

## Chapter 3

### Suitable components of Capacity Building

Reference is made in the first section of this chapter to the report of the Task Team on Education Management Development (Godden et.al, 1996).

There is a mutual relationship between empowerment and capacity building. It is therefore difficult to talk about one element, without referring to the other. Empowerment and capacity building arise as a result of transformation, which involves every aspect of South African life. Major steps are being taken to transform the economy in order to promote growth with equity and justice. In each sphere there is a need to change; not simply the scale of provision and access to services, but the nature of those services and the way they are conceptualized, resourced and delivered. Empowerment and capacity building are therefore means that are used to address the imperatives for change in education.

The new approach to Education Management and Education Management Development shifts directly towards democratic governance as outlined in recent education policy papers and legislation. If this approach is to be realized, we cannot continue "business as usual."

A new generation of school managers will have to develop effective relationships with both their schools' governing bodies, as well as the departmental education officials. District officials and administrators will have to learn to relate to governors and school principals in ways that focus on empowering schools, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. School governors need to learn to take responsibility, not only for the decisions they make that affect their schools, but also for their interaction with the

management team in ways which offer support and guidance, balanced by thoughtful direction and control.

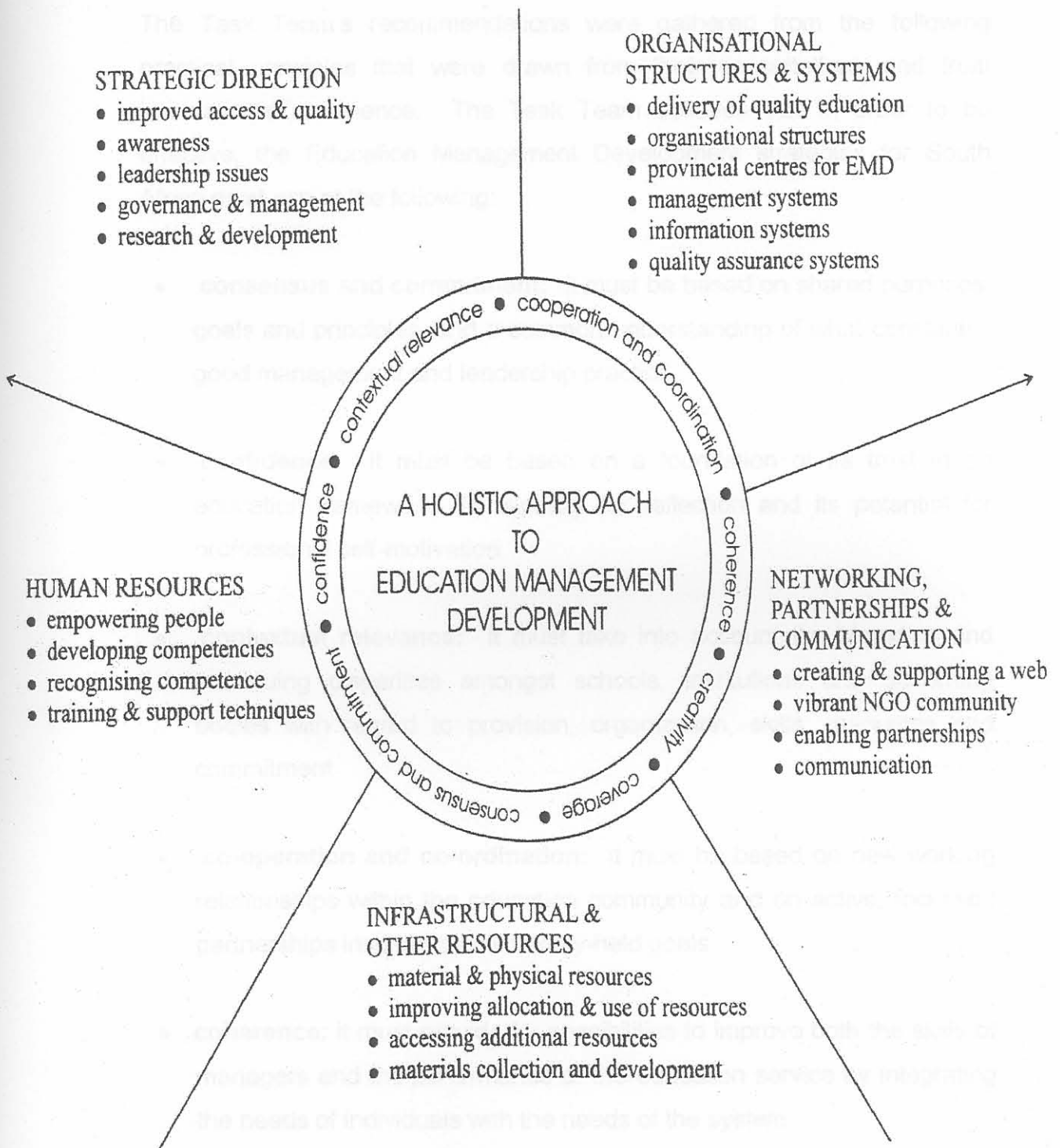
The task of instilling these new skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding is at the heart of the challenge we face in transforming governance and management. The task may be daunting, but not impossible. The new policy framework for decentralized decision-making is now embedded in the South-African Schools Act (1996). The progress that is made in building up competency at all levels will determine the pace of change that will take place toward more democratic governance.

