

https://dspace.org/

An assessment of the Lesotho government assistance programmes in addressing the financial implications of education for all at secondary school level : a case study of two secondary schools.

Mohoebi, Matseliso Alice

2014-01-06
http://hdl.handle.net10539/13345

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

School of Education

University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE LESOTHO GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES IN ADDRESSING THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF EDUCATION FOR ALL AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL:

A CASE STUDY OF TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

By

Matseliso Alice Mohoebi

Student No.504107

A Research Report submitted to the School of Education, Faculty of Humanities in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Supervisor: Dr Francine De Clercq

May, 2013

Copyright Notice

The copyright of this research report vests in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in accordance with the University's Intellectual Property Policy. No portion of the text may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including analogue and digital media, without prior written permission from the University. Extracts of or quotations from this thesis may, however, be made in terms of Sections 12 and 13 of the South African Copyright laws. Full acknowledgement must be made of the author and the University.

An electronic version of this thesis is available on the Library webpage (www.wits.ac.za/library) under "Research Resources".

For permission requests, please contact the University Legal Office or the University Research Office (www.wits.ac.za)

ABSTRACT

The study assesses the Lesotho government's assistance programmes in addressing the financial implications of Education for All (EFA) at secondary school level. It does this by examining the objectives of the financial assistance programmes, their main problems and tensions in the implementation, and how they impact on the education of poor learners.

This research was conducted using a qualitative methodology, which relied in part on the case study approach by focusing on two schools in the poor areas of Lesotho. The study used a multi-method data collection approach with interviews, questionnaires and document analysis. The respondents were selected on the basis of their relationship to the implementation of these government programmes. The school sample comprised two (2) principals, four (4) parents of learners targeted by such assistance programmes, and four (4) teachers working with learners who were beneficiaries of these programmes and who knew how these programmes assisted them (or not).

There were two MOET officials, the bursary manager at central level, responsible for all government assistance programmes; and the district education bursary administrator responsible for the OVC programmes and entrusted with implementing the programmes in line with the regulations. The decision to get information from these respondents was because they were knowledgeable or experienced in different aspects of these government programmes, their implementation, and the impact on schools and learners.

Using the rational and political analytical approaches, the findings reveal the limited conceptualization of the financial assistance programmes designed to widen the secondary education of poor learners as these did not address the deeper problems of Orphans and Vulnerable Children's (OVC) problems in accessing and completing their education. The rational approach indicates poor system resources and capacity to effectively manage these programmes, as well as poor monitoring and accountability at all levels of the system. The political approach emphasises the poor implementation context of these assistance programmes due to the conflicting agendas of various programme implementers.

The role of leadership is identified as crucial in interpreting and effectively mediating the operationalisation of these programmes on the ground so that the more deserving poor learners benefit. However, such leadership appears to be lacking at various levels of the implementation process.

The study concludes that in order for these government assistance programmes to have a lasting and meaningful impact on OVC secondary schooling, there is a need to review their assumptions and scope to address more fully the OVC needs. Additional resource mobilization coupled with strong leadership, monitoring and evaluation are necessary for this to be realised.

Key Words:

Secondary schooling, Access and Completion, Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Government Assistance Programmes.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

Signature of candidate:

Matseliso Alice Mohoebi

(Day).....(Month).....(year)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to all people who helped to make this study a success. I am most grateful to my supervisor, Dr Francine De Clercq, for her time, patience, expertise, inspiration, and consistent support in guiding me and making this study a success. She has been responsible for my intellectual development by continuously stimulating my academic thinking and encouraging me to do better. I am even more grateful for the generous way in which she shared her knowledge and the constructive suggestions she made in this study, which not only make her the best supervisor but also the best teacher I have come to know by far.

I would also like to thank my family — my mother, brothers and sisters — for providing me with an opportunity to have an education, for their undying support, encouragement, and believing in me throughout my studies.

I am thankful to my lovely friends for being so supportive; by providing their inputs and insights on the topic, they have been instrumental in building my work by tirelessly sharing their experiences and being there for me during hours of self-doubt and fear.

My gratitude also goes to the Government of Lesotho for granting me a scholarship to study which has made a significant difference in my life; this is a privilege I will treasure forever.

Special thanks go to all the people who participated in this study (the two schools and the education officials) for their co-operation by responding openly to the questions and their insightful answers. They have undoubtedly contributed to the successful completion of this study.

My last and most significant humble, grateful and affectionate 'thank you' goes to God, my father in heaven, for without Him, I would never have had the strength and courage to tackle this challenge.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ..... **I**

DECLARATION ..... **III**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **IV**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **VI**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **IX**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **IX**

ACRONYMS ..... **XI**

CHAPTER 1 ..... **1**

INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 EFA BACKGROUND 1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT 4
1.3 AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS 6
1.4 RATIONALE 6

CHAPTER 2 ..... **8**

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK **8**

2.1 INTRODUCTION 8
2.2 DIFFERENT POLICY ANALYSIS APPROACHES 8
2.2.1 Rational Analysis of the EFA policy *9*
2.2.2 Rational Analysis of EFA Implementation challenges *10*
2.2.3 Political Analysis of the EFA policy *14*
2.2.4 Political Analysis Approach of EFA Implementation challenges *17*
2.3 EFA AND THE ISSUES OF QUANTITY VS QUALITY 18
2.4 EFA AND ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS 19
2.5 GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL PROGRAMMES: IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES 22
2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK 24

CHAPTER 3 ..... **28**

RESEARCH METHODLOGY **28**

3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH 28
3.2 DISTRICT AND SCHOOL SAMPLE SELECTION 30
3.3 SAMPLE OF RESPONDENTS 31
3.4 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS 31
3.4.1 Interviews *32*
3.4.2 Questionnaires *33*
3.4.3 Document Analysis *33*

3.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY 35
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS 37
3.7 ETHICS 37
3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY 38

CHAPTER 4 39

BACKGROUND AND CONTENT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES 39

4.1 INTRODUCTION 39
4.2 SOCIAL FACTORS 39
4.2.1 Poverty and Unemployment 40
4.2.2 HIV/AIDS 41
4.2.3 Formal Recognition of OVC 41
4.3 LOW ACCESS TO EDUCATION 43
4.3.1 Primary school enrolment trends 44
4.3.2 Secondary school enrolment trends 46
4.4 EDUCATION BUDGET 48
4.5 GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS 51
4.5.1 Secondary School Bursary Scheme 52
4.5.2 Textbook Rental Scheme (TRS) 54
4.5.3 Rationalization of secondary school tuition fees 55
4.5.4 National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) Scholarships 56
4.6 ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES 57
4.6.1 The rational analytical approach 58
4.6.2 The political analytical approach 60

CHAPTER 5 62

DISTRICT AND SCHOOL DATA PRESENTATION 62

5.1 INTRODUCTION 62
5.2 PROFILE OF THE DISTRICT 63
5.3 CAPACITY OF THE DISTRICT 65
5.4 DISTRICT CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES 67
5.4.1 Number of Learners 67
5.4.2 Mismanagement of Bursaries 68
5.5 SCHOOL A DATA 70
5.5.1 Profile of School A 71
5.5.2 Financial Assistance Programmes for School A 72
5.5.3 Implementation Issues of Government Financial Assistance Programmes 74
5.5.4 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes on Retention and Completion of Poor Learners' Schooling 75
5.5.5 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes in widening access to secondary education 80
5.5.6 Suggestions on How to Strengthen Financial Assistance Programmes 81

5.6 SCHOOL B DATA 83
5.6.1 Profile of School B *83*
5.6.2 School B Financial Assistance Programmes *84*
5.6.3 Implementation Issues of the Government Financial Assistance Programmes *88*
5.6.4 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes on the retention and completion of Poor Learners' Schooling *91*
5.6.5 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes in Widening Access to Secondary Education *94*
5.6.6 Suggestions on How to Strengthen Government Assistance Programmes *96*
5.7 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SCHOOLS A AND B 97

CHAPTER 6 99

DATA ANALYSIS 99

6.1 INTRODUCTION 99
6.2 THE RATIONAL ANALYSIS 99
6.2.1 Limited Government Conceptualisation of the Assistance Programmes *100*
6.2.2 System Resources and Human Capacity *102*
6.2.3 School Quantity vs Quality *104*
6.2.4 Monitoring and Accountability *106*
6.3 THE POLITICAL ANALYSIS 108
6.3.1 The Poor Context of Implementation of the Programmes *108*
6.3.2 Stakeholder Interests in the Implementation of the Financial Assistance Programmes *110*
6.4 LEADERSHIP ROLE AROUND THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES 113

CHAPTER 7 117

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 117

7.1 INTRODUCTION 117
7.2 GREATER RESOURCES 118
7.3 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION 119
7.4 DECENTRALISATION OF POWER TO THE LOCAL DISTRICTS 120
7.5 BETTER MANAGEMENT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES 121
7.6 STRONG LEADERSHIP MEDIATION OF PROGRAMMES 122
7.7 ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING 123

REFERENCES 124

APPENDICES 133

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION 149

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS CLEARANCE: MASTER OF EDUCATION 149

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:
The Map of Lesotho with Butha-Buthe highlighted in Green…….....65
Figure 2:
Flow of Funds from the Central Office to Schools…….....67
Figure 3:
Proposed Authorization and Flow of Funds under the Decentralised System…… 123

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:
Orphaned Children Status by District…….....43
Table 2:
Enrolment of Males and Females of Primary and Secondary Level from 1999-2010…….....45
Table 3:
Enrolment in Registered Primary Schools by District from 2004-2011…….....46
Table 4:
Enrolment in Registered School by District from 2004-2010…….....48

Table 5:
Donor Agencies' targets for Assistance in the Lesotho Education Sector…….....51
Table 6:
Bursaries Awarded in Secondary Schools from 2004-2008…….....53
Table 7:
OVC definition according to formal documents and bursary……..54
Table 8:
The Number of Government Schools per District Implementing the Rationalization Fee Policy…….....57
Table 9:
Number of 2010 Registered Schools in Primary and Secondary in Butha-Buthe district……..…….....65
Table 10:
Enrolments in Registered Primary and Secondary Schools in Butha-Buthe District……..…….…….....66
Table 11:
Participants in School A……..…….....73
Table 12:
Profile of School B Participants…….....86

ACRONYMS

ACL	Anglican Church of Lesotho
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AME	African Methodist Episcopal
ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign on Education for All
BOS	Bureau of Statistics
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity
ECCD	Early Childhood Care & Development
EFA	Education For All
EU	European Union
FPE	Free Primary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GFCU	Global Fund Coordinating Unit
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JC	Junior Certificate
LEC	Lesotho Evangelican Church
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGOs	Non-governmental Organization
NMDS	National Manpower Development Secretariat
NUFFIC	Netherlands University Foundation for International Cooperation
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development

OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
RCM	Roman Catholic Mission
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TRS	Textbook Rental Scheme
TSD	Teaching Service Department
TVET	Technical & Vocational Education Training
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 EFA BACKGROUND

The World Conference on Education For All was held in March 1990 in Jomtiem, Thailand, with representatives from various governments, international agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), professional associations and leading personalities in the field of education from all corners of the world who were all present to witness history being made in education (Torres, 1999). There were 155 governments who signed a Declaration and a Framework for Action, with a commitment to ensure basic education for children, youth and adults. According to Avenstrup (2004), universal basic education, largely understood as universal primary schooling, is the ultimate goal of most countries with regard to their national education responsibilities, and it was soon realized after Jomtien that only by making education free, would children from poor families be included and education thereby become universal. In this manner, free primary education serves as a stepping stone towards universal basic education.

Avenstrup (2004) explains that primary schooling is the foundation for building the edifice of human capital that is required for both growth and anti-poverty within countries. Thus, one of the goals of free primary education is to alleviate poverty in developing countries where many households experience absolute poverty which prevents them from sending their children to school. This attests to governments' commitment to universal schooling in addressing

poverty through generations that are literate, skilled, knowledgeable and numerate.

Some African countries implemented EFA in the 1990s. Malawi started in 1991 grade by grade and moved onto all grades by 1997; Uganda and Kenya decided on what was called the "big bang" approach in 1997 and 2000 respectively (Avenstrup, 2004). Lesotho signed the 1990 Jomtien Declaration and the 2000 Dakar Declaration which set a framework for action to achieve universal primary education and alleviate poverty through education. In 2000, it introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) in all public primary schools on an annual incremental basis from grade one, resulting in a significant expansion of participation in the seven years of the primary cycle from then onwards (Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), 2005, p.12). Through partnership with UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Bank and other international agencies, the MOET worked hard to ensure that primary education was accessible to all Basotho children.

Historically in Lesotho, tuition fees' and textbook provision was a shared responsibility between government, churches and communities for primary and secondary schools. Lerotholi (2001) argues that the collection of school fees was the responsibility of school proprietors while government's interventions regarding tuition fees were minimal and consisted of making recommendations rather than enacting regulations. Schools had the freedom to determine their own fees on the basis of what was appropriate to them, with some schools becoming relatively expensive and forcing many parents to settle for cheaper schools, which tended to be mostly poorly performing schools.

The FPE made the government cover the tuition fees and textbooks of all learners. The FPE policy led to a 13% increase in the number of primary school learners, from 364,951 learners in 1999 to 410,745 learners in 2000. Enrolment continued to increase, reaching its peak in 2003, with 429,720 learners (an increase of 18% from the 1999 level), only to decline to 420,009 in 2004. This increase impacted on the quality of primary education because donor funds and the national budget did not follow in the same proportion to support and finance adequate supply of school infrastructure, equipment, materials and qualified teaching staff.

By 2004, only 73% of those pupils who completed primary education proceeded to secondary schools; furthermore, many learners dropped out before finishing the junior secondary phase (MOET Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2015, 2005). The World Bank (2005) points out that by 2005, overall access to secondary education remained limited in Lesotho. The figures show a Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of 35% and a Net Enrolment Rate (NER) of 23%, rates which lagged behind many Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries which had achieved a GER of more than 50% in 2005. The communities worst affected were those in rural areas where households struggled to finance the education and hidden costs of their children's secondary education.

A few years after the introduction of FPE, learners (and their parents) became frustrated at not being able to proceed to secondary schools as they could not afford the fees and costs of educational materials, as Lerotholi (2001) explains. The Lesotho government was under increasing pressure from its citizens to widen access to secondary schools. It was also required to comply with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights to which it was a signatory and

which prescribes education as a basic human right. From 2004 onwards, various assistance programmes were introduced by the Lesotho government to broaden access to secondary schools for poor children.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

By 2004, the Lesotho government had acknowledged the need to accommodate the large number of poor learners who could not enter secondary schools and chose the strategy of financial assistance programmes. These assistance programmes are strategies that the government put in place targeted at poor children to facilitate their access to secondary schools. Some assistance, such as bursaries and scholarships, are awarded directly to learners/parents while others, such as subsidies, go direct to schools. All these programmes are meant to widen access and facilitate the completion of secondary schooling for the poorest and most vulnerable learners. The MOET and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) introduced a new bursary programme to support orphans and vulnerable children in secondary schools. This bursary scheme, jointly funded by the Lesotho Government, the World Bank and Global Fund grants, was designed to target children from disadvantaged backgrounds such as orphans, abandoned children and those with other vulnerabilities (Global Fund Coordinating Unit, 2008). This programme for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) was designed to provide secondary school fees, stationery, uniforms, meals and toiletries to poor children affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the related problems of poverty and hunger. Around the same time, a second programme, the Textbook Rental Scheme, was introduced to help learners of all secondary schools. Later, in 2009, MOET introduced a third financial assistance programme to widen access to secondary schools with the rationalization of

tuition fees in all new public secondary schools, where learners had to pay R500 as tuition fee for the whole year and the balance of the costs was covered by the government. According to MoHSW's National Policy on OVC (2006, p.5-6),

> An orphan is any person who is below the age of 18, who has lost one or both parents due to death while a vulnerable child is any person who is below the age of 18, who has one or both parents who have deserted or neglected him/her to an extent that he/she has no means of survival and as a such is exposed to dangers of abuse, exploitation and/or criminalisation and is, therefore, in need of care and protection. Thus vulnerable children include orphans, children living on the streets, children with challenging behaviour, children in need of legal and other forms of protection, children who have been or are physically, psychologically, emotionally or sexually abused, neglected children, children who behave in a manner that may harm them, children with disabilities, children involved in commercial sex work, children who frequent the company of immoral persons, children infected and affected by HIV and Aids and other chronic diseases, children whose parents are delinquent and/or children who cannot be supervised by their parents or gardians and children who by virtue of the age are vulnerable.

There are many questions to be asked about these assistance programmes. What led to the selection of these particular programmes? Were these based on a sound understanding of the problems faced by poor communities and their children's access to secondary schools? How effective were these programmes with regard to their actual implementation? What obstacles did they encounter and what impact did they have at school level?

1.3 AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to assess government financial assistance programmes intended to enhance poor children's access to secondary schooling in Lesotho. It investigates the background, content, and tensions in these assistance programmes as well as testing their implementation challenges and impact on poor children. The main research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What led to the introduction of government assistance programmes to widen access to secondary schooling?
2. What are the main problems and tensions in the content of these assistance programmes?
3. What are the perceived implementation problems of these assistance programmes?
4. What is the perceived impact of these assistance programmes on the education of poor learners?

1.4 RATIONALE

Since the inception of free primary education, much research has been done on its impact on children's access and learning in primary schools. However, little has been investigated about its impact on secondary schooling and this study aims to contribute to addressing such a gap. Given the emergence of government programmes assisting poor learners in accessing and completing secondary schooling, it becomes important to assess their soundness, effectiveness and impact on the education of secondary learners from poor rural households.

It is hoped that such small-scale research can assist education officials and professionals who are interested in reviewing or improving Lesotho's attempts to expand secondary school access and assisting the poorest and most vulnerable children to complete their secondary education.

More importantly, this research hopes to fill a gap in the EFA research and knowledge which tends to concentrate on the EFA targets but less on the means or strategies used to improve educational access. Given the lack of literature or even official evaluations of such programmes and their impact on poor children's educational access, this study aims to add to the body of knowledge in Lesotho especially since this kind of information is scarce.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with a presentation of the debate between different policy analysis perspectives and their explanation of the gap between government policy — or programme — intentions and their implementation on the ground. It illustrates this debate by presenting different scholars' discussions of EFA, its implementation, and the impact on primary and secondary education. It then proceeds to use these analysts' conceptual lenses on Lesotho's government assistance programmes targeted at secondary schools. It concludes with some key lessons of the literature and discusses how these inform the conceptual framework of the study.

2.2 DIFFERENT POLICY ANALYSIS APPROACHES

This section reviews different policy analyses and how they analyse EFA policy intentions and implementation as well as the reasons for the gap between the two. It presents the two main analytical approaches, the rational and the political, and their arguments on the background, content and assumptions of the EFA policy and its implementation. It argues that these two analytical approaches are useful and can supplement one another by revealing different problems and issues around the gap which exists between the EFA policy and its implementation.

2.2.1 Rational Analysis of the EFA policy

The EFA declaration and campaign aim to achieve universal primary education, which is presented as a basic human right which can liberate and empower individuals to make informed choices about their lives and participate in citizenship and society. Fredriksen (2002, p.2) notes that basic education is a necessary condition for creating, applying and spreading new ideas and technologies critical to high sustainable growth within a country.

The rational analytical approach to EFA focuses on the clarity and coherence of the policy content, design or plan and identifies the issues and assumptions which contribute to its implementation problems. Lewin (2007, p.3) explains that the goal of universal primary education in developing countries has a long history and dates back to the United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) conference of the 1960s. When time-bound targets were not met, few comprehensive analyses of their failure were produced and these targets continued to be extended to eventually resurface with the 1990 Jomtien declaration.

There were many problems in the EFA policy as far as developing countries were concerned. Chimombo (2006, p.3-4) criticizes the Jomtien EFA declaration for lacking guidelines about what should happen when a country commits itself to EFA targets. ANCEFA (2008) notes the absence of credible participatory plans to strategically tackle the challenges which the Dakar framework outlined. Lewin (2007, p.29) agrees that the EFA targets assume that appropriate and realistic implementation plans and strategies will be put in place and financed by an appropriate mix of domestic revenue and external assistance. However, for African countries with low education enrolment,

EFA only made sense with a major boost in external donor assistance to support the national education budget. Yet it was not obvious that serious additional resources could be secured, especially since countries and international agencies assumed that funds would eventually be available for EFA, something that did not materialise, as will be expanded on below.

Uyttersport (2008, p.7) suggests that EFA and the associated rapid expansion of learners in primary schools put pressure on, and caused problems for, the quality of education. The challenge was to choose the right mix of programmes and strategies to effectively support the education system. Such an ideal mix varies, depending on factors such as the country's context, its policy framework, the quality of policy dialogue, the system's management and service delivery capacity. Even if funds are available, EFA can only be sustained if a viable financial management framework is in place to ensure the efficient use and allocation of resources in the education sector.

In brief, rational analysts focus on the feasibility and sustainability of the EFA policy and question whether the latter's plans and strategies are appropriate solutions for developing countries that experience high poverty and unemployment as well as low school enrolments. They recommend revisions of EFA targets and strategies, something that was done in Dakar in 2000 but not sufficiently to improve EFA implementation.

2.2.2 Rational Analysis of EFA Implementation challenges

The EFA policy placed a lot of pressure on primary schools which could not effectively accommodate the sudden increase in learner enrolments. Rational analysts are interested in identifying the root causes of implementation

problems or reasons for the gap between EFA intentions and practices on the ground. They retain two main problems: the problems external to the education system and the internal problems, both of which led to a deterioration of quality education delivery. The external factors are associated with the poor contextual socio-economic conditions of developing countries (Sack, Niane & Mafela, 2001; Joel, Sebatane & Dembele, 2003). The internal factors consist of the poor system and institutional capacity as well as limited human and material resources (Galabawa, 2001; Moulton, 2003; Avenstrup, 2004).

2.2.2.1 Poor contextual conditions

Rational policy analysts argue that contextual conditions are important influences on EFA implementation. The EFA campaign ignored or was insensitive to the national context of African countries, which were known at the time for their poor economic growth, political instability, endemic poverty and the HIV/AIDS epidemic (Sack, Niane & Mafela 2001, p.207). Galabawa (2001, p.60) argues that the weak macro-economic context of African countries made EFA implementation difficult as the governments did not have the resources to assist schools or communities in meeting the financial requirements associated with quality free primary education. According to Avenstrup (2004), in Malawi, Kenya, Uganda and Lesotho the high levels of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy rates as well as the major challenges in reaching out to remote areas to improve educational access militated strongly against the implementation of EFA.

