May 2000 and their first report was the beginning of a series of reports based on the process of development. Approximately 750 participants were consulted in this process. Phase one looked at Organisational Structures and Staff Establishment. The team concluded phases 2 and 3 that addressed the macro and micro organisation structure of the WCED Head office respectively. Four reports were drawn up by Task Team 9 regarding the work of the restructuring process within the WCED. The members of the team presented their recommendations on 31 July 2000 to the CMT. Their recommendations were accepted by the CMT as realistic and implementable. This task team managed to do this and involve about 750 participants all within the space of three months.

The four reports are the following:

- a) WCED: Branch Operational Education Management: Organisational Redesign of EMDCs: Project 1(a) / 2000 (EMDC Report);
- b) WCED: Branch Operational Education Management and Education Planning and Development: Organisational Redesign: Project 1(b) /2000;
- c) WCED: Branch Corporate Management: Organisational Redesign: Project 1(c) / 2000;
- d) WCED: Financial Implication of Organisational Redesign: Project 1(d) / 2000.

The WCED Report 1(a), states that in the beginning stage of the SEED discussion, the WCED became aware that it had to develop into a “Learning Organisation”. Fidler’s (2002:77) idea of learning organisations is that they need to “be able to adapt continuously to client needs and external circumstances”. Needs change all the time, therefore learning organisations must be creative to deal with change according to the circumstances. The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:7) warns that “any organisational development process could be effectively derailed or prolonged if any stakeholder or all of them had a skewed

understanding of the phenomenon”. This statement indicates that the WCED deemed it necessary that all participants in the development process must have the same aims and goals in order for the developmental process to succeed. The relationship between ‘learning’, ‘teaching’ and ‘education’ does not necessarily assume that all teaching and educational institutions are learning institutions. The WCED realised that it must take cognisance of the dysfunctional schools that exist within it. Dysfunctional schools cannot be seen as learning organisations, since a learning organisation is viewed by the WCED Report 1(a) (2000:8) as “a place of excellence, ever reflecting on itself, its values, aims, processes and structures and systematically introducing the weighted result of these reflections into its practice”. This indicates that any learning organisation must have a clear vision and desirable standards if effective learning is to take place. According to the WCED Report 1(a) (2000:8), a learning organisation can be best understood in terms of a systemic view of organisations. It holds that an effective learning organisation must place the emphasis on environmental perspective, a value perspective, and must have a clearly defined mission, vision, goal and outcome for a particular system. A learning organisation must be aware of the specific activities by which it hopes to achieve its goals and the processes that are put in place to organise the system. It must also be aware of which resources are available within its organisation. It must have a well-established management in place to achieve effective, efficient, economic and public administration. In short, the WCED Report 1(a) (2000:10) states that “an organisation’s value informs its aims, the aims inform the processes by which those aims are met; the processes inform the structure (i.e. hierarchical or appropriate matrix management model) within which the processes of the organisation are organised”.

3. Draft theoretical framework for STEDS

The aim of SEED/STEDS was essentially to change the WCED so that it could provide quality support to schools as schools strive to become learning organisations. To accomplish this, the WCED itself had to become a learning organisation. The work of STEDS was to create an understanding between the different levels within the WCED and to organise a relationship of interdependence between the different levels. The three recommended levels of organisations are: Head Office (WCED), the EMDCs and Schools.

To create an effective link between these different levels, STEDS were to identify possible areas of conflict between the different levels and to look for means and ways to overcome these obstacles. The essence of the draft was to provide a framework where people could understand change within a particular context, but at the same time make them aware of the real problems, such as examinations that must be faced and stipulating whose responsibility it is to effect change. Everybody who participated in the developmental process at whatever level had to be made aware of the nature of the evolving organisation, the constraints and the possibilities.

The STEDS draft report WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:1) highlights the following considerations for change management:

- Everybody at all levels of the system must take ownership of the process of change;
- To sustain the process of change there must be:
 1. training at all levels in the system;
 2. capacity building at schools, EMDCs and Head Office;
 3. development of structures at all three levels: school development teams at schools; co-ordinating team at EMDCs, and a Head Office management team;
- Building self- understanding;
- Developing an understanding of change and the development process;
- Facilitating individual responsibility within the collective;
- Empowerment of all participants at all three levels to participate in the developmental process;
- Paradigm shifts and building new understanding of systemic thinking and interdependence;
- An understanding of key leverage points and what has to move and where it can be moved.

3.1 School-based management

The STEDS teams recognise the damage Apartheid Education has left in the education system and how the culture of teaching and learning has been broken down at many of the formerly disadvantaged schools. Many educational institutions experience a lack of clear

leadership, have poor management, low teacher morale, lack of confidence among many teachers that they can cope with the many demands being made on them, resistance to change, lack of discipline and professionalism, lack of parental involvement, conflict, vandalism, violence and abuse, lack of resources and coherent support (WDED Report 1(a) Annexure B, 2000:2).

To bring about successful transformation schools must be seen as the unit of change in the way in which they function and to take on their responsibility towards society. The WCED had to find ways to assist schools to manage the process of change that is taking place at their sites. The WCED considers school-based management (SBM) as the best way to devolve appropriate decision-making powers to schools in order that they can “take charge of their own destinies in a meaningful and purposeful way, within and in pursuit of national and provincial goals” (WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B, 2000:2). School-based management is more than giving schools administrative responsibilities; it includes decision making about finance, management, curriculum and personnel issues. Dimmock (1993:18) argues that SBM is generally associated with “autonomy, flexibility and responsiveness, planning, participatory and collaboration decision making, and self-efficacy”. A self-managing school must have competence in all these areas to become a learning organisation. The STEDS report holds that, although “SBM is a necessary requirement for schools to become learning organisations, it is not a sufficient condition [for them] to become vibrant centres of learning” (WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B, 2000:2). SBM in itself is not a guarantee to successful development of learning organisations, but rather can be used as a tool to improve school culture and encourage better-quality decisions. According to the WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:2), teachers sometimes experience SBM as a burden because of the many added responsibilities that it places on schools. Rewards can be used to acknowledge the extra effort SBM requires from teachers and to acknowledge the improvements.

Research done by Noble et al. (1996:1) indicates, that “SBM includes components of shared governance (or decentralisation) and collaborative decision-making.” The decision-making process can occur at the school site, EMDC or Head Office level.

According to the WCED report, which decisions will be shared, and at which level, should be endorsed by school governing bodies as well as other stakeholders, namely teachers, departmental officials and parents before implementation. Once the decision-making process has been agreed upon, the authority of groups (those who will steer the process) who make decisions using the process must be respected and supported by all three levels of the system.

Wohlstetter and Mohrman (1994:2) point out that research indicates three essential elements for successful SBM. These include knowledge, information and reward. Knowledge refers to the need for technical knowledge, such as implementation of different teaching methodologies, how to draw up a budget and having interpersonal and problem-solving skills. Participants in SBM must have extensive information about the institution they serve. They must know what resources are available and what the parents and the community want from the institution. The reward is to acknowledge the efforts of participants as well as to recognise improvements.

According to studies done by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), advocates of site-based management believe that SBM fosters a great sense of ownership and responsibility for the quality of education within the community. SBM gives more authority and accountability to teachers, administrators, parents and students. SBM has the potential to improve performance because involvement is extended to all role players such as governing bodies, teachers and non-teaching staff. It also provides a more efficient use of resources because stewardship of resources is more likely when there is good communication about who does what and when. Although the rationale and conceptualisation of SGBs is very noble, the implementation of such a policy is no easy matter. Prior to 1994 parents were very reluctant to participate because of high levels of illiteracy, poverty and disadvantaged socio-economic conditions. This history of non-participation is having an impact still today on the development of formerly disadvantaged schools. In my experience as a member of a school governing body, parents often just agree to proposals that are put forward by principals because of their inability to challenge the views of those who are more educated than they are.

The WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:3) indicates that SBM should be “linked conceptually and practically with the notion of learning organisations”. The aim of SBM should be to maximise the decision-making functions of the schools so that they can develop appropriate autonomy in managing their own affairs within the national and provincial framework. A clear and objective view of SBM is necessary for efficient functioning of schools, focused on effective learning. Ultimately, SBM must be focused on effective learning that develops learners’ personal and educational skills. SBM should define the moral purpose of education and describe the teachers’ role to meet this purpose. In order for school to bring all this about, clear and strong support from national and provincial bodies is needed.

3.2 Organisational development

The term Organisational Development (OD) suggests an ongoing development of an organisation so that it knows its needs and can make informed changes as part of its holistic development. The WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:4) holds that OD works on the following basic assumptions:

- The clients (i.e. the schools) are the most important role players;
- OD is an ongoing developmental process to enable the organisation to become a learning organisation;
- The WCED support system must respond to the needs of the client;
- The OD process must build the capacity within schools to manage the process of change with the assistance of EMDCs;
- OD must develop personal capacity of all participants to manage change. It should also focus strongly on cultural change (i.e. the habits and ways of doing educational things);
- OD should change structures in all three levels to reflect new goals, aims and orientations.

The progressive nature of OD enables the use of flexible and different strategies to attain goals. This means that participants in the organisation must be open so that a climate for understanding and appreciating change can be fostered. Fidler (2002:76) argues that OD

comes from “within the organisation rather than from outside”. The developmental practitioners (the support staff of the WCED) must continually move with the changing needs of the client (the school and community). For this to happen within the WCED the practitioners must be cognisant of the needs of the client in relation to the development of schools into learning organisations. A relationship of trust, support, understanding, security and awareness must develop between the practitioner and the client. Such a relationship will create a climate for co-operation and commitment (WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B, 2000:4).

The WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:5) states that for a big organisation such as the WCED to manage change effectively, it must provide both pressure and support to local schools. Ultimately the WCED is looking for ways to provide adequate quality support to schools, while at the same time exercising control in terms of accountability for schools. The WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:4) suggests that the pressure and accountability functions should become responsibilities of Head Office. A clear distinction between the functions of Head Office, EMDCs and local schools must be defined, so that appropriate judgements and decisions can be made in terms of their responsibilities. The WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:5) perceives pressure or control as a “consistent, legitimate, continuous and transparent process of measurement and evaluation, whereby all stakeholders have knowledge of the institution’s performance and appropriate actions to be applied where the institution is seen to be not performing adequately”. Pressure and control are necessary requirements for the development of any organisation. However, the WCED report reflects that the methodology must be proactive and have support and development as its main objectives. Support refers to an ongoing developmental process of quality development (the development of necessary skills) by the WCED to capacitate and empower where there is no capacity, so that schools can become the learning organisations they ought to be. The WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:5) defines the aim of the WCED as an emerging organisation “attempting to shift from a highly centralized and compartmentalized system focused on control and regulation to a more decentralized, synergistic, responsive and flexible system focused on support and development”.

3.3 STEDS

STEDS Task Team 4 was responsible for drafting job descriptions of the three components, namely Head Office, EMDCs and Learning Sites. The Task Team was, however, aware that during the initial stage, extreme caution be taken not to compromise the authority and control of the WCED Head Office. The WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B (2000:6-7) indicates that the STEDS Task Teams pledged their commitment to the following issues:

- Not to give instant and superficial answers;
- To provide scope for ongoing and broad participation and concentrate not only on crisis intervention but build up preventative measures;
- To give more attention to cultural development and identity and the development of a common understanding. The EMDCs must explore support structures that would focus on the needs of schools rather than the needs of the system;
- To look for ways to introduce progressive change on both EMDC and school level, while at the same time working harmoniously together with management on their own level;
- To see the whole focus of change as in the best interests of school development. The ultimate aim should be the creation of the “optimal environment for teaching and learning by all those entrusted with the responsibility, within the context of scarce resources” (WCED Report 1(a) Annexure B, 2000:7). This calls for extreme loyalty and commitment from all participants in order for the new education system to succeed.

4. Reformulating the aims and perspective of the WCED

The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:7) states that “the aims perspective refers to the purpose, vision, mission, goals, outcomes, etc, of a system.” STEDS Task Teams were responsible for analysing all the functions of the WCED in order to create policy for future functions and delivery. The Directorate Organisational Development put together a core group in 2000 to take this process forward. Their recommendations together with the results of STEDS Task Team 1 and Task Team 5 were to be the main focus of the organisational restructuring process.

On 26 April 2000 STEDS Task Team 9 presented their recommendations to the CMT. In the development of these recommendations, 110 stakeholders were consulted. The following are a more detailed discussion of the recommendations of STEDS Task Team 9.

4.1 Head office

The WCED Report 1(b) Annexure B (2000:2) defines the purpose of Head Office as being “to ensure qualitative and quantitative accountability in the education planning, development, delivery and corporate support system”. The Report notes that Head Office will strive to communicate a clear vision and purpose through the system and to the public. It will take action in line with its purpose of service to sustain and develop public education. It was recommended to the CMT that Head Office should be responsible for the overall legislative, policy and resource infrastructure. The WCED Head Office is responsible for all functions that include “control, policy determination / development, international, national, inter-and intra-provincial co-ordination, transversal co-ordination and management of the Western Cape Education delivery system as well as external verification and control” (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:11). In terms of the Report other functions will include:

- Human resource management;
- Departmental account functions;
- Budgetary administration;
- Examination administration;
- Provisioning of buildings and sites;
- Management and co-ordination of EMDCs;
- Quality assurance (external verification);
- Research and planning;
- Co-ordination and management of special projects;
- Communication and language services;
- General education management;
- Administration and policy;
- Curriculum research;
- Development and policy;

- Psycho-social support;
- Policy and legislation;
- Education resource material: research, development and policy;
- Education technology; and
- Education library and information services.