The way forward requires creative strategies in order to turn the new approach to Education Management and Management Development into effective action. The Task Team's framework can best be understood as a guiding instrument, and not a blueprint, for change. The intention is to focus the attention on the principal ingredients for systematic capacity building. In other words, the Task Team does not dictate what the Minister, the departments of education, district officials or school management teams must do. According to the Report on Education Management Development, Godden et.al, (1996:35-36), the Task Team only makes recommendations. In order to build capacity in the institution in which they work, the different people in the system then take the necessary action.

INFRASTRUCTURAL &  
OTHER RESOURCES

- reviewing physical resources
- improving allocation & use of resources
- accessing additional resources
- materials collection and development

**Fig. 3.1 A Holistic approach to Education Management Development**



Taken from the Task Team Report , by Godden et.al, (1996).

### 3.1 Guiding strategic principles

The Task Team's recommendations were gathered from the following practical principles that were drawn from their consultations and from international experience. The Task Team believes that in order to be effective, the Education Management Development strategies for South Africa must aim at the following:

- **consensus and commitment:** it must be based on shared purposes, goals and principles, and a common understanding of what constitutes good management and leadership practice
- **confidence:** it must be based on a foundation of its trust in an education framework, its capacity for reflection and its potential for professional self-motivation
- **contextual relevance:** it must take into account the historical and continuing disparities amongst schools, institutions and governing bodies with regard to provision, organization, skills, resources and commitment
- **co-operation and co-ordination:** it must be based on new working relationships within the education community and on active, focussed partnerships inspired by commonly-held goals
- **coherence:** it must provide for possibilities to improve both the skills of managers and the performance of the education service by integrating the needs of individuals with the needs of the system
- **creativity:** it must make the best use of all available human, material and financial resources and a variety of training and support techniques

- **coverage:** it must have the capacity to reach the large numbers of people now responsible for managing and leading educational transformation in all parts of South Africa

### 3.2 Guidelines for Education Management Development

The Task Team suggested that the primary purpose of Education Management is to “create an environment for effective teaching and learning”, that is, to improve performance in the education service according to three criteria:

- **effectiveness:** to achieve the objectives of the school, institution or education system
- **efficiency:** to improve performance at equivalent or lower cost; using resources to best effect
- **relevance:** to sustain the ability to learn and adapt.

How then can we build capacity in order to achieve improvements in the quality of education we provide?

The Task Team has consistently stressed that Education Management Development does not only provide training for individuals, but it also includes the processes whereby people agree on the values which underpin the vision and mission of every education institution and the performance of individuals in them. This also includes education systems and structures, policies and procedures within which people are able to work effectively.

The Task Team recognizes the need to promote a common understanding of Education Management Development and to foster a systematic approach to building capacity for improved educational performance.

In keeping with the theme of this report – changing management to change education – the Task Team proposes a dynamic framework that will evolve and be adapted for use in a variety of ways, according to need.

### **3.3 Overview of the major components**

The central driving force of this framework is capacity building. It is to develop the ability of institutions and individuals to perform effectively and consistently. It consists of five key components:

- **strategic direction:** to build capacity (within the context of agreed values and principles) which will guide schools, institutions and various other levels of the education service and keep them on course
- **organizational structures and systems:** to build the capacity to develop and deliver quality education services through effective structures and procedures
- **human resources:** to develop the potential of people at all levels of the education service, whether they are managerial, technical, professional or support staff
- **infrastructural and other resources:** to develop the basic infrastructure for decision-making and to provide adequate technical, financial and material back-up

- **networking, partnerships and communication:** to link institutions, people, resources and interest groups inside and outside South Africa in a variety of practical, focussed ways and to improve levels of communication.

All these components, put together, constitute a holistic framework for changing Education Management in South Africa, and ultimately for improving the quality of teaching and learning in our schools. It is important to recognize that the strategy cannot be fully effective if only one of its components is implemented.