It is useful to examine, for example, HIV/AIDS and how it impacted on EFA implementation. According to Avenstrup (2004, p.2), “free primary education

was mooted and launched before the impact of HIV/AIDS began to be understood or felt". Ogama, Nomura & Lim (2007, p.53) argue that the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Southern Africa had a serious negative impact on the educational attainment of children in school as more and more of them dropped out to help their households or because their families could not afford the hidden costs of education, such as transport and uniforms. The HIV/AIDS pandemic was a serious threat to the EFA targets because it affected the quantity and quality of the education system since learners, parents, teachers and education managers, or both the supply and demand sides of education, were directly or indirectly affected (Sack, Niane & Matela, 2001). For Avenstrup (2004), EFA implementation required simultaneous strategies to address HIV/AIDS and its impact on education by targeting families and children from marginalized backgrounds who were badly infected and affected by this pandemic.

As discussed previously, the EFA goals were too ambitious and failed to take into account the poor implementation context of developing countries which militated against adequate support for the rapid expansion of learners. Other analysts focus on constraining factors which are internal to the education system.

2.2.2.2 System Capacity

Rational analysts argue that successful implementation of any policy or programme requires competent management systems. Moulton (2003) notes that competent managers are required at all levels of the system but that ministries of education in many African countries struggle with poor planning and management capacity. They do not have management information systems

to assist with educational planning and viable implementation plans. Avenstrup (2004, p.18) explains that, if the system capacity had been greater, it would have been able to better support schools and teachers who had to cope with a rapid increase of learners. Little (2008, p.14) mentions that if funded action programmes had been formulated prior to implementation, these would have enabled donor agencies and national governments to anticipate the EFA challenges and develop interventions to address them.

It is interesting to note that, even though the inefficient management of financial and material resources provided by external agencies is often used to criticize African states, Mkandawire (2002, p.15) argues that attempts at capacity-building exercises to strengthen African states and their civil servants were often systematically undermined by structural adjustment programmes and other World Bank or international agencies-initiated reforms.

2.2.2.3 System Resources

Education quality depends on adequate financial, material and human resources. Even though UNESCO declared idealistically that "no country seriously committed to basic education will be thwarted in the achievement of this goal by lack of resources" (UNESCO, 2000, in Jansen 2005, p.369). Avenstrup (2004, p.9) argues that most African educational systems were not appropriately designed or sufficiently equipped with financial, human and material resources to cope with such large influxes of primary school learners. Galabawa (2001) agrees that universal free education can never be achieved in countries with poor financial resources. Education in Africa has always depended on high levels of external funding. Although donors promised funds for the EFA implementation, these did not materialise fully and, as a result, the

national budget allocation to education was unable to provide the resources needed for such rapid educational expansion (ANCEFA, 2008).

In addition, basic material resources, such as supporting physical infrastructure, school facilities and equipment, did not exist in schools (Joel, Sebatane & Dembele, 2003). This is why, as noted by Aventrup (2004, p.9), the rapid expansion of primary school learners resulted in overcrowded classrooms, and acute shortage of textbooks and learning materials which undermined the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools in Africa.

Finally, an adequate supply of quality human resources was needed but did not exist in many developing countries. The influx of primary learners strained existing schools whose teachers became frustrated and over-burdened by the number of learners they had to teach in difficult working conditions in already under-resourced schools. In addition, as Aventrup (2004) argues, because teachers resented the lack of adequate departmental planning and support, they developed negative attitudes and a low level of commitment towards EFA goals. The shortage of qualified teachers forced governments to hire teachers who were under-qualified or even unqualified. These new teachers were asked to enrol in in-service training programmes while teaching but such programmes did not have much positive impact on their knowledge, skills and performance (Lewin, 2002).

2.2.3 Political Analysis of the EFA policy

Political analysts such as Taylor, Rizvi, Linguard and Henry (1997) and Jansen (2005) understand education as a tool used by dominant groups to promote their own interests and reproduce social inequalities. This does not mean that

education is not contested by various interest groups aware of the importance of accessing quality education. This is why these analysts understand education policies not as the product of rational planning and implementation but as politically contested and the outcome of struggles and bargaining between competing interest groups at different stages of the policy development process (Taylor *et al*, 1997). Political analysts focus on the policy context, policy-making process, policy content and implementation to unravel the underlying interests pursued by the stakeholders involved with the policy.

In analysing the emergence of EFA, these analysts show that it came principally from the top, and more specifically from international donors who made it attractive to developing countries to support it. However, Lewin (2007, p.4) agrees that EFA was generated through a consensus-building process at international meetings but that many actors had competing agendas. Jansen (2005, p.377) argues further that the EFA targets were the result of political consultations and power dynamics between international donor agencies and national governments rather than the result of school and classroom level deliberations on education.

What were the agendas of international agencies and donors? ANCEFA (2008) argues that these international groups were more interested in imposing their education projects on African countries than in supporting these countries' educational needs and priorities. They wanted to have control over these countries' education agendas (as they did not trust their governments) and ensure their education plans reflected their own priorities. This is why, according to Jansen (2005), the internationally-set EFA targets systematically ignored the internal political and administrative realities of developing countries and the education planning and delivery functions of their education

departments: “International target-setting exercises make the assumption that developing countries can readily change and reorder existing bureaucratic organization and political priorities at the national level” (Jansen, 2005, p.375). Similarly, Tabulawa (2003, p.7) explains that international aid agencies sponsored education programmes, such as learner-centred pedagogy, in African countries with the aim of promoting western cultural values and forms of democracy as well as capitalist ideologies in developing countries.

Given the international agenda, why did developing countries agree to EFA? Jansen (2005, p.375) argues that, “the promises of international agencies not to leave any stone unturned in fighting for financial support for poor countries serve as a very important mobilizing function in securing the participation of developing countries – whether or not such support eventually materializes … or even if progress is limited, stalls or reverses.” Developing countries participated in the EFA campaign in the hope of qualifying for donor funds. Jansen (2005) notes that, at a time when national budgets came under severe pressure to support education expansion, developing countries did not want to opt out of the EFA consensus for fear of being sanctioned by powerful international agencies and experiencing difficulties in securing future support from donors.

Galabawa (2001) also agrees that, although EFA was a policy imposed by international agencies, developing countries accepted the policy in the hope of securing external education funding to promote the interests of the governing party. Avenstrup (2004) explains that EFA became a dominant issue in the political discussions prior to the elections in countries such as Malawi, Kenya and Lesotho. He shows that EFA was heavily used by politicians in their election campaigns, but after the elections, the urgency of delivering to the

people receded and so did the commitment of governments which did not feel sufficient ownership towards EFA and its implementation. Yet, Fredriksen (2002, p.5) and Little (2008, p.1) warn that political commitment is a key prerequisite to achieving EFA goals. In addition, aid to poor countries contracted in the less prosperous end-of-1990s period with varying degrees of reliability and disbursement, leaving many developing countries without the promised EFA external funds. All these factors compromised EFA and made it difficult to sustain (Lewin, 2007, p.1).

Political analysts argue that the EFA policy was generated and developed in a problematic manner, given the competing and manipulative interests of the dominant interest groups involved. What should have been the priority — and was not really considered — was to understand how schools and teachers would be affected by, and respond to, the national EFA campaign since they had to cope with the rapid and poorly planned educational expansion.

2.2.4 Political Analysis Approach of EFA Implementation challenges

Like the rational analysts, political analysts argue that the broad socio-economic context greatly influenced EFA implementation. Jansen (2005) criticizes EFA targets for being too ambitious, ambiguous and problematic for developing countries because they fail to anticipate unpredictable turns in the global economy, unexpected civil wars in poor countries, and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Political analysts also seek to understand the interests of various implementers as well as their power relations and dynamics. Grindle (1990 in Little, 2008, p.15) notes that policy implementation "involves a wide range of actors

engaged in ongoing decisions about a wide range of specific allocations of public resources". Little (2008, p.15) adds that "different sets of actors are likely to have particular interests in programmes and make demands on allocation procedures and these demands are often in conflict". She argues that EFA implementation should be analysed in terms of "whose interests are affected, the types of benefits anticipated, the extent of the change envisioned, the site of decision-making, the dedication of programme implementers and the level of committed resources". This refers to the political dimension in the way administration action is pursued, whether the administrative system of education is centralised or decentralised.

2.3 EFA AND THE ISSUES OF QUANTITY VS QUALITY

On the issues of education quantity and quality, the literature exposes the tensions associated with the EFA campaign. The goal of universal basic education is supposed to promote better access, equity and quality (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2011). Yet thus far, the focal point of EFA has been on quantity, at the expense of quality (Glewwe & Kremer, 2005). Govinda & Bandyopadhyay (2011) agree that more children have access to school education, but they often receive poor quality education, as reflected in the high levels of repetitions, drop-outs and gradual exclusion from school education.

Research by rational analysts (Glewwe & Kremer, 2005; Reddy & Sinha, 2010) shows that many schools in developing countries lack the most basic physical infrastructure, equipment and school supplies such as blackboards, desks, benches, and classrooms (with children meeting outside and classes cancelled when it rains) as well as a basic supply of textbooks and instructional materials.

Teacher availability, commitment and quality are also common problems in schools, with many teachers often absent from their classrooms (Glewwe, 1999, in Glewwe & Kremer, 2005). All these factors undermine the quality of primary schools.

The situation deteriorated further with the introduction of EFA because the increased number of learners stretched schools and left many teachers frustrated at teaching in worse conditions. The acute shortage of qualified teachers led to the hiring of unqualified teachers who were not supported adequately to improve their knowledge and skills.

It is clear that, with the introduction of EFA in developing countries and a non-conducive learning environment, poor learners' achievements, high repetitions and drop-outs continued and even accelerated. According to Reddy and Sinha (2010, p.16), "this poor quality ….. led to learners' irregular attendance and dropping out". Thus, partly because of the tremendous progress in expanding enrolment and moving towards universal primary education, governments faced the unexpected challenge of scarce resources and funds to ensure that educational quality was maintained.

2.4 EFA AND ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

For a while, the EFA campaign contributed to a poor focus on access to secondary schools in many poor developing countries. Yet, as Lewin (2007) argues, universal access to primary schooling should not be seen in isolation from investment in secondary education as the latter sustains the attainment levels of primary school learners and gives them important skills and knowledge for themselves, their communities, and society.

A research organisation, the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE), was set up in 2005 to monitor educational expansion after EFA was introduced. Its aim was to understand the reasons behind many children not accessing schools, as well as why learners who did access schools did not attend regularly or even dropped out of the school system. To this effect, CREATE developed the concept of six different Zones of Exclusion to understand different types of exclusion of children:

Zone 1 covers those children who never attended school but were in close proximity to schools. These children were usually excluded because of their poor livelihoods, civil status, disability, social stigma or other vulnerabilities.

Zone 2 includes children who became excluded after initial entry, as they either dropped out of school or failed to complete the full primary cycle. The CREATE research shows that the largest numbers of out-of-school children in developing countries were found in this Zone.

Zone 3 includes children in school but at risk of dropping out because of their low achievement and poor attendance. These children are described as "the silently excluded" since they are enrolled, attend irregularly, are often over-aged but do not learn much while in school.

Zone 4 covers those children who fail to transit to secondary education as a result of not being accepted, being unable to afford costs, or living far away from a secondary school.

Zone 5 includes children who dropped out of secondary schools

Zone 6 includes those children who are at risk of dropping out from secondary school (Online 1).

These zones were meant to assist researchers in investigating educational access and the reasons for learners not remaining in schools. CREATE was interested in understanding the problems existing in the different zones, and distinguishing how school-based and non-school-based factors contributed to the exclusion of children from schools.

This research study, which focuses on learners of Zones 4, 5 and 6, is interested to understand the factors and problems which make it difficult for poor learners to access and/or complete their secondary schooling in Lesotho. A few years after the EFA introduction many learners tried to access secondary schools but failed to enter or complete the process because their poor households could not afford the costs involved. Rose and Al-Samarrai (2001, p.41) argues that the cost of schooling in poor countries has always been an important explanation for learners' non-attendance, non-participation and high level of drop-outs. Lewin (2007, p.15) notes that the costs of secondary schools in Sub-Saharan Africa are expensive — at least five times higher than in primary schools, while the school quality is low.

Poor developing countries struggled to finance secondary schools because the budgetary support coming from the World Bank and other external agencies was allocated to primary schools only. Most of the education budget was spent on primary education, with secondary education receiving second preference and higher education even less (Alam, Hoque, Rout & Priyadarshani, 2010, p.771). Chimombo (2006) mentions that, after the EFA policy was introduced, primary education in Malawi receives 77% of the education budget. Lesotho allocated 30% of its national budget to education, with primary education taking 41.3 % in the financial year 2001/2 and 51% in 2005/6 while secondary education was estimated at 23.5% and 21% (MOET Report, 2008).

This inadequate national budget share for secondary education meant that the costs of secondary schools fell under the responsibility of communities and parents, resulting in many poor households not being able to afford tuition fees, let alone indirect costs, such as textbooks, uniforms, food and so on (Emerson, 2007). As a result, there was unequal access to secondary schools for children from poor geographic areas and poor households (Lewin, 2007).

These trends led poor communities to pressurize their government to change the way secondary schools were financed, as well as to provide financial assistance for poor children's entry into secondary education (Lewin, 2007). Many governments found it difficult to accommodate these social demands given their insufficient external funds and their biased education budget allocation towards primary education (Alam *et al*, 2010). However, the Lesotho government decided to increase its educational expenditure and assist children of families who could not afford secondary schooling with various financial assistance programmes, such as bursary or scholarship schemes, and subsidization of school fees.

2.5 GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL PROGRAMMES: IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The study aims to assess Lesotho's financial assistance programmes for poor learners' secondary education by looking at what both rational and political analysts would do. As mentioned earlier, the rational analysts focus on the clarity of these programmes as well as their assumptions about what exactly undermines poor children's secondary school access and retention. Political analysts focus on the contestations between different interest groups and how

these interests manifest themselves in the programme content and implementation. This study proposes to rely on the explanations of these two lenses.

As far as the implementation of programmes at district and school level is concerned, Schofield (2004, in De Clercq, 2010) is useful when arguing that policies (or programmes) do not implement themselves, but need knowledgeable and competent implementers to translate their intentions into operational strategies and actions. Because school-targeted policies or programmes are often vague or ambiguous in their content and implementation plans, implementers require capacity and expertise to adapt the policies/programmes in their context and ensure that these changes strengthen rather than undermine schools.

In the United States, Rorrer and Skrla (2005, p.54) argues that "educational policies enacted at the federal, state, and local levels are shaped and mediated in their implementation – in positive, neutral, mixed, or negative ways – through a long and complicated series of stages at the district, school, and classroom levels". They believe that school and district leaders are key agents in influencing how these policies and programmes are translated into action on the ground. For instance, they state that, "the ability to adapt policies to local context needs is viewed as a most valuable survival skill, a fact of administrative life, and a requisite for an integrated, cohesive response to policy requirements" (Rorrer & Skrla, 2005, p.55). McLauglin (1990) also points out that leadership capacity at local level is fundamental in mediating education policy or programmes effectively. This is even more important for developing countries where district and school leaders face challenges of limited resources and capacity.

De Clercq (2010) argues that the local leadership has to develop mediation strategies which exploit the positive opportunities created by these policies or programmes to benefit the local school system as a whole. However, for this to happen, such leadership needs to possess strong knowledge and skills about the environment and its power dynamics as well as the intentions and tensions of these policies or programmes (De Clercq, 2010). Crosswell and Elliott (2003) recommends support strategies to assist local leaders to understand the ambiguity of policies (or programmes) to enable their effective implementation. This could be done through comprehensive documentary materials on these policies (or programmes) as well as appropriate training on the priorities and their potential implementation problems.

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

From the above, it is clear that this study is informed by three literature debates. The first debate is around meaningful school access of poor children. A strong argument of this literature is that school access should be defined beyond the narrow indicators of school enrolment rates and includes quality educational processes and quality of teaching and learning (Lewin, 2011). This means that poor learners should be adequately supported for their full education cycle and attention given to not only facilitating access, but also to improving the quality conditions of the education system which impact negatively on children's retention, completion and quality learning (UNESCO, 2007). Assistance programmes should therefore be well conceptualised on the basis of a sound understanding of problems faced by poor children, or in this case, poor secondary school learners. This is also where the CREATE typology of learner exclusion in Zones 4, 5 and 6 is useful to this study because it

distinguishes between learners who fail to access schools, those who drop out, and those who are at risk of dropping out and not completing their schooling.

The second debate is around how the implementation of government policies or programmes can be studied through different policy analysis approaches. It is argued here that two main analytical approaches were useful for this study and the research therefore relies on an eclectic approach by using these two approaches for different analytical purposes. The rational approach is useful in drawing attention to the poor implementation context of developing countries which militates against EFA and government assistance programmes. It is also useful when analysing certain aspects of planning and implementation of policies or programmes, such as the lack of clarity of the policies as well as the problematic influence of poor management capacity, and scarce financial, material and human resources. This study will therefore look for problematic planning and implementation of government assistance programmes as well as the kind of capacity and resources at district and school level in order to achieve the intentions of the programmes. It also points to the need to assess the basic priority needs of these children at home and at school in order to target strategically and rationally their needs. More importantly, the study further focuses on whether beneficiaries are sufficiently supported to access, remain in, and complete the secondary school cycle.

The political approach understands policies or programmes as political in nature and the compromised outcomes of contestations between different competing interests (Taylor *et al*, 1997, p.24). It is also useful in its focus on the political and economic context of policies and programmes with its underlying political interests and uneven power relationships among the main stakeholder groups involved, whether at the formulation, planning or implementation

levels. Because of these competing interest groups, the declared intentions and implementation of government policies and programmes are often said to be distorted and lead to tensions and manipulation by implementers. Therefore, this study will look for the underlying political interests of stakeholders who shape and influence the formulation, mediation, and implementation of government policies or programmes. It will further assess the context, content and implementation of these financial assistance programmes in terms of the underlying power relationships between different interest groups involved in these programmes which may explain the discrepancies developed between the intentions and implementation practices of policies or programmes.

Therefore, this study decided to rely on the rational and political policy analyses to analyse EFA and government financial assistance programmes, their implementation and impact on poor learners.

Finally, the third section of the literature emphasizes the role of leadership in the implementation of government policies or programmes. It argues that effective implementation requires an informed and capacitated leadership at district and school level, which understands the power dynamics associated with the programmes, and which also knows how to mediate and implement these to maximise their benefits for the targeted schools and learners. McLaughlin (1987, p.177) argues that "policy [or programmes] requires chronic information collection and analysis to allow an ongoing strategy of monitoring and assessing progress and activities associated with a policy at different levels of the policy system." Indeed, all main agents involved in the policy or programmes should be given comprehensive information about its content and possible implications on the ground. Implementation leaders

should also have the will, knowledge and strategic skills to adapt and mediate government programmes to suit their institutional settings (De Clercq, 2010).

These three literature debates provide a rich lens through which to gather and analyse data on the nature, implementation and impact of government assistance programmes at secondary school level on poor OVC.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.20) explains that research design describes "the procedures for conducting the study, including when and under what conditions the data will be obtained". Specifically, it gives an overview of the research process from its beginning to end. Research design can include different approaches that are used to collect data in educational research as well as a basis to infer and interpret, for explanation and prediction (Cohen & Manion, 1980).

Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.17) asserts that "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" is a qualitative study. Qualitative research designs understand social situations through views, experiences and perceptions of people in a particular situation in order to arrive at a particular understanding of a subject.

Qualitative case study

This is a qualitative case study which, according to Patton (2001, in Golafshani, 2003, p.601), often uses a naturalistic approach to understand a phenomenon in a context-specific setting such as the "real world setting where the research does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest." A qualitative case study is defined as a research approach which "examines a bounded system, or a case, in depth, employing multiple sources of data found in the

setting…a case selected because of its uniqueness or used to illustrate an issue (Stake, 1999, in McMillan & Schumacher, 2006, p.24).

Like any other research designs, the strengths of this study outweigh its limitations. Qualitative case study has both advantages and limitations. Its advantages are related to its ability to answer the research questions and "offer a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006, p.24).

However, case studies have their limitations. As Guba and Lincoln (1981, in Merriam, 2001, p.42) argue, "case studies can oversimplify or exaggerate a situation, leading the reader to erroneous conclusions about the actual state of affairs." They further argue that readers may assume that case studies are accounts of the whole situation while "they are but a part — a slice of life" (ibid, p.42). More limitations involve issues of reliability and generalizability. According to Hamel (1993, in Merriam, 2001, p.43), "a case study has basically been faulted for its lack of representativeness…and its lack of rigor in the collection, construction, and, analysis of the empirical materials that give rise to this study. This lack of rigor is linked to the problem of bias, introduced by the subjectivity of the researcher and others involved in the case."

This study aims to assess the origin and nature of a few government assistance programmes aimed at addressing the financial implications of EFA at secondary school level. Apart from an analytical assessment of these programmes, this study also examines the impact of these programmes on the ground by relying on a case study of two schools in the poor areas of Lesotho. It explores how the schools' district, the schools and parents from poor rural

backgrounds are affected by the implementation of government assistance programmes as well as how the latter impact on poor children's access, attendance and completion of their secondary schooling. A qualitative interpretive approach therefore seems an appropriate research design for such a topic.

3.2 DISTRICT AND SCHOOL SAMPLE SELECTION

This is a case study of two secondary schools in the Butha-Buthe district whose office oversees all schools in the district. The rationale in selecting this district is that many researchers have focused on Maseru as the capital city, while other districts in the country have been understudied thus the study was purposefully designed to go beyond Maseru. This particular district is characterised by many poor underprivileged rural communities, with limited access to secondary education. Also widespread in this district are issues of poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS which all contribute to poor access to education by learners. The selection of schools was random but also convenient as easily accessible for the researcher.

Two secondary schools in far remote rural communities were selected on the basis of certain criteria. Their location is in poor communities with which the researcher was familiar and they both have many OVC and poor rural learners. It was decided to choose one old church school and one new government school as they benefitted from slightly different government assistance programmes which the researcher wanted to assess.