The overall aim of Head Office is to ensure effective, efficient and responsible use of resources in education service delivery. In the Report, Head Office pledges to provide effective, efficient and responsible planning and development within the system.

4.2 EMDCs

According to the WCED Report1- (a), EMDCs are responsible for the management and development of education in their areas. EMDCs are teachers' learning and service centres that will initiate and foster transformation towards quality service in the WCED. The Report recommended that multi-functional teams would operate in the various districts to provide holistic co-ordinated service delivery to local learning sites. The EMDCs will be responsible and accountable for supporting the learning sites. In terms of the WCED Report 1(a) (2000:13), EMDCs will be responsible and accountable for the "support, development, enablement, empowerment, and co-ordination at the intermediate level of the WCED as well as the rendering of SASA Section 20 functions for those section 20 learning sites that are unable or ill equipped to perform these functions independently". EMDCs will also monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of management and governance of local schools.

STEDS Task Team 5 divided the Western Cape Province into seven EMDC districts. EMDCs would be responsible for providing support and training to all learning institutions in the Western Cape. Learning institutions include: public schools, Education for Learners with Special Education Needs (ELSEN) schools, Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centres and Early Childhood Development (ECD). EMDCs will serve as educational centres where teachers can come for support and in-service training, and where multi-disciplinary teams would meet and plan their services to schools. Other functions for

which the EMDCs will be responsible are:

- Curriculum research, development, implementation, support;
- Assessment and exams;
- Psycho-social support;
- Educational resource material: research, development;
- Education technology;
- Education library and information services;
- ELSEN advocacy and inclusion;
- Institutional development, management co-ordination;
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Staff function support and development;
- Input into quality assurance processes;
- Provision of input into the processes regarding the provisioning of buildings and sites;
- Performance of SASA Section 21 functions for those learning sites that are unable to handle these functions themselves;
- Input into Human Resource Utilization (permanent appointment), a regional dimension of Human Resource Development;
- The promotion of industrial peace, in-house generic staff functions (i.e. financial administration, personnel administration, budget administration, provisioning administration, etc.).

4.3 Learning sites / Schools

Learning sites are to a large extent responsible and accountable for their own development and learning. According to the WCED Report 1(a), SGB in collaboration with EMDC staff must work out ways to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of services offered by EMDC staff in order to promote the development of schools into “learning organizations”.

5. Proposed organisation and establishments of EMDCs

The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:15) states that a comparison between the existing structures and the proposed structure within the WCED indicates a need for extensive process and

structural changes, especially in the intermediate level of the WCED. It adds that the current service delivery system “does not allow the WCED the necessary functional fluidity to realize its vision of largely independent learning sites with the capacities of self-management and self-governance” (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:15). To stimulate effective development and support the WCED must combine services to work in co-operation in order to provide a more integrated and holistic service delivery. The EMDCs will therefore replace the existing area offices, school clinics and teachers centres. The STEDS Task Team 9 led the organisational redesign process with regards to the EMDCs.

The WCED Report claims that the STEDS Task Team 9 used a consultative approach to OD that stretched over a period of four months. Task Team 9 was divided into different groups. Groups 1 and 2 developed an operational structure for EMDCs with specific role definitions, job descriptions and the criteria that could be used for the provisioning of jobs. Their recommendations were “refined by the project management team into a workable and realistic organisation structure and establishment.” (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:23). The final product was tested with the involvement of various representatives from the nine area offices, school principals and teachers. From their interactions it became clear that further development sessions were needed to “broaden stakeholder participation as well as to deepen the development discussion” (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:23). After additional sessions were held, the recommendations were accepted with minor adjustments. All the recommendations of STEDS Task Team 9 that were presented to the CMT were finally accepted on 8 August 2000.

The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:24) stipulates that “it remains a management prerogative to mould and remould the organisation in line with the needs of the various stakeholders that the organisation seeks to support, develop or serve.” The danger with such view, however, is that management may perceive a need differently to the way a client does. Because there was a need for a more responsive operational structure, the WCED decided that “the process matrix offers the best manner of deploying multifunctional service delivery” (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:24). The adoption of the process matrix is an attempt to avoid

imposing inappropriate needs. The process matrix acknowledges the importance of information and attempts to use it extensively. It carries information in horizontal and vertical “functional lines”, informing all stakeholders, while at the same time revealing the source of the particular information so that stakeholders can interact with the given information to test its validity (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:24). The Task Team’s rationale is that in a learning organisation, as seen within a broader context, management, technology and information are very important.

According to the WCED Report 1(a) (2000:26) the process matrix involves the following functions:

- Service provisioning;
- Support of workers so that they can provide a good service;
- Provision for adequate planning, controlling and resources for learning sites and teachers.

The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:24) concludes that the process matrix allows for better differentiation in economies of scale as well as functional performance. A traditional hierarchy has the following disadvantages:

- Focus on management and prestige, while clients may be neglected;
- The top management is far removed from the client, which results in slow reaction to change in especially the client environment;
- Decision-making and planning are characterised by a top-down approach;
- It could lead to inefficient bureaucracies and empire building;
- Departments work in isolation and there is no co-ordination in terms of service delivery.

In contrast, the process matrix has the following advantages:

- It has the potential to be more client orientated than organisationally driven;
- The process makes use of maximum human resources to the benefit of the organisation;
- It has a multidisciplinary approach to the work;
- It creates harmony and flexibility between people in a working environment;

- The process inspires growth by focusing on organisational achievement rather than stimulating competition for resources;
- Duplication and unnecessary work are eliminated.

However, a matrix process has the potential disadvantage that it is a complex way to structure an organisation and could lead to people confusing their roles.

5.1 Boundaries of the proposed EMDCs

In the establishment of boundaries, STEDS Task Team 5 had to take cognisance of the historical imbalances that exist in terms of resources and managerial and administration skills. To ensure equal treatment, Task Team 5 worked on an equal spreading in terms of the geographical and demographic nature of the seven areas. The boundaries of EMDCs were worked out in line with the Municipal Demarcation Act. Three options were put forward to the CMT in April 2000, namely five, six or seven EMDCs. The CMT eventually decided on seven EMDCs. Two hundred and twenty stakeholders were consulted in the establishment of these boundaries. The WCED Report 1(a) indicates that the important issue that took special consideration in the establishment of boundaries was the number of schools, number of teachers, distance, socio-economic factors, developmental phase of a learning site, geography, demarcation, growth points, hostels, demography, redress and equity needs and migration. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) formula

$$a = \frac{x - \text{Min}}{\text{Max} - \text{Min}}$$

was used to create a uniform base for the measurement of criteria, where a = the individual place name and magisterial district values, x = the number of schools and *Min* and *Max* refer to the minimum and maximum values recorded for place names and magisterial districts.

The rural boundaries are:

West Coast / Winelands

Clanwilliam, Hopefield, Malmesbury, Moorreesburg, Piketberg, Van Rhynsdorp, Vredenburg, Vredendal, Paarl, Stellenbosch, Wellington.

Overberg / Breede River

Bredasdorp, Caledon, Hermanus, Swellendam, Ceres, Montagu, Robertson, Tulbagh, Worcester, Lainsburg.

South Cape / Karoo

Beaufort West, Murraysburg, Prince Albert, Uniondale, Knysna, Oudshoorn, Calitzdorp, Mossel Bay, Riversdale, Ladismith, Heidelberg, George.

The urban boundaries are:

Metropole Central

Cape Town and its environs.

Metropole East

Oostenberg, Helderberg, Khayelitsha.

Metropole North

Blaauwberg, Tygerberg,

Metropole South

Southern Peninsula, Mitchell's Plain

5.2 Proposed services of EMDCs

In the development of post provisioning, STEDS Task Team 9 used a client profile to establish the number of posts per EMDC. EMDCs will be responsible and accountable for providing support to learning sites in line with their developmental needs. This broad brief entails the following tasks:

- To develop and supports the management of effective curriculum delivery;
- To provide specialist support to optimise learning, develop and distribute educational resource material;
- To support the management of all learning sites and hostels;
- To provide administrative support and development service to learning sites.

In more detail, the following services are provided by EMDCs.

5.2.1 *Curriculum development and support services*

The purpose is to develop and support the management of effective curriculum delivery:

- It identifies and analyses local curriculum needs;
- It provides training and support teachers to develop and apply the curriculum;
- It facilitates development of learning programmes, guidelines and materials;
- It monitors and evaluates the curriculum development and application at the learning site;
- It co-ordinates the assessment of curriculum outcomes.

5.2.2 *Specialised learner and educator support unit*

The purpose is to provide specialist support to optimise learning. In more detail, this unit is required:

- To identify and analyse special needs of learners and teachers to optimise learning;
- To capacitate teachers, learning sites and communities;
- To design, develop and implement strategies to either prevent the development of barriers to learning or to address special needs;
- To promote the well being of human resources;
- To monitor and evaluate outcomes of interventions;
- To guide and support learning sites to design and develop an appropriate school library model;
- To train and support educators, learning sites and the community i.r.o. the management of the school library model as integral to teaching and learning;
- To advocate and promote the use of management, teaching and learning resources;
- To facilitate the development of guidelines and support materials;
- To facilitate the provision of library and information resources and services to learning sites and the EMDC;
- To manage the EMDC Resource Centre;

- To train and support educators and learning sites to use technology (CT &AVT) and to develop teaching and learning support materials.

5.2.3 Institutional development and support unit

The main purpose of this unit is to render administrative development and support services to all learning sites and hostels. In more detail, the function of developing and supporting learning sites entails that EMDCs help with:

- Institutional administration;
- Financial and budget administration;
- Provisioning administration;
- Human resource management;
- Data management;
- Site and building administration;
- Hostel administration.

5.2.4 Labour relations

The purpose of this service is to promote labour peace and good labour relations. This means EMDCs are required:

- To provide labour relations advice;
- To handle the grievance stage of the dispute process;
- To manage the initial stages of the disciplinary process;
- To co-ordinate strike action and work stoppage;
- To provide labour relations training

6 Proposed establishment posts in the EMDCs

There are fifty-six different kinds of posts for every EMDC as listed in the WCED Report 1(a). The following post establishment pertains to the EMDC Metropole North, but reflects the kinds of post structures in the other EMDCs:

1x EMDC Manager

1x Secretary

Curriculum development and support

- 1 x Chief Curriculum Advisor Post Level -PL 5
- 4 x Deputy Chief Curriculum Advisor -PL 4
- 32 x First Curriculum Advisor -PL 3

Specialised learner and educator support

- 1 x Chief Education Specialist - PL5
- 1 x Senior School Psychologist – PL4
- 11x School Psychologist PL3
- 1 x Senior School Social Worker – PL2
- 2 x School Social Worker – PL1
- 1 x Occupational Therapist – PL 1
- 2 x ELSEN Specialist – PL4
- 1 x Senior

Institutional development and support

- 1x Chief Administrative assistant
- 3x Senior Administrators
- 11x Administration assistance

Labour Relations

- 1x Labour Relation practitioner (detached from head office)

There are seven profiles for each EMDC. These profiles refer to schools, technical colleges, ABET centres and ELSEN schools. The following client profile statistics pertain to the EMDC Metropole North:

Number of learners per phase / grade			
Foundation Phase (Grade R – 3)		43442	
Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 – 6)		43228	
GR 7		12652	
GR 8		13516	
GR 9		12694	
GR 10		10753	
GR 11		8363	
GR12		6722	
Total		151370	
Learning Sites	No. of Learning Sites	No. of Educators	No. of Learners
Schools:			
Section 20	103	4124	149197
Section 21	88		
Technical Colleges	4		
ABET Centres	5	44	685
ELSEN Schools	15	235	2173
Totals	215	4403	152055

The Metropole North EMDC is responsible for delivering the four main kinds of services discussed above to a total of 215 learning sites, involving 4403 educators and 152 055 learners in all.

7. **Summary**

I noted that national, as well as local pressure necessitated the transformation of service delivery within the WCED. I also noted that the service delivery within the pre-2001 WCED had problems. A more responsive service delivery model was needed that would be more client orientated. In this chapter I looked in more detail at the proposed organization and structure of the EMDCs. The restructuring process will remain on the agenda of the WCED for the foreseeable future because of the slow process of change. The transformation process is a trial-and-error process and shall continue to evolve as the needs of schools change. In the next chapter I shall discuss how the EMDC policy responds to the challenges with regards to structure, communication and ethos within the WCED.

CHAPTER THREE

EMDC policy as a response to problems in WCED structure and service delivery.

In this chapter I shall focus on the problems the WCED is experiencing with regard to structure, communication and ethics. I shall examine sections in the EMDC policy that address the problems highlighted under the three sections and the possible implications this might have for the WCED. Although I shall list the three sections separately, there will be an overlap between them, especially pertaining to service delivery and finances. Improving the quality of education and helping children to learn is the top priority of the National Department of Education. Reaching these goals requires co-operation between national and provincial levels in the education sector. Building relationships between schools and the WCED begins with a clear commitment to ascertain schools' capacities and assets and to develop them where they are non-existent. Central to capacity building is the examination of and reflection on the thoughts, emotions and actions of individuals and groups within the education sector. EMDCs aim to improve organisational support to school development.

1. Problems and restrictions with regards to the WCED structure

In Chapter One I noted the WCED's inflexible and inefficient hierarchical model of service delivery and its need to improve its service delivery to local schools. Departments worked in isolation, which often resulted in duplication of services. These challenges, among others, necessitated the development of new structures and policies. However, creating new structures and policy does not guarantee transformation or better service delivery. In this section I shall look specifically at how the new policy for structural organisation hopes to address existing problems.

