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Building an Educative Community for Early Childhood Development

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"To a greater extent than other forms of research, *(ethnography)* allows a working out of one's own destiny within the context of 'public issues' " (Woods 1985: 92)

ABSTRACT

This emancipatory action research project, undertaken in South Africa between 1995 and 1999, responds to the challenge of engaging a wide variety of Early Childhood Development (ECD) role-players in policy debate and development. Through cycles of action and reflection, a model for building an ECD educative community, using the case method and Zeichner and Liston's four traditions of reform in teacher development, is proposed and tested. New policy seeks to replace the inherited inequitable system of ECD provisioning with a multi-service approach that supports families and communities in meeting the basic needs of young children.

Emancipatory action research has been chosen for its potential to stimulate critical reflection that can deliver political and practical action. Established perspectives and practice constitute major obstacles to co-operation within and across different spheres of government and between government and non-government role-players. The model for dialogue enables all stakeholders in the life of the child to reach a shared understanding of what is meant by quality in ECD, by reflecting in groups on their current practice in the light of a theoretical framework.

The model was developed through two similar series of workshop, in the Northern Province in 1995 and Gauteng in 1997. A dialectical relationship exists between the action research project and the national and provincial policy development process. Experience gained in the two series of workshops informed the conceptualisation and development of Impilo, which is a series of linked ECD pilot projects that expand the scope and scale of the model to include all ECD role-players in Gauteng. Eighteen Gauteng Department of Education ECD district forums are the primary location for dialogue and the educative community includes other provincial departments, local government, ECD practitioners, community groups and families. On-going experience in participating Impilo pilot sites provides the focus for linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue.

The primary product of the dissertation is the research design for the evaluation of Impilo that is intended to complement the national ECD research. The effectiveness of the model for building an educative community is already evident in the ECD partnerships forged within and beyond Impilo and the basic principles of the model have been adapted for different ECD contexts. The strategies for curbing domination

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have been most effective. Theoretical frameworks have assisted people in moving beyond their current system of beliefs to engage with other perspectives. Helping participants reflect on their attitudes and actions has provided skills that can easily be transferred into other operational situations. This model for enabling dialogue is now supported by the broad provincial consultative ECD policy development process and preparation of provincial ECD Green Paper, which proposes a new single, comprehensive system of registering, monitoring and subsidising services that overcome hardships without impeding development. The proposed webs of ECD services provide a mechanism for linking implementation, research, policy development and advocacy.

Key words

- emancipatory action research
- educative community
- early childhood development policy in South Africa
- educare
- reflective practice and the case method
- community development and intersectoral partnership

DEDICATED

to Sandi, Lionel, Claire, Jacqui,
Heather, Jeannette, Hellie,
Susan and Popo
whose work for transformation and development
was interrupted by untimely violent death.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own work, conducted under the supervision of Professor Shirley Pendlebury. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has never been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

Signed by ..... on 4/3/99 at Johannesburg

Norma Rudolph date

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- Denise and Puleng for their special inspiration
- Punka and Lesedi for their patience and nurture at home
- All my friends and family for their love and encouragement

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ABLD	Addressing barriers to learning and development
ANC	African National Congress
CCECD	Co-ordinating committee for Early Childhood Development
CDP	Curriculum Development Project in Arts Education
CHED	Committee of Heads of Education Departments (now known HEDCOM)
CNE	Christian National Education
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
COTEP	Committee of Teacher Education Policy
DDO	District Development Officers
ECCED	Early Childhood Care, Education and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
ELRU	Early Learning Resources Unit
ETQA	Education and Training Qualifications Authority
EU	European Union
EQC	Educator's Quality Committee
Ex-DET	Department of Education and Training under the previous government
Ex-HOR	House of Representatives under the previous government
FE	Further Education phase in terms of NQF
FETC	Further Education and Training Certificate
GALA	Gauteng Association of Local Authorities
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GDH	Gauteng Department of Health
GDWPD	Gauteng Department of Welfare and Population Development
GE	General Education phase in terms of NQF
GERTOF	Gauteng ECD Resource and Training Organisation Forum
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GIGF	Gauteng Intergovernmental Forum
GO	Government organisation
GPAC	Gauteng Programme of Action for Children
Grade R	Also known as the reception year (proposed additional year of compulsory education before grade one)
HEDCOM	Heads of Education Departments Committee consists of the heads of the national and all nine provincial departments of education
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
IAC	Interim Accreditation Committee
IDT	Independent Development Trust