3.3 SAMPLE OF RESPONDENTS

This study uses a purposive sampling for the respondents. McMillan and Schumacher (2006, p.138) states that "the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representatives in relation to the topic." Greenstein (2009) describes purposive sampling as a form of non-probability sampling where cases are judged as typical or some categories of cases are of interest to the research.

The respondents were selected on the basis of their relationship to the implementation of these government programmes: two (2) at departmental level and five (5) at each school level, or a total of twelve (12) respondents. The decision to get information from these respondents was because they were knowledgeable or experienced in different aspects of these government programmes, their implementation and the impact on schools and learners. The two MOET officials were the bursary manager at central level, responsible for all government assistance programmes; and the district education bursary administrator responsible for the OVC programmes and entrusted with implementing the programmes in line with the documents. The school sample was made up of the two (2) principals, four (4) parents of learners targeted by such assistance programmes and four (4) teachers working with learners who were beneficiaries of these programmes and who knew how these programmes assisted them (or not).

3.4 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

The study uses multi-method data collection with interviews, questionnaires and document analysis to achieve some triangulation between data sources.

3.4.1 Interviews

The interviews in this study are semi-structured to allow for freer individual responses specific to the intentions of the questions. Face-to-face interviews allow for oral conversation, with the researcher asking questions and writing or recording respondents' answers. This kind of interview enables the researcher to elicit information through probing the respondents. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) argue that probing in semi-structured interviews calls for elicitation, elaboration for details, further explanations, and clarification of responses.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), the disadvantages of interviews are their potential for subjectivity, bias on the part of the interviewer, their higher cost and time-consuming nature, and their lack of anonymity. Furthermore, "depending on the training and expertise of the interviewer, the respondent may be uncomfortable in the interview and unwilling to report true feelings" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006, p.205). To limit the bias, McMillan and Schumacher (2006) argue that the interview should be thought of and used as a neutral medium through which information is shared.

For this study, face-to-face interviews were used. Thus face-to-face interview questions were derived from the salient features identified in the conceptual framework in relation to the content of the government assistance programmes, their implementation issues on the ground at district and school level as well as the views of the different stakeholders concerning their efficacy, implementation and implications for the quality of education received by poor OVC.

3.4.2 Questionnaires

The study used questionnaires to collect data from two additional teachers from each school. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) explain that questionnaires are relatively economical and can ensure anonymity, unlike interviews. However, they exclude people who are illiterate or too young to read and write. In addition, the responses cannot be probed, clarified, or elaborated. Furthermore, the researcher cannot read non-verbal as well as verbal behaviour displayed by the interviewees (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006).

The choice of questionnaire for teachers was made on the basis that teachers, as professionals, understand questions better than parents who are often illiterate and in need of guidance by the researcher and may give different answers than when interviewed. The questionnaire items focused mainly on the socio-economic background of communities, the background of the programmes, implementation in terms of their content and problems encountered on the ground, and the overall impact in widening secondary educational access.

3.4.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis was also used since the crucial information of EFA policy and the guidelines and procedures of government assistance programmes are found in documents. This source of data could help the researcher find useful information about the origin and purpose of these programmes, which is the subject of the first research question.

Merriem (2001) states that using documentary materials as data is different from using interviews or observations. Documents are a ready-made source of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator, and this refers to "a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand" (Merriam, 2001, p.112).

However, documents have their strengths and limitations. Their strengths are that they are easily accessible, free, and contain information that would take a researcher enormous time and effort to gather (Merriam, 2001, p.125). Other advantages include their stability because, unlike interviews and questionnaires, the researcher does not alter what has been written and "they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem investigated" (Merriam, 2001, p.126). Glaser and Strauss (1967, in Merriam, 2001, p.124) explain that most documents have not been developed for research purposes and the material may also be incomplete from a research perspective. Also important to note, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967, in Merriam, 2001) is that data from documents may not fit present definitions of the concepts under scrutiny, and they may lack correspondence with the conceptual model which allows the researcher to see if what is taking place on the ground correlates with what the documents advocate for.

A review of government documents pertaining to these financial programmes and other official documents of EFA in Lesotho was part of the data collection. More specifically, the researcher looked for government and donor documents addressing OVC, such as the National OVC Strategic Plan for 2005-2010, Global Fund documents as well as government documents at district and school level that helped the researcher to get different information on the government financial programmes. Documents also include Lesotho's

Education Sector Strategic Plan 2000-2005, National Report on the Development of Education, Lesotho's OVC Assessment Report (2010), and EFA policy documents. Unfortunately, the researcher was unsuccessful in obtaining documents on the education budget, including the budget share allocated to financial assistance programmes and official written documents about these programmes.

Documents covering the background, aims and objectives and implementation of the assistance programmes were reviewed to understand how financial programmes came about, how they were meant to be implemented by districts and schools, and whether their goals and intentions were achieved on the ground.

3.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Golafshani (2003, p.601) explains that "validity and reliability are two factors which any qualitative researcher should be concerned about while designing a study, analyzing results and judging the quality of a study."

Reliability is defined as "the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study (Golafshani, 2003). This means that, if the research can reproduce the same results under the same methodology, research instruments are considered to be reliable. Given the topic that the researcher is investigating, the use of interviews, questionnaires and document analysis are believed to enable triangulation of data which maximizes reliability. Triangulation is a strategy or test for improving reliability and validity of the research and this is done through multiple data collection methods (Golafshani, 2003). This is because interviews

go into greater depth to understand people's situations and experiences. They further allow for face-to-face interaction which will enable the researcher to obtain in-depth information through probing. Other reasons point to the fact that, when people speak, they tend to say more and give more reliable information. Interviews enable greater clarity of questions and answers on the part of both the researcher and the interviewee because, where questions are not clear, the researcher can rephrase the questions to meet the desired outcomes. They also allow researchers to evaluate the situation and ask for more information on the spot, thereby enhancing reliability. Using different categories of participants also ensures better consistency of results and more accurate information.

Validity is about whether the study truly measures what it intended to measure or how truthful to the research purpose the interview and questionnaire items were. That is whether the questions test what they intend to test and ask the right questions for the research topic and questions. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) stipulate that qualitative research uses several different strategies to promote and enhance validity. They argue that validity in qualitative research refers to "the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006, p.330). It works as a checking tool for measuring the research. The use of different data collection tools, such as questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis, helps to improve the validity of the research as it assists with triangulation of data. Beyond the validity of the research design and data collection tools, validity also resides in how data is analysed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis was informed by research questions and done to derive themes and trends that emerged from the data. According to Merriam (2001, p.278), "data analysis is the process of making sense of the data, and that involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read — it is the process of making meaning." The purpose is to determine some order and pattern upon the data to enhance understanding and interpretation. MacMillan and Schumacher (2006) describe qualitative research analysis as a process of organizing data into categories as well as identifying patterns among such categories.

In this case, data was coded to identify different meaningful themes which partly reflect the conceptual framework which informed the research questions as well as any other themes which emerged from the research. Coding was done through identification of common patterns found in the data analysis which revolved around the main problems and tensions in the assistance programmes, their main implementation problems and their impact on learners.

3.7 ETHICS

Ethics approval is meant to protect participants from harm and ensure their right to privacy. An application to conduct this study was accepted by the University of the Witwatersrand Ethics Committee for ethical clearance (Protocol no. 2011ECE106C) and permission to conduct this research in the district and its two secondary schools was granted by the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho which endorsed the letters asking for permission to interview education department officials and school staff. An

information sheet containing the details on the research and a written informed consent form was sent to participants, all of which were told that their participation is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw their consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Apart from that, confidentiality and anonymity was assured by never referring to the names of participants and their schools in the published and written data resulting from the study. Also, all data are stored in a safe place and will be destroyed between 3 and 5 years after the research has been completed.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was limited because of time constraints, cost, and accessibility to primary sources. The research was done in Lesotho with a few trips undertaken over a period of some months, but because of high costs the researcher could not travel to Lesotho as regularly as possible. Thus, access to the two schools for a long period was not possible. Access to certain government documents on education budget, donor funds, overall figures/costs of various government financial assistance programmes under investigation did not materialise, and yet it is believed that these documents could have been highly informative and enriched the research. In addition, there was not much literature from Lesotho to be reviewed in the macro education sector. Likewise, sufficiently rich data was not derived from teachers' answers to questionnaires although it had been anticipated that they would provide more explanatory answers.

Finally, the research is also constrained in terms of its scope. Because the research is mainly a case study of two secondary schools and their government programmes, it cannot be generalized but can only point to trends or patterns that need to be investigated in further large-scale study.

CHAPTER 4

BACKGROUND AND CONTENT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the first two research questions of this study about the background, content and tensions of the Lesotho government assistance programmes designed to facilitate the access of poor children to secondary schools. It starts with a brief presentation of some contextual social factors, such as poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS, and how these contribute to the government's formal recognition in 2006 of vulnerable children or "Orphans and Vulnerable Children" (OVC). The chapter then presents an overall picture of the low access to primary and secondary schools as well as the budgetary and financial constraints of the government in financing educational expansion. This provides the information necessary to understand and assess the aim, content and tensions of the government assistance programmes to poor learners.

4.2 SOCIAL FACTORS

Lesotho is one of the most poverty-stricken countries in Africa with weak economic growth as it has no strong natural or mineral resources, except its water. Its other main resource is its labour which is exported to countries like South Africa, due to the lack of local employment. In terms of macroeconomic indicators, Lesotho ranks as one of the 40 lowest-income economies in the

world (Omole, 2003). Thus, there are many social factors that have contributed to the high number of OVC and among others that have stood out are poverty, unemployment, and HIV/AIDS. These factors are discussed below.

4.2.1 Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty is widespread in Lesotho with the proportion of the population falling below the poverty line estimated at 60% (BOS, 2007). Many households find it increasingly difficult to meet the basic needs of their families, and particularly of their children. In the Butha-Buthe district, which is the focus of the study, respondents confirm that many households live solely from subsistence agriculture, depending on their livestock and the selling of crops for survival. Because of the drought, climate change and other factors in the past few years, agricultural production has slowed and many families are becoming poorer every year (Interview with Parent A in school B - September 2011).

The unemployment rate continues to increase and has become one of the worst contributory factors to poverty in Lesotho. Already in the 1990s, the World Bank (1994) estimated the unemployment rate to be between 35% and 45%. This was mainly due to the ongoing retrenchment of Basotho workers from South African mines which used to provide employment to about 40% of Lesotho's male labour force. As a result, many families live on hand-outs and pension allowances.

The area around School A is inhabited by mostly poor families which do not receive any income but survive from part-time jobs, pension allowances and donations. Many households neglect or abandon their children because they are old, sick or disabled and experience serious financial problems which do

not allow them to provide for their children's tuition fees (Interview with principal from School A - September 2011). Households around School B are not in a better situation and consist of unemployed adults, grandparents who survive on their pension allowance, or adults relying on their livestock, doing domestic work but never earning enough to sustain their families and pay for their children's education (Interview with principal of School B - September 2011).

4.2.2 HIV/AIDS

Lesotho has one of the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in the world. According to MoHSW's National Policy on OVC (2006, p.2), UNAIDS estimated that in 2006 the HIV prevalence rate among people aged 15 to 49 was 23.2%. The MoHSW's HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (2008) put the figure of people living with HIV/AIDS in 2007 at an estimated 273,273, with about 60 people dying every day from AIDS-related illnesses (UNAIDS, 2008). Many households have lost their breadwinners and an increasing number of children become orphans or are abandoned by sick parents who have no access to any money.

4.2.3 Formal Recognition of OVC

As discussed above, the high poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS pandemic has weighed heavily on poor children for more than a decade. Table 4 presents the 2003 figures of the OVC crisis per district.

Table 1: Orphaned Children Status by District

District	Dependent	Household Head	Unclassified	Total
Berea	13536	238	3	13777
Butha Buthe	3761	133	58	3952
Leribe	11015	362	1	11378
Maseru	18770	177	0	14281
Mafeteng	13934	347	0	14281
Mohale's Hoek	8169	264	1	8434
Mokhotlong	9331	78	1	9410
Quthing	985	97	2	1084
Qacha's Nek	3448	92	0	3540
Thaba Tseka	6972	69	0	7041
Grand Total	**89921**	**1857**	**66**	**91844**

Source: Statistics Unit, MOET Report, 2010

If the number of orphaned children was 91,844 in 2003, a year later in 2004, the Ministry of Health Social and Welfare (2005, in MoHSW's National Policy on OVC, 2006) estimated that the number had risen to 181,000 as it was believed that more than 100,000 children were orphaned by AIDS in that year.

By 2006, the Lesotho government formally acknowledged these children by passing the National Policy on OVC which declares: "while orphanhood and child vulnerability is not a new phenomenon and was well contained within the strong social fabric of Lesotho, its scope and magnitude has been worsened by the triple threat of HIV/AIDS, poverty and food insecurity" (MoHSW's National Policy on OVC, 2006, p.1).

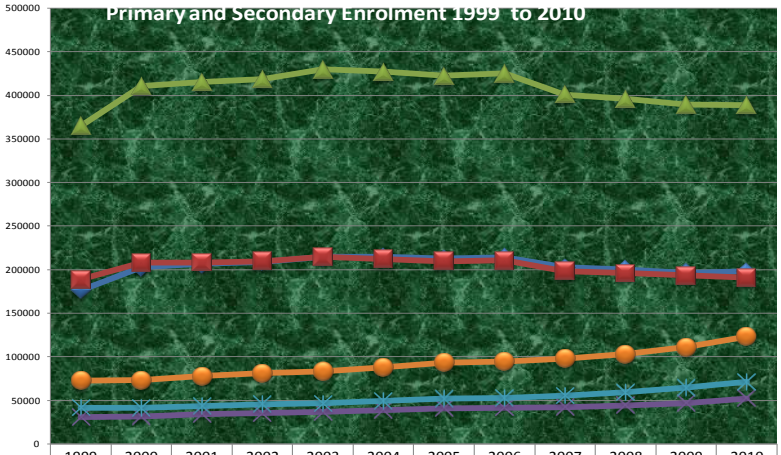
The MOET Statistics Report (2010) notes that the number of orphans enrolled at primary schools rose from 99,082 in 2004 to 120,463 in 2010 (a 21,5% increase in 6 years), while the number at secondary level nearly tripled from 18,156 in 2004 to 49,076 in 2010 (a 170% increase in 6 years). It appears as if the increased enrolment of orphans is partly linked to the FPE policy and the existence of financial assistance programmes for OVC secondary school learners (see also the next chapter). The bursary manager at central level confirmed that in the past 10 years, many more children have lost their parents from HIV/AIDS and survive on their own as OVC with some government school assistance (Interview - April 2012).

It is clear that poverty, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, orphaned children and other hardships continue to worsen, putting great strain on poor households and their children. When the FPE was introduced, it provided some relief to parents who struggled financially and could not send their children to primary schools. More than a decade after the introduction of FPE, new pressures developed on the government for supporting children from poor families to have access to secondary schools.

4.3 LOW ACCESS TO EDUCATION

By the turn of the 21st century, the harsher socio-economic conditions faced by the Lesotho population resulted in lower access to education. With the introduction of FPE, it was expected that primary school enrolment would rise as would secondary school enrolment. Yet, Table 2 below presents a different picture from what was anticipated.

Table 2: 1999-2010 Enrolment of males and females at primary and secondary level



	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Primary Male	176365	202760	206665	209024	214746	214762	212683	214123	202710	200332	196319	197912
Primary Female	188586	207985	208342	209644	214974	212247	209595	210732	198224	195709	193105	190769
Primary Total	364951	410745	415007	418668	429720	427009	422278	424855	400934	396041	389424	388681
Secondary Male	30833	31537	34226	35465	36621	38915	41086	41637	42357	44162	46880	52148
Secondary Female	41604	41455	43693	45663	46483	49227	52010	52908	55579	59155	64600	71159
Secondary Total	72437	72992	77919	81128	83104	88142	93096	94545	97936	103317	111480	123307

Source: Statistics Unit, MoET Report (2010)

4.3.1 Primary school enrolment trends

Table 2, which covers the 2004-2011 period, shows an increase in primary school enrolment from 364,951 learners in 1999 to 388, 861 learners in 2010, or an increase of 6,5 % in 11 years. A deeper examination of the trend reveals that there was a major enrolment increase of 12,5% from 1999 to 2000, which was the year of the introduction of FPE. By 2004, the primary school enrolment reached its peak with 427,009 learners or an increase of 17% from the 1999 level. However, after 2004, the enrolment started to decline to reach 388,681 in 2010. This decline in primary school enrolment suggests that either many primary learners dropped out and could not complete the primary cycle, or that the new pool of young children is no longer entering primary schools at the normal demographic rate (these children being in the CREATE Zones 1

and 2). More research is needed to understand the reasons behind this unexpected decline in enrolment since 2004.

Table 2 reveals that the decline in primary enrolment continues after 2010, falling from 389,425 learners in 2010 to 385,437 learners in 2011. It also shows the unequal distribution of primary school learners across districts. In 2010, 22% of the total primary school learners are in the more urbanized district of Maseru, 16% are in Leribe and 10% in Berea, while the district under investigation, Butha-Buthe has only 6% of the total primary school learners. The table below shows enrolment of learners in primary schools by districts from 2004-2011. This reveals how much access has been widened or declined.

Table 3: Enrolment in Registered Primary Schools by Districts from 2004-2011

District	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Butha-Buthe	27128	26543	26452	24996	23879	23339	22859	22535
Leribe	67702	66831	66728	64500	61615	60445	59847	59553
Berea	54665	54444	54935	50358	49956	48203	48049	39620
Maseru	89482	86917	89238	82551	84644	83535	84281	84492
Mafeteng	47350	46290	45576	43740	41293	40998	40129	39620
Mohale's Hoek	40483	40690	39816	37547	36402	35675	35976	34672
Quthing	29062	28011	27968	26874	25929	25014	243989	24009
Qacha's Nek	18982	18490	18589	17918	16775	17250	16805	16504
Mokhotlong	21406	21860	22831	22308	22615	22024	22811	22898
Thaba-Tseka	31749	32202	32722	30142	32933	32941	33526	33199
Total	**427007**	**422278**	**424855**	**400934**	**396041**	**389424**	**388681**	**385437**

Source: Statistics Unit, MoET Report (2010)

It is interesting to note that, over the period 2004 - 2011, the rate of primary school drop-outs in the Butha-Buthe district was 17% compared to the 5, 5% drop in the wealthier urbanized district of Maseru over the same period. This could suggest that the socio-economic background of families is a major influence in the ability of children to enter, attend and stay in primary schools. Quality schooling could be another factor of drop-outs but this research could not explore in any depth this dimension.

4.3.2 Secondary school enrolment trends

The MOET Education Sector Strategic Plan (2005-2015) (MOET, 2005, p.43) notes that only 73% of learners who complete primary education proceed to secondary education. Those who managed to enter secondary schools increased significantly in the period 1999-2011. Table 2 shows a 70,2% increase of secondary school enrolment from 72,437 in 1999 to 123,307 in 2011 (11 years).

Table 4 below presents the breakdown of secondary school enrolment per district, and reveals that the 2004- 2010 increase in secondary enrolment varies in different districts, The Maseru district saw an increase of 38,5%, compared to the 54,5% increase in Butha-Buthe. This could be an indication that government financial assistance programmes for secondary school learners do reach poor rural households.

Table 4: Enrolment in Registered Secondary Schools by Districts from 2004-2010

District	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Butha-Buthe	6471	6996	7079	7533	8588	9040	10003
Leribe	18771	19218	19316	20271	20884	22661	23284
Berea	9991	11558	9059	12437	12265	14275	15962
Maseru	22972	23638	23955	23561	26624	28933	31854
Mafeteng	9951	11187	11079	11353	10759	12715	12297
Mohale's Hoek	5967	6021	5994	6349	7286	6890	8212
Quthing	5805	5110	5524	5880	5989	5348	7134
Qacha's Nek	2910	3261	3479	3623	3426	3913	4549
Mokhotlong	2655	3129	3316	3834	3987	3725	5216
Thaba-Tseka	2972	2978	2744	3095	3509	3980	4796
Total	**88469**	**93096**	**94545**	**97936**	**103317**	**111480**	**123307**

Source: Statistics Unit, MoET Report (2010)

On the whole, the large increase of secondary school enrolment over the period 2004-2011 is an achievement for Lesotho whose MOET Education Sector Strategic Plan (2005-2015) had declared the expansion of secondary education access for the poorest and vulnerable groups a top priority (MOET, 2008, p.14). The FPE could be responsible for this increase at secondary level because learners who received free primary school education in 2000 were ready to enter secondary schools from 2007 onwards. The FPE policy could also have alleviated the financial burden of poor families that could subsequently afford to finance their children when they were ready to enter secondary schools. Finally, the various government financial assistance programmes from 2004 onwards may also have helped the access of a few

secondary school candidates. Here again, further research is needed to better understand these issues.

There are two caveats to this increase at the secondary level. First, many learners continue to drop out before completing the secondary cycle. The MOET Report (MOET, 2008, p.18) contends that these drop-outs are a reflection of the state of secondary education which leaves much to be desired, although it could also be a reflection that many rural communities are still too poor to support their children's completion of the secondary cycle (MOET, 2005).

Second, the overall access to secondary schools in Lesotho remains poor according to SADC standards. According to the World Bank (2008, p.2), the overall access to secondary education in Lesotho in 2005 was limited as the GER stood at 35% and the NER at 23%, rates which lag behind neighbouring SADC countries, some of which have reached a GER of more than 50%. The reasons are found in the poor educational resources available to the MOET.

4.4 EDUCATION BUDGET

As mentioned earlier, primary and secondary education used to be financed mainly by parents and communities whereas it is presently funded jointly by government, donor agencies and private contributions from households and communities (Lerotholi, 2001).

With the introduction of Free Primary Education, the government budget allocation to education has risen from 20% of total government spending in 2001/2 to 30% in 2005/06. It also represents around 12% of the GDP. Two-

thirds of the education budget was allocated to basic and secondary education, and this share is likely to rise slightly in the coming years (World Bank, 2008, p.11).

However, the increased demand for schooling over the past decade has placed additional strains on the national education budget, at a time of tight fiscal austerity measures. The only course of action for the Lesotho government was to be more aggressive in forging partnership with international agencies and foreign donors to support its educational expansion. According to the bursary manager (Interview - April 2012), donors contribute 33% of the education budget.