Capacity development includes everything that is needed to contribute to the enhancement of the organization's capacity to increase performance. The afore-mentioned South African Task Team on EMD examined capacity development and identified five themes, which provide a holistic approach to EMD.

### 3.3.1 Component 1: Strategic direction

Strategic direction must reflect and promote both coherence and diversity within the context of school-based focus on teaching and learning.

**Improved access and quality.** If the purpose of our education system is to provide a good education to all learners and as a result redress historical imbalances in provision, the quest must be to achieve higher levels of school effectiveness, efficiency and relevance. The first step in developing capacity to manage our schools better, is to understand and promote this vision of schooling.

**Building awareness of Education Management Development as the foundation of transformation.** The Task Team is concerned that the interconnectedness of management development on the one hand, and transformation on the other, has not generally been recognized. Management development provides the basic foundation for change that is an absolute prerequisite to implement the new education policies successfully.

It is important that all education professionals make a similar commitment to the new vision for Education Management and the new approach to Education Management Development. This means that the concepts of school performance, school quality, school effectiveness, school improvement, whole school development, school-based management and planning and in-service training must become standard items in the vocabulary of education.

**Who is to provide leadership?** In the new dispensation strategic direction will come from various different sources within the education system. One can expect leadership in this regard not only from the national Ministry and Department of Education, the provincial Members of the Executive Committee and their departments of education, but also from schools and their governing bodies, as well as their partners in tertiary institutions, non-governmental organizations and professional associations.

Decentralized leadership will both be formal and informal. Customarily we find formal leadership exercised by people in positions of authority, for example: the chairman of a school governing body or a district manager. However, informal leadership will be exercised on a more regular basis by anyone in the education community who, by virtue of their skills or resources, is able to exercise influence on the conduct of others. It is not always the

person in authority who has the most influence over decision-making and practice.

**Governance and management.** The South African Schools Act has just been adopted to guide governance transformation. School governing bodies will, among other things, be expected to articulate the mission and vision for the school and to monitor its performance and hold staff accountable. They will help to select staff, manage finances and physical resources and attempt to bridge the gap between the school and its community. They will also be responsible for conflict management and resolution. This is a tall order by any standard.

It would be wrong to build capacity of the governing bodies in isolation. Governors work in collaboration with principals, their senior staff and the school management team. They also have support from district officials. The Task Team's attention was focussed on the continuing discrimination against women in Education Management, corrupt appointment practices, the appalling conditions under which teachers in many of our schools work, and the consequent low motivation and morale amongst both teachers and students. The Task Team feels that the establishing and then training of school governing bodies must take place within the context of improving Education Management across a wide spectrum of concern.

**Research and development.** As two of the key blocks in our strategic realignment, research and development are important for setting our education course. The Task Team feels that there is a need to agree on research topics that will most strongly support policy and strategy formulation, as well as better management practices. A number of issues are derived from the imperatives of transformation. This includes women in management; the legal and

practical problems of remote rural and farm schools; aspects of labour relations policy and practice; financial and legal frameworks for teacher management and support; organizational development and transformation and matters related to accreditation, certification, standards and norms.

### 3.3.2 Component 2: Organizational structures and systems

In order to provide education of as high a standard as possible, we need to build the capacity of organizations and institutions. They need to structure themselves in order to design and set in place effective patterns of work, administrative processes and procedures at all levels. They need to plan and implement their objectives, and to set up education management information and quality assurance systems.

**Delivering quality education.** This should be the core concern of the education system at every level. As obvious as this may sound, this perspective is often the exception rather than the rule.

A recent study in Gauteng considered various strategies for dealing with school infrastructure; leadership, management and administration; relationship between principals, teachers, students and parents; the socio-economic context and the relationship between the schools and the departments of education. Most, if not all of these issues, sound very much like “management issues”, and so they are. These issues have been raised in the context of improving the culture of teaching and learning, and ultimately this is what Education Management should be about.

**Organizational structures.** The Task Team refers to the way in which duties and responsibilities are divided amongst organizations and institutions in the system, and amongst units and individuals within each institution and organization.

The Task Team identified a number of strengths in the system on which to build, including:

- an existing core of trained managers - particularly in technical areas
- an injection of new people with enthusiasm to change the system
- the existence of various information systems to support management
- new district structures which provide for more decentralized decision-making
- a wide variety of people and organizations currently involved in policy development and implementation.

**A Centre for Education Management Development in each province.** Each provincial department of education, as the employer of personnel, bears the primary responsibility to train and support its management teams. Each department must therefore have means by which to develop a strategy for, and adopt a policy on Education Management Development. They also need to oversee the implementation of such a policy.