INSET	In-service Education and Training
IPET	Implementation Plan for Education and Training
LBLD	Learners with barriers to learning and development
LSEN	Learners with special education needs (now replaced by term ABLD and LBLD - *see above*)
NDE	National Department of Education
NEPI	National Education Policy Initiative
NERTOF	Northern Province ECD Resource and Training Organisation Forum
NGO	Non-government organisation
NIWC	National Interim Working Committee
NPA	National Programme of Action
NPDE	Northern Province Department of Education
NSB	National Standard Setting Body
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PRAESA	Project for the Advancement of Education in South Africa
PRESET	Preservice Education and Training
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RTO	Resource and Training Organisation (also referred to as ECD providers)
SAAECE	South African Association for Early Childhood Educare
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SACECD	South African Congress for Early Childhood Development
SASA	South African Schools Act
SATIECE	South African Training Institute for Early Childhood Educare
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SGB	Standards Generating Body
SO	Specific outcome
TC	Technical Committee on the Revision of Norms and Standards for Teacher Education
TS	Technical Secretariat of the IAC
ZFM	Zone of Free Movement
ZPA	Zone of Promoted Action
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter starts with a brief overview of the action research project. The rationale highlights key international ECD policy challenges in relation to the South African context and is followed by an explanation of the structure of the dissertation.

1.1 Overview

Against a background of radical change throughout South Africa, including the reorganisation of provincial boundaries and government departments, this project undertaken between 1995 and 1999 responds to the challenge of engaging a wide variety of Early Childhood Development (ECD) role-players in policy debate and development. Through cycles of action and reflection, a model for building an Early Childhood Development (ECD) educative community is proposed and tested. Three theoretical positions informed the model: the principle of dialogue (Bullough and Gitlin 1991); the case method (Richert 1991) and reflection theoretically informed by Zeichner and Liston's (1992) four traditions of reform in teacher development. Collaborative learning methods were investigated and special attention was given to the role of the facilitator.

Guided participation was used to structure the action research process. This assumes an active learner and more expert guide engaged in activity. The individual, interpersonal and cultural processes are brought in turn to the foreground for examination, but must always be seen against the background of the other two, since they mutually constitute the activity as a unit of analysis (Rogoff 1992). In addition to significant shifts in the policy context, from the conceptualisation in about 1994 to completion of this action research project, the employment context of the researcher changed from non-governmental Resource and Training Organisation (RTO), to Research Officer in a School of Public and Development Management, and finally to a provincial department of education policy unit.

The model was developed through a series of three two-day workshops, in the Northern Province towards the end of 1995. One of the participants in the first series

of workshops then assumed the role of more expert guide, adapted the model and facilitated a similar series of workshops in Gauteng in early 1997. By that time, both the researcher and Gauteng workshop facilitator were employed in the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) ECD and Primary Education Policy Unit.

The urgent need to build a foundation of collaboration in preparation for offering provincial training contracts as part of the three-year national ECD pilot project led to the decision to transfer the model to Gauteng and extend the project beyond the initial plan for the Northern Province. This second major cycle of activity took the research into the current rich and complex policy context and provided the foundation for the conceptualisation of a series of linked GDE ECD pilot projects known as Impilo. Rather than limiting the case study to the ECD educative community in the Northern Province, activity in both provinces is analysed against the background of the national ECD policy development process from 1994 to 1998. A model for evaluating the first three-year phase of the Impilo ECD pilot is based on the findings of this research project.

Three key features of the model remain constant in the series of workshops in both provinces. Firstly, all organisations in the province developing the educators of children between the ages of three and nine were invited to participate. Secondly, the same theoretical perspective informed the model for a series of workshops of the same duration and time frame. Thirdly, groups of organisations undertook collaborative exercises between workshops.