Noble et al. (1996:2) indicate that "all those responsible for schools should have a voice in determining the conditions and practices of schooling". This holds true especially with regards to changing the pre-2000 WCED bureaucratic system, which made it very difficult

for schools and educators to access important information, resources or to initiate new programmes, because certain protracted and inflexible hierarchical line functions had to be followed. Sometimes these procedures could be very time consuming. The delay in service frustrated many educators and schools to the point where they stopped initiating new programmes. Chapter One also indicated the lack of responsiveness and the lack of interaction and creativity of the bureaucratic system of the WCED. The WCED is now attempting to transform its previous extensive and expensive bureaucracy into a more flexible and efficient system. Campbell-Evans (1993:102) argues that “a clearly articulated vision guides decision making and problem solving so that situations are resolved in a way that is consistent with the goals, priorities and direction of the school”. Through the restructuring programme the WCED is attempting to establish a clear corporate vision concerning the role EMDCs are to play in organisational development. A corporate vision will enhance proactive behaviour and better use of time for setting clear goals. I shall argue that bureaucracy is not in itself negative, but if it has a negative effect on service delivery, causes unnecessary delays in service delivery or has extra financial implications, this implies problems with it that should be addressed.

The WCED strives to adhere to the Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999), which calls for effective, efficient and economic use of all the resources of the WCED, including budgets. Public forums and public debates as stated in the WCED Report 1(a) (2000:2-3) claim that many “government departments, including the WCED, are administratively over-staffed, hence the high expenditure on salaries”. The WCED showed its intention to impose fiscal discipline by stating that it “does not unnecessarily fund vacancies in the establishment” (WCED Report 1(d), 2000:1). However, stating its intention to reduce budgetary cost, the WCED at the same time justifies its staff establishment by stating in a Circular distributed to learning sites (schools) that “when the Province established the WCED in 1995, it made provision for 2080 posts outside of schools for staffing the entire Head Office, nine Area Offices and related units. The WCED has always known that it would need further restructuring, and has opted not to fill all these posts until our restructuring plan has been finalized. Our new establishment allows for 1 713 post, or 367 fewer than allocated in 1995” (WCED Circular No. 0051, 2001f:2).

The WCED Report seems to bear out the commitment expressed in circular 0051. The personnel statistics for the months of November 2000 to January 2001 indicate that the overall expenditure for the Head Office and intermediary structures, which include area offices, school clinics and teacher centres, amounted to R169 303 672. The additional expense between 2000 and 2001 spending on organisation and establishment is R50 997 775. In summary, the WCED was allocated 2 080 posts in 1995. It opted to utilise only 1 713 posts, 367 fewer than were allocated with a financial budget of R169 303 672. With the restructuring programme of 2001, the WCED opted to utilise the same number of posts, but this time with a financial budget of R220 301 447. amount of R50 997 775. more than the previous budget without utilising the 367 posts allocated to them. It appears that the WCED is not complying fully with its commitment to be in line with national imperatives as expressed in the Batho Pele White Paper which requests “reduction in unnecessary government consumption and the release of resources for productive investment and their redirection to areas of greater need” (Government Gazette No. 18340, 1997:10).

So it seems as though the restructuring of the WCED will not be a cost-reducing move in terms of salary expenditure. It is also worth noting that the new establishment may bring about a significant increase in the current budget, if the WCED decides to utilise the 367 posts allocated to them. The huge additional financial implications also create the potential that the WCED may shift some responsibilities to local schools and school communities for financing and support in the context of scarce resources. This potential could lead to privatisation of provision, which can be seen as an attempt at marketisation of education services. The argument against marketisation is that it leads to competition that will marginalise poor communities. After examining the proposed structure within the two levels of the WCED (see Annexure B), it seem consistent to argue that the proposed bureaucracy within the WCED tends to be expensive.

I shall argue that the WCED’s expensive bureaucracy could also run the risk of being bloated, and therefore lead to reduced efficiency. I will substantiate my claim based on data gathered from the WCED Reports.

As argued in Chapter One, the WCED became aware that the existing inflexible hierarchical structure could not meet the demands for the new service delivery. The line of communication was so rigid that it was difficult to access information without following complex time-consuming procedures. After the amalgamation of the former departments of education in 1995, the WCED and the public sector unions agreed on the implementation of a decentralised delivery model in order to minimise delays in service delivery. This new service delivery model would evolve into a fully restructured education system over a period of time. This involved establishing a three-tier organisation, consisting of a head office, two regional offices and nine area offices. It was then decided to move some administrative functions and staff from the head office to regional and area offices. This – it was argued – would bring services closer to the schools. However, the education system changed so drastically in 1998 that this particular decentralised service model could not respond to the complex needs of education nationally. The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:2) affirms this by stating that the need for “changes made the original decentralised service delivery model obsolete”.

In 1998 the WCED became aware that its service delivery model was not providing the ideal level of service it would want to provide. The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:4) stated that their decentralised model was considered inefficient, because it would “simply extend the current bureaucracy, rather than transform it in line with the new form of support and control required by schools and the broader education system”. The decentralisation issue received greater attention when other important functions like curriculum development and appointment of teachers were also decentralised to schools in 1998. The WCED embarked on the transformation process in order to develop a holistic education model. The main focus of the WCED is “to ensure qualitative and quantitative accountability in the education planning, development, delivery and corporate support system” (WCED Report 1- (b), (2000:4). To fulfil this purpose the WCED has to develop and support capacity building in local school governance.

Although many important functions have been decentralised to school level, other functions still remain centralised. Centralisation and decentralisation in combination could

provide effective and efficient services. Dalin (1998:14) observes that decentralisation attempts to “create ownership with respect to the individual school by giving parents, pupils, teachers and the head teacher a lot more influence over school improvement”. People are generally more responsive and appreciative if they are part of the process. However, too much power at school level can also undermine the authority of higher-level management. “It is a question of what serves best to promote the quality of service and objectives of the school in general”. The question that needs clarification is, as Dalin (1998:14) puts it: “Who decides what?” Giving schools carte blanche to do things on their own could create anarchy. Hence it is important to prioritise and clarify the decision-making process. Since teachers are trained to teach, they should be given the opportunity to make decisions pertaining to curriculum matters. Principals and governing bodies, on the other hand, should be given the opportunity to make decisions pertaining to management and administrative duties of the school.

The government also has a responsibility for supporting school development and improvement. Dalin (1998:15) argues “one of the major aspects of restructuring has been to give teachers a bigger say in school affairs”. Teachers know the problems that exist on school level and can sometimes provide meaningful contributions. Teachers are the ones who best understand the context, cultures and dynamics of the schools. Learners and the parent community can easily relate to teachers because they are familiar with them. But devolving such decision-making authority to teachers means that there must be a programme to build teachers’ capacity to cope with these added responsibilities.

Part of the WCED’s commitment is to look at ways to address national imperatives such as equity and redress in its endeavours to find legitimate solutions to the developmental needs within the WCED. In a document drafted by the Mitchell’s Plain area STEDS Steering Committee on 15 September 2000, the following concern was raised: “if we are talking about transformation of the whole system, the questions that beg answering is who will be involved in decisions around the restructuring of Head Office? Will it be Head Office deciding on it alone, or will it be done via a representative process which will include people from grass roots level”? If such an important issue such as adequate representation

becomes questionable, this could have negative implications for the future development of education in the WCED. These negative implications may include mistrust in departmental officials, securing important jobs and cutting out turfs. Based on the concerns raised by this steering committee, it appears that a lack of adequate communication occurred in the establishment of post provision. Although this perception is not widespread, it could negatively affect the restructuring process, especially in the region where it prevails.

Chapter One drew attention to male predominance in the top managerial positions within the WCED Head Office, Area Offices and Regional Offices. In the restructured WCED I found that equity and redress have not received adequate attention. The basis for my assumption is that the WCED Head Office as well as top management of the EMDCs is still male dominated. In the current EMDC directorship there are seven males and one female. It seems as if the status quo in gender inequity will also be reflected in the new transformed WCED.

So, in summary, the problems and restrictions in the pre-2000 WCED structures were:

- The increase in expenditure on salaries;
- The lack of clear capacity building programme to support the move towards decentralisation;
- The gender inequity at senior managerial level.

2. Proposed EMDCs responses to structural challenges

The WCED is now attempting to transform the previous extensive and expensive bureaucracy to a more flexible and less bureaucratic one. To make services more accessible, the WCED decided to flatten its hierarchical structures. When new services are developed, it relies on the expertise and co-operation of individuals working in teams during and after development. The WCED has attempted to “locate certain administrative and professional support functions at or nearer to schools” (WCED Report 1(a), (2000:3). This move was not intended to lower the standard of service delivery. On the contrary, it is intended to make services more responsive to schools in an attempt to create more effective and efficient services to schools. It sometimes happens that key personnel leave the

organisation or fail to co-operate. Flattening the organisation into more of a team structure means that service development and delivery are not incapacitated when a key person leaves.

In Chapter Two I compared the hierarchical structure with a process matrix (a process where the whole organisation works towards a central point). The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:24) concludes that the “process matrix offers the best manner of deploying multifunctional service delivery”. To recap briefly, the WCED found the process matrix to be more customer friendly; to be more client orientated than organisationally driven; to be information driven, which will allow information to reach the client much sooner; to maximise the use of human resources to enable EMDCs to provide an efficient service to schools; to be more responsive to the needs of the schools; and to minimise duplication and unnecessary work. According to the WCED Report 1(a) (2000:25), the advantage of the process matrix is that it is a dynamic process that can be manipulated because “there are variations based on the needs of the EMDC and its stakeholders”. This allows EMDCs to provide the kind of services that will meet the needs of their particular area. It also provides coherence between the horizontal line functions (service from WCED Head Office down) and vertical line functions (functions within schools). The hierarchical structure will not be completely abandoned, but will only be flattened to bring certain functions closer to schools. The process matrix is not completely without flaws. One of the possible problems with this structure is that people might be confused about the scope of their roles.

Racial boundaries have been addressed with the establishment of EMDCs. Schools in formerly disadvantages areas have been incorporated into well-established areas with well-resourced schools. School with inherited disadvantages can now directly link and exchange resources and assistance with formerly advantaged schools. This it is hoped will lead to better capacity building and greater sharing of resources. In this way the WCED hoped to strengthen capacity in schools struggling to function effectively and efficiently.

To provide quality education and a safe and stimulating environment, the WCED initiated a safer school project that would look into the improvement and safety of school children

throughout the Western Cape. Funds have been allocated through the Safer School Project to safeguard schools against burglary, vandalism and gangsterism. A safer school would result in a substantial reduction in expenditure to deal with vandalism, burglary, gansterism and the hiring of security companies to see to the safety of children and look after school properties. It could also result in greater parental support and involvement, which would lead to better capacity building of parents and school staff.

EMDCs have been developed as professional centres to provide quality and ongoing support to schools in an attempt to develop schools into learning organisations. EMDCs will assist schools to operate through a school-based management approach. Through constant contact and communication with schools, EMDCs aim to effectively build capacity in schools where it was previously almost non-existent in disadvantaged communities. EMDCs include school clinics, teacher resource centres, art and music centres and library services. It will be a place where teachers can go to for support and training to equip them to deal with the challenges that go with the implementation of the new curriculum.

In summary, although there are no quick fixes for the problems of expenditure, capacity building and greater equity highlighted above, it is fair to assume that the above attempts to flatten the hierarchical structures, the adoption of a process matrix, the reduction of racial boundaries and the establishment of a safer school project has the promising potential to have a positive impact on capacity building and to some extent lead to a reduction in some expenditure. The move towards decentralisation with school-based management as the main objective aims for lead more involvement of parents financially and otherwise. Decentralisation envisages a reduction in school finances. However, based on the organogram, it appears that the restructured WCED is still burdened with an expensive bureaucracy. The restructured WCED does not reflect a cost- saving education system, especially if we consider the R50 million increases in its current expenditure, even without the utilisation of the 367 posts that are still available to them. The restructured WCED therefore remains an expensive bureaucracy. The WCED remains silent on the issue of gender equity.

3. Problems and restrictions with regards to communication within the WCED

Internal systems should support and enhance communication. Maintaining a balance between control and accountability has been a problem for many years. A lack of high-quality and experienced staff to help with professional and administrative support for schools contributes to inadequate communication. In my experience as a teacher I have had many frustrating moments where I was sent from one end of an institution to another. Simple enquiries about the number of days you have available for vacation or sick leave can sometimes take days to be answered. Area Office will tell you that their data are not accurate and that they have to consult with Head Office before they can provide you with accurate information. In some instances salary cheques would come to schools for teachers who had left three months before. If schools are to develop toward increased capacity, they require various forms of incentives or pressure, resources and support. Clear and timely communications exchange with professional and administrative personnel is needed. Access to personnel records for school-based action and accountability is essential. Training and support in administration, management and leadership are needed. In other words, the balance between control, accountability and decentralisation is still a major issue that needs attention.

Chapter One indicated the problem the WCED faced in terms of duplication of services due to members of departments working in isolation from and in competition with each other. The previous structures of communication also required schools to report to different directors at different locations, leading to both duplication and lack of co-ordination. This duplication of services leads to a lack of co-ordination among the different departments. The lack of coherence sometimes results in services being duplicated. This problem has extra financial implications. The EMDC must now create an environment where individuals and departments can work together harmoniously toward a common purpose, not only within each EMDC, but also between different EMDCs.