Irish AID is one of the leading donors which supported the MOET for the past 30 years, working closely today with partners such as UNICEF and UNESCO (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2009). Various development organizations fund different aspects of the education system which have been declared priorities by the MOET. Unfortunately, it was not possible to provide actual figures for donor contributions as the researcher was not given access to this information. The table below summarises donor's agencies' contribution toward the education of Lesotho from pre-primary level to tertiary institutions.

Table 5: Donor agencies' targets for assistance in the Lesotho education system

Pre-Primary and Primary Levels	**Types of Programmes**
European Union (EU), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization(UNESCO)	Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and Free Primary Education
Secondary Level	
United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Red Cross, World Vision and Global Fund	Lower and Higher Secondary Education
Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET)	
Irish Aid, European Union, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Global Fund	Technical Education
University	
Netherlands University Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC)	

Source: Statistics Unit, MoET Report (2010)

Even though the contributions of donor agencies have always been essential to Lesotho's education sector, these are far from being sufficient. While the researcher could not access exact budget figures, it is clear that the budgetary situation has become worse in the past decade because most funds promised by international agencies and the World Bank to assist with the EFA implementation costs in developing countries did not materialise fully (Alam *et al*, 2010). As a result of these insufficient contributions of donor agencies in Lesotho education, the government put in a place a number of assistance programmes as discussed in the section below.

4.5 GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

This section describes various government assistance programmes targeted at OVC to facilitate their access to secondary schools. The Education Sector Plan 2005-2015 (MOET, 2005) mentions the MOET's commitment to a higher budget allocation of 30% of the national budget to support OVC in the future. This could indicate a certain political will and commitment by the MOET towards secondary school assistance programmes, but it is difficult to establish exactly how much money is devoted to OVC every year, as the researcher was not given access to this information.

To improve access to secondary education in poor rural areas, especially for OVC, the government partnered with developmental organizations such as the Global Fund, World Vision and Red Cross. The Global Fund is an international agency which mobilizes and provides resources in areas of greatest need, with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and a low education access. World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation, which assists poor and vulnerable people to overcome poverty and injustice, and the Red Cross is a similar humanitarian organisation which works to improve the lives of poor and vulnerable people. The financial programmes for OVCs relate to the humanitarian and 'human rights' goals which assisted the MOET work with donor agencies to provide some financial assistance programmes aimed at OVC's access to secondary schools (Mwansa, 2010).

There were four government programmes: the Secondary School Bursary Scheme, the Textbook Rental Scheme (TRS), the Fee Rationalization policy

and the National Manpower Development Secretariat Scholarships. Each of these is discussed in detail below.

4.5.1 Secondary School Bursary Scheme

In 2004, the MOET introduced the Secondary School Bursary Scheme for orphans and vulnerable children from poverty-stricken families. There is no uniform bursary package as it depends on the tuition fees of each school which the MOET pays directly to schools (Interview with the Bursary Manager – April 2012). According to MOET (2008), orphans and vulnerable children include children with special needs, orphans, children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, underage heads of families, survivors of abuse, and those from extreme poverty backgrounds.

This financial support programme was run in close collaboration with the MoHSW and various NGOs, such as the Global Fund, to ensure that secondary education was more accessible to poor children. The Ministries provided bursaries to OVC learners of lower secondary schools (the junior 3 year-cycle) while the Global Fund targeted the OVC in the two senior secondary years as well as those receiving vocational training.

The MOET's OVC Bursary Scheme report reveals that the number of OVC who benefitted from these bursaries increased rapidly from 6,421 in 2004 to 22,735 in 2008, as depicted in Table 6.

Table 6: Bursaries Awarded in Secondary Schools (2004-2008)

Level of Education	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Secondary School Learners	6,421	6,637	8,585	19,000	22,735

Source: Mwansa 2010, p.75

It is interesting to note that the interpretation of the kinds of children who fall into the category 'OVC' differs across various formal documents, as well as with the central bursary administrator, as illustrated below in Table 7.

Table 7: OVC definition according to formal documents and bursary administrator

MOET National Strategic Plan 2005-2015	Lesotho's OVC National Action Plan (2006) (Ministry of Health and Social Welfare)	Bursary Administrator
• Orphans • Children with special needs • Children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS • Underage heads of households • Those from extreme poverty backgrounds	• Orphans below the age of 18 who have lost one or both parents • Abandoned children who have no means of survival, are exposed to any form of abuse and need care and protection	• Highest priority is given to double orphans, vulnerable children, and single orphans • Children whose parents are over-age and cannot work • Children whose parents are medically unfit • Needy children and all OVC should be below the age of 18

Source: Own

The programme was welcomed by the government, the MOET, schools and the general public. However, with the overwhelming increase in the number of orphans and the high school fees between R1300 and R2000 per annum in the past decade, it became difficult for the Bursary Scheme to accommodate all OVC. The 2006 National Policy on OVC reaffirms the commitment of the government to OVC bursaries but there is no indication yet that these are

being extended. The MoHSW hopes to introduce additional measures in the form of cash transfer to support poor learners (MOET, 2008). At the beginning of 2010, the Global Fund experienced a decrease in its fund allocation for Lesotho. Its Coordinating Unit reviewed its support priorities in Lesotho and decided to spread its money to non-school projects, which meant that school bursaries were only provided to double orphans, and no longer to all OVC (Interview with District Bursary Administrator – September 2011).

Thus, this bursary scheme targeted specific poor children rather than poor schools. It ensured OVC's access to secondary schools by covering school fees, food and stationery as well as textbooks. In addition, the MOET and Global Fund partnered with the MoHSW to cover OVC's toiletries as part of home support. The district bursary administrator (Interview - August 2011) criticized the Bursary Scheme for not covering uniforms and other home-based necessities (such as food rations) as in his view, these expenses had to be covered to maximize OVC's chances to remain in school.

4.5.2 Textbook Rental Scheme (TRS)

Another programme introduced in 2004 by the MOET is the Textbook Rental Scheme which subsidizes the cost of textbooks for secondary schools. The MOET understood that many secondary school learners struggled, or could not afford, to buy textbooks which are relatively expensive. The lack of textbooks undermined these learners' learning, discouraging them from continuing their study sometimes (MOET Report, 2008). The Textbook Rental Scheme aims to improve secondary school participation rates and prevent learners from dropping out by assisting with the rental of quality textbooks at secondary schools. It met the learners half-way by subsidizing 50% of the textbook rental costs.

In addition, the MOET adopted more stringent screening procedures for the selection of textbooks before recommending them to secondary schools. It wanted to improve the cost-effectiveness of textbooks, since many of them were too expensive and of poor quality. Thus, the MOET's textbook programmes aim to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the participation of learners in secondary schools by choosing better and cheaper textbooks and subsidizing 50% of learners' textbook rental (MOET Report, 2008, p.20). It is interesting to note that the Textbook Scheme targeted all secondary schools and their learners.

4.5.3 Rationalization of secondary school tuition fees

As mentioned before, a large number of primary school leavers (27%) did not transit into secondary schools (children of CREATE Zone 4). By 2009, the Lesotho government decided to introduce a rationalization of school fees for all new public secondary schools. The intention was to lower tuition fees and to prohibit new public secondary schools from charging learners more than what the government stipulated, namely R500 annual tuition fees. These fees were subjected to periodic revisions to enable schools to function properly (MOET External Circular, 2011).

The lowering of tuition fees meant that these schools could not generate as much income as community and church schools. Because the MOET did not want this rationalization of fees policy to be at the expense of these schools, it provided government capitation grants proportionate to their enrolment numbers (MOET report, 2008). Unfortunately, the researcher could not access the precise amount of such school grants per learner. The principal of School B

(Interview - November 2011) criticized the capitation grant for not reaching school on time and for stipulating how it should be used against school priorities.

By early 2012, there were 77 new public secondary schools which were subjected to the fee rationalization policy. These schools had to reduce their fees and receive a school capitation grant (MOET Report, 2008). Table 8 below illustrates the breakdown per district of these new public secondary schools.

Table 8: Number of government schools implementing the rationalisation fee policy per district

District	New public secondary schools (77)
Butha-Buthe	5
Leribe	10
Berea	7
Maseru	18
Mafeteng	9
Mohale's Hoek	7
Quthing	5
Qacha's Nek	8
Mokhotlong	6
Thaba-Tseka	9

Source: Education Headquarters office Records, Maseru (April, 2012)

4.5.4 National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) Scholarships

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning set up its own financial assistance programme in the form of scholarships for learners who qualified for

secondary and tertiary institutions of learning inside and outside Lesotho. The scholarship programme for secondary school learners operated through the National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) which was responsible for the administration and disbursement of these scholarships. The target groups were children from poor households who performed exceptionally well in secondary schools. The NMDS required schools (teachers together with the principal) to select their poor learners on the basis of the following criteria: socio-economic background, performance and not in receipt of any other assistance schemes. The scholarship covered the tuition fees, boarding costs and book rental. It is important to note that the researcher could not obtain information about the number of recipients of these scholarships.

In conclusion, these four government assistance programmes targeted slightly different learners. The 2004 School Bursary Scheme targeted OVC, the Textbook Rental Scheme and the rationalisation of fees policy aimed at secondary schools and all their learners, whereas the NMDS Scholarships targeted high performing poor learners. The targeting of poor rural schools is an indication that the government realised that, beyond OVC, many poor households' children were also excluded from accessing or completing secondary education.

4.6 ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

This section discusses briefly the focus of the rational and political approaches in terms of their analysis of the different issues associated with government assistance programmes around their context, content, implementation and impact. It is proposed to use broadly the lenses of these two analytical

approaches to enrich the assessment of these programmes, even if what is presented below is not exhaustive or fully analysed.

4.6.1 The rational analytical approach

For rational analysts, the challenge is to identify the basic priority needs of these children at home and at school and then target strategically and rationally their needs. They are interested in asking whether these financial assistance schemes are well designed: do they target the most appropriate learners? Are they based on an adequate understanding of the harsh living and schooling conditions and pressures confronting these poor learners? Are they effective in ensuring that the beneficiaries are sufficiently supported to access, remain in, and complete the secondary school cycle? Do they impact sufficiently on the beneficiaries?

These financial assistance programmes targeted the most obvious schooling expenses: tuition fees, boarding, textbooks and meals. These costs were assumed to be the main obstacles faced by poor learners in entering, staying in, and completing their secondary education. However, there were other less obvious school and non-school issues which confronted poor learners.

At school level, there were hidden costs and expenses (such as uniforms and school maintenance fees), cultural or social dimensions, issues around the relevance of curricula, and relationship with teachers and other learners. The location of secondary schools could also have been an issue. Richardson (2011) mentions that the low level of access to secondary education is often associated with the distance learners have to travel to school as there are not many secondary schools, especially in poor remote rural areas.

Another school issue, as mentioned earlier, is the impact of the increase in enrolment on the quality of education since it stretched an already poor school infrastructure, with many secondary schools suffering from a lack of adequate material and human resources. According to the MOET (2005), from 2001 onwards, the state of primary and secondary schooling deteriorated and discouraged many learners to stay in the system.

Another set of obstacles militating against poor learners' attendance and success was found in the home situation. Harsh and difficult living conditions can have serious effects on the material, psychological or emotional well-being of poor learners. Many learners were orphans without a home, others were neglected by their families or had to care for sick parents or aged relatives. Beyond access to school, these learners needed access to social workers or counsellors — in the community or at school — to support and advise them.

It is thus clear that the financial assistance programmes only reached the tip of the iceberg and did not address many of the root problems faced by the OVC and poor children. In its desire to expand educational access, the government seemed to have focused narrowly on the most obvious school expenses, instead of finding ways in which to incorporate support measures beyond schooling around the well-being of OVC and poor children.

Reddy and Sinha (2010, p.16) are keen to emphasize that, "children's participation in schools cannot be improved without changes in the wider socio-economic conditions." The improvement of school access, retention and completion of the secondary cycle does indeed require a multi-pronged approach, involving the collaboration of various ministries as well as sound

and well-conceptualised strategic interventions, which take into account the limited government resources. As ANCEFA (2008) argues, it was an almost impossible task for the Lesotho government to develop sustainable poverty reduction interventions.

4.6.2 The political analytical approach

Political analysts are interested in assessing the context, content and implementation of these financial assistance programmes in terms of the underlying power relationships between different interest groups. For them, key questions to examine are: whose agendas are represented or ignored in these programmes? What conflicts and tensions exist over the content and implementation of these programmes? Who benefits at the expense of whom?

Political analysts would first focus on the agendas and roles of international agencies versus the local population in pressurizing the government to widen secondary school access and completion. They would assess whether the government had the political will or commitment to change substantially its allocation of education funds and introduce comprehensive interventions to improve the situation faced by poor learners at home and in their secondary schools.

In analysing the content and implementation of these government assistance programmes, attention would be given to the underlying tensions and conflicts between different interest groups. For example, the main funding parties, the MOET, MoHSW and the Global Fund had different interpretations of OVC and what they should provide for specific groups of poor learners and these views shifted overtime. What would also be examined are the contestations and manipulations by various communities to qualify for these financial

schemes given that these communities are not homogeneous and will pursue their own sectarian interests (as explained below). The assessment would look at which groups benefit more than others. For instance, the rationalisation of fees policy benefited all learners of these schools but some of these schools were more negatively affected by their declining income. The tighter screening of textbook selection was also about antagonising some existing textbook publishing companies by bringing new ones on board. This change of textbooks could also be the outcome of corrupt or manipulative practices by some groups involved in textbook production and distribution, as has been shown recently in South African education.

Thus, it is clear that the rational and political analyses reveal different important issues and problems embedded in the context, conceptualisation, content and implementation of these financial assistance programmes aimed at widening secondary school access to poor communities.

CHAPTER 5

DISTRICT AND SCHOOL DATA PRESENTATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the last two research questions of this study about the district and school implementation challenges of these government assistance programmes and their impact on learners. It does this by presenting the research findings on the challenges experienced by the district and then by the two sampled schools regarding the implementation of these financial assistance programmes; their impact on poor vulnerable children's schooling; and suggestions on how to improve these programmes. In its presentation, it further reveals the different tensions that came up as result the different issues associated with government assistance programmes around their implementation and impact as the rational and political approaches would point out. The rational approach reveals implementation challenges that may be related to poor planning and management and lack of capacity both at central, district and school level while the political approach points to different stakeholder interests in the implementation of the assistance programmes which mitigate against their good intentions. The chapter concludes on the similarities and differences experienced by the two sampled schools with these assistance programmes.

The study was conducted in two secondary schools located in the Butha-Buthe district, in the northern part of Lesotho. Data was collected through document analysis, interviews and questionnaires. National documents such as the

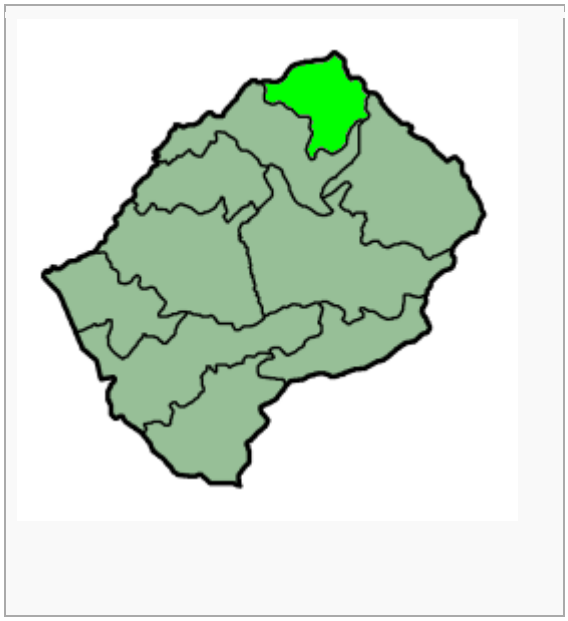
MOET Strategic Plan (2005-2015), MOET Report, MOET's OVC Assessment Report, and National OVC Plan relating to government programmes were obtained but attempts to obtain documents about the government's financial assistance programmes failed.

Interviews were conducted with the centrally based bursary manager, the district-based bursary administrator, with the principal and two parents of OVC per school. Questionnaires were administered to two teachers per school. Apart from covering basic data on the profile of district/schools and participants and on the socio-economic background of the community, the interview/questionnaire schedules dealt with the government assistance programmes, the problems and tensions in the content of these programmes, their implementation, and impact on the education of poor learners.

5.2 PROFILE OF THE DISTRICT

The Butha-Buthe district has an area of 1,767 km² and a population of 109,529 in 2006. It is in the northern part of Lesotho and borders on the Free State Province while domestically it borders on Mokhotlong and Leribe districts (BOS, 2007). Its physical setting is classified within three livelihoods zones: northern lowlands, foothills, and mountains. It has the same homogenous cultural characteristics and behaviour as prevalent in entire Lesotho. According to Owusu-Sekyere (2008), the demographic data shows that 65% of citizens depend on agriculture for income. It is one of 10 districts with the majority of people living below the poverty line (Mohanoe-Mochebele, Letele & Raleting, 2007).

Figure 1: Map of Lesotho with Butha-Buthe (highlighted in green)



Source: MOET Strategic Plan 2005-2015 (2005)

Table 9: Number of registered primary and secondary schools in Butha-Buthe district in 2010

Proprietorship Of schools	Anglican Church Lesotho (ACL)	African Methodist Episcopal (AME)	Comm Unity	Government	Lesotho Evangelican Church (LEC)	Roman Catholic Mission (RCM)	Others	Total
Primary	15	1	8	6	26	21	3	**81**
Secondary	4	1	1	5	6	1	5	**23**

Source: Statistics Unit, MoET Report, 2010

Table 9 above shows that the majority of schools are owned by the churches, with the government having only 11 schools in the district. It is interesting to note that there are only 23 secondary schools compared to 81 primary schools, an indication of how secondary education access remains low. The existence of only 5 government secondary schools indicates how difficult it is for OVC to

access secondary schooling in the district, especially since non-government schools are usually much more costly than government schools.

Table 10: Enrolments in registered primary and secondary schools in Butha-Buthe district

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Primary	27128	26543	26452	25996	23879	23339	22859	22535
Secondary	6471	6996	7079	7533	8588	9040	10003	-

Source: Statistics Unit, MoET Report (2010)

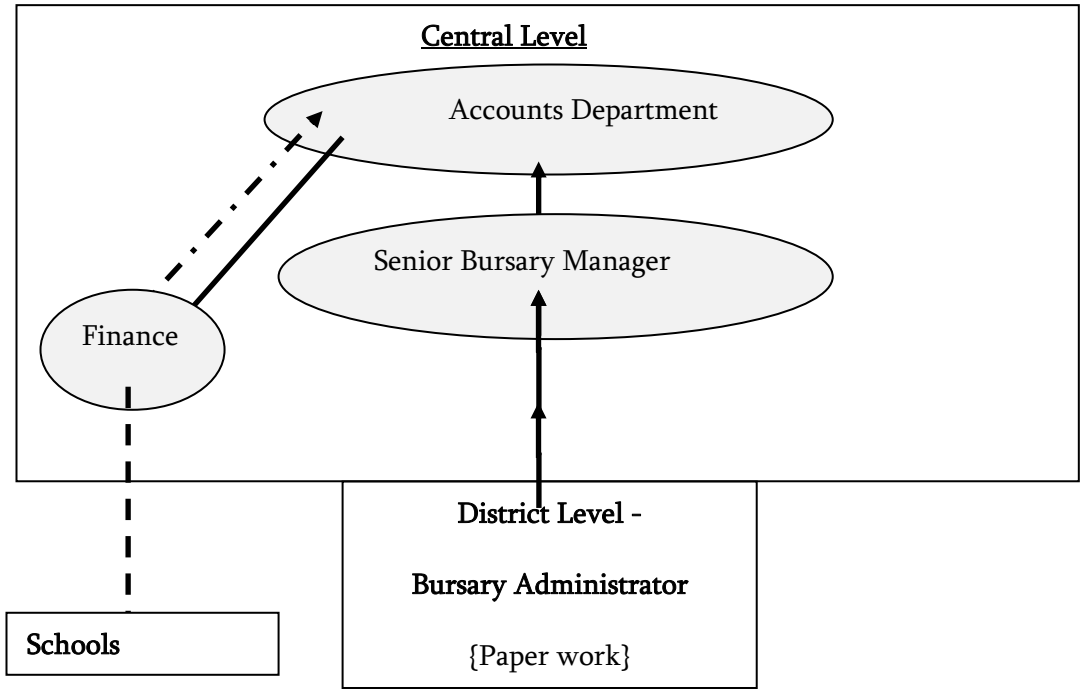
Table 10 shows the considerable difference between primary and secondary enrolment with 22,859 learners registered in primary schools and 10,003 learners in secondary schools in 2010, suggesting a poor transition from primary to secondary education. Equally interesting is the decline in primary enrolment from 2004 onwards. Between 2004 and 2010, the number of learners enrolled decreased from 27,128 to 22,859 while secondary enrolments rose steadily from 6,471 to 10,003.

5.3 CAPACITY OF THE DISTRICT

The central and district level officers manage bursaries. There are 3 bursary officers at headquarters and 12 district bursary administrators in the ten districts who are responsible for the administration related to selection of those who qualify for assistance. These district officers are responsible for the collection of applications from parents or guardians with accompanying documents, such as birth certificates, death certificates of parents and letters from the chief. Once all the requirements are collected, the district management team ensures that all documentation and the list of names are in

place before taking them to headquarters bursaries office where preparation for payments of OVC is done. Headquarters takes almost three months to process the applications before disbursement of the funds (Mwansa, 2010). This process is depicted in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Flow of administration and payment of bursaries



KEY

Authorization ⟶ Flow of funds ⇢

Source: Mwansa 2010, p.42

The low level of human resources previously mentioned at both central and district level contributes to the ineffective management of the bursary scheme. However, the bursary manager at headquarters pointed out that plans were under way to increase staff at each district's Bursary Unit to reduce the workload and improve its supervisory and audit functions, something that was

urgently required to address the long-term needs of managing the OVC programme effectively (Interview - April 2012).

5.4 DISTRICT CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

The evidence from respondents reveals that the district is experiencing major implementation challenges based on the huge number of learners, slow disbursement and mismanagement of bursaries. Each of these challenges is discussed below.