The most significant differences relate to the role of the provincial education department and the broad ECD policy context. In 1995, the Northern Province Department of Education (NPDE) had not yet appointed any officials responsible for ECD. Although the project had the support of the NPDE and the MEC for Education opened the first workshop, there was no direct continuity from the Action Research Project to policy development in the province. In the period between the Northern Province and Gauteng workshops, the national Interim ECD Policy was published and provincial departments were allocated funds for the first year of the national ECD pilot project. The researcher-facilitator in the Northern Province project paid rigorous attention to detail in the initial development of the model in a policy vacuum and under extremely difficult physical circumstances. The facilitator in Gauteng was

less constrained by research imperatives and more influenced by immediate practical demands of delivery.

The Gauteng workshops flowed directly and organically into the conceptualisation and development of Impilo, which is aimed at developing and testing new models of provisioning for ECD in Gauteng over a three-year period. Through Impilo, the scope and scale of the model has been significantly expanded to include all ECD role-players in Gauteng. ECD forums in each of the eighteen GDE districts are the primary location for dialogue. The educative community has been extended to include other provincial departments, local government, ECD practitioners, community groups and families. On-going experience in participating Impilo pilot sites provides the focus for linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue.

1.2 Rationale

The rationale for this project is discussed under three broad headings: international ECD challenges, ECD legacy, and new policy for young children in South Africa.

International ECD challenges

Early in the period of transition following the 1994 change of government in South Africa, this action research project was initiated as a tentative contribution toward ECD policy development. Assuming that meeting the basic needs of young children is essential for social transformation and effective schooling, the project sets out to enable dialogue that can deliver consensus on the best way to achieve this goal within a context of transformation and limited resources.

It is widely accepted that children who receive good quality care tend to thrive, whereas children who are given poor quality care may be placed at risk. Consequently, increasing importance is being given by local and national governments around the world to the imperative of meeting the needs of young children. However, despite development of family policies and new child-care facilities world wide, the demand for child-care often outstrips the available supply and increasingly large numbers of families are not able to meet the basic needs of their young children (Lamb and Sternberg 1990).

In seeking to understand this apparent anomaly, two linked problems emerge from investigating the historical influence of wealthy industrialised nations on the

development of international child-care policy. Firstly, ECD policy innovation has invariably focused primarily on curriculum and accepted the dominant centre-based **model of provisioning** as given. The misconception that government funds are best spent in supporting "non-parental" care is seldom questioned. Children are taken out of the family context and institutionalised in centre-based services. In poor communities this usually results in a large number of children being left in the care of a single adult in extremely poor quality services. Curriculum programmes developed in a first-word context have been implemented in ECD centres in developing countries with little or no adaptation. Secondly, **quality** indicators that preoccupy programme managers in materially affluent, industrialised, urban societies have been misinterpreted as universal basic standards (Evans 1996). Quality is not a readily quantifiable dimension and these structural aspects, such as adequacy of physical facilities, and staff qualifications and ratios, make high quality care more likely, but they do not guarantee high quality care.

The argument for a fresh look at strategies for provisioning and the definition of "quality" is presented convincingly by Evans in *Co-ordinators' notebook* (Issue 18)

> A quality environment for children is one that supports the child's whole development. However, what it means to support a whole child's development is embedded within culture, within specific historical and economic contexts, within the goals and values of people designing and providing the child's care. We have found, based on long experience, that the process of defining quality, when it includes all stakeholders in a child's life, should in fact be the first step in assuring that quality services will exist. (Evans 1996:7)

Defining quality needs to include all ECD role-players and to be an integral, ongoing part of the programming process. In multi-cultural societies defining quality services for young children and their families may need to happen at a local and national level. Multiple perspectives do lead to quality itself being arbitrary. Judgements of quality are the expressions of complex systems of belief, knowledge and values. While the broad framework is established nationally in terms of the constitution, implementation requires interpretation in terms of the particular cultural, familial and institutional context and aspirations for childhood (Evans 1996).

To succeed, new ECD policy must focus on the nature of care, the quality of care, and the way these two factors together affect children with different characteristics, from different family backgrounds and with different educational and individual needs. The crucial intersection between familial and non-familial child-care settings

may play an important role in facilitating healthy development. Practices and values of the care facility must be consistent with and complement, rather than contrast and conflict with, the values of the home (Lamb and Sternberg 1990).