Historically a lack of accountability existed within the service provision system within the WCED. The legacy of apartheid left many South African institutions with a negative understanding of control and accountability. The previous Apartheid Education

department was highly centralised and was rigid in terms of control. This resulted in a high level of distrust between teachers and departmental officials. Circuit Managers (previously known as Inspectors) and subject advisers were seen as agents of the oppressive regime. With the amalgamation of the former departments of education in 1994, the issue of control and accountability had to receive much more attention. An appraisal system was introduced during 1999, but up to now many schools do not have an appraisal system in place. Gleeson and Gunter (2001:141) refer to the Department of Education and Employment Newsletter (1994) (DfEE 31/1/95) that claims “appraisal is a vital tool helping teachers to realize their potential and carry out their duties more effectively. In turn this serves the ultimate goal of improving the quality of education for pupils”. This means that appraisal holds significant benefits for school development in the WCED. In my experience in my school district I noted that many schools do not have adequate knowledge of the appraisal system and therefore no form of appraisal is in place. Given the inherited distrust of departmental appraisals, it might take a long time and lots of resources to implement and operate an effective appraisal system in every school, assisted by the EMDCs.

In summary, EMDCs will have to deal carefully with the lack of experienced staff to provide professional and administrative support to schools. Broad participation in the decision-making process also needs extension so that role players at Head Office, EMDCs and schools can engage more meaningfully in the restructuring process. Also, more co-ordination in service provision is needed to eliminate duplication of services and lack of accountability. This will require a carefully worked out plan that will not compromise the authority of Head Office, while at the same time maximising transparency and accountability.

4. Proposed EMDCs responses to the challenge of communication

To address the problem of inexperienced staff assistance, many administrative staff members have been transferred to the seven EMDCs, where they have been absorbed into teams. In-service training programmes have been arranged to capacitate and enhance the professional and administrative capacities of teachers and administrators at school level.

Job descriptions have been set out. Some Head Office staff members have been deployed to schools to support with administrative assistance.

The lack of participation was taken very seriously in the initial stages of the OD programme. Broad participation may lead to more “buy-in” and more commitment to new projects. This was manifested when the STEDS Task Team 9 consulted 750 stakeholders. The service delivery model is also structured in such a way that a potential for broad participation has been created at all three levels within the WCED. During the early stages of the Organisational Development (OD) process the WCED realised that the “OD process could be effectively derailed if any stakeholder, or all of them, had a skewed understanding of the phenomenon” (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:7). This means that the organisational development of the WCED could fail if participants misunderstand the nature of organisational development. Also, lack of “buy-in” by teachers is much more complicated than lack of participation. I think issues of change-overload, transformation fatigue, threatened change etc. can account for a lot of resistance.

Robinson et al. (2002:62) found that “the primary reason put forward for why co-ordination is poor or lacking is that structures at Head Office level are too fragmented”. They point out that directorates at Head office have different budgets and different agendas. These uncoordinated services sometimes lead to duplication of services. To reduce the duplication of services, multidisciplinary teams are to be established at EMDC level that report directly to EMDC Directors. A multidisciplinary approach to service delivery aims to be more needs driven and attempts to reduce duplication by introducing co-ordination between services such as subject advisory services, psychological services, welfare services and provide better follow-up. These services will constitute the tasks of multidisciplinary teams with the Circuit Manager as team co-ordinator. They are also intended to develop more effective sharing of resources that may be more cost effective and assist with more effective use of human resources. Multidisciplinary teams consist of departmental personnel such as subject advisors, area managers, circuit managers, school clinic personnel, learning support personnel, administrators, governmental and community service providers and non- governmental organisations. NGO’s like TIP and IMTEC will

develop training programmes for multi-functional teams and provide school level support. These multi-disciplinary teams are intended to improve communication and coherence amongst school support services, by being first of all more responsive to individual school needs, and by reducing possible duplication or a piece-meal approach.

It is envisaged that through this restructuring, EMDCs will offer more systematic, co-ordinated and holistic support service to schools. This should eliminate the previously fragmented approach to supporting school development. The combination of the various services is not itself a guarantee for better services. In the new EMDCs it is envisaged that multidisciplinary teams will combine their expertise and work together to streamline communication and avoid duplication of services. This multidisciplinary team should work in a co-ordinated way to provide support and training to schools, while at the same time contributing to capacity building at schools. Through the combination of services, people can share their skills and learn from each other. Working together should increase the likelihood of a shared vision and develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other's perceptions. In this way it is hoped that miscommunication will be reduced. Subject advisory services, school clinics, NGOs, circuit managers and area managers will be joining together in a holistic approach.

The potential problem that might arise in multidisciplinary teams is the lack of understanding about the specific roles of departmental officials and the seniority of certain roles within multifunctional teams. This lack of clarification could hamper service delivery. The unification of services should lead to an equal and fair distribution of workload, but this very often does not happen in practice. "Teamwork" often is driven by one or a few motivated individuals. It is hoped that needs in local schools could be met sooner by these multidisciplinary teams than in the previous dispensation. However, close monitoring of the implementation of these teams will be needed if practice is to follow policy. These multidisciplinary teams hope to establish a shared vision between departments and between departments and schools. This is important, but also a difficult objective, given the legacy of distrust and apartheid fragmentation. Multidisciplinary services also aim to be most cost effective, because resources would be more responsibly used to meet the needs

of local schools. On the other hand, indications are that there will be an increase in salary expenses to sustain the functioning of the multidisciplinary teams.

The establishment of multidisciplinary teams should address the lack of capacity building in the education system. The WCED realises the need to transform itself so that it can build capacity within schools. Multidisciplinary teams should provide the necessary assistance and competent management support. As schools become increasingly independent and as their capacities increase, additional functions will be devolved to them. Of course, the process of devolution must be sensitive to school conditions. Too much devolution too soon will probably be met with resistance. Therefore it is important to build up capacity gradually. The fundamental aim of EMDCs is to build support structures for learning sites. This means that school administration and governing bodies will have to be capacitated. From my experience with governing bodies I have noted that many parent members are not trained or properly schooled to meet their responsibilities. For this reason, the Directorate: Human Resource Development has initiated a training programme called the Workplace Skill Plan to assist governing bodies with their responsibilities. In a newsletter to schools the Directorate: Human Resource Development indicated that members of this team will be visiting the seven EMDCs to discuss the process to be followed in enhancing the capacity of especially newly elected school governors. This capacity-building programme aims to enhance the quality of decision-making and to ensure a meaningful contribution from all members of governing bodies.

Control and accountability form a very important part of the sustainable development of any organisation. Through EMDCs, the WCED hopes to develop a “consistent, legitimate, continuous and transparent process of measurement and evaluation” (Robinson *et al*, 2002:14). This process will evaluate institutional performance and apply appropriate intervention where it is deemed necessary. Although Head Office will be responsible for functions such as control, policy determination/development, international, national, inter- and intra-provincial co-ordination, transversal co-ordination and management of the WCED education system, some authority will be given to educational staff at EMDCs and

schools to make appropriate judgements and decisions about their work. This will ensure that the principle of decision-making involves the lower levels of the education system.

5. Problems and restrictions with regards to the ethos within the WCED

Based on conflict resolution and mediation workshops conducted at schools as well as the exchange of information with other cluster groups, I found that it appears that one of the major problems facing our education system is low morale and absenteeism of teachers. The low morale of a teacher can negatively impact on his or her learners as well as on the productivity of the school. The low morale and absenteeism of teachers can in part be ascribed to over-crowded classes and lack of discipline among children. The over-crowded classes in many areas were the direct result of the rationalisation process that was introduced by the National Department of Education in 1998 (WCED Report 1(a), 2000:3). The rationalisation process was adopted in an attempt to reduce the overall salary bill by reducing the number of professional teachers in some areas and to relocate teachers to understaffed schools in more needy areas in an effort to address issues of equity. The WCED Report 1(a) (2000:3) noted, that “the most obvious impact of this process to date has been an increase in the number of learners per classroom.” The rationalisation process also created huge conflict between teachers and school management.

To address the issues of low morale and absenteeism of teachers, the WCED initiated a Safer School project early in 1999 to train teachers to assist students and teachers to use a constructive approach to conflict resolution and mediation. Only a core group was trained with the intention that they conduct workshops in their communities and schools in an attempt to empower other teachers and learners to deal with challenges in school. This training had a positive impact on the developmental progress, especially in the Belhar and Delft areas. This assumption I base on my personal experience while I was conducting workshops in conflict resolution and mediation for teachers in the Belhar and Delft areas.

Other issues that negatively influence the culture of learning are the lack of training and lack of professionalism between governing body members (SGB) and teachers. During my term as a member of a governing body I noted how a lack of training and professionalism

could introduce conflict and distrust between the school staff and governing body members. Some SGB members would visit the school regularly and walk up and down in the corridors to see if teachers were doing their work. These were the very SGB members who decided who would be appointed in promotion posts. Moreover, the leave arrangement is a contentious issue, especially between educators and the SGB. Due to budgetary constraints the WCED does not have the funds to employ contract workers to substitute for teachers taking leave for more than a month. The current arrangement is that the WCED will grant leave subject to SGB approval with the understanding that no substitute will be appointed. This is a recipe for conflict between educators and members of the SGB, because the SGB will not approve leave to the disadvantage of the school programme. Educators, on the other hand, feel entitled to leave, but at the same time are not allowed to take it because of the staff shortage it might create.

With the adoption of the legislation outlawing corporal punishment many teachers felt disempowered because they were accustomed to administering corporal punishment as a means of discipline. In terms of the SASA Act No. 84 (1996:10) “no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner”. The growing disciplinary problems in class are contributing to the low morale of teachers. Legislation makes it very difficult for teachers to administer traditional forms of discipline. The result is that children and parents are now subjecting teachers to increasing types of abuses. Teachers feel disempowered because the SASA Act No. 84 (1996:10) clearly stipulates that any person who contravenes the act “is guilty of an offence and liable of conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault”. Many teachers lack the necessary skills to deal with “at- risk” children (the likelihood of children having developmental difficulties) and often find themselves in conflict with the WCED. This happened in 2001, when one of my colleagues was fined a month’s salary for administering corporal punishment.

6. Proposed EMDCs responses to developing a productive ethos

To improve morale and reduce absenteeism amongst teachers, EMDCs are arranging capacity-building programmes to assist teachers with problems they experience in their classes. Programmes include, the Safer School project, which are aimed at training

teachers to engage creatively and productively with conflict in schools. The Safer School project can play a meaningful role in assisting teachers to cope with classroom discipline. Through conflict resolution and mediation programmes teachers are introduced to innovative ways of dealing with classroom discipline. At the end of these programmes, cluster groups are organised to constantly assist teachers in their regions. The conflict-resolution and mediation training programmes are also aimed at assisting teachers to deal creatively with conflicts that may arise amongst teachers and between teachers and governing body members.

Unsafe schools are a phenomenon that has increased enormously, especially in formerly disadvantaged communities. While some schools attempt to develop under difficult circumstances, deteriorating discipline, gangsterism and vandalism further reduce their chances of development. To assist schools with the problems of discipline, gangsterism and vandalism, the WCED has prioritised a funding for school safety according to the danger area in which they are located. Schools can access these funds through the Safer Schools network. These funds can also be used to organise leadership-training camp for learners. This training is very useful because these trainees can be used as prefects that can assist with the discipline of the school.

To improve communication between teachers and governing bodies, the EMDCs will assign the Workplace Skill Plan group to capacitate governing body members to carry out their duties in collaboration with teachers. The workplace skill group also aims to train governing body members to deal with their responsibilities. This training programme hopes to increase professionalism amongst governing body members, which would reduce conflict between governing body members and teachers somewhat. Dalin et al. (1993: 113) argue that “the extent to which ordinary practitioners will alter their behaviour will often be the essential indicator of change”.

Programmes that aim to capacitate teachers are also means to empower teachers to cope more creatively with the many challenges they face. Based on my experience as a teacher, I noted that if teachers know their subject content and prepare thoroughly for classes, it

may greatly reduce discipline problems in class. So the WCED's in-service training programmes for teachers also contributes to a more professional ethos.

The ELSEN project also aims to assist teachers to deal with children with reading disabilities. Based on my experience as a teacher, I noted in my class that sometimes more than 50% of learners experience reading disabilities. These children become disruptive because they do not experience any academic progress. The need is much greater than the current intervention, because there are so many "at-risk" children at school. Due to financial constraints the WCED is unable to employ enough social workers and psychologists to deal with the number of cases that require attention. There are so many serious cases of "at-risk" children who pose a threat to other children.

In my own experience, I had two Grade 7 boys in my class who were on trail for sodomy and possession of guns respectively. This is only a fraction of the kinds of conditions teachers and children are subjected to. Many of the above-mentioned challenges are directly related to poverty and broken homes. These challenges negatively affect the productive ethos of schools because teachers spend a great deal time in discipline control before engaging in teaching. Many teachers lack the necessary skills to adequately deal with these types of learners. The question that should be asked is what kind of support can the WCED give teachers to address these issues? With the necessary funds, resources and developmental programmes EMDCs may reduce these problems somewhat by working with teachers on appropriate strategies. However, the issues of poverty and the erosion of law and order are such broad and complex social, economic and political problems that they must be addressed at all levels by many different departments over many years.

To address the challenge of dysfunctional schools in the WCED education system effectively there is a need for constant communication between EMDCs and schools to ensure that early warning signs of problems are identified and no surprises arise. This may be achieved through one visit per term by one of the multidisciplinary teams.