Education Management Development is unlikely to ever come into its own, unless dedicated loci or centres, suitably located, staffed, mandated and resourced, are established in each province.

**Management systems.** If organizational structures constitute the “hardware” of educational management, then systems can be thought of as its “software”. Management systems may be quite formal and detailed, or more informal and open. The main issue here is not the nature or shape of the system, but whether it supports the mission of the organization.

**Information: the core of management systems.** The Education Management Information System (EMIS), now under development will make reliable and practical information available to all stakeholders that should enable managers and school governors to make more informed decisions.

Education Management Development will not only feed off such an information system, but will also contribute substantially to improve its effectiveness.

**Quality assurance systems.** The processes for monitoring the quality of schools are essential components of the education service; a continuous process that starts at the schools and runs through to the Department of Education. Quality assurance systems help to develop norms and standards for governance and management and to decide where professional training and support is needed. The three cornerstones of quality are to constitute a means to monitor, to evaluate effectiveness, efficiency and relevance, as well as being a mechanism to supply feedback into the process of policy formation.

In order for quality assurance systems to operate effectively, considerable capacity building will be required at all levels of the system. A quality assurance framework will include processes for reaching an agreement on the underlying principles of Education Management and Education Development on characteristics of good practice and on norms and standards. Such norms and standards are

likely to develop within the context of the National Qualifications Framework. It will require more detailed policy work around issues such as identifying and promoting management competencies, accrediting Education Management Development providers, validating courses and programs, recognizing prior and experiential learning and giving certificates of qualification to managers or aspiring managers at various levels.

### 3.3.3 Component 3: Human Resources

It is people that make education work. The quality of our schools and our education service depends on support staff, teachers, principals, school governors, policy makers and administrators throughout the system. These people not only have to deal with change on a daily basis; they have to make change possible at all levels.

**Empowering people.** Individuals working in a school environment that is constantly changing require support. Managing people ensures that the work gets done properly and on time. Developing their skills ensures that they have opportunities to improve the quality of their work it leads to continuous improvement and positive change for everyone in the organization. It also makes excellence in our schools possible.

The challenge is to provide the kind of support, skills and knowledge that will enable each individual in the education community to contribute as much as possible.

Effective Capacity Building will focus on three aspects of people development:

- **objective empowerment:** staff members need to perceive that promotion and upgrading procedures are rational and fairly applied and that they have access to the information they need. They need to know that leadership locates decision-making at appropriate levels and that they, as staff members, have sufficient physical and material resources to do the job.
- **subjective empowerment:** people need to have a sense of “ I can do this” which originates from a feeling of self-confidence and motivation. This feeling promotes high morale.
- **competence:** people need to have or to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes which enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

**Developing appropriate competencies.** In developing human resources for education, care needs to be taken to meet the needs that are emerging from the new approach to Education Management, including an increased emphasis on relationships and team building skills. Participative management and decentralized decision-making require educators at all levels to interact with many different people and organizations in order to make joint decisions and to co-operate in working through a range of tasks. They need new interpersonal, facilitation, leadership and conflict resolution skills.

According to the Task Team the way to make the best use of our human resources involve the following:

- **Planning** to ensure that people with the right skills and abilities are in the right place at the right time. Planning assists to work out which people are needed in which positions, doing what type

of work and when. Planning enables managers to identify the impact of change on people in order to develop strategies for restructuring an organization on a continuous basis.

- **Employing people** through fair and effective procedures, including those for recruitment, selection, promotion and deployment. “Quality in selection” based on merit and equity is essential to performance and morale.
- **Managing people** in order to balance individual performances, attitudes and aspirations with the overall goals, culture and values of the organization. People management needs to focus on improving individual and team performance in such a way as to contribute to the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Managing people is not just a matter of getting people to work harder – it involves helping people to work more effectively.
- **Developing people** in order to improve the effectiveness of each individual and of the organization. This requires that people have opportunities for improving the skills required in their current position, for pursuing their career goals and for taking up new responsibilities in an education system in transition. Today most skills-upgrading takes place through formal training and development programs. The Task Team anticipates that people development will involve on-the-job training, as well as support in schools and districts, career counselling, mentoring and self-study, distance education and peer-group work with the result that the culture of learning is dispersed throughout the education community.

- **Working together** in order to foster recognition for the interdependence of everyone in the education community. Good working relationships, effective staff participation and disciplined leadership are essential if each individual is to contribute to the attainment of our educational vision.
- **Equity**, that is, to ensure that we recognize the diversity within our education community. It is particularly focussed on developing anti-discriminatory practices with regard to race, gender and disability.