There is now a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive family policies. Societies need to provide an array of options that allow parents to choose child-care arrangements that are most appropriate given their children's ages, individual styles, their own economic and social circumstances and the values and attitudes they hold (Lamb and Sternberg 1990). New creative approaches to ECD provisioning must provide a wide variety of strategies that support families as the primary caregivers of young children, rather than resorting to poor quality non-parental care. This approach requires partnership of all role players in the life of the child, which in turn requires a shared understanding of child development and the circumstances of children in different contexts (Evans 1996; Schaeffer 1996).

This new ECD perspective is in stark contrast to the inherited system of ECD provisioning in South Africa, that displays all the problems of the uncritical importation of a model of ECD provisioning without due consideration of local social and economic factors.

The ECD legacy

The previous South African government's neglect of policies and programmes to support the development of young children has left a legacy of fragmentation and inequity in service provision. The present model of provisioning was developed in the previously "white" suburbs of urban cities. In the early 1980s, the association of white nursery school teachers began to open its membership to other races and became the South African Association of Early Childhood Educare (SAAECE) but branches/chapters still only operated in urban centres and ECD services were almost non-existent in rural areas. The National Interim Working Committee (NIWC) was launched in 1990 with a mandate to form a new national representative ECD organisation. SAAECE and NIWC amalgamated in 1994 to form the Congress of Early Childhood Development (SACECD). While this new organisation has taken up the call for increased access and the rights of ECD workers, little or no attention has been given to the nature of provisioning and the possible mismatch between values and practice in the home and ECD service.

Currently, different functions are allocated to different government departments, with the result that children are physically segregated in different kinds of services. A few of the most advantaged children have access to high quality services registered or established by the ex-white provincial departments of education. For example, in 1996 the GDE spent about R47 million on public pre-primary schools accommodating about 12 000 children and another R1.2 million subsidising private pre-primary schools accommodating a further 17 000 children. A larger group of less advantaged children have access to poor quality replicas, which are mostly privately funded and in some cases subsidised by the Welfare and Population Development budget. However the majority had no access to services of any kind.

This analysis is supported by the Interim ECD Policy (1996)

> Up to now only between 9 and 11% of all South African children from birth to six years have had access to public or private ECD facilities with the result that:
> - one in three White infants and children receive ECD services, compared with about eight Indian and Coloured children and one in sixteen African children
> - twice as many urban as rural infants and children receive ECD provision (1996:2)

This problem has been exacerbated by the fact that the primary model of provision has been uncritically imported from Europe and America. There is still an assumption that, firstly, the major need is for "day-care" for children of working parents and secondly, that the best way to ensure that children are safe is to collect large numbers under one roof. Services that operate mornings only, employ staff with qualifications from teacher training colleges and cater for children from three to six years are registered as pre-primary schools and qualify for funding from provincial departments of education and special dispensation in terms of rates and tax exemption. There is no doubt that children can thrive in this environment, but it is clearly not possible for any government to provide universal access to this expensive model. Replicating this model in disadvantaged communities, without government funding, results in extremely poor quality services, with extremely large numbers of children in the care of a single adult, inadequate space and basic equipment to provide opportunities for exploration and development. The terms "educare-centre", "crèche", "play-group" or "pre-school" are all used interchangeably to refer to this kind of service. Families are not able to evaluate the quality of these services and assume that their children will be better off in any "centre" than they would be in the loving care of a family member.

In designing government policy in the past, insufficient attention has been given to understanding the needs and circumstances of children in different communities. The model and standards are more suited to a highly industrialised western country with high rates of employment as opposed to communities in which there is a high level of unemployment and a network of family support through the extended family.

There is a false assumption, among ECD practitioners and RTOs, that if non-formal NGO training is accredited, then government will pay the salaries of all practitioners. However, in reality, without adequate financial resources, even the best-trained practitioners cannot implement their training effectively. Within the current economic climate, the centre-based model is too expensive to ensure access to all children and in any event, might not be the best solution to the problem.

New comprehensive policy for young children

New ECD policy must support local goals and strategies for child rearing and take account of circumstances of young children. New legislation is necessary to create an enabling environment for the development of new multi-service approaches to ECD provisioning based on a new definition of "child-care" facilities and "quality" in ECD services. A new single, comprehensive system of registering, monitoring and subsidising services, recognising the role of community in quality assurance, must replace the inherited fragmented and inequitable system.