7. Summary of proposed EMDCs support of schools

All the challenges the WCED has been facing since 2002 need one or other intervention from different levels within the WCED education system. These interventions the WCED has realized, must be needs driven. Most of these interventions have direct or indirect financial implications. Restructuring and development bring inevitable fear and anxiety with it. A broad consultation process is more likely to attract a positive contribution to the restructuring process. Fidler (2002:51) argues that involvement in decision-making could result in an improvement in the quality of the decisions and improved motivation and commitment of those involved. The WCED Report claims that the WCED through the EMDCs is attempting a holistic approach to development. This holistic approach includes educators, learners, and the community and should also include “at-risk” learners, who are sometimes so easily neglected because teachers are not equipped to deal with them. The EMDCs must take cognisance of the fear that people experience about change, while at the same time providing support and reassurance in working towards developing an understanding for the need to transform.

Although much has been done to ensure effective transformation within the WCED to provide effective service delivery to schools, the proposed plan is not without flaws. My argument in this chapter has been that the proposed interventions to the problems listed above indicate that the new service delivery will be an improvement on the previous system. The education new system attempts to be more client orientated. However, some of these problems will not be effectively addressed if other problems are ignored. Problems that are not effectively dealt with include a large, extended bureaucracy, lack of participation, low morale and absenteeism of educators. Issues that are completely omitted include gender inequity and party politics that influence the process. I shall discuss these in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Possible obstacles and problems pertaining to effective service delivery by EMDCs to schools

This chapter investigates problems, constraints and ambiguities encountered by similar educational centres nationally and internationally. It looks at the prevailing concerns, gaps, weaknesses and tensions that exist within EMDCs.

1. The international experience of similar educational support services

Before looking at the problems, gaps and ambiguities that exist in other education systems, the contextual differences within and between different countries must first be recognised. In the USA Education Service Districts (ESD) are providing services in different states across USA. Thompson (1994) argues that, although the needs of society have changed dramatically, schools in the USA have retained many outdated and ineffectual purposes and methods. Thompson (1994:1) states, that “Systemic reforms stem from the recognition that the nation’s social and economic structure have changed”. While this holds true in many countries and to a large extent in South Africa, I will argue that the reforms in the Western Cape were given impetus by the political events that were unfolding after 1994.

After an investigation into the education decentralisation model in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, Rhoten (2000:1) concluded that “the gaps in the education decentralisation process within countries and the variations in its outcomes between countries are determined by the ideological legacies and cultural identities as well as structural capacities that define that country’s state, market and society model.” This especially holds true for the education system in South Africa that is characterised by a variety of cultures of which many have been greatly deprived in the past. She further argues that, although the neo-liberal democratic state-market-society (SMS) model has been enforced in developing and developed countries, it “has evolved at slightly different rates and with somewhat different routes in each country” (Rhoten, 2000:2). She concludes that this evolution resulted from contextual differences. Hopkins and Harris (1997:1) agree with this view.

They claim that “different improvement strategies and types of intervention are needed for schools at different stages of growth”. This view holds true especially within the South African context, where many formerly disadvantaged schools are plagued with crime and social upheaval, while schools in rich areas have more resources. Schools in the WCED have been developed within different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Hence different improvement strategies are needed for the different groups in South Africa schools.

1.1 Different intervention strategies for different schools

Hopkins and Harris (1997) suggest that schools are sometimes at different levels of effectiveness. Therefore schools require different school improvement strategies to fit their unique needs. Hopkins and Harris (1997:3) also admit that not much is known in terms of “how different improvement strategies affect different schools.” In their research project conducted in the USA, schools were categorised according to type: namely, Type I, Type II and Type III. Type I schools are considered to be failing or ineffective schools. Hence Type I strategies were applied to Type I schools, which include strategies to assist failing schools to become moderately effective. It also includes clear and direct attention to basic curriculum and organisational issues. In this situation a high level of external support is given, since the understanding is that these types of schools need significant broad based support. Type II strategies are directed towards moderately effective schools. The aim is to help moderately effective schools to become more effective. The understanding is that these types of schools only need help to structure their development priorities. These schools must be helped to focus on specific teaching and learning issues. They should also be helped to build capacity within their schools to support this work. Type III strategies assist effective schools to remain effective. External help is not necessary, but is often welcome. These types of schools normally search for and create their own support network. These schools are also characterised by collaboration and teamwork.

The implications of these different strategies for South African EMDCs are that the WCED and EMDCs should firstly recognise that in their contexts schools are at different levels of development. Hence different strategies are needed for different schools. EMDCs should

also acknowledge that failing schools are unable to improve themselves. Hence a high level of external intervention is necessary. It is important to identify problems at an early stage and act accordingly. Hopkins and Harris (1997:5) say that for development to be effective, “data collection is an important first step.” Management and leadership are critical components in the development of schools. Early intervention and continual support is important for the sustainable development of schools. So, in order to assist the three types of schools in South Africa, EMDCs should collect data on each specific school, develop its management and leadership capacities and arrange extensive interventions to assist these schools. Therefore, it seems that a significant part of the EMDCs will be to work with particularly ex-Department of Education and Training schools and rural schools who have been made most dysfunctional through apartheid policies and practices.

To assist Type 1 schools, EMDCs should carefully analyse the needs of such schools and focus on that specific needs. Since a certain level of proficiency already exists, EMDCs need to help (Type 1) schools to carefully structure its developmental program to improve their services. This may cultivate a closer relationship and foster greater participation between EMDCs and schools

Type 1 schools would be associated with dysfunctional schools. The quality of instruction should be more intense and EMDCs should be in constant communication with these schools. The instructional agenda should include all levels namely teachers, administration and learners. This type of intervention would encourage these schools to work in collaboration with EMDCs and would greatly reduce crisis intervention.

1.2 Centralised and decentralised services

In the United Kingdom, schools improvement strategies have included the establishment of various forums for educational support such as the Teachers Training Agency (TTA), Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) as well as the allocation of centralised and decentralised tasks. The TTA was primarily responsible for teachers’ education and research development while the OFSTED carried overall responsibility for driving school improvement.

Many departments within the United Kingdom education system have been decentralised by giving meaningful power to school governing bodies and other school-level stakeholders. Services that have been centralised include curriculum, educational funding and assessment processes, while at the same time the decentralisation of services such as the day-to-day management of schools and budgetary responsibilities was also introduced. The consequences of decentralisation were a decline in state school funding, a rise in self-funded professional development, and increased teacher and institutional accountability. It has also led to a more “academic interest in the policies and processes of professional development” (Law, 1999:2).

Law (1992:2) argues that decentralisation of educational services in the UK has led to a more “market-driven and managerial schooling system”. This in turn resulted in competition among schools for clients and prestige. Decentralisation leads to a decrease of involvement and resources from the state. Schools in the UK now have to supplement their resources and are also becoming more accountable to the communities they service. Schools that offer the best services are more likely to increase their clients. Hence there is a high level of competition among schools, which ultimately leads to market-driven schooling.

Competition among South African schools is on the increase. What the UK decentralisation model signals for EMDCs in South Africa is that careful attention should be given to the potential outcomes of decentralisation, especially within the context of a disadvantaged historical past and the limitation of resources. In other words, EMDCs need to help schools in taking on devolved responsibilities, such as day-to-day management and financial planning, but also need to be aware that competition among schools to improve their services and enrolment is likely to be of most benefit only once schools can compete on a more or less even footing. In South Africa, that is still a long way from being the case and the issue of decentralisation should therefore be implemented with caution.

In the UK decentralisation was aimed at bringing together all the stakeholders in a forum where differences could be discussed and resolved for the purpose of developing an

environment conducive to learning. In South African schools a more decentralised approach to the daily management and budgetary responsibility was introduced for Article 21 schools. However, management at Head Office still decides on the amount to be allocated to schools for administration, per capita spending on learners and maintenance of buildings. The centralisation of financial management supports Fullan's claim that change can be more effective if a system combines centralisation and decentralisation. The decentralisation process stresses the importance of schools being more publicly accountable.

Educational institutions in the USA, UK and Asia rely on decentralisation to transform and improve their education systems. However, decentralisation is not a quick fix for better educational service. Decentralisation must involve different levels of development. Dalin (1998:16) draws on Elmore's claim that decentralisation "should foster development in the classroom, in schools as a whole and school system and in the relationship between the schools and the local community". Dalin (1998:15) argues that parents must possess "real power and responsibility over decisions that are important to them and their children". Teachers must be given "freedom" and "flexibility" at school level to do their job, yet within the framework of national imperatives. According to Dalin, many reports on site-based management have shown that little has been done in terms of teacher influence, although he (1998:15) draws on research which indicates "that schools with a large measure of teacher influence enjoy better staff motivation, increased efficiency". His conclusion is that teachers respond best if they feel part of the process. If EMDCs want to get the best out of teachers, they need to devolve real authority to teachers and encourage their professional development.

Dalin (1998:16) notes however that there is "little so far to indicate that decentralised schools reforms lead to improved pupils performance." Dalin draws on Fullan's report on Levin and Eubanks (1989), who investigated the problems that a decentralised school experienced. The report draws attention to "insufficient time, training and assistance, diffuse line of responsibility, problems in the decision-making process, resistance from leaders at all levels to yielding power, regulatory limitations, and state and federal

agreements” as part of the difficulties involved. What Dalin’s research highlights is that successful decentralization moves must be underpinned by realistic time frames, sensitivity to teachers’ anxieties, clarity of roles and procedures, constructive consultations and broad-based participation. If EMDCs are therefore to succeed in transforming South African schools into effective learning organisations, they will have to take cognisance of lessons learnt elsewhere.

1.3 Broad-based consultation

Hallinger (1998:4) argues that, “The key to producing high-quality products was still skilled workers and their suggestions”. This means that if the WCED aims to provide quality service delivery, it should value the suggestions of school teachers because teachers understand better the actual needs of the learners. Also the EMDCs have to provide training programmes to develop administrative capacities at all levels at school, namely principal, teacher and administrative staff. A situation has risen in Southeast Asia where the bureaucracy of state support in the education system does not consult with teachers about their classroom needs. This has led to poor school performance. Hallinger (1998:5) reiterates the sentiments of Sippanondha Ketudat, a former Minister of Education, who claims that the Asian educational system “is still grounded in traditions that limit rather than foster students’ independent, creative thinking and practical problem solving.” Hallinger concludes that the education system in South-East Asia does not comply with the expectations placed on it by national and international conditions. Hallinger concurs with Ketudat’s claim that poor academic performance is a result of the learning system. This means that services provided by the education system may not be relevant to the actual needs of teachers and learners. It would therefore be important for EMDCs to be in constant communication with schools and teachers in order to be able to address actual needs.

This means that poor school achievement should not be blamed only on schools and teachers, but on the education system as a whole, since it is the support of the education system that enables teachers to perform optimally. What this implies for the WCED is that,

for schools performance to improve, the EMDCS must provide adequate service to schools. It also means that EMDCs must, together with the schools, do a careful need analysis.

1.4 Professional development

According to Hallinger (1998:8) a continuous challenge facing schools worldwide to encourage teachers to participate in in-service training. In-service training provides teachers with up-to-date information on educational matters. He says that policy should prescribe continuous development in schools and staff. The management of information is a very useful tool in any learning organisation. Hallinger (1998:8) points out that a learning organisation is characterised by the “skillful use of relevant information”. Through multifunctional teams, EMDCs hope to provide ongoing support and in-service training to teachers.

1.5 Change management

If the focus is on the development of effective learning, Law (1999:2) suggests that, “sound management skills and practices are essential pre-requisites”. Law (1999:2) noted that, with the development of a more market-driven and managerial system, concerns have been expressed over changes in the school leader’s role. She says that principals and head teachers are becoming too involved in administrative duties. This results in the neglect of their curriculum and professional leadership roles. Law (1999:2) draws on Ribbins’s (1996) suggestion that effective head teachers should be able to cope with their administrative duties and still fulfil their obligations regarding curriculum and professional leadership. However, the balance may vary according to their context, skills or personal preference. It is therefore important for schools and teachers who lack managerial skills to be supported in developing these. EMDCs have as part of their task to do this.

Although Hallinger does not say anything about leadership, what I can deduce from his arguments is that learning institutions require leadership that is able to manipulate change according to its environment. Also, co-ordination in any institution of learning requires effective leadership. EMDCs would therefore have to assist principals and senior leaders in coping with and manipulating change effectively. According to Hallinger (1998), the

concept of learning organisation originated in the private sector and has since moved into schools. He claims that a learning organisation should be capable of manipulating change successfully according to its environment. He further claims that creating effective learning organisations requires system leaders to create a network in which information can be spread to schools quickly and efficiently. If an effective leadership is in place, the WCED through the EMDCs would be able to provide effective and efficient service delivery to local schools in terms of communication between local schools and the Department and among schools. Hallinger concludes that a shared vision is an important requirement for a learning organisation. He says that not much guidance is given in terms of vision building and goal consensus, and leaders generally assume “that goal-setting was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and that schools should accept this goal-setting as meaningful and appropriate” (Hallinger, 1998:6). He concludes that this assumption is not in line with the decentralised notion of learning organisations in which local schools identify their needs and develop a common vision of how to proceed within the education system. Learning organisations should be able to identify their needs and devise their own innovative methods to address their needs. This, however, does not preclude assistance from the central department to help to help individual schools articulate their goals.

He draws on Fullan (1993) and Senge’s (1990) claim that the development of a learning organisation involves a process of cultural change and process management. This means each community has a particular value system and that direct involvement of parents and the local community is very important to the development of the learning organisation within that community. Hallinger (1998:8) admits that building a learning organisation is a slow process that is not easily susceptible to “direct manipulation.” It appears that the education development process is a trial-and-error process with no guarantee of quick results. Hallinger’s concept of a learning organisation seems to emphasise the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the development of a shared vision. Hallinger also considers learning organisations as places where students are taught to think creatively and where management and teachers can manage change effectively according to the context.