#### 3.3.4 Component 4: Infrastructural and other resources

Even though capacity building requires money, financial resources alone will not build capacity. It is the way in which it is used, that will ultimately determine whether the education system achieves higher levels of performance. Education departments will need to plan *how* funds need to be applied to Education Management Development to the best effect.

**Material and physical resources.** Infrastructure usually refers to the basic conditions under which teaching and learning takes place in the school and classroom environment. In many schools attention must be given to the very basic needs like water and electricity. Provinces need to analyze current allocations of material resources and devise strategies in order to meet the most urgent needs and also to reduce current disparities in provision.

**Improving the allocation and use of resources.** One of the most telling demonstrations of commitment - or lack thereof - to a new vision for education, lies in the allocation of resources; particularly in

the context of budgetary restraints and reduction in the size of the public service. In designing an overall strategic resource plan for Education Management Development, the starting point has to be a detailed analysis of the utilization, cost effectiveness and efficiency of the deployment of existing resources.

At the moment, under-provision is exacerbated by the fact that the bulk of financial resources for Education Management Development are allocated to universities and technikons in support of pre-service and post-graduate academic training for professionals. The flow of funds to tertiary institutions will need to be targeted much more precisely, and the funding formula adapted in order to reward such institutions for engaging in professional management development work.

**Accessing additional resources.** In addition to improve the manner in which existing resources are used, a strong imperative exists for allocating additional resources to Education Management Development. The international community has signaled its willingness to support Education Management Development activities. Agencies representing Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Sweden, the United States of America, and multilateral agencies, including the Commonwealth Secretariat and the European Union UNESCO, have already made commitments to Management Development or are negotiating support programs.

The contributions of the international community are welcome, as long as it can be directed and focussed toward agreed priorities. This will focus such resources where it is most needed, and in such a way that it builds the capacity of the departments, or institutions, they intend to serve.

**Materials collection and materials development.** South Africa urgently requires a central, world-class document collection that is dedicated to Education Management.

In order to establish and maintain such a set of resource materials, these materials, available in South Africa or from around the world, cannot simply be collected. It must also involve developing our own training and resource materials. Generic materials, which can be adapted as needed for governing bodies, school management teams, district officials and others, can be prepared nationally or provincially by writing teams. These teams will consist of practitioners who can work on specific topics that were agreed upon by those who will benefit from the topics.

The principal purpose of these generic materials is to set an example of quality with regard to language, content and practicality, and, by such quality gain visibility in and access to the system. Promoting materials development and distribution should be one of the highest priorities of the new approach to Education Management Development at all levels.

### 3.3.5 Component 5: Networking, partnership and communication

By linking institutions, people, organizations and interest groups inside and outside of South Africa in a variety of practical ways, and by improving communication with one another, it will enable us to make effective use of the technical, financial and professional resources available to Education Management Development. It will also help to find ways to collaborate in dealing with common problems.

**A web of support and support for the web.** The Task Team believes that only a strongly woven web of vibrant networks and partnerships has the breadth and depth to nurture, drive and sustain the management of change. Schools, educational institutions and government departments cannot do it alone. Working together and sharing information and expertise are consistent with an open, democratic education service. Real and systemic educational change is costly and requires the collaboration of policy makers, researchers, administrators and – most important of all – educators, students and parents. No one can hope to initiate significant change while working in isolation.

Building positive and practical links among members of the education community is an important step in promoting change. The Task Team recognizes that, just because working together is important, it does not mean it is easy to achieve. Working collaboratively has not characterized government practice in the past. Information was something to be guarded, not shared. Seeking outside assistance or advice was seen as a sign of weakness, not strength. Networking and partnerships were not part of the management agenda. The new partnership principles which underlie the Task Team's strategic proposals, depend on people making available a great deal of time and energy to make them work.

**A vibrant non-governmental community.** South Africa's non-governmental community has had wide experience in drawing on diverse expertise to achieve its goals. Much benefit can be derived from experience and innovation. Non-governmental organizations have expressed their concern about their role as consultants to government and about the fact that they have to compete with

foreign, donor-funded consultants. They are also concerned on how their own programs should be evaluated and by whom.

The Task Team anticipates that non-governmental organizations will not only play an increasingly direct role in Education Management Development Programs, but also in partnerships with training institutions, and in consortia with other non-governmental organizations, institutions and government departments. Guidelines for involving potential partners in new working relationships in Education Management Development are urgently needed.

**Evolving partnership.** By getting representatives from tertiary institutions, non-governmental organizations and various associations together, opportunities were provided whereby tentative working relationships were extended. Provision was also made for representatives to engage in initial consultations about working together in ways one cannot ever have imagined in the past.

Institutions have started to create formal linkages, such as sharing expertise and developing course outlines and training materials with other institutions at home and abroad. Schools have started to work in clusters, or through twinning arrangements in order to make the best use of scarce expertise, equipment and materials.