The urgent need for partnership between government and non-government role players, including all three spheres of government, families and communities, intensifies the need for a theoretical framework for evaluating our beliefs, if partners are to reach a shared understanding of goals and strategies. Barbara Rogoff (1990) offers one example, based on her extensive observations of the way in which young children are socialised into the culture in different communities. A key assumption of this theory is that thinking and learning are functional efforts by individuals to solve specific problems of importance in their cultures. The purpose of thinking is to act effectively. Activities are goal directed, with social and cultural definitions of goals and the ways to handle problems. This broad view of cognition as problem solving, integrates thinking, feeling and acting, and emphasises the active nature of thinking as a process rather than a product. The primary challenge in terms of ECD policy is

in this dynamic view of culture based on activity, rather than a static notion. It is also necessary to distinguish between the differences in the goals of different cultures and the hardships that impede development. ECD programmes should help communities overcome hardships without impeding development in other directions. Understanding development in different local settings is essential for the development of ECD and primary school curricula. The challenge lies in redressing the consequence of hardships without undermining the beneficial values of the community.

The education policy of the new government recognises the right to lifelong learning and provides for ECD and adult basic education (ABET) as developmental initiatives. Fragmented services and an inequitable subsidy system favouring the most advantaged section of the community were the product of the apartheid system. Neglect of services for young children by the previous government opened the way for innovation by non-governmental organisations in strong contrast with the rigid approach that dominated the formal school system. Consequently, ECD forms an important new sub-sector of teacher development and an opportunity for creative interaction between educators who previously operated in very different contexts. The proposed National Qualifications Framework (NQF) promises a mechanism for overcoming fragmentation and including all stakeholders in the education policy debate. The current tension between "p ofessionalisation" of ECD practitioners and the empowerment of the family as prima y care-givers of young children must be resolved in the interests of meeting the b sic needs of all young children in South Africa.

Through this research project, an adapted approach to the national ECD pilot project has been implemented in Gauteng. Impilo uses action research to challenge the technical orientation inherited from apartheid and introduce a more developmentalist and social reconstructionist perspective on ECD policy development.

1.3 The structure of this dissertation

This dissertation is presented in the form of a case study that describes the initial three stages in an ongoing process to build an ECD educative community. The workshops in Northern Province and Gauteng are described as complete cycles of activity. The third major cycle of activity constituted by the three-year Impilo pilot

project is in its second year of implementation. The primary product of the dissertation is the research design for the evaluation of Impilo. The explanation of chapters that follows, seeks to guide the reader through this complex case study that describes, analyses and interprets a rapidly evolving policy development process.

Chapter one provides a brief introduction and background, setting out the project aims and the rationale, which is derived directly from the international and South African ECD policy context and key challenges. **Chapter two** describes the policy context from 1995, when the project started, up to the present. The chapter is divided into two main parts: a description of the policy context at the start of the project and a recent update on subsequent developments. This includes the national ECD pilot project, the launch of the National Programme of Action for Children, the initiation of intersectoral collaboration in Gauteng and preparation for a Gauteng provincial ECD Green Paper.

The literature review and conceptual framework provided in **Chapter three**, is followed in **Chapter four** by a description of the initial series of three two-day workshops in Northern Province. The eight stages of action research (Cohen and Manion 1994) provides the structure of the Northern Province case as an explanation of the methodology that was used in developing, applying and elaborating the model for enabling dialogue. Collection of data was most extensive during this stage as the model was being developed. The entire Northern Province case consists of three main cycles of action and reflection, in the form of the series of three two-day workshops, with each cycle determining developments in the next.

In **Chapter five** the action shifts to Gauteng, starting with a description of a similar workshop process that formed the foundation of the Impilo ECD pilot project, which constitutes the third major cycle of activity. The same categories used to analyse and interpret the data from the two workshops are proposed for evaluating Impilo, but the collection, analysis and interpretation of the Impilo data lies beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Chapter six evaluates the complete action research project presented in the form of a case study and explores the potential of the model for future ECD policy development and other consultative policy development processes beyond ECD.

1.4 Conclusion

The aim of the project is to develop and test a model for building an ECD educative community in which caring and reason is linked to reflection through dialogue (Bullough and Gitlin 1991). Emancipatory action research has been chosen as the method for its potential to promote emancipatory praxis through stimulating critical consciousness which exhibits itself in political as well as practical action.