The rationale for EMDCs acknowledges that the idea for better service delivery stems from the recognition that South Africa's social and economic structure has changed. This change was the result of a new democratic dispensation that came into existence in 1994. The changes in family structures, the increased child poverty, the inadequate social welfare and social services are generating new expectations and call for improved education for all. To provide better service delivery in education it is imperative that systemic change must occur and cognisance should be taken of the needs of schools and the community in which they operate.

1.6 Lessons for EMDCs

Dalin (1998) draws on Fullan's (1993) discussion on the 'New Futures Initiative' that was financed by the Anne E Casey Foundation. The purpose of the project was to restructure American city schools. An amount of \$40 million was spent over a period of five years in four medium-sized schools. These schools were to established collaborative groups in which families, schools, companies, representatives of the welfare and the city government officials participated. Each school made an assessment of its needs. The Foundation gave these schools extensive technical assistance in in-service training and guidance on an ongoing basis. The aim of the project was to give schools more independence from municipalities, to give teachers more flexibility, pupils more individual options and follow-up, and individual teachers training to address their specific needs. Schools were encouraged to link up with other schools to form a network. Other stakeholders who participated in the projects were private companies, welfare department, and city government officials. In spite of network support from other schools, companies, parents, welfare officials, city government officials and the Foundation, it was found that the schools did not change significantly, but merely added new elements to the existing practices. Dalin (1998:201) observed that, "the basic organisation of the school remained the same". It was also found that the changes did not improve the way teachers related to each other. Most teachers had a problem working together because they were used to working on their own. The learning culture of these schools remained unchanged because the standard teaching practice could not be changed.

What EMDCs in South Africa could learn from this experience is that good resources do not necessarily guarantee successful development. As EMDCs develop, it is important to look at the factors that support and hinder development. The issue of working relationships and collegiality should not be neglected, especially within the South African historical context with its inherited culture of distrust. Gentle (2001:24) says that there is evidence to suggest that “collegiate approaches towards school improvement are far more effective than the efforts of those working in isolation”. This by no means suggests that EMDCs are doomed to failure, but it does underline that professional camaraderie could form an important part of the equation in the developmental process.

The failure of this restructuring programme led Dalin (1998:201) to believe that “fundamental change in the school organisation is not easy even with ample resources.” Dalin draws on other studies of restructuring projects that indicate similar results namely those of Taylor and Teddie (1992), Fullan and Miles (1992), and Fullan (1993). The lesson to be learned from this experience is that it is not easy to accomplish fundamental change in spite of all the support, large resources and commitment from important participants that go into restructuring. Fullan (1993:49) argues that the lesson to be learned from this experience is the difficulty of accomplishing “changes in instructional practices and in the culture of teaching towards greater collaborative relationships among student, teachers and other potential partners”. Teachers and officials are not used to working in teams and sometimes the failure can be due to the “conservative” environment in which the education system operates (Fullan, 1993:3). Hargreaves (1997:112) concurs with Fullan (1993) by saying, that “teachers have developed a culture of individualism working largely in isolation, sharing few resources”. South African teachers are no different. Based on my experience as a teacher, I noted that teachers often were not keen on sharing their ideas and resources with each other.

In certain instances restructuring efforts were partially successful. Dalin draws on Fullan’s comments on the Cox and deFrees (1992) report. This report states that ten schools in the state of Maine (USA) made substantial progress in areas such as pupils learning experiences, changes in the teaching processes, and the redesign of the school and

improving the relationship between the schools and the surrounding institutions. The success could be ascribed to a clear focus on what was expected. They also realised that the changes had to do with relationships and power, that all parties had an understanding of the process, and that it required extra effort. An important lesson according to Dalin (1998:202) is that “a new organisation must be developed all the way from pupil to the head teacher”.

What South African EMDCs can learn from these experiences is that extensive participation plays an important role in the restructuring process. Also, EMDCs must have a clear focus on what they want to improve and how they want to improve it. It is therefore important to point out clearly the role of each participant so that each one knows exactly what is expected of him or her.

In his thesis “Die rol van onderwysersentrum in skoolontwikkeling” (The role of education centres in school development) Faasen (1988:124) states, “Onderwysers wil en kan self n baie sterk bydra tot hulle eie professionele ontwikkeling, tot institutionele ontwikkeling en tot kurrikulumontwikkeling lewer”. (Teachers want to and can make a huge contribution to their own professional development, to institutional development and to curriculum development.) He further claims that teachers experience different developmental needs at different times. Teachers are the ones who work with learners and know their shortcomings and needs. Faasen (1988:128) puts it this way: “Onderwysers self kan hulle eie behoeftes die beste identifiseer”. (Teachers are best capable to identify their needs.) He also claims that the classroom teacher has a wealth of knowledge and experience. I argue that, if the success of the learner depends on the expertise of his/her teacher, it is fair to assume that the development of the teacher becomes the most important variable in the successful teaching of learners. Teachers should be given the opportunity to play an active role in the management of their professional development. The lesson for South African EMDCs is therefore to encourage meaningful teacher participation but at the same time to guard against investing resources in the wrong focus areas.

Harber and Davies (1997:156) claim that democratic schools are more effective than bureaucratic and authoritarian schools. Harber and Davies (1997:156) make the following suggestions:

- Rules are better upheld if everybody agrees upon them;
- Regular discussion promotes communication;
- Students and staff are more responsible for and have better control over their organisation than departmental officials;
- Decision-making is improved when everybody's opinion is respected.

Harber and Davies also admit that democracy has its weakness in that the decision-making process is time consuming and does not work perfectly at all times.

In summary, what EMDCs in South Africa can learn from the above international experiences is that different strategies are needed for different schools, depending on their level of effectiveness. Support services should be linked with specific stages of development. Therefore thorough investigation should be done in terms of the different levels of development, taking into account the suggestions of all stakeholders – especially teachers. Careful attention should be given to previously disadvantaged schools, since decentralisation stimulates competition that may further marginalise non-performing schools. Also the element of working relationships should not be neglected because, as already pointed out, sufficient resources do not guarantee success. Professional camaraderie among co-workers could play an important role in the restructuring process.

2. Prevailing concerns, gaps, weaknesses and ambiguities in the proposed EMDCs

2.1 Structures

In a discussion document drafted by the Mitchell Plain area STEDS Steering Committee on 15 September 2000c, concerns were raised about the manner in which the STEDS project was developing. Some members of the STEDS Steering committee felt that party politics in the Western Cape influenced the structural alignment and that the appointment of

management staff was to maintain political domination by the then National Party over the education sector. The STEDS Steering committee acknowledged the inevitable influence of politics in the education sectors, but was concerned with the negative impact this might have on the development of education. The inadequate provision of human, physical and financial resources was another matter of concern. These perceptions – whether they were based on reality or otherwise – could derail the development process if participants in general are suspicious of the motives and intentions of the others.

The aim of EMDCs is to design an integrated, holistic service delivery model that is intended to focus primarily on the support and development of learning sites. Learning sites refer to schools but also point to the classroom-teaching situation. EMDCs hope to organise their services into a coherent, responsive and adaptable support system by means of multidisciplinary teams. The possible challenges that may face multidisciplinary teams are the suspicion and the confusion of roles that may exist within the teams. In an interview conducted at an EMDC Metropole North, one team member said that there is no clearly spelled out policy in terms of their roles within multidisciplinary teams. Robinson et al. (2002:77) state that a “lack of training for new roles and new situations” exists especially in rural areas. Given that three of the seven EMDCs are located in rural areas, staff will require extensive assistance and support in redefining their roles and relationships within multidisciplinary teams. Roles that were familiar to them were changed significantly and many must still come to terms with their new roles, while adjusting to the idea of working with new colleagues. Sometimes this means working with colleagues of different cultures. Gultig et al. (1999:51) define culture as “the procedures, norms, expectations and values” of people. Multicultural multidisciplinary teams are therefore potential sites for deep-rooted tensions, especially given South Africa’s apartheid history. A meaningful relationship and collegial support between team members must be present to create the environment for teamwork. Roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined and accepted by everyone to avoid misunderstandings and provide quality service to schools. A productive “culture” of shared norms, expectation and values will take time to develop within the teams. Until this is firmly entrenched, teams might be subject to a fair amount of internal confusion and strife.

In an interview conducted in 2001 at Head Office, a STEDS participant expressed his concern that some STEDS members perceive the STEDS project as a Head Office initiative with a Head Office agenda. Robinson et al. (2002:48) also found among former SEED participants that “most seemed to regard the EMDC planning process as a Head Office ‘top down’ initiative”. This perception – whether based on reality or otherwise – may influence the developmental process negatively. There is also competition between STEDS participants to secure individual positions in the hierarchy. Dalin (1998:33) argues that “success and status are related to one’s place in the hierarchy.” Research indicates that there is a link between perception and behaviour, so these perceptions of status might negatively affect developmental processes by participants questioning the legitimacy of the “transformed” WCED, and their status within the new structures.

A school’s ability to provide a good learning environment depends to a certain degree on its access to material resources. Robinson et al. (2002:73) found that a lack of resources, facilities, poor transportation and poor administration exists within the WCED. Yet it is the aim of EMDCs to minimise these shortcomings by bringing these services closer to schools. Looking at the situation after the establishment of EMDCs, I noted that some departments like social work, psychology and school clinics still operate from different locations. In an interview I was told that the reason why certain departments operate from different locations is a lack of facilities in certain EMDCs. This goes counter to the aims of EMDCs to provide multidisciplinary teams and to provide services in a holistic way. When team members work from different locations, this can stifle professional camaraderie and develop a sense of “us” and “them”.

2.2 Communication

Planning for change should be a joint venture and include a transparent process. Wallace and McMahon (1994:176) argue that working out what works best and under which circumstances is a complex task. In a research report documented by Robinson et al. (2001:9) they argue that some participants in the research project felt that “there had been inadequate communication and consultation about the SEED pilot programme particularly in areas not involved in the pilot phase”. Some former SEED participants of the pilot

project in 1999 were left out of the planning of the EMDC Planning Task Teams and expressed their concern about whether their own EMDC proposals would be taken into account and incorporated into the STEDS Task Team's 2000 plans for the EMDCs. In a discussion document (2001) some SEED participants felt that the establishment of EMDCs is a top-down initiative. The discussion document called the STEDS project "a Head Office thing". Teachers, principals and some STEDS members regarded the EMDC planning process as a Head Office top-down initiative, where many important stakeholders had very little influence. Perceptions such as these have the potential to sow seeds of distrust that may stifle the development process. Because of the complexity of the process of change, it is important to maximise all available human resources. Wallace and McMahon (1994:178) put it this way: "...effective planning for change leads to the most focused effort possible to implement the most important innovations, with the least possible wastage of staff talent and with the most efficient use of resources".

Some members of the Mitchell's Plain STEDS Reference Group also felt that not enough time and resources were spent in the advocacy programme so that principals at school level could meaningfully interact with the systemic reform process. The lack of perceived participation could lead to fear and suspicion, especially at the school level of the education sector. Inadequate preparation was done to prepare schools for change to EMDCs. In a discussion document WCED (2000:2) it is said that consultation on the establishment of EMDCs was limited to Head Office, some SEED participants and IMTEC. Many schools only became aware of EMDCs when the process was at an advanced stage. During an interview conducted in 1999 I noted that many principals did not know anything about EMDCs.

Collaborative working relationships and participation are critical conditions for learning organisations especially for EMDCS and schools in the Western Cape. Student achievement is linked to the quality of instruction. Instruction in turn is linked to the capacity of the school and the capacity of schools are affected by policy and programmes offered by EMDCs and Head Office. Of course, there are many other factors not listed that influence student achievement, but the purpose is to link EMDC and Head Office to

student achievement. Through meaningful collaboration between schools and Head Office, supportive conditions for better learner achievement can be developed.

In an interview conducted with one of the departmental officials at Head Office the interviewee felt that multi-disciplinary teams are not functioning as they were intended to. When roles are not clearly defined, it could create conflict among team members. This became clear when a Circuit Manager was asked to attend to a problem at a local school. After investigating the problem, he decided that this particular problem needed the attention of Labour Relations. He then referred the matter to the Labour Relations, who referred it back to him. After much deliberation the Circuit Manager was ordered by the EMDC director to attend to the problem. This is an indication of the confusion of roles that exists within EMDCs. Many other challenges will still unfold as EMDCs develop a life of their own. Although job descriptions were carefully worked out, there are always many activities that may cross the boundaries and call for discretionary management decision. Boundary management goes beyond who does what; it is also about what individuals can do beyond what is demanded from them. Interpersonal relationships in any organisation are crucial for its success. Poster (1999:151) observes that “relationships are a key feature of the restructuring school.” Good staff relationships depend to a large extent on communication. It must be noted that these problems do not reflect all EMDCs, because each EMDC may face its unique issues.

2.3 Processes

Based on views expressed in a STEDS Steering Committee discussion document WCED (2000:2), there is a feeling of alienation among some of the departmental officials with regard to the initiation of EMDCs. This feeling of alienation stems from the perception that the decision -making process was a top -down approach regarding the secondment of people from Head Office into the project. The result of the secondment was that some former members of the SEED pilot project were dropped from the STEDS teams. This situation created an environment of distrust about the developmental process.