5.4.1 Number of Learners

Over the past 10 years, the district has been faced with major challenges with around 20,000 learners eligible for government financial assistance. According to Mwansa (2010), the need for bursaries has outpaced the supply. An additional problem is that the number of learners eligible for financial assistance is determined by the central head office which is unable to consider fully the relative poverty needs of each district. The government is the biggest funder for the bursary scheme but with the economic recession, the 2010 budget remains the same as for 2009, forcing the scheme to rethink its target group. At the beginning of 2011, according to the bursary administrator (Interview - November 2011), the government changed the target group to double orphans because of the limited funds available.

Beyond the difficult distribution of these limited funds to an increasing number of learners, districts were also faced with administrative and managerial issues. As mentioned above, the delays in processing beneficiaries

and making the payments to schools come from the low number of bursary managers/administrators countrywide (3 at central and 12 in the 10 districts) who were increasingly overstretched in their work by the growing number of eligible OVCs. Another problem, according to the bursary manager (Interview - April 2012), is the non-alignment of the fiscal year with the school calendar year. The fiscal year begins in April while the school year begins in January, meaning that while schools open in January each year, the data for recipients is captured only in March.

5.4.2 Mismanagement of Bursaries

The bursary manager (Interview - April 2012) acknowledged the mismanagement of funds in some districts as bursaries were not always given to the rightful learners. With an increasing number of poor learners, the district had to exclude some learners who did not qualify for financial assistance because they did not fall into the double orphans OVC category even though they were from extremely disadvantaged families or communities. The bursary administrator (Interview - August 2011) explained that:

> At times, we have to deal with the large number of eligible learners who are more than what the government is willing to help in a year. There is also fraud of identity by the beneficiaries. It becomes a challenge to select those who most qualify without being biased.

In addition, the lack of financial and human capacity constraints at district level made it difficult to find transport and people to monitor how all schools managed and implemented the bursary scheme and whether the OVC selected were eligible. The Mwansa (2010) claims that verification exercises are essential to ensure that only the most vulnerable children get access to a

bursary. Yet, as the bursary administrator (Interview - November 2011) explains:

> Some pupils may fake the death certificates and use those of the family members with similar surnames in attempting to get a scholarship. To an extent, this is done with the knowledge of the chiefs. This cannot easily be detected since bursary administrators do not conduct verification exercises before a bursary is awarded and there are no proper lower level structures to detect this.

Furthermore, according to Mwansa (2010), the funds budgeted for monitoring the scheme were often used for paying for extra learners, given the huge demands for these bursaries.

On their side, teacher and parent respondents had their own concerns about the scheme. They believed that there was some nepotism at district level because there were children who were not poor and yet were getting bursaries. In School A, parents (Interviews - September 2011) and a teacher agreed that the distribution was not fair since many children who were given bursaries were not OVC. In School B, a parent (Interview - September 2011) indicated that the bursary scheme was not distributed fairly as she "knows of children receiving these bursaries which do not come from needy families and have both parents working". However, the other parent (Interview - September 2011) did not think the distribution unfair as she never experienced any problems. The bursary administrator (Interview, November 2011) also disputed this and said that there was consistency in the selection of OVC learners which was done by using criteria stipulated by the scheme.

Teacher respondents added that there was a lack of follow-up by schools and the district on OVC school attendance to find out why learners failed to attend schools as frequently as they did. However, the bursary administrator

(Interview, November 2011) disagreed and said that, at the end of the year, a performance analysis was done of these learners to check how many had passed, failed, and dropped out. Another management-related problem, according to him, is that the district did not have a proper management information system to monitor the progress properly as everything was done manually and was therefore not fully reliable.

In School A, teachers stated that many learners dropped out in the early months of the year but schools did not inform the district and continued to demand the money for the learners who have dropped out. The Global Fund Coordinating Unit (2008) agreed that some OVC dropped out or transferred to other schools but that these schools still charged the district. Thus, the implementation of the bursary scheme illustrates how such programmes were contested by the various interest groups involved as they all wanted to make as much money out of the scheme as possible since they felt desperate to access the scarce and limited government funds. This is why adequate monitoring of the scheme is important to ensure that funds are properly allocated, used and accounted for.

5.5 SCHOOL A DATA

This section discusses the data from School A. It does this by looking at the profile of the school, the financial assistance programmes for the school and their implementation challenges. It further discusses their general impact on poor learners' schooling and suggestions for improvement.

5.5.1 Profile of School A

School A, founded in 1951, is a secondary school of the Anglican Church of Lesotho (ACL) situated in one of Butha-Buthe's underprivileged areas, 32 km out of the main town. In the past, the school used to have a roll of 500-600 learners. However, with the introduction of government financial assistance programmes, the school roll increased to +/- 900 learners. This roll increased because the school had to accommodate all the children in their area, given the few secondary schools in the area.

The principal reported that the number of OVC children had increased because of the poverty and orphanhood in the area. The majority were double orphans while the rest came from disadvantaged households with no monthly income. At the moment, the school has 890 learners with 26 qualified and 5 under-qualified teachers. Out of 890 children, 488 are reported OVC and about 268 are assisted financially by the government and NGOs. The school charges R1880 fee per annum, inclusive of tuition fee, books and feeding. Table 11 below provides more information.

Table 11: Profile of Participants in School A

Participants	**Experience**	
Principal	11 years	
Teacher A	7 years	
Teacher B	5 years	
	Relation to learner	**Occupation**
Parent A	Single parent	Domestic worker
Parent B	Grandmother	Pensioner

Source: Own

5.5.2 Financial Assistance Programmes for School A

The school benefits from a few assistance programmes such as the secondary school bursary scheme programme, the textbook rental scheme, the National Manpower Development Secretariat scholarships, and some other non-governmental schemes as explained below.

5.5.2.1 Secondary School Bursary Scheme

The principal (Interview - September 2011) stated that the government implemented a bursary scheme for OVC inclusive of tuition fees, boarding fees, feeding fees, notebooks, and textbooks. 207 OVC learners were identified as recipients of the bursaries in the school. He explained that:

> The bursary administrator identifies learners on the basis that they produce their birth certificates, parents' death certificates, and/or a medical certificate as proof from government hospitals that parents are unfit to engage in any form of physical activity.

Teacher and parent respondents added that a letter from the chief also served as a form of evidence that children fall under the OVC category.

5.5.2.2 Textbook Rental Scheme (TRS)

Teachers indicated that the textbook rental scheme helped in reducing costs for poor households which could not afford to buy textbooks for their children. They pointed out that many learners did not have textbooks and this resulted in some degree of disorganisation as those who did not have books sometimes tried to steal them from their classmates. This lack of textbooks which were the main reference for their learning negatively affected the teaching and learning.

This rental scheme applied to all learners in lower secondary schools for a stipulated amount of R220 per annum. The government rented books to schools and at the end of the year learners returned textbooks and the money was returned to the school. The principal believed in the cost effectiveness of such a scheme which was compulsory and was of reasonable cost. He said that this has contributed to a major improvement in the teaching and learning in the school.

5.5.2.3 National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) Scholarships

The principal indicated that they have 50 learners sponsored by the NMDS in the form of scholarships the government gives to poor learners. It was linked to a meritocratic system of learners' exceptional performance and the scholarship was inclusive of tuition fee, boarding fee, and provision of food and textbooks.

The principal and teachers identified these learners since they knew them well and were in a better position to select those good learners in desperate need of financial assistance. Teachers explained that, over the years, the government topped up these scholarships for bright OVC learners to enable them to attend school effectively. Nonetheless, teacher B felt that the selection was open to bias as sometimes the school chose learners they favoured and overlooked learners who genuinely needed assistance.

5.5.2.4 Other Non-Government Assistance Programmes

The principal explained that 11 poor learners are financed by World Vision, who registered these learners at school when they were young needy children. Since primary education was free, World Vision decided to continue paying for their secondary schooling cost. It also paid for non-tuition support by building shelter in their individual villages.

In addition, teachers mentioned that individuals in the community offered financial assistance to OVC by buying and offering them uniforms and food. Teacher A explained that, at one point, the constituency's politically elected parliamentary representatives offered school jerseys to OVC. The school also decided to allow 9 OVC learners to attend school for free. These OVCs did well in their studies but did not benefit from any financial assistance programmes.

With these various programmes in place which covered the main schooling expenses, the OVC were given a better chance to attend and follow the secondary school cycle.

5.5.3 Implementation Issues of Government Financial Assistance Programmes

This section looks at how schools and communities experienced the implementation of these financial assistance programmes, and in particular their payment problems.

The principal, together with teachers, stated that the delay in government paying the bursary and NMDS scholarship money for OVCs' fees impacted negatively on the financial running of the school. This was a great concern

because these learners did not have access to stationery or textbooks for a large part of the year, and this affected their performance.

The principal was worried about this delay in allocating books to such learners while teacher A complained of the negative impact on the teaching and learning of the whole class of the delay in supplying notebooks and textbooks.

The school was put under strain financially as it interfered with the school budget and undermined the way the school runs and this is why the school sought other sources of money to buy learners food and textbooks. Another problem was that OVC learners lost the books provided to them by the school on behalf of the government and these could not be replaced.

Thus, it is imperative for the government to find ways to speed up this payment to schools on time so that schools are able to function more effectively.

5.5.4 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes on Retention and Completion of Poor Learners' Schooling

The next issue is how these programmes impacted on access to quality education, retention, and completion, given the extreme poverty, poor attendance, and lack of tuition support. The findings suggested that, despite these assistance programmes, many learners did not receive quality education and either failed to proceed to the next grade or dropped out altogether.

5.5.4.1 Quality Secondary Education

It is undeniable that FPE together with the existence of many OVC have overstretched the capacity of existing secondary school infrastructure and teachers. Without a sound conducive learning environment, poor learners' performance, high repetitions and drop-outs at an early age continued to present challenges.

The principal of School A (Interview - September 2011) claimed that while as many as 320 OVC had been admitted since the introduction of these financial assistance programmes, the government failed to provide the school with additional teachers to make up for the increased number of learners. According to Teacher A, the student-teacher ratio is now around 60:1 in most classrooms but used to be at 45:1 before the introduction of FEP and the financial programmes. This became rather strenuous as it was difficult to reach out to all learners in the classroom. Sometimes the school used its own funding to hire more teachers and extend the infrastructure. This went against the MOET's Education Strategic Plan of Action 2005-2015 (2005, p.33) which stipulated the following:

> The quality of secondary education shall be enhanced by equipping schools and educational centres with the requisite skills through investing in teacher training, professional development, and facilities or resources such as teaching and learning materials, adequate school infrastructure, such as libraries and laboratories, and providing improved teacher supervision and support (MOET, 2005).

Yet the reality did not match the government's intentions. Many countries which made primary education free experienced the same problems. For example, Swaziland's National Plan for OVC 2006-2010 acknowledged that, to

maintain quality, there was a need for expansion of infrastructure and the recruitment of better teachers and better training for all teachers.

5.5.4.2 Learner Dropout vs Completion

This section examines CREATE Zones 5 and 6 children who dropped out of secondary schools or were at risk of dropping out. A number of factors were cited by school respondents as contributory factors to drop-outs. The most important causes were poor attendance and the needy situation of these learners (beyond tuition support). Indeed, poor attendance and drop-outs can be caused by poverty and/or the poor quality schooling offered.

5.5.4.3 Poor Attendance

Poor attendance was a factor that hindered OVC performance at school, leading to drop-outs. The principal highlighted that many OVC did not attend school regularly partly because they did not have anyone at home to encourage them and ensure that they attended school daily. Teacher B indicated that even though many of OVC learners have managed to access secondary education, schools have been overburdened by the huge number of learners and this has resulted in some of them not achieving in school as effectively as they should. As time went by, they failed to catch up with their studies and the level of other learner and as a result they lost interest, eventually deciding to leave school.

5.5.4.4 Poverty and More than Tuition Support

The principal (Interview- September 2011) argued that, even though OVC were offered financial assistance, some of them dropped out because of their poverty. Teacher B confirmed that although the OVC were given tuition fee and book assistance, their attendance often remained poor because they could not buy uniforms because of their extreme household poverty. The school tried to do follow-up with these learners at their homes to understand their problems and reasons why they did not attend school so they could help them with uniforms and food.

The principal stated that they tried to partner with the community for feeding schemes for OVC who could not afford daily meals and raise funds in whatever possible ways to help them with other necessities such as uniforms and warm clothes. The bursary administrator (Interview – November 2011) confirmed that there was a government plan to look at how to help these learners who needed more than tuition support. This shows that learners' attendance is affected by external socio-economic issues which are outside the realm of the school's responsibilities.

Teacher B said that the financial assistance programmes did manage to increase and sustain access as some poor learners remained throughout the secondary cycle despite the challenges they experienced. However, others who were less determined lost interest when they realized they could not cope. Parent A (Interview - September 2011) added that these children needed more than financial assistance if they had to be retained in the secondary cycle. She confirmed that many struggled financially, while others left school because of reasons such as marriage, pregnancy or initiation school. Parent B (Interview -

September 2011) mentioned that these children lacked encouragement from their families since their parents were not educated and did not demonstrate much interest in their children's education. Finally, there were some learners who acted as heads of households because their parents were deceased, and they had to take care of their siblings or, even worse, had to work to provide for the family.

The government acknowledged some of these factors which led to learner dropouts. The Lesotho National Plan on OVC 2006-2010 (2006, p.14) noted that: "while the right to education is a universal right for every child, the reality is that a large number of orphaned children continues to be denied access because they have no money to pay for food, clothing (including uniform), and school books, and are often burdened with caring and household tasks". The MOET Report (2008, p.18) also notes that:

> A growing concern is with the majority of the beneficiaries of financial assistance who found it difficult to attend lessons regularly, owing to unfriendly conditions in their homes as well as walking long distances to schools. Thus, the government of Lesotho plans to have half-way homes to take care of the large number of orphans (mainly due to HIV/AIDS), thereby ensuring that children did not walk long distances to schools as this was an impediment for learners to complete their secondary education.

Thus, a number of issues were responsible for the low quality of education, retention, and completion. The government should have done a more comprehensive analysis of the various factors which prevented OVC from accessing and remaining in schools. Not only did school infrastructure and teacher training not expand but it was clear that many OVC needed more support than just tuition and textbooks in order to attend and complete their secondary schooling.

5.5.5 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes in widening access to secondary education

This section looks at the impact of these financial assistance programmes on ensuring the widening of access to secondary education. The principal (Interview - September 2011) believed that the government financial assistance programmes had partly achieved their objectives, although there were a few discrepancies and mishaps that needed to be addressed. He pointed out that, while there were still a lot of OVC who were not in school, the number of learners in schools had increased because of these programmes. This suggests that some learners in that poor community have benefited from government assistance.

There were no school statistics which showed the exact number of OVC learners graduating at the end of secondary schooling, but access had been widened even if it led to larger class size with the same number of qualified teachers. This was confirmed by the bursary manager (Interview - April 2012) who indicated that, because of limited funds, they could not develop measuring tools to find out the number of OVC learners who completed their education and those who dropped out and why. The principal (Interview - August 2012) maintained that many of these poor learners have stayed at school and were doing fairly well in most subjects, although one cannot rule out the fact that some learners' performance was poor.

Both parents (Interviews - September 2011) believed that the financial assistance was satisfactory to cover all schooling expenses since learners received what the government had promised and access to secondary education had been widened. As pointed out by parent A, "the financial assistance has been very helpful as it has reduced crime since most children are

now at school preventing them from loitering around and engaging in unlawful activities".

From the findings, it is clear that access was widened for OVC although the programmes have had a limited impact because they focused too narrowly on financial assistance for access to secondary schools and did not assist with ensuring a more conducive learning environment and quality support to these learners both at school and at home. There were, indeed, deeper obstacles which prevented these financial programmes from achieving their objectives.

5.5.6 Suggestions on How to Strengthen Financial Assistance Programmes

Given the problems around these programmes and their implementation, respondents made some suggestions to strengthen these. School A's respondents argued that, to ensure the efficacy and sustainability of these programmes, additional mechanisms were needed such as better communication with all people concerned, home support, psychological support and monitoring.

5.5.6.1 Stakeholder Communication

Schools suffered financially because they were never paid on time by the government. It is therefore important that the government develops better mechanisms to ensure timely payment. The principal believed that better stakeholder communication could eliminate many problems faced by schools and government who need to find ways in which to improve the existing programmes. The bursary administrator agreed that regular communication between all relevant stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and learners could enhance the effectiveness of the programmes.

5.5.6.2 Home Support

Parent B stated that the government should be more generous and continue to finance their education even if some learners have to repeat as they cannot pay for repeating a grade, otherwise this will be a waste of resources because they drop out as a result of such issues (Interview – September 2011).

Teacher A suggested that financial assistance should go beyond schooling items and help with things such as uniforms and food. Teacher B agreed that the assistance should include other forms of support to overcome OVC problems such as warm clothes needed in winter, as most of them could not afford these. This, they believe, could assist in ensuring that they remained at school. They suggested that the government considers assistance, including non-tuition support, to help them at home.

Another suggestion was for the school to assist with the home situation. Parent A indicated that the school could assist parents and their children to work together on development projects such as agricultural projects to earn a living to support themselves and that in the process the school could raise funds for the needy children and help them with things that the government programmes do not cover.

5.5.6.3 Psychological Support

The principal claimed that assistance also had to cover the psychological dimension of support. He said that OVC learners needed to have a minimum level of emotional well-being to study properly and feel they belonged to the school. He suggested that government should train teachers with counselling

skills to help learners with the emotional and psychological issues that affected them both at school and at home.

5.5.6.4 Monitoring

The district, together with schools, needed to do regular monitoring and performance analysis throughout the year to determine how many learners were still in the system to ensure the effective use of extra resources. Performance analysis could determine which learners have dropped out and why, and this would enable schools and the district to come up with alternative ways of helping these learners.

5.6 SCHOOL B DATA

This section covers the findings about the profile of the school, the financial assistance programmes implemented and their implementation challenges. It also discusses their impact on poor learners' schooling and suggestions for improvement.

5.6.1 Profile of School B

School B was established in 2009 as a new government public school in the Butha-Buthe district, 18 km out of the main town. It is located in one of the most poverty-stricken areas. The school serves children who cannot afford the high costs of secondary education after the FPE but could manage to pay the R500 maximum fee of this secondary school as this was much lower than many schools that charged between R1300 and R2000. The principal explained that the majority of learners were double and single orphans, while others

were vulnerable because they were either abandoned, disabled, or their parents suffered from some sickness or disability. The school has 480 learners and 10 qualified teachers, including the principal. There were 207 learners who were OVC, with 112 being offered financial assistance by the government. Although not very different from School A in terms of community background, this recently established public school fell under the new rationalised fees regulations.

Table 12: Profile of School B Participants

Participants	**Experience**	
Principal	3 years	
Teacher A	3 years	
Teacher B	3 years	
	Relation to learner	**Occupation**
Parent A	Grandmother	Government pensioner
Parent B	Aunt	Not working

Source: Own

5.6.2 School B Financial Assistance Programmes

The programmes benefitting poor learners at this school were the rationalisation of tuition fees, the secondary school bursary scheme and the textbook rental scheme.

5.6.2.1 Rationalization of tuition fees

According to the principal (Interview – September 2011), the fee rationalization policy was passed in 2009 to ensure that some schools did not

charge above the stipulated amounts. The MOET minister explained that, "the rationalization policy is implemented in all public secondary schools in order to make education accessible to all Basotho children…it is noted that the decision to rationalize school fees comes from the uncoordinated way in which schools peg fees and introduce new ones, thereby resulting in prohibitive fees in schools. This situation had rendered it difficult for some students to access secondary education as evidenced by the low transition rates from primary to secondary school levels" (Informative Newspaper, 27 September 2011).

The rationale behind this policy was to subsidize school fees so they could become more affordable amount for parents, while ensuring that schools were not deprived of all the revenue they needed. The principal agreed that the government rationalization of school fees reduced the high costs of secondary schooling for parents who could not afford to pay for their children as a result of government's concern about the high number of drop-outs due to lack of household finances, particularly after their completion of FPE.

Thus, this government's attempt to widen access to secondary education for poor learners benefited the learners as their school fees included a book allowance of R220, R260 for feeding schemes, and R20 government levy. In return, these schools were to be subsidized by the government through various forms of financial support to enable them to function properly (Informative Newspaper, 27 September 2011).

However this subsidized fees policy was not sufficient for OVC learners who still could not afford these low fees. The principal explained that all fees, such as security fee and maintenance fee that are charged by the school, are not covered by this scheme which had therefore to be accompanied by other financial support such as the bursary and textbook rental scheme.

5.6.2.2 Secondary School Bursary Scheme

The principal stated that the government offers bursaries to orphans and vulnerable children to enable them to better access secondary education and these cover school fees, feeding, government levy, and books (Interview - September 2011). This was given to 112 OVC learners who could not afford the already subsidized fees but the principal felt that this assistance was minimal as students could not afford uniforms, while others came to the school hungry and could not focus or concentrate well at school.

Teacher B pointed out that parents applied for such financial assistance at the District Office as this process does not include principals and/or teachers. To qualify for this assistance, both parents highlighted that they were supposed to produce birth certificates, parents' death certificates, a letter from the village chief, and a medical certificate as proof from a government hospital that parents were unfit to engage in any form of physical activity that can enable them to work. Teacher A believed that the selection process was unfair as there were learners admitted into the scheme who were not needy at all. The bursary administrator (Interview - November 2011) agreed that there was a lot of fraud as parents/guardians blackmailed their chiefs and bought medical certificates. The GFCU (2008) also acknowledged that some learners were admitted into the scheme even though they were over 18 years, as the system worked on the basis of "first come, first served". This is why the GFCU (2008) wanted to revise and tighten the selection and admission criteria of this bursary scheme. In addition, the GFCU wanted the bursary scheme to be monitored constantly to generate quality data for the country and the partners to ensure accountability, transparency, efficiency and effective implementation.

Another problem mentioned by most respondents was that the bursary scheme was discontinued if learners failed one year. They felt it was unfair for poor learners who needed more time sometimes and benefited from repeating a grade to keep up with the standards. Respondents urged the government to review this clause and pay for these learners' fees if they managed to pass that repeated grade.

5.6.2.3 Textbook Rental Scheme (TRS)

Teachers mentioned the textbook rental scheme as another programme put in place to support learners. Learners were expected to pay a rental fee for books and, at the end of the year, were reimbursed if they returned the books to the school. The principal (Interview – September 2011) indicated that many learners struggled to afford the textbooks for their learning and that this scheme played a valuable role in assisting poor learners. Teacher A stated that this initiative was helpful because, when learners did not have the right textbooks and reference materials, the teaching and learning was negatively affected. It was especially beneficial to learners who were not covered by any other financial assistance schemes as they struggled financially to pay for their various school expenses. Furthermore, it helped minimize the fact that learners without textbooks were often disruptive and/or stole textbooks from those who had them, leading to chaos in the classrooms.