Meeting the needs of young children requires partnership between a large number of different role-players. Established perspectives and practice constitute major obstacles to co-operation within and across different spheres of government and between government and non-government role-players. All stakeholders in the life of the child must reach a shared understanding of what is meant by quality in ECD.

Impilo uses action research to challenge the technical orientation inherited from apartheid and introduces a more developmentalist and social reconstructionist perspective on ECD policy development. The model for enabling dialogue was developed in two series of workshops in Northern Province and Gauteng and is now supported by the broad provincial consultative ECD policy development process.

CHAPTER TWO
POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

This two-part chapter describes the ECD policy context over the past four years. The first part, which is an historical account prepared initially in 1995, presents the earlier period with the rationale for initiating the project in the Northern Province and therefore uses now out-dated terms such as "educare". Part two provides a brief overview of subsequent policy developments using three broad inter-linked headings: legislation and intersectoral collaboration; interim ECD policy and the national implementation plan and teacher development and curriculum. Together these two parts offer a sense of the rapidly shifting policy context marked by the election to power of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1994 and provide the background and rationale for the Gauteng series of linked ECD pilot projects known as Impilo.

Although these two periods are described in separate parts, there has been a dialectical relationship between the action research process and the ongoing national and provincial policy development process. The national ad hoc Consultative Committee on ECD (CCECD) and the national ECD implementation plan provide the structured relationship between the Gauteng and national policy development processes. The CCECD, which advises the National Department of Education (NDE) on ECD, comprises provincial nominees and stakeholders from a variety of sectors. The researcher was initially appointed as one of three ECD specialists, when the CCECD was established in 1995, but later relinquished this role to take up the post in the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE). Early lessons from the Northern Province workshop influenced the development of the *Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development* (1996), which in turn guides ECD development in Gauteng.

2.2 Part one: 1995 ECD Landscape

Whereas, ECD was neglected by the previous government, the ANC education policy recognises ECD as a new developmental initiative. The Draft White Paper for Education and Training stated that, "The care and development of infants and young

children must be the foundation of social relations and the starting point of a national human resource strategy" (1994:19). This first draft did not provide an adequate definition of ECD. Early work by the Gauteng Ministry of Education ECD task team, suggested that "ECD is an umbrella term which includes a wide variety of services and strategies directed at meeting the needs of the young child from birth to nine years old" (Naidoo and Rudolph 1994:6).

The new national education policy proposed a Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education. This assumes a continuity in the education and development services for children from birth to nine years old. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) proposes a system of equating all teacher education and development in terms of national standards based on "learning outcomes" and suggests recognising expertise acquired by "unqualified" or "under-qualified" teachers outside of "formal" courses.

Apartheid left a legacy of fragmentation in education, particularly in the case of services for young children. In the past legislation was not only segregationist, but also discriminatory in its application. Section 8(1) of the Education and Training Act (1979) imposed obstacles in the form of authorisation procedures on private schools wishing to offer education to blacks. Moreover, although this Act, the Coloured Persons Education Act (1963) and the Indian Education Act (1965) empowered the Minister of Education to make grants to provide loans for private schools within Black, Coloured and Indian population groups, these grants were inadequate and these groups were substantially under-funded when compared to white schools.

The "all white" Education Affairs Act (1988) was the first attempt to deal with ECD, by making provision for the establishment and maintenance of public pre-primary schools, the registration of private pre-primary schools, and the provision of subsidies. In addition to the major weakness of this legislation's providing for the minority race group only, it was also regulatory and administrative rather than facilitative of an integrated approach to ECD. Another limited step toward ECD was the passing of the Child Care Act (1983). This Act applies to "at risk" children of all races and provides for the registration of children's homes and places of care. The Department of Welfare is responsible for registering places of care with a health certificate from local government. This Act is also regulatory and administrative and has entrenched separation of the notions of "care" and "education".