Gultig et al. (1999:4) claim that to improve the quality of teaching and learning, education management must be supportive rather than directive. To provide quality support, it is important to understand the needs of clients. Once an understanding is gained, meaningful interaction must follow between the support provider and local schools. Some STEDS participants raised the concern that the development of independence through school-based management is far from ideal, because EMDCs still receive too many directives from Head Office about what they should do and how to do it. This is not to say that Head Office should not play a role at all, but more discretionary decision-making should be allowed to EMDCs. They also feel that too much attention was given to the restructuring of the WCED, and not much attention was given to classroom-based support to schools. Some felt strongly that improved teaching and learning should be the ultimate indicator of educational development. Based on my involvement with in-service training programmes within EMDCs, I have noted a significant improvement in the amount of involvement from the WCED with schools. Many of the interventions with schools are mostly aimed at classroom base support.

Some STEDS participants felt that the transformation is only a manipulation of the previous WCED organogram. According to an unpublished and undated memorandum, there is a perception among some previous SEED participants that “the same drivers will drive the bus, but that the seating arrangement will change and that bureaucrats will ultimately decide who sits where”. This creates the perception that individuals at top management are protecting their turf and enlarging their sphere of control. Whether these concerns are real or perceived, it may still create suspicion among the lower ranks of the education structure. When the authority for decision-making is far removed from schools, change comes slowly. This would mean that schools will not own the restructuring process and this in turn will lead to greater alienation from schools.

Participants sometimes come from different social backgrounds. Some of these participants, therefore, approach the restructuring process from their different social experiences on the basis of age, gender, race and ethnicity. Gender is an important feature of social differentiation and needs adequate attention. Some STEDS members felt that the

national imperatives of equity and redress have not received adequate attention within the restructuring process of the WCED. They felt that gender issues were not adequately addressed, because the top management at Head Office and EMDCs are still male dominated. These STEDS members fear that this status quo will be reflected in the transformed WCED.

2.4 Implementation

Sometimes an implementation dip occurs that could stifle the reform process. Implementation is a process where a programme is put into action. In the case of educational change, the process is both technically and socially complex and loaded with uncertainty. The different domains within the WCED that operated in isolation are now forced to work together. These domains that used to be autonomous and had their own agendas now have to work as collaborative teams. Gultig et al. (1999) claim that individual performance and development in combination with organisational development can manage change effectively. Based on interviews conducted with departmental officials, it appears that a challenge exists among multidisciplinary members in terms of collaborative teamwork. It appears that no adequate arrangements were made to prepare members for the amalgamation of domains. New norms and shared values must be adopted to develop harmonious collaboration. This in itself is not an easy process. Gultig et al. (1999:7) concur by saying, "Resistance to change flourishes where there is poor communication, little or no active participation or involvement in decision".

The transformation process should therefore be based on a clear vision and purpose, trust and support, with accountability for results and responsible use of resources. Bolam (1993:219) argues that important considerations in implementing restructuring should include "clarity about restructuring, collaborative decision making, training, accountability mechanisms and budgetary support". As stated in the previous chapter, a lack of trust can be a hindrance to the transformation process. The transformation process will not be immune to frustrations and shortcomings. Each school has its unique conditions, purposes and methods appropriate to its needs. Schools should organise and set their aims and goal within the framework of the WCED. Gultig et al. (1999:35) argue that what needs to

happen is to translate “individual vision into a shared vision”. These are elements that could greatly enhance restructuring. Based on the above concerns, there is indication of distrust in the transformation process. However, this perception is not widespread. In some metropole areas EMDCs members are highly motivated.

To create a shared vision, the WCED extended the SEED programme to involve all other areas within the WCED and took over the transformation programme. The new service delivery model in the Western Cape should be implemented in such a way that all schools understand the roles of Head Office and EMDCs and buy into the new service delivery model. In this way it would be easier for multidisciplinary team members to combine their expertise for the development of all schools within the respective EMDCs, where the student should be the ultimate beneficiary of change.

2.4.1 *Aspect of time*

Fullan (1991) concludes that substantive change is time consuming and an energy-intensive process. Based on my experience with workshops at the Parow Teachers Centre, I noted a significant lack of time in terms of in-service training of teachers pertaining to OBE. Some teachers expressed their wish for a more flexible and extended time schedule to engage more meaningfully with important issues. Complex issues are squeezed into short time frames. Presenters said that insufficient budgets and time constraints do not allow for adequate follow-up sessions. Teachers are burdened with information and expected to form networks in their school communities to work through the newly acquired skills. Dalin et al. (1993:137) suggest that sometimes it is necessary to free teachers from their daily teaching schedule because, as they put it, “the use of time is as we see it a major issue in change management”. The emphasis should be on quality training not quantity. I also noted that Head Office determines the time schedule of in-service programmes. If EMDCs are to create learning organisations, there should more commitment and flexibility in terms of time for quality training programmes to empower teachers to create and sustain learning organisations within their communities. To empower teachers with skills will take time away from their classrooms, but the investment will have its spin-offs eventually. Teachers need time to assimilate new skills and be given

time to put them into practice and later reflect on the results. These new developments are highly complex. Even good teachers need considerable time and support to become expert in new skills. So teachers must be given enough time and resources to establish a solid foundation for good teaching.

2.4.2 Lack of coherence

Based on my experience of training sessions, I noted that EMDC presenters don't always relay the same messages. The mixed information creates confusion amongst teachers. During an OBE training workshop at the Parow Teachers Centre (a training centre for the EMDC Metropole North), there was confusion amongst teachers in terms of achieving outcomes. The presenter of the Social Science learning area argued that specific outcomes must be attained first before the learning outcome can be reached. At the next presentation the other presenter stated that the learning outcome must be attained first before one could reach the specific outcome. This lack of coherence indicates that multidisciplinary teams at EMDCs need more co-ordination and training.

2.4.3 No clear incentive

There is no clear incentive for teachers to participate in teacher training workshops or networking. Some teachers feel that they are already over-burdened with administrative, pastoral and extra-mural duties. Based on interviews with teachers as well as my own experience, teachers feel that attending workshops or forming networks are added responsibilities. Many schools also expect teachers to get involved with fund-raising efforts to supplement their schools budget. These tasks can become burdens, especially for teachers in the Western Cape, who also have to deal with the restructuring programme, new policies and in-service training. Teachers feel already overburdened by the transformation responsibilities. The increase in responsibilities may lead to unwillingness from teachers and school administrators to attend training programmes at EMDCs or to contribute to the developmental process.

2.4.4 *Gender-skewed management*

The current policy does not stipulate promotion of women to senior positions. There is a great gender imbalance in the newly formed EMDCs. Out of seven EMDCs in the Western Cape, there is only one female director. It is encouraging to note that more attention to gender equity was given in EMDCs. (see Appendix C). The implementation of EMDCs should take cognisance of the gender equity legislation.

2.4.5 *Over-bureaucratisation*

Harber and Davies (1997:47) state that “bureaucracy with its emphasis on hierarchy, technical experience, appointment rather than election, and secrecy, is a form of domination”. This is also the allegation made by the Mitchell’s Plain STEDS Steering Committee EMDC initiative about the WCED. Gultig et al. (1999:24) claim that bureaucracy produces “machine-like organisations.” Over-bureaucratisation makes it difficult for teachers to understand and access information.

3. Summary

International experiences can play a significant role in informing the developmental process in the Western Cape EMDCs. The problems highlighted in the international and national literature that are likely to be problems in the Western Cape as well include, among others, the contextual differences that may inform the strategies to improve service delivery to schools. Another lesson to be learned is that negative outcomes in schooling sometimes point to faulty education systems. Law (1999) also indicated that decentralisation leads to market-driven schooling, which ultimately leads to competition amongst schools. This in turn may lead to “winners” and “losers”, which may further marginalise disadvantaged schools.

Possible obstacles facing EMDCs with regards to structures include: inadequate resources and lack of facilities. With regards to communication the possible obstacles may be lack of participation and delays in upgrading information technology. Further obstacles could also be the inflexibility of time schedules to arrange in-service training programmes, lack of coherence in training programmes and the fact that no incentive is offered to motivate

teachers to participate in workshops. Other problems may be the gender-skewed management at Head Office and EMDCs and over-bureaucratisation.

If EMDCs are to provide a professional service to schools, the above-mentioned issues need careful consideration. Broad participation, especially at school level, may be a useful tool to make the developmental process more legitimate and transparent. This would ensure acceptance even when the process fails, because everyone accepted the process. The frustration with educational change is that it is a time consuming process with no guarantees for success.

CHAPTER 5

Possible modifications of EMDC policy and areas for further research

The previous chapter pointed out the challenges and obstacles facing EMDCs. This chapter aims to look at some modifications to certain EMDC policies and to look at areas for further research. Research has shown that restructuring depends on whether the conditions are favourable or not. Roles, rules, relationships and results are issues that are frequently grappled with in the process of restructuring. Many problems that appear in the restructuring process will manifest themselves in different ways in different countries. The literature also indicates that certain restructuring characteristics are universal. EMDCs were established to create effective and efficient services to schools, which ultimately should benefit the learners. Because of this aim, it is important to look at what make services more effective. There will always be factors that enhance or hinder development. However, it is the combination of these factors that will eventually impact on the success or failure of restructuring. Poster (1999:35) sums up Sashkin and Egermeier's argument (1992:3) that "restructuring involves changes in roles, rules and relationships between and among students and teachers, teachers and administrators, and administrators at various levels from the school building to the district office to the state level, all with the aims of improving student outcome." I argue that this principle holds true for all three levels of the education system in the WCED, especially for multidisciplinary teams at EMDC level. The student should become the ultimate beneficiary of the service provision. Although there appears to be an improvement to the previous service delivery model, there is still scope for improvement to the current model.

1. Structures

The experience in the USA (as pointed out in the previous chapter) showed that change is not guaranteed in spite of extensive technical assistance, in-service training or resources. Although many resources and a great deal of assistance went into the restructuring programme, it still failed. The failure was ascribed to the fact that teachers had a problem

working together. The presence of professional camaraderie could form an important element in the restructuring process.

1.1 Confusion of roles

When people work in groups there is always the potential for conflict. Hallinger and Kantamara (2000:192) argue that “conflict is a natural by-product of change”. Conflict that most commonly appears in groups is usually based on lack of understanding about roles, battles for role quality, poor communication, reluctance to express opinions and concern about job security. Although the boundaries of job descriptions appear very organised in the EMDC policy, there is still confusion of roles within multi-functional teams. During an interview with multi-functional team members, some expressed the need to develop a decision-making policy and guidelines that would clearly define their roles and give them a sense of understanding in terms of their position within the teams. This multi-functional team member also told me that she often has to venture into unfamiliar terrain that goes beyond her knowledge and expertise, but to avoid conflict she “gives it her best shot”. People must have clear direction and they need to be reminded of it as they go about their daily duties. A clearly defined role will prevent conflict and minimise distrust among colleagues. Moreover, boundaries should not just dictate who does what, but also what one can do beyond what is demanded of one. I argue that there isn’t as yet enough clarity about who does what in the multi-functional teams in EMDCs, and that further modification with regard to this policy is needed.

1.2 Lack of resources

During interviews conducted at a certain EMDC some multi-functional team members expressed the need to have adequate resources available to them to do their work effectively. More relevant curriculum materials are available these days. However, these materials are not enough to meet the needs of all schools. Because of the lack of resources, schools with greater needs are given priority. Supplying former disadvantaged schools with new resources does not guarantee effective and efficient teaching. Many teachers are not proficient at using these materials. Hence a more flexible time schedule is needed to train teachers to use these resources adequately. The two most needed resources in the

EMDCs' service delivery programme are time and money. Robinson et al. (2002) draw on Dettmer (1996), Intriligator (1994), Lazarus et al. (1996) and Lunt et al. (1994) who claim that the challenge with a lack of resources can be addressed by emphasising "the importance of agreed procedures for procuring, sharing and managing adequate resources, including time, facilities and human resources to support collaboration". Based on interviews and research done by Robinson et al. (2002) it appears that the effective use of resources needs further investigation and agreed procedures on the use of resources need to be spelt out more clearly.

2. Communication

Communication forms a very important part of the transformation process. In any organisation it is very important to have adequate communication to minimise ambiguity, suspicion and resistance. Good and consistent communication contributes to meaningful participation. Participation means more than just working together. Service providers should look at what works best under particular circumstances and how to maximise involvement. It might also be beneficial to determine whether the environment is conducive for change. The readiness of the environment will then determine the degree of innovation possible or required. It might also help to break down the programme into manageable parts. EMDCs should develop a framework, clearly communicated that analyses the needs of the schools. This framework could enable teams to be more responsive to the needs of schools and not determine schools' needs for them. They should also communicate their plans for interventions and anticipate the effects of their interventions in the broader culture of the school. EMDCs should maintain close monitoring of all schools through effective two-way communication to ensure early warnings and eliminate surprises. Monitoring can be done by regular visitations to schools and to categorise schools according to their needs. Multi-functional teams should work in partnership with schools to improve the quality of teaching and acceptable standards of education.

I base this suggestion on my experience with the Safer Schools project, where teachers were selected to participate in the conflict resolution and mediation course that stretched over a period of nine weeks. These participants were then encouraged to form support

groups in their district and investigate common problems that exist and, with the assistance of the Safer Schools project, support schools to deal with these problems. Meetings were held monthly and reports were presented on the successes and problems experienced for that month. Through regular communication the Safer School project unit knows what is happening in schools and in communities. School participants work in collaboration with the Safer Schools unit to promote safety and security in schools. Similar projects could also be beneficial to multi-functional teams where people are co-opted at school level to identify problems in schools so that proactive measures be taken to prevent serious problems.

Communication goes beyond the acquisition of data. Sometime the element of relationships is overlooked. Poster (1999:46) refers to Murphy's (1991:15) claim that "restructuring also involves fundamental alterations in the relationships among the players involved in the education process". If relationships form an important part of the restructuring process, then it is consistent to argue that the means must be found to respond to this issue. Multi-functional teams especially experience internal confusion and strife because of a lack of communication to deal with their new role.