The implementation of these programmes is believed to have helped learners to access secondary education even though many continued to struggle with fee payments and expensive textbooks not being available.

School B did not benefit from the NMDS scholarships and did not have other financial support partners. Because School B did not have many learners and because it enjoyed subsidized fees, the government felt that other schools, such as School A, deserved more of its other financial assistance support programmes.

5.6.3 Implementation Issues of the Government Financial Assistance Programmes

This section discusses the main problems associated with the school implementation of these assistance programmes, such as government delays in paying for the OVC, the low government subsidies, the limitation of reduced school budget, and ineffective management of textbooks.

5.6.3.1 Delayed Payments and Low Subsidies

The school could not function properly because of its low finances and insufficient subsidies. All respondents (Interviews - September 2011) confirmed that the government took too long to pay the subsidies which came late and put pressure on the school which had to function for more than half of the year with the limited revenue it managed to accumulate. On several occasions, principals of poor schools have complained about the delays in government payments to schools but nothing has been put in place to adequately address this problem. The bursary administrator (Interview - November 2011) agreed that this government delay impacted negatively on the financial running of schools.

The principal of the newly established school (Interview - September 2011) complained because, as a result of this delay, it became difficult to feed poor learners throughout the year because the school resources were severely strained.

Another problem with the subsidies which came with the fee rationalisation programme is that they came with a stipulation on how they should be used, which frustrated the school which wanted to use them differently according to the school's own priorities.

5.6.3.2 Limitation of reduced school budget

The reduced school budget had implications for two school issues: a narrowing of the curriculum offerings and the impossibility of offering a boarding facility. The principal (Interview - November 2011) indicated that, as a result of operating under the rationalised policy and having to function on a reduced budget, the school had to exclude from its curriculum offerings subjects such as Home Economics, Basic Handicrafts and Computer Studies as it did not have enough funds to maintain these subjects and hire teachers for them. Thus, the government has to find ways of ensuring that schools do not exclude other subjects which may be important for some learners.

Teacher respondents explained that many of their poor learners stayed far from school and had to travel long distances. As a result, the school had planned to open a boarding facility but this important plan was unlikely to materialise due to the school's limited budget. The principal (Interview - November 2011) concluded that this rationalisation policy was a government strategy to win people over, but that it overlooked many important factors

such as what is necessary for a school to run effectively and maintain its education quality.

5.6.3.3 Mismanagement of textbooks

The timeous securing and distribution of textbooks was another serious issue which impacted negatively on the teaching and learning. Teacher A complained that textbooks arrived late to schools, sometimes only half-way through the year. Without any reference material, learners had to rely on notes that teachers were able to provide in class.

The distribution and collection of these textbooks was unnecessarily long and tedious because it was done manually. The principal (Interview - September 2011) added that the process of administering and collecting textbooks from learners was difficult as the school did not have an effective system in place to ensure that books given to learners had a specific number so that these very same books were returned at the end of the year. This cumbersome process made teachers do this job themselves since the school could not afford to pay for a school secretary.

Thus, on the whole, the implementation of government financial assistance programmes suffered from poor management and delivery systems at district and school level which undermined their good intentions. The government, district offices and schools all have to improve their administrative capacity or find better mechanisms to handle the payment of school subsidies and more timely and effective textbook distribution and management.

5.6.4 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes on the retention and completion of Poor Learners' Schooling

This section looks at the impact of the assistance programmes in terms of their ability to retain OVC in schools by ensuring basic quality education so they could complete their secondary education. The first set of findings reveals that there were many poor learners who still failed to access quality secondary education. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (2006:11) is aware that it is only quality education that "empowers OVC, through provision of life-skills, and in the long term contributes towards poverty alleviation and employment opportunities." The second set of findings reveals that many poor learners did not complete their secondary education for reasons associated with poor attendance, cultural beliefs, and lack of home support.

5.6.4.1 Quality Education

The capacity of the school was undermined by the increase in learners' enrolment as it strained the infrastructure and necessitated more teachers. The principal (Interview – September 2011) complained that they, "have not been given teachers to make up for the increased number of learners and, as a result, had to rely on student-teachers assisting with their teaching practice". All respondents felt aggrieved that the government failed to provide the necessary teachers and additional infrastructure to accommodate the rising number of learners. The bursary administrator (Interview - November 2011) explained the problem:

> It was the responsibility of the Teaching Service Department (TSD) to allocate more teachers to schools and as a district, they cannot do much in this regard, as in most public and rural government schools a great number of OVC learners have overstretched the capacity of schools

which had to accommodate them with their limited infrastructure and teachers.

As a result, the pupil/teacher ratio increased to 50/1 and undermined the quality of teaching and learning in classes which were not well staffed and equipped. Thus, without the increase of school capacity in terms of human and material resources, schools were not be able to provide quality education and retain all their learners.

5.6.4.2 Learner Dropout and Completion

As with School A, School B had a few children who dropped out or risked dropping out, and belonged to the CREATE Zones 5 and 6. The findings revealed that OVC learners dropped out and did not complete their secondary education because of poor attendance, cultural issues, and lack of home support.

5.6.4.3 Poor Attendance

Many respondents acknowledged that neither schools nor districts monitored or made follow-ups on OVC attendance to understand why some learners failed to attend school regularly. The principal (Interview- November 2011) stated that some learners stay in deep rural areas where there are no schools and have to travel long distances to schools and that may be why they do not attend school as regularly as they should. This is due at times to the poor conditions in which they live or to poor weather conditions where some learners have to cross rivers to come to school. In these cases, they cannot come to school.

Despite these two financial assistance programmes to schools and to poor OVC learners, the latter did not manage to attend school regularly and complete their secondary education. This suggests that these programmes did not properly take into account the deeper problems faced by poor vulnerable learners. Many lived in child-headed households where they had to fend for themselves and support their younger siblings and were often too poor even to afford a decent meal, making it difficult and stressful for them to attend school regularly. Most of the time, parents/guardians did not encourage children to go to school or report them if they did not go.

5.6.4.4 Cultural Perspectives

Other contributory factors in the poor school attendance and drop-outs came from cultural beliefs and traditions which were stronger in School B than in School A, due to the specific traditional customs in the school community regarding initiation and marriage. Teachers indicated that boys went to initiation schools and became herd boys while girls often left school because they got married or fell pregnant. This community had strong cultural beliefs that girls should marry at a certain age. As Okwach (2008) mentions, "gender issues in Lesotho are complex and embedded in cultural attitudes and practices that nourish perceptions and practices in education". Such cultural beliefs promoted gender discrimination but issues of poverty, HIV/AIDS prevalence and teenage pregnancy in this rural area were also cited as contributing to female children not attending and completing secondary school education.

5.6.4.5 Lack of Home Support

The lack of home support for OVC learners was another issue that emerged from the findings. Parent/guardian A to an OVC learner (Interview – September 2011) argued that learners dropped out for many reasons: many did not have someone to look after them at home or give them some encouragement to do well at school while others had to work as domestic workers to provide for their siblings.

Teachers indicated that, to minimize learner drop-outs, teachers had to take it upon themselves to counsel learners about these difficult issues that affect them at home. Equally important was to make them talk about their cultural beliefs to ensure that these did not conflict with their need to complete their education.

Thus, it is clear that, besides the financial costs for schooling, there were other school issues, such as the poor infrastructure and poorly conducive learning environment, which worked against poor learners in secondary schools. There were also non-school social issues, such as poverty, traditional views, and irregular attendance, which hindered OVC in fully accessing and benefiting from secondary education.

5.6.5 Impact of Financial Assistance Programmes in Widening Access to Secondary Education

This section highlights the impact of the financial assistance programmes at widening education access and opportunities, focusing in particular on the lack

of focus on home support as a crucial impediment working against these programmes.

It has to be admitted that many learners from underprivileged families now had an opportunity to attend school without worrying about tuition fees. The bursary administrator (Interview – November 2011) emphasized that with the implementation of the rationalized fee policy, OVC learners are now able to attend school properly like other children who come from more financially stable families.

The principal believed that "the financial assistance is very helpful to poor learners since they could not afford the expenses of schooling." Teachers shared the same sentiments that the number of learners in school has increased due to these assistance programmes. A grandmother/guardian (Interview - September 2011) claimed that the financial assistance was helpful as she could never afford to educate her grand-child on her own and that, in the first year of her child's education, her child had to stay at home because of her inability to pay the quarterly fee. However, since the government intervened, she had not experienced any problems with her child's school attendance.

However, although a few perform exceptionally well, most poor learners' performance is average as they struggled to make the best out of their schooling. According to the principal, many OVC still struggled with tuition fee as they were excluded from the bursary scheme while others did not know about these financial assistance programmes. Other learners who were accepted into the school could not pay the R500 subsidized tuition fee on time and as a result they did not attend school. So, according to the principal, these programmes only achieved their objectives to a limited extent because they did

not catch or reach enough of the poor learners in the community. Thus, in as much as secondary school access and retention was improved, the programmes did not really provide sufficient support that reached into the deep roots of why OVC do not access, remain or complete their secondary education.

5.6.6 Suggestions on How to Strengthen Government Assistance Programmes

Given the many problems which emerged at the school implementation stage of these assistance programmes, all respondents argued that additional measures are needed to strengthen the effectiveness of these assistance programmes.

5.6.6.1 Psychological Support

One suggestion made by most respondents (Interviews - September 2011) was the need to offer psychological support to OVC. Respondents suggested psychological support for OVC, which should extend to the teachers who deal with them on a daily basis. This will help OVC learners to address their feelings of isolation and despair and gain a commitment or desire to complete their secondary education. Also important was to equip teachers with the necessary counselling skills to handle and support these learners.

5.6.6.2 Home Support

Respondents (Interviews - September 2011) suggested that the government, schools and communities needed to partner to engage OVC and their families in development projects which could feed and sustain them at home as these learners needed to make a living to eat and not come to school hungry as this affected their performance. This could complement the sustainability of the

financial assistance programmes. In addition, parents urged the government, together with the help of the schools, to identify the learners who most needed some financial assistance with school costs.

Thus, to ensure the sustainability of these programmes other interventions such as non-tuition support and psychological counselling for the well-being of OVC are needed.

5.7 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SCHOOLS A AND B

It is interesting to note the similar and different experiences in the two schools under study as judged from the responses of the respondents. The schools have some assistance programmes in common, such as the Bursary scheme and Textbook Rental scheme. In addition, School A is recipient of the NMDS scholarships and NGOs while School B implements the new rationalised fees since it is a new government school which the government wanted to be more accessible to poor learners through reduced school fees. School A is a well-established church school while School B is in a more remote area with more poor learners, which means it attracts more OVC and more government funding.

The two schools experienced similar challenges in the implementation of these government financial programmes and in their impact on learners. Both schools have noted the government delays in payments for OVC as well as the late delivery of textbooks to school. This is a great concern for both schools as this affects them negatively in running the school's programme. Due to their tight budgets, School B principal stated that maintenance of certain subjects is high and requires a lot of funds. As a result, the school was forced to shut

down some facilities in order to survive on its low budget. Because the government overlooks these problems, the principal contended that the government used this programme to garner support for the elections while the schools are suffering.

Above all, the quality of education has been compromised in both schools as, ever since the increased number of learners generated by these assistance programmes, there has not been sufficient provision of qualified teachers and improvement of infrastructure which, as a result, undermined teaching and learning.

Both schools have OVC who drop out of school before they complete their secondary education. The respondents cited poverty, non-tuition support, poor attendance and psychological reasons as contributory factors to school drop-outs. However, being in a remote rural area, School B also cited cultural beliefs and rituals such as early marriage and initiation as impacting negatively on their attendance.

To minimize drop-outs, schools do follow-ups of OVC in their homes to understand their problems and find ways of helping them. In School B, teachers have gone further and showed some leadership in embarking on counselling OVC to ensure that whatever issues they face in their different homes does not stop them from completing their education.

Thus, both schools confront similar problems in the implementation of the financial assistance programmes and plead for the government to rethink and reformulate these programmes to find better ways to meet their targets by better addressing a combination of school and non-school factors

CHAPTER 6
DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter uses the rational and political analytical approaches to analyse the main issues that emerged from, and were derived from the research evidence and findings. Using the lessons from the literature around access to education, this chapter focuses on CREATE Zones of Exclusion 4, 5, and 6 to understand why learners did not remain at or complete their secondary schooling. It argues that the government had a somewhat limited conceptualisation of its financial assistance programmes in trying to support poor learners. It concludes that, for any programme to have a lasting and meaningful impact, there is a need to assess and target the deeper causes of the problems as well as develop strong leadership, better financial and human resources and better partnerships for more effective programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

6.2 THE RATIONAL ANALYSIS

The rational analytical approach, as mentioned earlier, would point towards the problematic poor planning and implementation of government assistance programmes as well as the poor capacity and resources at district and school level as major contributory factors that militated against the achieving the intentions of the programmes. It would note the lack of proper understanding of the deep problems of poor learners which have serious implications on learner drop out levels and on completion of their secondary education. In

addition, it would note that meaningful access needs to be defined beyond narrow indicators of school enrolment and include access to an effective teaching and learning process.

6.2.1 Limited Government Conceptualisation of the Assistance Programmes

The findings reveal that many poor learners fit into the CREATE's zones of exclusion 5 and 6 as they dropped out before completing their secondary schooling. The reasons could be due to some issues being overlooked in the conceptualisation and planning of these programmes as these did not target some of the deeper roots of the OVC problems in accessing and completing their secondary schooling. The evidence from both schools shows that targeting tuition and textbook support or subsidized OVC learners' fees are not addressing the issues which contribute to poor learners not attending school regularly and completing their secondary education. There are various socio-cultural issues beyond the school as well as institutional school-based reasons such as quality of schooling being offered.

First, the programmes ignore various socio-cultural dimensions and problems which impact negatively on their sustainability. The government and schools need to take action to sensitize communities and schools as well as recipients of financial assistance of the important value of education. At the moment, neither schools nor the government are taking full responsibility for promoting and advocating access to education and retention of OVC in schools among communities with different values and cultures. As Lewin (2007) argues, the success of such policies or programmes depends on a thorough understanding of the values, ideologies and cultural contexts within which the policies or programmes are pursued. Lee (2002) also argues for the importance

of engaging with socio-cultural perceptions when dealing with school attendance and life chances of the disadvantaged.

Second, the programme goals remain problematic without enough consideration of the realities and nuances involved in accessing meaningful quality education. In fact, by focusing on narrowly defined indicators of learners accessing schools, as opposed to their achievement and completion of schooling, these financial programmes ignore important school and non-school realities which impact learners' well-being at school and home and contribute to their poor attendance and/or drop-out.

At the school level, as Lewin and Akyeampong (2009) argues, schools need to be 'child-friendly' and 'child-seeking' if children are to remain in school and complete the full cycle. The quality of schooling cannot be allowed to deteriorate as it will encourage learners not to attend regularly or to drop out. There are also many non-school related hardships faced by OVC such as lack of support at home, cultural values and overall poverty. The difficult psychological state faced by many OVC undermines the government programmes and prevent many learners' completing their education as they are known to be emotionally depressed, discouraged, and isolated. They live in child-headed households where they have to fend for themselves and support their younger siblings. This is why Rose (2003) argues that securing the future of OVC in schools does not depend only on clearly articulated frameworks and consultations, but also on the "how", which tends to always remain elusive.

This research shows that the main barriers for learners to access and fully participate in education cover many school and non-school factors such as basic school requirements (absence of school uniforms/shoes/food), real and

hidden costs of post-primary schooling, families' disability, ill-health, early marriages, teenage pregnancy, sexual harassment, heavy burden of household chores, distance to school, insecurity and poor nutrition or no meals at home.

Thus, the research points to the need by the government together with other relevant stakeholders to better understand school and non-school issues preventing OVC from accessing, continuing and completing their secondary education. There are many significant interventions at school and home which are needed to address the deeper obstacles which prevent these financial programmes from being cost-effective and achieving their objectives.

The government did not foresee the challenges for schools and learners to access and complete their schooling and, as a result, did not conceptualise fully the problems of OVC, and did not properly plan the programme implementation. Thus, the rational analysts would have foregrounded the problems deriving from a lack of rational understanding, strategizing and planning of these programmes which did not sufficiently take into account the day-to-day world and realities of schools and learners.

6.2.2 System Resources and Human Capacity

The rational approach examines the implementation resources and capacity necessary to yield positive results. For Mouton (2003), implementation depends substantially on skilled management and resources at all levels of the system.

The findings point to the poor material, technical and financial capacity of the relevant stakeholders. There was poor human capacity at central and district

levels to effectively manage the bursary scheme for an increasing number of OVC requiring financial assistance. The increased number of OVC put significant strains on the implementation arrangements at both district and school level. There was a lack of district and school capacity as well as insufficient financial and material resources to sustain OVC success at schools and implementers encountered administrative difficulties in managing the schemes, as the MOET report acknowledges (Mwansa, 2010). What was overlooked was the need for capacity building in database management information systems and data capturing of bursary administrators. Mwansa (2010) also acknowledged problems of weak capacity to manage the bursary scheme at central and district levels, lack of updated instruments/operations guidelines, and political interference in the selection and allocation of bursaries to needy children. It also mentioned poor formalized ministry co-ordination; lack of collaboration with other line ministries; and uncertainties about the proposed annual increment of the number of OVC in relation to the available financial resource envelope and funding gap.

Schools were also overwhelmed by the sudden increase of learners who needed more than tuition support to stay in schools since many learners dropped out of school because of poor attendance associated with poverty, marriage pressures, early pregnancies, and initiation schools. Even though it has been almost 10 years since some of these programmes have been introduced, no measures have been taken to address the reasons OVC do not stay and complete their education.

Thus, there is a need for greater resource mobilisation and stronger district and school administrative capacity within the education system to enable OVC to attend and complete their schooling effectively.

6.2.3 School Quantity vs Quality

Full access to education means access to better equipped schools and adequate teaching and learning resources where the equity and quality of education are not compromised. One of the goals of the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education and the 2000 Dakar World Education Forum states that in addition to increased access to education, all countries should improve the quality and equity of education so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all (OECD, 2003).

Yet, the sampled schools argued that the ministry did not support them with sufficient additional human and material resources to offer the same quality education as before the widening of access. It is undeniable that the implementation of government financial strategies has increased secondary school enrolment rates. However, not much infrastructural development followed. The ministry acknowledges that "it is equally concerned about the general poor quality of education that is being delivered, a phenomenon that is explained principally by the high pupil-teacher ratios, inadequately trained teachers, and weak and over-centralised school management system" (MOET Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2015, 2005, p.17).

Schools were overwhelmed by the sudden huge increase in the numbers of learners given their limited infrastructure and teacher supply. All respondents indicated that the government failed to provide additional teachers and infrastructure to accommodate the increased number of learners. As a result, teachers complained that classrooms were overpopulated and that they could not reach out and follow all learners in the classroom. Respondents admitted that this undermined and compromised the quality of education provided and

resulted in poor performance and drop-outs by many secondary school learners.

Lee (2002) warns that the need for physical upgrading of school buildings, the supply of textbooks and instructional materials, and the upgrading of teaching skills and expertise are part of a long list of requirements to improve the quality of education. Lewin and Akyeampong (2009) also argues that rapid expansion in enrolments has degraded education quality, and the costs of accommodating all or even most of those completing primary education in secondary schools have become unsustainable without reform. Thus, the deteriorating school environment and what goes on in classrooms plays a significant part in influencing incidences of irregular attendance, low achievement, repetition and ultimate drop-out. In some developing countries where the quality in public schools is going down, high-cost private schooling has been growing (Lewin & Sayed, 2005, in Lewin, 2009). Thus, equitable access to effective and relevant education is critical for long term improvements in productivity and well-being.

It is interesting to note that many EFA programmes in other developing countries, such as Malawi and Kenya, have focused on additional school inputs where infrastructure is weak, buildings and classrooms insufficient or unavailable, learning materials in short supply, and teacher qualification is low (Lewin, 2007). Thus, the research findings reveal that better educational access in Lesotho meant only increasing enrolment rates through the subsidized access which lowered the costs of secondary schooling. However, the impact of these government assistance programmes on the OVC schooling was limited, partly because of the simultaneous deteriorating quality of the school learning environment.

6.2.4 Monitoring and Accountability

Brian *et al* (2006) advocate that accountability is demonstrated through transparency and documentation which will indicate how much human and material resources are available to support programme implementation. In addition, McLaughlin (1987) argues that ongoing strategy of monitoring and assessing progress and activities at different levels of the system is essential in determining the sustainability of any programme.

The findings reveal that there was not much documentation produced to guide the implementation of these programmes and that there were some administrative weaknesses at central level when it came to issues of monitoring and accountability. There was some degree of disorganisation in the distribution and management of funds but not much was done to address these delivery issues. For better accountability and transparency, there should be improved planning and preparation for bursary disbursement and subsidies payment by the central office.

The district and schools also experienced major implementation challenges which have not been seriously addressed so far. The evidence reveals that many learners dropped out in the early months of the year and schools did not inform the district about such learners so as to continue receiving the district money allocated to these drop-outs. This was picked up by the GFCU (2008) which argues that more attention should be given to accountability and transparency measures for the effective implementation of the bursary scheme.

District and school accountability seemed to have been overlooked. A possible explanation is the lack of operational guidelines, computerized tools and

management information systems to keep track of the repetitions and drop-out rates among bursary recipients (Mwansa, 2010). There is therefore a need for better monitoring and evaluation of these programmes to enforce greater accountability within the education system. According to Crawford and Bryce (2003), successful implementation of any programmes requires high levels of accountability and transparency. Strong monitoring and evaluation ensure efficiency and effectiveness through informed management decision-making and control (Brian, Ivan & Boyes, 2006).

Thus, unless monitoring and accountability measures are taken into serious consideration, these programmes will not improve their impact and schools will continue to experience a high level of drop-outs among poor learners, a form of wastage of government and funding agencies' resources. To determine progress of any programme, ongoing shared reflection and dialogue as well as a proper monitoring and accountability system is essential.