Together, these two Acts have created fragmented and inequitable ECD provisioning. Although some pre-primary schools already accommodated a few children of all races in 1995, these institutions were and are still all located in the previously white suburbs. In 1995, the Gauteng Department of Education was spending about R47 million on about 100 public pre-primary schools for about 12 000 children and another R1.2 million subsidising private pre-primary schools accommodating about 17 000 children. A few "bridging" classes in ex-DET and ex-HOR schools had teaching posts or subsidies. At that time. the Gauteng Department of Welfare was spending about R11 million subsidising places of care. Public and private pre-primary schools were able to access a double subsidy, by registering as a pre-primary school that provided afternoon care as well. In addition, while pre-primary schools qualify for tax exemption in terms of the Income Tax Act (1962) and have special dispensation in terms of rates and taxes, places of care or educare centres registered by Welfare are classified as ordinary businesses and are denied these benefits.

Northern Province was severely affected by the apartheid legacy as seven different educational authorities had to be dismantled to build the new education department. In 1995, more than forty different organisations were educating teachers. There were five ex-Gazankulu Department of Education Colleges, twelve ex-Lebowa Education Department Colleges and four ex-Venda Education Department Colleges and at least one non-governmental college. Some of the ex-departments also offered in-service training (INSET). In addition, a number of colleges based in Gauteng were training teachers in the Northern Province. At least three organisations were subsidised by the Department of Labour in terms of the Manpower Training Act of 1981 to provide child-care training programmes for unemployed persons. The intention here is job creation and assumes that given the relevant equipment, material and training the trainee will be able to administer and run a child day-care centre effectively. At that time short three-week courses in educare were offered with no follow-up support, except for one organisation which had an informal arrangement with an NGO that supported only those trainees in the area in which they operated. More than twenty non-governmental organisation were educating teachers in the province. Partnerships between NGOs and universities or organisations funded by the Department of Labour had been established to offer teacher education. Technisa and some technical colleges were also training teachers.

Although the new national education policy acknowledges the problem of fragmentation and gives broad direction for solutions, there were, in 1995, no coherent policy or mechanisms to co-ordinate the activities of these organisations. The NQF Bill under discussion at that time, promised enabling legislation in that direction. The National Draft White Paper (1994) recognised ECD as a new developmental initiative and located responsibility, for leading intersectoral co-ordination, within the provincial education departments.

Implementation of the proposed NQF offered a significant key to the transformation of the South African education system. The NQF is designed to overcome the divisions and limitations of the apartheid system of education, including racial divisions in management, financing and provisioning, divisions between sectors of learning and divisions between theory and application.

The NQF incorporates the following principles for a new national learning system described in the ANC Policy Discussion Document (1994):

- the right of the individual to lifelong learning;
- integration of the education and training system to ensure maximum flexibility for horizontal and vertical mobility between different levels of the education and training systems, both formal and non-formal;
- development of a national standards and qualification structure which will reflect the achievement of learning outcomes, defined at different levels from beginner to post-graduate, in terms of national standards;
- mechanisms that will enable learners to accumulate credits earned in the same or different learning contexts, which may be accumulated towards the achievement of national qualifications;
- recognition of prior learning and experience;
- promotion of career paths as an aid to mobility within all sectors of economic activity;
- development of a national curriculum based on the integration of academic and vocational skills and
- democratic participation of stakeholders in the education and training system (IPET 1994:5)

In the years preceding 1995, there had been two broad parallel policy processes in South Africa. One had viewed the education system very critically, the other had attempted merely to reform the inherited system. The National Draft White Paper (1994) was the culmination of a several progressive policy initiatives and consultative processes. One of the most important was the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) which published eleven reports in 1992 including the Teacher Education and Educare reports. The NQF was the product of a working group set up to redraft the

1981 Manpower and Training Act. In 1992 this task team was restructured to include representatives of the employer groups, state, trade unions and providers. The ANC and COSATU played an important role representing the trade unions.

At the same time, the policy process of the apartheid government had been carried forward. Old policies had sometimes been revised to accommodate some elements of the new progressive policy initiatives. This merely masked the fundamental differences which still existed. The Committee of Teacher Education Policy (COTEP) is probably the most relevant example for this research. COTEP is a standing committee set up by the Committee of Heads of Education Departments (CHED). The first COTEP discussion document (July 1994), did not attend to the problems in teacher education at the time nor offer clear direction for change. The theoretical framework from which it emanated was not explicit. According to COTEP (1994:5) "the fundamental aim of teacher education was to educate and train teachers to teach effectively". At the same time, "education should prepare teachers to be active and reflective members of the teaching profession" (COTEP 1994:9). Teachers were expected to have "some knowledge of and commitment to the values of the system in which he or she is working". However, there seemed to be no expectation that teachers reflect critically on the values or that stakeholders participate in determining "learning outcomes" for teacher education. That document was being revised in 1995 and the potential of those policy initiatives for transformation would be tested in the subsequent implementation phase.