Provincial education officials have expressed the urgent need for devices whereby officials can share both information and practical experience related to management in no uncertain terms. They have also told the Task Team that common goals need to be set with regard to national norms and standards and to the transformation of

provincial management structures. Incentives for professional self-development were also negotiated.

Officials have also pointed out the potential of convening on either an ad hoc basis, or with standing inter-provincial joint groups. This would permit provincial officials and their partners not only to tackle practical problems together, but also to establish and train governing bodies; to prepare regulations and legislation; to develop and produce training materials and to rationalize inspection and advisory services.

It is clear that the essential need is to build on national and international initiatives in such a way that working in collaboration with each other is no longer an exception to the rule, or a pilot study, but the cornerstone of the way in which we do business.

**Communication.** Sharing information is basic to informed decision-making. At every level of our education system our interaction with one another should be characterized by transparency in communication. At every point at which people make decisions, they must have access to information. Therefore the process of decentralization must include provision for information decentralization, thus the report of the Task Team on Education Management Development (Godden, et.al.1996:51-53).

The challenge that we face at the dawning of a democratic society is to create an education and training system that will ensure that human resources and potential in our society are developed to the full. It is the challenge posed by the vision of the Freedom Charter, "to open the doors of learning and culture to all" (Smith, 1997:125).

The above statement captures the essence of the challenges that face those responsible for designing and implementing the new education system in South Africa. Since the publication of the ANC policy framework, the national government and the provincial governments have been working hard to try and establish appropriate frameworks for the governance and management of education and training in South Africa. Among these initiatives was the creation in 1996 of a National Task Team on Education Management Development as previously discussed in this chapter.

Smith, et al. (1997:127) said that making the educational system accessible to all, is only half the battle. The system must provide quality education. Schaefer (1990:39) argues that there is no quality without equality and equality without quality is not worth having. Equality and quality are, in fact, complementary aspects of a global vision of public education, which, if not essential to each other, are mutually supportive and enhancing.

It is within this context that this study seeks to inform the policy development and implementation process in South Africa by advocating school performance and change as a focus of Education Management Development.

### **3.4 School performance, change and Education Management Development: An emerging framework**

Within this broad framework the research on school performance is concerned with the search for quality schools and on how we are performing in relation to where we want to be in terms of schooling.

School performance and change as a focus of Education Management Development will ensure that the essential purpose of the education system stays focussed on teaching and learning. The conceptual framework for the relation between school performance, change and Education Management Development draws on several major research traditions, but particularly the research on effective schools and school improvement (Smith, et al. 1997: 128 -129).

Capacity Building and School Management Development should lead to more effective schools and school improvement.

#### 3.4.1 School Effectiveness and School Improvement: Contrasting Traditions

Clark, Lotto & Astuto (1984:42) contrast the two traditions of school effectiveness and school improvement by the nature of the questions their respective researchers seek to answer: "In the former case, the question is whether altering resources, processes, and organizational arrangements will affect student outcomes. In the latter case, the issue is whether schools can change, and if they can, how they do it?"

Education and education institutions are empowered and capacitated in order to play a meaningful role in the transformation agenda. Both empowerment and capacity building have proportionate effects as catalysts for school improvement, according to Fullan (1997:21). The search for "quality school", "school effectiveness", and "school improvement", invokes empowerment and capacity building.

Reynolds, Hopkins & Stoll (1993:44) distinguish between these traditions on several dimensions, as shown in the below:

**Comparison : School Effectiveness and School Improvement**

**Table 3.1**

School Effectiveness	School Improvement
<p>Focus on schools.</p> <p>Focus on school organization.</p> <p>Data driven, with emphasis on outcomes.</p> <p>Quantitative in orientation.</p> <p>Lack of knowledge about how to implement strategies on change</p> <p>More concerned with change in pupil outcomes.</p> <p>More concerned with schools at a point in time.</p> <p>Based on research knowledge.</p>	<p>Focus on individual teacher or groups of teachers.</p> <p>Focus on school processes.</p> <p>Rare empirical evaluation on effects of change.</p> <p>Qualitative in orientation.</p> <p>Concerned with change in schools exclusively.</p> <p>More concerned with journey of school improvement, than with its destination.</p> <p>More concerned with schools busy changing.</p> <p>Focus on practitioner knowledge.</p>

In North America the research on effective schools grew as a response to the research findings of Coleman, et al. (1966:89) who alleged that schools made little difference to student achievement because of the pervasive influence of family background characteristics.