In conclusion, the rational analytical approach identifies the importance of better rational programme conceptualisation, planning, sufficient implementation capacity and resources and tight monitoring as key factors in ensuring greater cost-effectiveness of government programmes.

6.3 THE POLITICAL ANALYSIS

The political analytical approach focuses strongly on the underlying political interests of stakeholders who shape and influence the formulation, mediation, and implementation of government policies or programmes. It does this by analysing the political and economic context of implementation of the programmes as well as the political character of implementation which explains why discrepancies developed between the intentions and implementation practices of policies or programmes.

6.3.1 The Poor Context of Implementation of the Programmes

Political analysts attempt to understand the socio-political and economic context in which the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes are pursued. They argue that governments often adopt or borrow policies and programmes to further their own interests and legitimacy, irrespective of the conditions and realities on the ground.

There were different competing agendas behind these assistance programmes. International agencies want to influence the education agenda of developing countries, even if their funding commitment did not follow; the Lesotho government wanted to conform to the EFA campaign to receive foreign aid from international donors and the local population pushed for greater educational opportunities for their children while schools were hesitant to open their doors to more learners without government support. The political analysis would indicate that, because the promised funds from donors did not materialise for various reasons, the financial budgetary constraints became a major obstacle in realising the intentions of both the EFA policy and the

assistance programmes. This partly explains why some compromises in the content of the programmes had to be made, leading to rather narrow and limited scope of the programmes in comparison with their ambitious declared aims and intentions.

The government faced a choice in how to proceed. It could revise the EFA policy; it could reorganise its national budget; or look for more partners to devote more money to education and its assistance programmes and ensure their sustainability; or it could downgrade the assistance programmes in a way that did not undermine legitimacy and trust from the local population. The latter choice seems to have been the one adopted, with less money (in real terms) being allocated to such programmes, rendering their efficacy rather limited and generating frustrations on the ground.

The programmes had to appear substantial to gain national legitimacy but, in practice, they did not take sufficient cognisance of the context of implementation and the problems existing at the level of planning, management and day-to-day functioning of the department and school system. Yet, institutional, social, cultural, political, economic and educational contexts have to be taken into account for any ambitious education policy or assistance programmes to succeed. As Jansen (2005, p.374) argues, the organizational context within which implementation is pursued has to be taken into account and yet international targets tend to ignore what happens inside developing countries in their day-to-day education planning and delivery functions. Jansen (2005, p.375) points to the problem arising when, "international target-setting exercises make assumptions that developing countries can readily change and reorder existing bureaucratic organization and political priorities at the national level".

Implementers at departmental and school level became overwhelmed by their intensified work routines because of their lack of resources and capacity. In addition, in the operationalization of these programmes, vested interests and tensions emerged among various sections of the educational bureaucracy, revealing conflicts between different groups involved. An example of this is found in the role of the centre versus the districts in administering these assistance programmes. The centre appeared more interested in controlling and retaining most powers over the implementation of these assistance programmes, even if such a centralised system was not efficient and did not deliver optimally to schools.

Effective programmes have to foresee the implementation context challenges by understanding and managing the various existing conflicts, possibilities and constraints and by developing effective interventions to win over, or at least not fuel further the various tensions between conflicting interest groups (De Clercq, 2010).

6.3.2 Stakeholder Interests in the Implementation of the Financial Assistance Programmes

As mentioned above, the implementation of any policy and programme involves different interest groups who will contest and bargain at the planning and implementation stage of the policy or programmes in pursuance of their particular interests. Little (2008, p.14) explains that, "policy implementation will be affected by whose interests are affected, the types of benefits anticipated, the extent of the change envisioned, the site of decision-making, the nature of expertise and dedication of programme implementer and the level of committed resources." The inability on the part of the government to

retain OVC in the system remains problematic, raising questions as to whether the widening of secondary school access for OVC was more political than rational.

The findings revealed that the power to implement the financial programmes resided with the central office which controlled everything from the number of OVC to be offered financial assistance to the disbursement of funds to schools. Yet, as Mwansa (2010, p.11) explains:

> ... although the MOET has embarked on the decentralisation process of devolving some of the responsibilities from central level to district management, major decisions which districts can make are still taken at central level. Roles and responsibilities of central bursary administrators versus district bursary administrators are still not clearly delineated. This creates a challenge in terms of accountability and transparency in the system.

Mwansa (2010) also mentioned that district structures were too weak to translate these programmes into effective operational practices because district did not always follow properly the various specified procedures and criteria.

Thus, the centre did not appear to want to decentralise some of its powers to districts on the ground that it did not trust, a view which reflected the existence of some kind of power dynamics between the centre and districts. However, the research findings revealed that the result of this power dynamics within the education bureaucracy led to inefficient management by the centre in the form of delays in subsidy payments and bursary disbursements. On their part, districts did not assume full ownership of these programmes and did not go out of their way to ensure that these programmes were effectively operationalized in their contexts.

Yet, one could argue that district officers were better placed and closer to the

point of delivery than central level officers in managing and monitoring these assistance programmes. If the districts were given some decentralised powers from the centre and if their capacity was built up, they would reduce the bureaucracy as well as interpret and adapt the programmes in the light of their local context. Reddy and Sinha (2010) believe that educational programmes should be decentralised to district level to make them more suitable to local needs.

However, Little (2008, p.16) warns that many policies require for their implementation a combination of effective centralized and decentralized systems of administration with better interaction, communication and involvement of the implementers of these different levels. Thus, the political context in which administrative action is pursued has to be recognized and taken on board in any examination of programme implementation. In the context of the Lesotho education bureaucracy, it is interesting to note that the centre had interest in keeping certain responsibilities for fear of losing control over districts. However, it had to justify its centralised control and used the need for tighter accountability from districts on the grounds that the latter was tempted to gain power over these programmes and manipulate funds together with schools to further their sectarian local interests.

Another stakeholder conflict emerged in the supply and distribution of textbooks in schools. The rationale behind the MOET's adoption of the textbook rental scheme was to improve the cost-effectiveness of supplying textbooks (MOET Report, 2008). The MOET wanted to adopt more stringent screening procedures for the selection of textbooks before recommending them to secondary schools because it felt that some textbooks were rather expensive and of poor quality. The issue of textbooks selection has always been

a challenging contested process because of the extensive financing involved and the fact that the procurement and tender processes tended to be questionable and politically influenced. Officials in charge of the textbook selection process are known to manipulate the process in favour of some publishing houses which reward them lavishly, thereby antagonising other publishers. Textbooks were over-priced as well as delivered late or not at all. It is known in the school textbook industry that rational tendering allocation procedures are often not used, leading to a poor quality, supply and distribution of textbooks. However, more research is needed to examine whether the MOET decision regarding textbook selection was a strategy to tighten its control to address previous textbook irregularities or to favour other publishing houses which had lobbied the ministry.

Thus, unless implementation priorities, plans and procedures are clearly articulated and managed, these assistance programmes will continue to run into implementation problems as different implementers or beneficiary groups will contest, interpret, manipulate or derail the implementation to ensure that they benefit as much as possible. Mwansa (2010) agrees that, to improve programme efficiency, it will be necessary to spell out the roles and responsibilities of the lower and upper tier of the management structure and be clearer on how to ensure that the poorest learners benefit most.

6.4 LEADERSHIP ROLE AROUND THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

As the rational analyst, Jones (1992, in De Clercq, 2010) mentions, the main factors contributing to the gap between policies and their implementation are, *inter alia*, implementers' inadequate skills, competencies and resources, poor

communication/co-ordination given the multiplicity of actors, as well as poor administrative control over implementation. McLaughlin (1987) argues that local factors such as size, commitment, capacity, and institutional complexity inevitably mould responses to policy and that there should be some flexibility at local level to adapt policies or programmes to the context. Power relationship should be added to this list of factors contributing to the gap as policy researchers argue that every implementation action simultaneously changes policy intentions, challenges, and resources (Crawford & Bryce, 2003).

The researcher struggled to find any document on the implementation plans or procedures of these financial assistance programmes, suggesting that there were no easily accessible documents to guide the programme implementation by districts and schools. Paradoxically, by not having clearly stipulated procedures, these programmes gave implementers more space to use their discretion on how to implement them. However, districts and schools can only cope with such ambiguity or space if they have some leadership capacity to understand, adapt and manage these programmes at ground level.

It is true that effective or productive implementation requires, as Schofield (2004, in De Clercq, 2010) notes, implementers who are knowledgeable and competent to translate policy intentions into effective operational strategies and actions. Implementers have to anticipate problems as new considerations constantly emerge with the unfolding implementation process.

The researcher could not find evidence of strong leadership or strategic thinking at central, district or school level in strengthening the content or implementation of these financial programmes, or in translating these programmes into beneficial actions on the ground. There seems to be a need

for such leadership skills and competencies to make the best out of the idea of financial assistance programmes for poor OVC. In reality, the opposite was true: there was not much leadership and capacity at central, district and local level to design these programmes and manage their operationalization and implementation at school level. The content of these programmes was limited and the funding allocation process was said by many to be fraught with nepotism at district and school level. Here more research is needed as it was beyond the scope of this study to investigate this assertion further.

Were there more efficient ways of producing better results with the available resources? No programmes designed from the top down can be effective on the ground as there needs to be some genuine dialogue or involvement with the local level. The department has to listen to schools and communities to understand better the roots of the problems or priority needs of poor OVC as well as the reasons behind their irregular school attendance and drop-out. But schools and communities also need to hear about the constraints under which the district and centre operate. A two-way dialogue is important in this regard. In addition, more strategic leadership, commitment and capacity are needed at all levels of the system to ensure that better programmes are designed and implemented.

For example, both schools have cited problems related to the context and realities on the ground about the reasons for drop-outs which are a waste of human and financial resources. Furthermore, schools' and parents' suggestions to improve the programmes were rather broad and unrealistic.

More strategic thinking is needed on how to ensure the OVC continued access to and completion of secondary schooling within the financially constrained

conditions. This leadership capacity should come from those who understand the deeper OVC realities and the school issues of quality, non-school attendance and drop-outs. It should ensure that future assistance programmes address both school and home issues through some kind of partnership between schools and community. Thus, schools and communities should be empowered to propose ways in which these assistance programmes could be made more effective for the money involved. Ultimately, all stakeholders should be empowered to work more effectively with the education ministry to develop more strategic and cost-effective programmes which will lead to poor learners' meaningful access to, and completion of, their secondary education.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the main issues that emerged from this study on the effectiveness of the Lesotho government's financial assistance programmes in widening secondary school access and improving poor learners' completion. It concludes with some recommendations about how to improve these programmes and ensure a more positive impact.

Access to education is an important strategy in promoting poverty reduction for OVCs as education reduces the OVC vulnerability to poverty, HIV/AIDS and other diseases by increasing these learners' knowledge, awareness, skills and opportunities (Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, 2004). The government believes that provision of financial support to OVC is essential to ensure that every child has access to and completes secondary schooling.

The transition rate from primary schooling to the end of secondary schooling has always been poor but seems worse since more learners have had access to secondary schooling. This research study attempted to understand this deteriorating situation and found that OVC needed more than school financial support if they are to proceed to and complete their secondary education. This study reveals that the various financial assistance programmes, as they are presently formulated and implemented, widen poor learners' chances of

accessing secondary education but are not enough to prevent their dropping out.

The MOET needs to rethink the various assistance programmes and propose more cost effective ways in which to address the OVC crisis in education. However, neither schools nor the government take the full responsibility of ensuring not only OVC access to and completion of secondary education. Since there are many OVC who do not attend or complete their secondary schooling, schools together with districts have to improve the quality of education as well as the support given to poor learners who face material, psychological and emotional obstacles and challenges.

Beyond school factors, there are also home factors which have to be addressed as these are responsible for poor learners not remaining in or completing their secondary schooling. Thus, in addition to assistance programmes, a number of strategic support interventions outside the school should be developed.

What follows are issues that need to be addressed to improve poor learners' access to and completion of secondary schooling.

7.2 GREATER RESOURCES

In expanding access to primary and secondary education, the Lesotho government has to recognize that there are serious financial requirements that need to be met. First, the government must provide schools with additional teachers and improved infrastructure to match the increased number of learners in schools. Full access to education can only be realised through better quality education which can only be secured with fully resourced schools with

qualified teachers and good infrastructure to facilitate effective teaching and learning. The government should also sensitize poor rural communities and schools about the socio-cultural and gender inequalities that may undermine the sustainability of the programme.

Second, poor children need more than tuition support and financial assistance programmes should include other schooling expenses such as uniform and food which are not currently covered by these programmes and are essential to minimize learners' non-attendance and drop-outs. Beyond material and financial resources, the MOET and its partnering agencies should be committed to provide some home support as well as psychological support services to assist and advise poor learners who may feel overburdened and isolated. The MOET vision of widening access to schooling should be translated through effective strategies which include the training of teachers with the necessary psychological support skills to assist their learners, and through making schools become community centres of care and support (MOET Report, 2008).

However, for this to happen, the Lesotho government has to work with donor agencies and other partners to mobilise greater material, human and financial resources which will ensure more meaningful access to and completion of secondary schooling. Unless comprehensive measures are taken to meet the OVC needs, these financial assistance programmes will be seen as a waste of resources as they will not be successful in expanding secondary school access or improving learners' completion.

7.3 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Another important way in which to increase resources to meet more

effectively the needs of the OVC is for the MOET to partner with other government sectors as well as with donors, schools and communities and work together to mitigate the hardships faced by OVC. The Swaziland National OVC Plan (2006-2010) mentions the need for joint partnership with all sectors of society, families, communities, NGOs, government departments and the international community. Such joint partnership is the only way in which vulnerable groups in society will have their concerns acknowledged and addressed.

7.4 DECENTRALISATION OF POWER TO THE LOCAL DISTRICTS

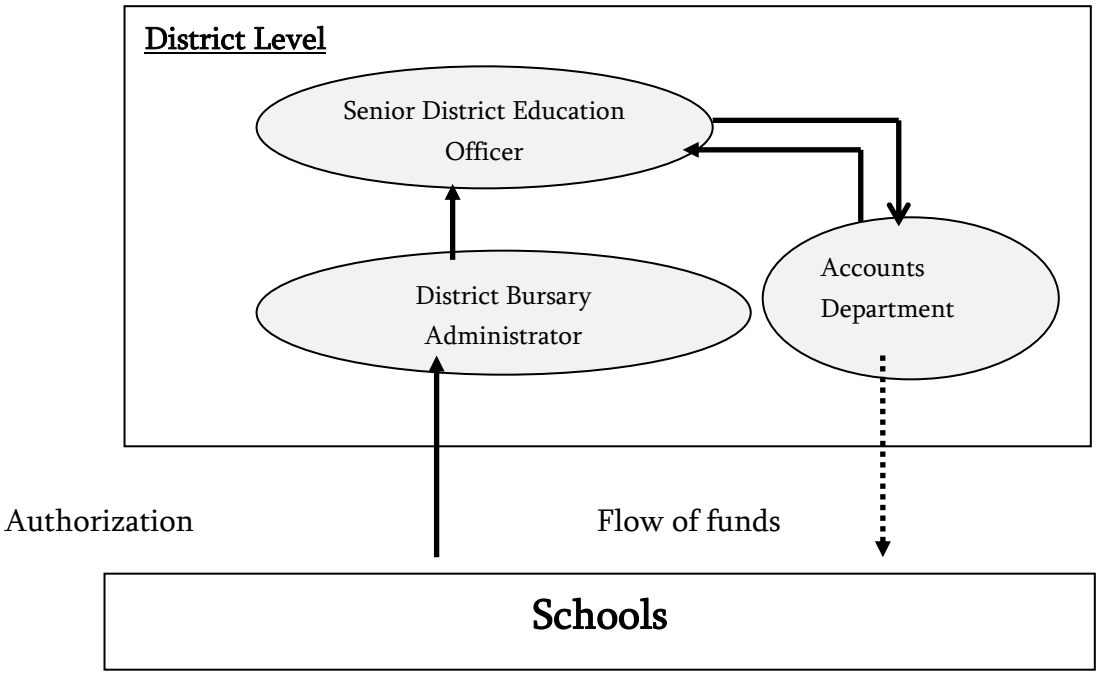
There is a need to devolve some powers to, and capacitate, district managers and administrators so they can mediate and implement more effectively the programmes according to the needs of their districts and schools. The various levels of the education bureaucracy have to develop ownership over these programmes and go beyond the mere following of procedures to find ways in which they can make the best of, and improve, these programmes and their implementation.

The responsibility of bursary disbursement should not lie only with the central level. Districts have to take over some responsibility in the disbursement of funds, textbooks and bursaries to speed up the process and ensure that schools receive these on time at the beginning of the year to avoid disruptions in the running of the school and its classroom activities.

It is interesting to note that, to improve on the efficiency of delivery and payment to schools, the MOET is considering devolving more responsibilities to the district level as well as developing district managerial and delivery

capacity, as mentioned in its 2010 OVC assessment report.

Figure 3: Proposed Flow of administration and payment of bursaries under a decentralized system



KEY

Authorization ——→ Flow of funds ·····→

Source: Mwansa, 2010, p.43

7.5 BETTER MANAGEMENT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

Beyond resources, the government needs to capacitate its educational bureaucracy to more efficiently manage the scarce resources it has and ensure that the financial assistance programmes are more effective at achieving their stated objectives. The MOET needs more commitment and capacity to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of these OVC programmes. For example, the selection criteria for learners' eligibility for financial assistance have to be clearer and more comprehensive than double orphans as the latter does not

necessarily make learners the most vulnerable and neediest. According to Mwansa (2010), in a situation where resources are not sufficient to accommodate all OVC, clear indicators have to be developed to serve as a tool for the selection of the most needy.

Mwansa (2010, p.59) also suggests the development of a common managerial instrument for tracking and reporting on programme recipients to learn how to improve and broaden the scope of these assistance programmes.

7.6 STRONG LEADERSHIP MEDIATION OF PROGRAMMES

To ensure effective delivery and implementation of these programmes, what is also needed is some knowledgeable and skilled strategic leadership at the various levels of the system to navigate through the programme challenges. Capacity building measures are needed for such leadership to fully understand the programmes and their implementation context and environment. They have to mediate and implement these programmes by adapting them to their local contexts. In the process, the leadership has to identify the various interest groups and mediate between them so they work together in the implementation of these programmes.

Such capacity building is essential to improve these programmes as well as guide their implementation so that implementers understand their intentions, anticipate problems and find ways to address these more effectively and without jeopardising their goals.

7.7 ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING

To improve the development, implementation and sustainability of financial assistance programmes and other support interventions for secondary schooling, accountability and monitoring mechanisms are crucial. Regular performance analysis has to be done by the district together with schools to determine how many learners remain in secondary schools and why others drop out.

Furthermore, assistance programmes and any other support interventions have to be reviewed, accounted for and evaluated regularly.

REFERENCES

Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA). (2008). The challenges of achieving EFA Goals in Africa. Position Paper for GCE World Assembly. Johannesburg.

ADEA. (2008). Post-primary education in Africa. Challenges and approaches for expanding learning opportunities synthesis. Biennale Meeting on Education in Africa. Mozambique.

ADEA. (2001). Reaching Out, Reaching All. Sustaining Effective Policy and practice for education in Africa and promising educational response to HIV/AIDS. Paper from Biennale Meeting. Tanzania.

Alam, G. M, Hoque, K. E, Rout, G. K. & Priyadarshani, N. (2010). Who gains from EFA – State Business of Education or Private Higher Education on Business in Developing Nations? A study to understand the policy impact in Bangladesh. *African Journal of Business Management.* Vol.45, No.5, pp 770-789. Malaysia: University of Malaya.

Avenstrup, R. (2004). *Free Primary Education and Poverty Reduction: The case of Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi & Uganda*. Shanghai: World Bank.

Bassey, M. (1999). What is case study? In Bassey, M. *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. Philadelphia and Buckingham: Open University Press, pp 22-37.

Brian, K. Reid, I & Boyes, L. C. (2006). Teachers As Mediators Between Educational Policy and Practice. *Educational Studies.* Vol.32, No.4, pp411-423. London: Bradford University.

Buchmann, C. (2003). The State and Schooling in Kenya: Historical development and current challenges. *Africa Today*. Vol.46, pp95-117.

Chimombo, J. (2006). Financing Free Primary Education in Malawi: Can the EFA goals be achieved? *Journal of International Cooperation Studies,* Vol.13, No.3, pp1-24.

Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1996). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Taylor & Francis Group.

Crawford, P. & Bryce, P. (2003). Project Monitoring & Evaluation: A method for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of aid. *International Journal for Project Implementation.* Vol.21, No.5. Sydney: University of Technology.

Crosswell, L. & Elliot, B. (2003). *School Leaders as Mediators of School Reform*. Sydney: University of Technology.

De Clercq, F. (2010). Policy Mediation & Leadership: Insights from Provincial Implementers of South African School Evaluation Policies. *Southern African Review of Education* Vol.16, No.2. pp 100-116.

EFA Global Monitoring Report. (2005). Accessed in April 2011 from http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2005-quality/

Emerson, R. W. (2007). *Financing Secondary Education*. SEIA Synthesis Report: Chapter 5. The World Bank: Washington.

Figueredo, V. & Anzalone, S. (2003). *Alternative models for secondary education in developing countries: Rationale and Realities.* University of Pittsburgh: American Institute for Research & Academy for Educational Development Education Development Center.

Fredriksen, B. (2002). Education for All African Children by 2015: What will it take to keep the promise? Paper prepared for the Forum on Cost and

Financing of Education in Nigeria. Abuja: Human Development Department African Region, World Bank.

Glewwe, P. & Kremer, N. (2005). Schools, Teachers, and Education Outcomes in Developing Countries. In Arrow, K. J. & Intriligator, M. D. *Handbook on the Economics of Education.* Harvard University: Centre for International Development.

Global Monitoring Fund Coordinating Unit, Lesotho (2008). Accessed in April 2011 from http://www.gfcu.org.ls/news/OVC_Bursary_MOET.php

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report* Vol.8, No.4, pp597-607.

Govinda, R & Bandyopadhyay, M. (2011). *Overcoming Exclusion through Quality: Schooling Pathways to Access*. Research Monograph, No.65. CREATE. Delhi/Brighton: NUEPA/University of Sussex.

IIEP Newsletter. (2001). *Financing the expansion of secondary education. International Institute for Educational Planning*, Vol. XIX, No.4. Available at http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/octe01.pdf. Accessed on May 2011.