2.1 Supportive and not be directive

Sernak (1999:345) suggests that educational leaders should display an ethic of caring when they create a nurturing environment. There should be an ongoing relationship between service provider and teachers. Interviews conducted with officials at the WCED Head office and multi-functional team members as well as research done by Robinson et al. (2002), confirm that there appear to be scepticisms surrounding Head Office's commitment to support. Some (especially those who were part of the former SEED project) felt that, although Head Office acknowledges the importance of the interdependence of school through SBM, it continues to issue directives about what schools should do and how to do it. This brings us back to the question of "who decides what" (Dalin 1998:15). Although the WCED is ultimately responsible for schools, schools must be given the freedom to do their work creatively, but within the framework of provincial legislation and accountability. Effective communication is essential so that each one knows what is

expected of them. Good working conditions, responsiveness to the needs of others and good care of buildings are associated with better outcomes. It appears that further research is needed in term of outreach programmes to all three levels within the WCED. Head Office should allow more flexibility to EMDCs in terms of time scheduling, so that EMDCs can creatively deal with in-service programmes to schools. This is especially important during this time of restructuring so that trust and acceptance can be developed at EMDC and school level. If teachers are trained during school hours, there may be a better attendance at workshops and this will also indicate the willingness of Head Office and EMDCs to co-operate and support schools.

2.2 Equity and redress

As was pointed out in the previous chapter, the WCED's reforms made significant progress in terms of resource distribution. However, the WCED policy makes no explicit reference to gender equity. Far fewer women than men hold managerial posts in the WCED and EMDCs, and in particular positions of seniority. In the seven EMDCs there are six males and only one female director. The attached organogram also indicates male predominance in terms of senior positions. The issue of gender equity and redress needs more consideration within the restructured WCED.

2.3 Different social background

Sometimes policy documents and training programmes are worked out without consulting those at school level. School improvement programmes should take cognisance of the background of the student population before they evaluate the school change effort. In my experience with counselling learners at my school I noted many social problems that prevailed in the district where I teach. These social problems can be minimised with the necessary intervention from EMDCs. In my counselling sessions with learners I also noted that many at-risk learners in our school have great respect for religious leaders in their communities. An example of such a situation was when I mentioned to a student that I would seek assistance from his church priest with his behaviour. Surprisingly, the student became very submissive and promised his participation on condition that I do not involve his priest. I asked him what the reason was for his sudden change and why he did not want

his priest's involvement. He told me that his priest has done a lot for him and his family and that he was trying his best to show appreciation to his priest. This experience leads me to the assumption that if one priest can have such an impact on a child, other religious leaders or community leaders could have a similar impact. However, I noted that community leaders are not involved at all in the current restructuring programme. I argue that if there is a need to get experts from outside; service providers should be bold enough to co-opt community leaders to assist them in their attempt to develop and sustain development in schools. The implication of involving such leaders for EMDCs would be broader participation and community involvement. EMDCs should widen their scope of participation that will allow them to come closer to communities.

3 Implementation

The restructuring process requires a holistic approach. Hargreaves and Evans (1997:3) refer to Woodhead's (1995) statement that "legislation only sets a framework for improvement; it is teachers who must make that improvement happen". A bottom-up approach to development will remove much pressure from department officials at Head Office and EMDC level. It should also make the developmental process more transparent. Gultig et al. (1999:105) argue that "the way in which information is shared tells us a lot about the culture of the organisation." If the information is limited to certain individuals, development will be limited. If EMDCs aims to provide effective and efficient services, it might be helpful to consider ways of more effective information sharing. This means that a good understanding of organisational development could assist developers to create a better service delivery model that would ultimately lead to better teaching practices. Some important issues facing the WCED policy makers with respect to school-based management are, as Bolam (1993:228) puts it, "which tasks to delegate, to which level and to what degree".

I argue that theories of organisational development should be included in EMDC policies. Multi-functional teams should pay adequate attention to particular features that impact on a school's performance.

3.1 Aspect of time

More flexible use of time and timetabling is an important prerequisite for improving teaching and learning. Hargreaves (1997:112) argues that “if the timetable does not allow teachers to meet during the regular school day, for example, collaboration can become exhausting and contrived”. The WCED should be more flexible in terms of a time schedule for in-service training and policy implementation if it hopes to get broad participation from teachers, administrators and governing bodies. Multi-functional teams should be more responsive to the classroom time needs of teachers. Based on my experience with numerous workshops at teacher Centres, it appears that service providers place an emphasis on issues like time, cost and the disruption caused by in-service training. In the previous chapter I mentioned how complex issues are dealt with in a limited space of time. It must be noted that EMDCs do not have the authority to determine time schedule during school hours. This directive comes from Head Office, which leaves limited scope for EMDCs to manipulate time schedules. However, I argue that, with proper investigation into the needs of teachers, EMDCs need to understand schools’ dilemmas and apply more pressure on Head Office to be more flexible in terms of time scheduling for in-service training. At a workshop held at the Parow Teachers Centre, teachers expressed the need for follow-up workshops and more flexible time schedules. I argue that policy should be modified to allow adequate time for in-service training.

Another example occurred when a school requested a multi-functional team in the Northern Metropole to assist with some serious challenges they experienced. The team agreed to assist the school on condition that the staff would make themselves available on a Saturday for at least three hours. The school staff then felt that they were sacrificing enough of their time and energy with OBE training and extra-mural activities. They requested the meeting to be held on a Friday afternoon and the children sent home 1 hour earlier. The reason for this request was that many Moslem children leave school at 12:30 pm to go to mosque. Revision is then done with the remaining pupils. The request of the teachers was declined and the meeting never materialised. The staff felt that if it is the aim of EMDCs to provide better service, it should be sensitive to the needs of teachers and be more flexible with regard to time.

3.2 Lack of coherence

In my interview with two multi-functional team members a need was expressed to define clearly spelled-out objectives in terms of what the EMDC hopes to produce, what resources it has and how every team member could contribute towards attaining that objective. Team members claim that a clearly defined objective would allow for coherence among multi-functional team members and would minimise tension between team members. One interviewee said that the challenge in her EMDC does not mean all EMDCs have the same problem. She mentioned that she knows of EMDCs where multi-functional teams work in close collaboration. Some multi-functional team members expressed the hope that the objective should focus on teamwork and team results. This is something that was lacking in her EMDC. Management by objective could be beneficial for the education system in the WCED as a whole. If there is a clear idea of what one wants, it is easier to accomplish it. An important element in teamwork is that members should agree on procedures and who does what before they start with a process.

3.3 No clear incentive

The idea behind clear incentives is to add motivation to the development of novice teachers so that they can continue to improve their professional expertise. A Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) at the University of Wisconsin, Madison conducted an investigation into forms of incentive programmes. They suggested that a part of the teacher's pay be tied to school performance, especially student performance. All teachers in a school should be given pay bonuses when their school as a whole meets or exceeds its targets for performance improvements. The CPRE's concluded that incentive initiatives can help to strengthen the teaching profession and can support standard-based educational reform. However, CPRE also warns that the administration of the programme must be fair to ensure its motivational impact on teachers. EMDC policy does not make provision for any type of incentive. The element of incentive is an issue that needs investigation, since many of our teachers come from a history of non-participation. Although finances are always a challenge in the education budget, I argue that an incentive programme be experimented with, even if it only means providing teachers with a certificate that they may

use for promotion purposes when they attend training programmes. This type of innovation may contribute to the desirable affect that the WCED hopes for.

4. Processes

Based on interviews and research done by Robinson et al. (2002), the restructuring processes are perceived as a “top-down” secondment of people into the project, while other former members of the SEED pilot projects were dropped from the process. This resulted in feelings of alienation, which could negatively influence the restructuring programme.

4.1 Collaboration

During a time of rapid change, especially with regards to the implementation of OBE and the development of a new service delivery model in the Western Cape, schools rely heavily upon the expertise of service providers to provide advice and training. To create sustainable development in education, a good relationship between the three levels of education, namely Head Office, EMDCs and schools, can only be beneficial. Hargreaves (1997:113) noted that working together is more than just building relationships and collective resolve; “it is also a source of learning”. A collaborative relationship helps people to understand each other and to focus on problems rather than people. This relationship will require a great deal of learning on the part of all educational stakeholders. In the past teachers and service providers worked under different conditions. For example, teachers were trained to teach within their own culture and language and it was easy for teachers to deal with individuals within their culture. Similarly, service providers mostly dealt with colleagues within their own cultural background. Now service providers and teachers will have to make their practices more responsive to the varied demands of the current reform conditions. This new approach requires close collaboration between teachers and multi-functional teams, taking cognisance of the organisational context and environment in which teachers teach. It is important that service providers understand the context in which their clients work. The new multi-functional approach to service delivery made service providers aware that their particular ways of working would fundamentally change. Therefore, it is important to assist each other in the development stage. Multi-functional teams should get professional training to help them cope with their new

role. The issue of how to work in a collaborative relationship can form another area for further research.

4.2 Work out vision

A vision is a statement of what an organisation is supposed to be and should be based on a clear goal, purpose, trust and support. To achieve effectiveness and improvement at schools, Law (1997:70) argues that a “supportive climate and professionally-orientated culture” must prevail. To ensure this professional culture, multi-functional teams should engage in strategic planning and operational planning. Cunningham (1982:12) defines strategic planning as “a process of deciding on objectives for the organisation, on changes in those objectives, on the resources used to obtain objectives, and on the policies that are to govern the acquisition, use and disposition of the resources.” Operational planning is a process by which administrators firstly obtain resources and then ensure the effective and efficient use of those resources to accomplishment strategic objectives. Operational planning is programme, project and staff orientated.

In the previous chapter I noted that schools are at different stages of development. I also noted that different schools require different strategies to enhance their capacity for development. Hence, I would argue that there is a need for different quality management interventions that are required at different phases of an organisation’s development.

5. Summary

This thesis investigated the motivation for the establishment of EMDCs. It also looked at improvements EMDCs are supposed to make in relation to the old system. The previous education system in the Western Cape was characterised by a serious lack of communication because of its fragmented and rigid hierarchical structure. The complex bureaucracy within the WCED was not very responsive to the needs of schools. Confusion of roles often resulted in duplication of or delays in providing services. A complicated line function also resulted in slow responses to the needs of schools. For this reason an investigation was launched early in 1999 to look at ways to improve the service delivery model. This investigation culminated in the establishment of EMDCs.

The motivation for the establishment of EMDCs were to transform the former bureaucratic, hierarchical and fragmental model to a flatter, more co-ordinated structure, which is better able to respond to the developmental needs of school. A need existed for a more effective service delivery model. To create effective learning schools, EMDCs need leaders who are “perceptive, so that they know when to push, and when to hold back; when to direct, and when to let go; when to confront and when to leave the situation unchallenged” (Gultig *et al*, 1999:64). What I can deduce from Gultig is that Head Office, EMDCs and schools need creative leadership who can manipulate change according to the environment. To address the problems in the previous system, the WCED adopted school-based management as its primary objective. Multi-functional teams were set up at seven EMDCs to assist with the school-based management programme. Multi-functional teams would provide training and support to school staff in their region and work proactively in relation to the needs of local schools. Many more services are now available to schools in areas that were previously neglected. Service to schools is also relatively more co-ordinated than in the previous system. Education support services (including school health, social work, specialised education, etc.) have been seriously neglected in the past. Where it existed, it was largely offered for the former advantaged ex-model C schools. Support services have significantly improved with the restructuring of the WCED.

There is a need to focus on a service delivery model that will assist teachers to become more learning-centred in their teaching. To the question of what improvements to the current system EMDCs are supposed to make, it is clear that much progress was made in terms of service delivery.

In spite of many positive changes that the reformed WCED have made there is scope for further improvements and modifications. As the restructuring programme unfolds, many new suggestions and improvements will necessitate further improvements because of the progressive nature of restructuring. The issue of gender equity was left untouched and needs more attention in the restructured WCED.

The most encouraging factor in the restructuring process in the WCED is that the restructuring process recognises learners as the primary beneficiaries in the new support service to schools. The new service provision strategy also aims to make provision for holistic development (including teachers, school administrators, parents and the curriculum.) The challenge with this new support provision is that support service personnel will have to extend the scope of their service because their work was limited within a “mainly curative model of practice” (Lazarus & Donald, 1995:49). The pre-2001 WCED mainly solved problems and issues as they appeared. The restructured WCED with the assistance of EMDCs hope to play a more proactive role in the development of learning institutions. Multi-disciplinary teams at EMDCs should have a more hands on approach in delivering services to schools.

The next phase of the restructuring programme is to develop a culture that promotes norms of collaboration, trust, collective risk taking and a focus on continuous learning for students. In this next phase all education stakeholders should get involve in the process of restructuring. Multi-functional teams must be open to change their approach and focus on the needs of teachers who are familiar with the real needs of their students. Inevitable risks will have to be taken as positions are enhanced or threatened by change.

Dimmock (1995:17) argues that if schools hope to meet the challenges of the next century the focus should be at “class room level” learning and teaching. However, class room level learning and teaching can only be successful if other levels namely EMDC and Head Office support it. Restructuring will fail unless all principals and teachers are fully involved and take ownership of the process. EMCDs first needs to “clarify the values and norms, and how daily practices are related to the perceived values” before they intervene in school development. (Dalin *et. al*, 1993:97). This is especially important for schools in South Africa since many schools were developed within different cultures. The Department as a whole, i.e. head office, EMDCs and learning sites are all co-responsible for achieving this restructuring goal.

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