Subsequent research, seeking to refute this conclusion, identified schools which were outliers, that is, schools which scored particularly high or low in relation to their socio-economic status. The high-end outliers became known as effective schools according to Reynold, et al. (1994). The effective schools' research searched for process variables that correlated with high student achievement.

Recent literature has evolved in the search for conceptual models of school effectiveness.

For two decades Michael Fullan has been the lantern bearer in the field of educational policy implementation and change. Policy, it was accepted, was made at the top, but put into effect (or not) by "street-level bureaucrats" according to Smith, et al. (1997:129).

Literature on policy implementation was based on the premise that policies alone do not produce results. The policies must be interpreted, applied, and elaborated into organizational routines and structures (Elmore, 1982:2).

It is not surprising therefore that the early literature on educational change adopted this "top down" perspective, only to be subsequently replaced by a "bottom up" perspective.

This has emphasized the ownership and commitment of school-based personnel as shown in the following table:

**Evolution of School Improvement**

**Table 3.2**

	<b>1960's</b>	<b>1980's</b>
<b>Orientation</b>	"top down"	"bottom up"
<b>Knowledge Base</b>	elite knowledge	practitioner knowledge
<b>Target</b>	organization/curriculum based	process based
<b>Outcomes</b>	pupil outcome orientated	school process orientated
<b>Goals</b>	outcome as given	outcome as problematic
<b>Focus</b>	school	teacher
<b>Methodology of evaluation</b>	quantitative	qualitative
<b>Site</b>	outside school	whole school
<b>Focus</b>	part of school	whole school

**Taken from " Linking School Effectiveness Knowledge and School Improvement Practice" (Reynold, et al. 1993:40).**

While there are a host of different ways in which schools can be effective, the message coming through from research is relatively simple:

" Effective schools are demanding places, where teachers expect and ensure high standards of work and behaviour; at the same time, they are responsive to pupils, for the teachers are approachable and, since they value pupils, seek to include them in the life and work of the school. It is the combination of pressure and support which characterizes the effective school (Brown & Riddell, 1991:67-68)."

The “top down” versus “bottom up” dichotomy falsely presents the change process as an “either...or “ choice. The process of change necessarily involves policy actors and other stakeholders at different levels of the system.

The real question that is germane to the policy debate is not “top” versus “bottom”, but how the various stakeholders will interact to support and sustain change over time. Note at this point that, although the expression “school improvement” is used in a general sense to signify the process of making schools better places for teaching and learning, it has a more narrow, specialized meaning, namely to strengthen the school’s capacity for making change (Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1994:13).

### 3.4.2 The meaning of change and the change process

Fullan (1991:3) begins his synthesis of the meaning of educational change as follows:

- As one person claims that schools are being bombarded by change, another observes that there is nothing new under the sun.
- While a policy maker charges that teachers are resistant to change, a teacher complains that the administrators introduce change for their own self-aggrandition and that they neither know what is needed, nor understand the classroom.
- A parent is bewildered by a new practice in reading and by the relevance of education to future jobs.
- A governor works hard to get new legislation passed to reform education and a principal thinks, “this too shall pass.”

Fuller & Snyder (1992:235) describe the difficulty of change penetrating the school as a problem of the “sticky school situation” – it is difficult to penetrate, but once it is done, it sticks for years to come.

In attempting to understand the meaning of change for individuals and organizations, one must first recognize that change, even when leading to positive outcomes, is anxiety provoking. As Fullan (1991:32) states:

”Real change, then, whether desired or not, represents a serious personal and collective experience characterized by ambivalence and uncertainty; and if change works out it can result in a sense of mastery, accomplishment, and professional growth.”

Stoll & Fink (1996:85) have developed a typology of school culture based on the interplay of the state of effectiveness and improvements in the school.

### Typology of School Culture

To use their terminology, “moving” schools are both effective and actively striving to improve. “Cruising” schools are also effective, but are engaged in improvement. By contrast “struggling” schools are effective, but trying to improve, while “sinking” schools are ineffective and unprepared, or unable to change. Finally, “strolling” schools, as suggested by Fig. 3.2 (Typology of School Culture) are neither effective nor ineffective and although some effort at change is occurring, the pace is inadequate to the task at hand.