Informative Newspaper. (2011). The rationalization of school fees in public secondary and high schools. Issued on 27 September 2011. Maseru.

Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs. (2009). Accessed in July 2012 from http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/lesotho.html.

Jansen, D. (2005). Targeting Education: The Politics of Performance and the Prospects of Education for All. *International Journal of Educational Development*, Vol.25, issue 4, pp.368-380.

Joel, S., Sebatane, M & Dembele, M. (2003). Scaling up by focusing down: creating space to expand education reform. Paper from ADEA Biennale Meeting. Tanzania.

Lee, W. O. (2002). *Themes, Tensions, and Policies*. Comparative Education Research Centre. Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong.

Lerotholi, M. L. (2001). *Tuition fees in primary and secondary education in Lesotho: The levels and implications for access, equity and efficiency*. Paris: IIEP/UNESCO.

Lesotho Bureau of Statistics (BOS). (2007). Accessed in August 2011 from http://www.bos.gov.ls

Lewin, K. M. (2011). Expanding Access to Secondary Education: Can India catch up? *International Journal of Educational Development.* Vol.32, No.4, pp.382-393. Brighton: University of Sussex.

Lewin, K. M. (2009). *Access to Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Patterns, Problems & Possibilities.* University of Sussex: Centre for International Education.

Lewin, K. M. (2007a). *Improving access, equity and transitions in education: Creating a research agenda.* University of Sussex: Centre for International Education

Lewin, K. M. (2007b). *EFA goals and expanded secondary schooling – taking stock and speaking solutions.* Kampala: Commonwealth People's Forum.

Lewin, K. M. (2007c). *Why some Education for All and Millennium Development Goals will not be met: Difficulties with goals and targets.* Brighton: University of Sussex.

Lewin K. M. & Akyeampong K. (2009). *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: researching access, transitions and equity*. University of Sussex: Centre for International Education.

Lewin, K. M. (2002). Mapping the missing link: Planning and financing secondary education development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Regional Conference on Secondary Education in Africa organised by ADEA.

Little, A. (2008). *EFA Politics, Policies and Progress*. CREATE, Research Monograph No.13. University of London: Institute of Education.

MacMillan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in Education – A Conceptual Introduction,* 7th Edition. New York: Longman.

McLaughlin, M. V. (1987). Learning from Experiences: Lessons from Policy Implementation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis.* Vol.9, No.2, pp171-178.

Merriam, S. B. (2001). Case Studies as Qualitative Research. In Merriam, S. B. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Application in Education.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Ministry of Education and Training Headquarters Office Records. (April 2012). Unpublished. Maseru: Lesotho Government Printer.

Ministry of Education and Training. (2011). Implementation of Rationalisation of School Fees in Public Secondary and High Schools. External Circular Notice No.16 of 2011. Maseru: Lesotho Government Printer.

Ministry of Education and Training. (2010). Presentation on Education Management Information System. Maseru: Statistics Unit.

Ministry of Education and Training. (2008). The Development of Education. Paper presented at International Conference on Education: Geneva.

Ministry of Education and Training. (2005). Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005-2015. Maseru: Government Printer.

Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development. (2004). National Orphans and other Vulnerable children policy. Kampala.

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. (2008*).* Health sector mid-term HIV/AIDS strategic plan 2008-2011. Maseru: Lesotho Government Printer.

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. (2006). National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2006-2010). The Kingdom of Swaziland.

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. (2006). National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children. Maseru: Government Printer.

Mkandawire, T. (2002). Incentives, Governance, and Capacity Development in Africa. *African Issues*, Vol.30, No.1, pp.15-20.

Motala, S., Dieltiens, V., Carrim, N., Kgobe, P., Moyo, G. & Rembe, S., (2007). *Educational Access in South Africa: Country Analytic Report*. CREATE Country Analytic Review. Johannesburg/Brighton: University of the Witwatersrand EPU/ University of Sussex.

Moulton, J. (2003). *Improving the Quality of Primary Education in Africa: What has the World Bank Learned*? ADEA Biennale Meeting, Mauritius: ADEA.

Mwansa, A. C. (2010). An Assessment of the Bursary Scheme for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Report. Study Commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Training in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Maseru.

Ngware, M. W. (2006). *Improving access to secondary education in Kenya: What can be done?* Nairobi: Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis, Social Sector Division.

OECD. (2003). *Literacy Skills for the World of Tomorrow*. Paris: OECD.

Ogama, K., Nomusa, S. & Lim, J. Y. (2007). *Macroeconomic & Demographic Setting towards Educational Development in Lesotho*. Maseru: UNICEF.

Okwach, A. (2003). *Report of the Gender Audit of the Education Sector.* Maseru: UNICEF.

Omole, A. D. (2003). Poverty in Lesotho: A Case Study and Policy Options. Accessed in July 2012 from http://www.create-rpc.org/

Owuso-Sekyere, B. N. (2008). Baseline Monitoring System Report for Butha-Buthe District, Lesotho. Accessed in July 2012 from http://thembosdev.com/butha-buthe_baseline_selection_2008.pdf

Peter, J. & Henroit, S. J. (2001). *Cost-sharing in Education in Zambia*. Zambia: Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection.

Reddy, A.N. & Sinha, S. (2010). *School Drop-outs and Pushouts? Overcoming Barriers for the Right to Education*. Research Monograph No.40. National University of Educational Planning and Administration: CREATE.

Richardson, P. (2011). A Proposal for Improving Access to Secondary Education through Innovative Self Study Access Systems. *Africa Policy Watch.* Centre for African Affairs and Global Peace. No.7.

Rorrer, K. A. & Skrla, L. (2005). Leaders as Policy Mediators. The Reconceptualiation of Accountablity. Closing Achievement Gaps; What will it take? *Theory into Practice*, Vol.44, No.1, pp53-62.

Rose, S. (2003). *Policies for Orphans and Vulnerable children. A framework for moving ahead.* Washington: Future Groups.

Rose, P. & Al-Samarrai, S. (2001). *Household constraints on schooling by gender: Empirical evidence from Ethiopia*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Sack, R. Niane, B. & Matela, L. (2001). Education policy networks in Africa. Paper from the ADEA Biennial Meeting. Arusha, Tanzania.

Sammoff, J. Sebatane, E. & Dembele. M. (2003). Scaling up but focusing down: creating space to expand reform. Paper presented at the ADEA Biennial, Arusha, Tanzania.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Tabulawa, R. (2003). International Aid Agencies. Learner-centred Pedagogy and Political Democratisation: a critique. *Comparative Education.* Vol.39, No.1, pp.7-26.

Taylor, S., Rizvi, F., Linguard,B. & Henry, M. (1997). *Education policy and the politics of change.* New York: Routledge.

Torres, M. R. (1999). *One Decade of Education for All: The challenges ahead.* Buenos Aires: UNESCO.

UNAIDS. (2008). Report on the global AIDS epidemic. *Lesotho Social Science Review.* Geneva: UNAIDS.

UNICEF. (2008). OVC Programming including children affected by HIV and AIDS in West and Central Africa. Working paper. Available at http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/english/wcaro_pub_wp_OVCprogr_en.pdf Accessed June 2011.

Uttersprot, I. (2008). Financing education in developing countries: New modalities, new approaches, examples from Rwanda. Direction in education planning. Paper presented in the Symposium to honour the work of Francoise Caillods. Available at http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Research_Challenges_and_Trends/pdf/symposium/Uttersprot.pdf. Accessed May 2011.

World Bank. (2005). *Primary and secondary education in Lesotho: A country status report for Lesotho.* Human Development Sector African Region working paper series No.101. Netherlands: The Word Expresso, Inc.

World Bank. (2005). *Building on FPE, Primary and Secondary Education in Lesotho*. Maseru: UNICEF.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Interview Questions for the Central Education Officer

1. How many primary and secondary /high schools both at national and district level Lesotho?

2. What is the rate of enrollment both at primary and secondary level and what have been major changes of enrollment over the last 10 years?

3. How many government schools implementing the rationalized fee (R500 fee per year) throughout the country and at each district?

4. How many OVC at national and each district level?

5. How many OVC are covered by the bursary scheme and National Manpower Development Secretariat (NMDS) Scholarships both at national and district level?

6. How many of them complete their secondary/high school education both at national and district level?

7. How many OVC drop out and fail to complete their education both at national and district level?

8. Besides the Global Fund, what else is helping MOET to pay for OVC's education?

9. How much does the donors funds contribute in education (in percentage if possible)

10. Which programmes do they fund?

11. Despite the programmes that have been put in place for OVC to access secondary education, why are some of them still out of school or dropping out of school?

12. What are the problems that the government has experienced in the implementation of these programmes for orphans and vulnerable children?

13. What else is being done to help OVC to stay in schools and complete their education?

14. From the findings, schools have cited that there is delay on the part of the government to pay for OVC which affect them financially, what is causing this delay?

Appendix 2

Interviews Questions for District Education Officer

1. Position. . . . . .

2. Years of professional experiences in the job. . . . . .

3. How long have you been working with OVC programmes . . . . . .

INFORMATION OF THE DISTRICT

1. No. of schools implementing the OVC programmes at secondary schools. . . . . .

2. No. of OVC learners at secondary schools. . . . . .

3. No. of OVC receiving financial assistance/bursaries at secondary school. . . . . .

DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

1. What kind of financial assistance programmes are offered by the government to poor learners?

2. When and why were these assistance programmes introduced?

3. What are the aims of the assistance programmes?

4. Who is supposed to benefit from this financial assistance at secondary school?

5. On what basis are learners selected?

6. Who is responsible for identifying the learners and what kind of information is needed from learners in order to qualify for the assistance?

7. Which schools in your district are targeted to implement this?

8. Are there any documents guiding schools to ensure effective implementation of this financial assistance programmes?

9. Which areas of OVC learners' education does the government's financial assistance cover?

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMMES

1. Is the way the bursaries distributed consistent with the government intention?

2. Are these programmes working on the ground?

3. Are there any challenges that schools and the district experience in distributing bursaries?

4. What has been done to address the problems that have hampered their success?

EFFECTIVENESS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES FOR ACCESS

1. What is the impact of these assistance programmes on school access by OVC learners?

2. Do you think OVC learners receive sufficient financial assistance?

3. Have the strategies increased access of secondary education by poor learners?

4. Suggest what can be done to strengthen the positive impact of these programmes?

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMMES FOR QUALITY SECONDARY SCHOOLING

1. How many of your secondary schools are overstretched by number of secondary learners?

2. How many secondary schools risk having their quality undermined by increased access?

3. How has the government and secondary schools addressed the issue of drop-outs?

4. Are there any other government measures to address issues of quality secondary education, in ensuring retention, completion and effective learning of these vulnerable learners?

5. Suggest what can be done to strengthen the positive impact of these programmes?

OTHER GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. Beyond the financial programmes, is the government assisting financially schools in any other way?

2. Does the government support secondary schools with more teacher posts and/or better infrastructure/learning materials to assist with the schooling of learners?

Appendix 3

Interview questions for principals

1. No. of years of experience in this post. . . . . .

INFORMATION OF THE SCHOOL

1. No. of learners. . . . . .

2. No. of OVC. . . . . .

3. No. of OVC offered financial assistance. . . . . .

4. No. of teachers. . . . . .

5. Category of the school (please tick)

Government . . . . . Church. . . . . Community. . . . . .

DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

1. What challenges are experienced by learners in accessing secondary education?

2. What kind of financial assistances are offered to OVC learners by the government?

3. When did the school implement these programmes?

4. Who is responsible for identifying these learners?

5. What kind of evidence do learners have to produce to qualify for financial assistance?

6. Which areas of OVC learners' education does the government financial assistance cover?

7. Are there any written documents given to schools guiding them on how to implement these programmes?

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMMES

1. How are the programmes implemented?

2. Is the way the bursaries are distributed by the district consistent with the government's intention?

3. Is there any support in terms of infrastructure and provision of qualified teachers in accommodating these learners?

4. Do you think the financial assistance has achieved its objectives in increasing access to poor learners?

5. What major challenges are experienced by schools in implementing these programmes?

6. Do you think schools receive enough to cope with these poor learners?

7. What has been done to address the problems that have been incurred through the distribution and implementation of the programmes?

EFFICTIVENESS OF THE FINANCIAL PROGRAMMES FOR ACCESS

1. What is their impact in enabling access to poor learners and in schools in general?

2. Is the financial assistance enough to cover all expenses of schooling?

3. Does the government do enough in reaching out to all poor learners?

4. Are there any contributions expected from the communities and schools to help these learners?

5. Do your poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance find it easier to enrol in a nearby secondary school? If not, what are the obstacles?

6. Do your poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance find it easy to study and pass all their secondary school classes? If not, what are the main problems?

7. Do your poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance complete with good, or average, or poor, marks in their secondary schooling?

8. Do these poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance experience other obstacles (beyond financial) during their secondary schooling?

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMMES FOR QUALITY SECONDARY SCHOOLING

1. Do you think the increased access threatens the quality of education?

2. Do these poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance drop out or remain in that secondary school until the end of COSC? What is the percentage?

3. What do schools do in minimizing learners' dropout?

4. Are there any other government measures to address issues of quality secondary education, in ensuring retention, completion and effective learning of these vulnerable learners?

5. Suggest what can be done to strengthen the successfulness of these programmes?

OTHER GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. Beyond financial programmes, is the government assisting financially schools in any other way?

2. Does the government support secondary schools with more teacher posts and/or better infrastructure/learning materials to assist with the schooling of learners?

Appendix 4

Interview Questions for parents/guardian

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Occupation. . . . . .

2. Relationship to learner. . . . . .

DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

1. What kind of financial programmes are offered by the government to poor learners?

2. When and why were these programmes introduced?

3. What are the aims of the programmes?

4. What problems do communities have in helping their children access secondary education?

5. How has the government intervened?

6. What kind of learners benefit from the financial assistance?

7. What kind of information do you have to produce for your children to qualify for financial assistance?

EFFECTIVENESS OF FINANCIAL PROGRAMMES FOR ACCESS

1. How has this been helpful in increasing access?

2. Are there any contributions expected from you to cover part of your children's expenses of schooling?

3. Do you think the distribution of the bursaries is fair?

4. Do you think the financial assistance is able to meet all the expenses of schooling?

5. Why are many children dropping out in schools despite the fact that financial assistance is offered?

6. Suggest what can be done to strengthen these programmes?

Appendix 5

Questionnaires questions for teachers

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. No. of years of experience. . . . .

2. Position in the school. . . . . .

DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

1. What kind of financial programmes are offered by the government to poor learners?

2. When were these programmes introduced?

3. What are the aims of the programmes?

4. Who is responsible for identification of these learners?

5. How are they selected?

6. What kind of information is needed from learners in order to quality for financial assistance?

7. What is the financial assistance specifically focusing on?

8. Which part of learners' education do the programmes cover?

9. Any training and written documents on how to guide the school to implement these programmes?

10. If yes, has this helped in implementing the programmes effectively/ineffectively?

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMMES

1. Is the way the bursaries are distributed by the schools and district consistent with what the government has intended?

2. Are these programmes working on the ground?

3. Are there any challenges that schools experience in distributing bursaries?

4. Are there any contributions expected from the communities?

5. Are there any problems faced by schools in implementing the programmes?

6. What has been done to address the problems that have hampered their success?

EFFECTIVENESS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES FOR ACCESS

1. What is their impact in enabling access to poor learners and in schools in general?

2. Is the financial assistance enough to cover all expenses of schooling?

3. Does the government do enough in reaching out to all poor learners?

4. Are there any contributions expected from the communities and schools to help these learners?

5. Do your poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance find it easier to enrol in a nearby secondary school? If not, what are the obstacles?

6. Do your poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance find it easy to study and pass all their secondary school classes? If not, what are the main problems?

7. Do your poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance complete with good, or average, or poor, marks in their secondary schooling?

8. Do these poor learners benefiting from such financial assistance experience other obstacles (beyond financial) during their secondary schooling?

EFFECTIVENESS OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES FOR QUALITY

1. How have they impacted on schools in terms of access and quality?

2. Do you think the increased access undermines the quality of education that schools offer?

3. Are the teachers and infrastructure enough to accommodate these learners?

4. Do the learners served by this financial assistance stay at school and complete?

5. With strategies in place, why are many learners still dropping out?

6. How has the school addressed this?

7. Are there any other government measures to address issues of quality secondary education, in ensuring retention, completion and effective learning of these vulnerable learners?

8. Suggest can been done to address any problems hampering the success of the programmes?

OTHER GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. Beyond financial programmes, is the government assisting financially schools in any other way?

2. Does the government support secondary schools with more teacher posts and/or better infrastructure/learning materials to assist with the schooling of learners?

Appendix 6

INFORMATION FROM DOCUMENTS

1. When where the programmes introduced in schools?

2. What are the aims of the programmes?

3. Which schools are charged with implementation?

4. Who is funding these financial programmes?

5. How are orphans and vulnerable children defined?

6. What kind information do learners have to produce in order to qualify for financial assistance?

7. What exactly do the programmes offer to learners and for how long?

8. Any contributions expected from the communities to cover up some of the cost of schooling?

9. Any support given to school in implementing these programmes?

Appendix 7

Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050, South AfricaTel: +27 11 717-3064 • Fax: +27 11 717-3100 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za • Website: www.wits.ac.za

Student number: 504107

2011ECE106C

07 September 2011

Ms. Matseliso Mohoebi

mohoebil@gmail.com

Dear Ms Mohoebi

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

A study of the impact of government's financial assistance programmes in addressing the financial implications of EFA inn secondary school level learners in Lesotho.

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that clearance was granted. The committee was delighted about the ways in which you have taken care of and given consideration to the ethical dimensions of your research project. Congratulations to you and your supervisor!

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education

Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely



Matsie Mabeta
Wits School of Education

(011) 717 3416

Cc Supervisor: Dr F. De Clercq (via email)

Appendix 8

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Dear Research Participant

Information about a M Ed research project

My name is Matseliso Alice Mohoebi, a M ed student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am doing a research entitled: **A study of the impact of government's financial assistance programmes in addressing the financial implications of EFA in secondary schools level in Lesotho.**

This research involves interviews and questionnaires with selected participants in your school. My main criterion to select participants is their knowledge of the government financial assistance programmes because they are either charged with implementation of these programmes or beneficiaries of these programmes.

I am kindly requesting permission to conduct this research project in your school where I will conduct, for a period of two to three weeks, semi-structured interviews with the school principal, teachers and parents and therefore would be grateful if would agree to participate.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your name and identity and that of the school will be kept completely confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your

individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

DATA

All data will be stored in a safe place and will be destroyed between 3 and 5 years after the research has been completed.

RISKS AND BENEFITS/PAYMENT

There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. You will not be paid for participating in the study. Any information picked up by the researcher during the research will not have any impact on your work. Benefits of the project will be a contribution to understandings of the existing literature on issues pertaining to financial planning of education in Lesotho. Hopefully, it will also help education officials as well parents in need of financial assistance.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

If you have any concerns about participation, or any questions that you would like to ask, please don't hesitate to contact me here: Mohoebi@gmail.com OR 0027784957919 (South African Number) OR 00266 58961232 (Lesotho Number).

Appendix 9

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The Ministry of Education and Training of Lesotho

Senior Education Officer

P.O. Box 230

Butha-Buthe 400

Lesotho

06 May 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

REQUEST: TO CONDUCT A M ED RESEARCH STUDY IN TWO SCHOOLS IN A LESOTHO DISTRICT.

My name is Ms. Matseliso Mohoebi (student number-504107), a M Ed student in the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand's School of Education. I wish to request your permission to collect data from two secondary schools in the Butha-Buthe district for my M Ed research, whose topic is: **"A study of the impact of Lesotho government's financial assistance programmes in addressing the EFA implications on secondary school learners".** The research process is estimated to be conducted for a period of three weeks in Lesotho in July/August 2011.

This research will be based on three research instruments: analysis of government documents, questionnaires and interviews with selected

participants, which will consist of the district education officer, principals, teachers and parents in the two selected schools. The main criterion in selecting participants is their knowledge of the government financial assistance programmes because they are either charged with implementation of these programmes and/or beneficiaries of these programmes.

The participation in this study's questionnaires or interviews is voluntary. Each interview will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Data collected from the respondents will be treated anonymously and all information obtained during the course of this study will be kept strictly confidential; no names will be mentioned in the research findings. All data will be stored in a safe place and will be destroyed between 3 and 5 years after the research has been completed.

If you have any queries or questions you want to ask, please don't hesitate to contact me at +27 784957919 (South African number) or +266 58961232 (Lesotho number) or email me at **mohoebi@gmail.com.**

Thank you

Yours faithfully

Ms. Matseliso Mohoebi

Appendix 10

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The School Principal

06 May 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTION LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Ms. Matseliso Mohoebi (student number-504107), a M Ed student in the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand's School of Education. I wish to request your permission to collect data from two secondary schools in the Butha-Buthe district for my M Ed research, whose topic is: **"A study of the impact of Lesotho government's financial assistance programmes in addressing the implications of EFA on secondary school learners"**.

This research will be based on three research instruments: analysis of government documents, questionnaires and interviews with selected participants, which will consist of the district education officer, principals, teachers and parents in the two selected schools. The key criterion used to select participants is their knowledge of the government financial assistance programmes because they are either charged with implementation of these programmes or beneficiaries of these programmes.

The participation in this study's questionnaires or interviews is voluntary. Each interview will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Data collected from the respondents will be treated anonymously and all information obtained during the course of this study will be kept strictly confidential; no names will be mentioned in the research findings. All data will be stored in a safe place and will be destroyed between 3 and 5 years after the research has been completed.

If you have any queries or questions you want to ask, please don't hesitate to contact me at +27 784957919 (South African number) or +266 58961232 (Lesotho number) or email me at **mohoebi@gmail.com.**

Thank you

Yours faithfully

Ms. Matseliso Mohoebi

Appendix 11

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

PARTICIPANTS' INFORMED CONSENT

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE

Research Topic: A study of the impact of government's financial assistance programmes in addressing the financial implications of EFA in secondary schools level in Lesotho.

☐ I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Ms. Matseliso Mohoebi, about the nature and purpose of the study.

☐ I have also received, read and understood the Information and Consent sheets regarding this research.

☐ I am aware that the information I give regarding my sex, age, teaching experience and qualifications will be anonymously processed in this study.

☐ In view of the requirements of the research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.

☐ I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation from the study.

☐ I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

……

……

Printed Name Signature Date and time