Stoll & Fink (1996:92-97) propose ten cultural norms, which they claim, underpin school improvement:

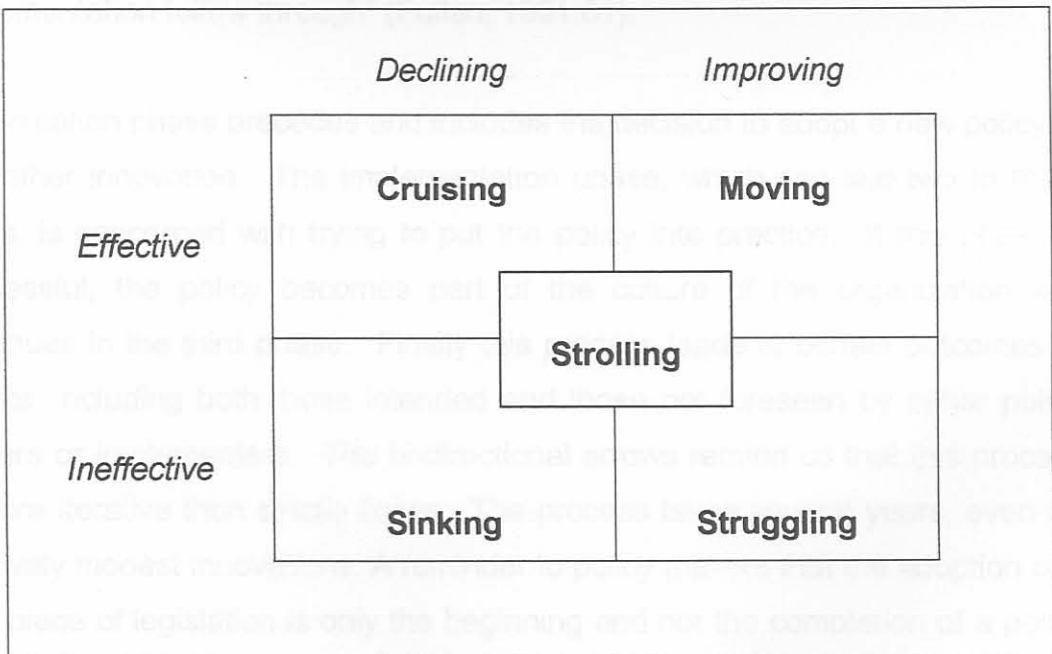
#### Ineffective

- Shared goals - we know where we are going
- Responsibility for success - we must succeed

- Collegiality - we are working on this together
- Lifelong learning - learning is for everyone
- Risk taking - we learn by trying something new
- Support – there is always someone there to help
- Mutual respect – everyone has something to offer
- Openness - we can discuss our differences
- Celebration and humour - we feel good about ourselves

**Typology of School Culture**

**Fig. 3.2**

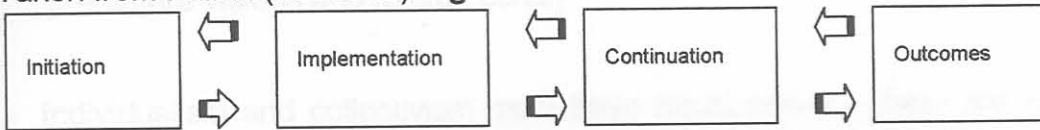


When a new policy is introduced, at least three potential dimensions are involved: possible use of new or revised materials, teaching approaches and teaching beliefs. Fullan (1991:40-41) states that “ innovations that do not include changes or these three dimensions are probably not significant changes at all.”

As mentioned above, change is above all a process, not an event as illustrated below:

**Simplified overview of the change process**

Taken from Fullan (1991: 48) **Fig. 3.3**



“The political and symbolic value of initiation of change is often of greater significance than the educational merit and the time and cost necessary for implementation follow through” (Fullan, 1991:61).

The initiation phase precedes and includes the decision to adopt a new policy or any other innovation. The implementation phase, which can last two to three years, is concerned with trying to put the policy into practice. If this phase is successful, the policy becomes part of the culture of the organization and continues in the third phase. Finally this process leads to certain outcomes or results, including both those intended and those not foreseen by either policy makers or implementers. The bi-directional arrows remind us that this process is more iterative than strictly linear. The process takes several years, even for relatively modest innovations. A reminder to policy makers that the adoption of a new piece of legislation is only the beginning and not the completion of a policy change.

In a later work Fullan (1993:22-23) advances the eight lessons about change:

- You cannot mandate what matters - the more complex the change the less you can force it
- Change is a journey not a blueprint – change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement and something perverse
- Problems are our friends - problems are inevitable and you cannot learn without them
- Vision and strategic planning come later – planning usually starts with premature visions and to plan blindly
- Individualism and collectivism must have equal power - there are no one-sided solutions to isolation and group thinking
- Neither centralization nor decentralization works - both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary
- Connection with the wider environment is critical for success - the best organizations learn externally as well as internally
- Every person is a change agent - change is too important to leave it to the experts; personal mindset and mastery is the ultimate protection

Hopkins (1996:42) has developed a model for school improvement which, in part, is based on the perspective of school improvement as the adaptation of external changes in order to suit local purposes.