While the 1994 Draft White Paper and IPET set out broad policy proposals, there were several impediments to implementation particularly, for ECD. By giving powers to both national and provincial legislatures to oversee education, the 1993 Interim Constitution had created confusion about responsibility, necessitating a number of inter-ministerial committees to establish mechanisms for inter-departmental co-ordination within the national and provincial structures as well as across national and provincial departments. As a multi-d sciplinary field, ECD involves a large number of different government departments and non-governmental organisations.

The guarantee that all civil servants keep their jobs had created a complex and time-consuming process of dismantling the old education departments and negotiating new positions in the nine provincial education departments. The 1995 education budgets were prepared by the previous government and made no provision for ECD

as a new developmental initiative. Personnel were being integrated in to new management structures within the context of tremendous financial limitations, while new education policy necessitated a major shift in educational approach for most existing personnel.

The new National Ministry of Education had adopted a two-pronged approach to address both short-term and long-term curriculum change. The National Department of Education (NDE) and National Education and Training Forum (NETF) joint curriculum process had prepared a short-term strategy for the start of the academic year in 1995. The primary objective of these field and phase committees was to cleanse the syllabi of racist and sexist materials and to consolidate existing syllabi. Unfortunately, the limitations of this process had led to a misconception that syllabus revision was sufficient for educational reconstruction. The key to educational reconstruction lies in the long-term process of reviewing all aspects of curriculum development. The Draft White Paper recommends "a fully participatory process of curriculum development and training in which the teaching profession, teacher educators, subject advisors and other training practitioners play a leading role, along with academic subject specialists and researchers" (1994;15 par 12). While emancipatory action research projects at district and provincial level provide an opportunity for realising this vision, circumstances at that time limited the capacity of provincial education departments to undertake that kind of initiative in 1995. However, concern was being expressed that the longer the delay, the more difficult it would be to replace the initial process of syllabus review with real curriculum change.

The division between formal and non-formal training has remained a major obstacle for ECD throughout this period. The perspective and process of teacher education in formal institutions such as universities and colleges of education is generally very different from that in non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The formal institutions have generally offered four-year pre-service education and training (PRESET) courses for matriculants. Once qualified, these teachers have primarily been employed in state or state-aided schools and enjoy professional status as lower primary, pre-school or bridging class teachers. The NGOs, on the other hand, have generally offered INSET to trainees in community-based or privately owned "educare centres", crèches or home-based programmes in disadvantaged communities. Some courses require standard eight for admission, however, since many women with low levels of literacy are frequently already employed in this capacity, the primary aim of

NGO INSET is often to improve the quality of the existing service and consequently no academic entry criteria are required.

The Department of Labour continues to subsidise educare training. Requirements have been adapted, to increase the number of days training to 40 days and provide for follow-up support. In Gauteng, one GDE representative serves on the committee that approves all subsidy contracts, but there is no effective mechanism for co-ordinating policy and implementation. Most contracts are given to major training organisations that offer educare courses alongside other training such as brick-laying.

Different systems of accreditation for formal and non-formal institutions has meant that formal institutions have awarded certificates of competence that carry national recognition, while a system of voluntary accreditation for "non-formal" training was initiated by the South African Association for Early Childhood Educare (SAAECE). Only ten NGO courses had been accredited between 1986 when the system was initiated and 1995. Even those RTOs offering an accredited certificate can not necessarily guarantee any improvement in the earning capacity or status of the trainees who qualify for certificates by SAAECE. The integration of NIWC and SAAECE in 1994, transferred responsibility for accreditation to SACECD, but no organisations have been accredited since the launch. Problems identified in the review of the system included the complicated and time-consuming nature of the process and the fact that courses rather than organisations were accredited (Moodley 1995). The resignation of most of the original SAAECE Training Co-ordinating Committee members had resulted in uncertainty about the future of the SACECD accreditation process.

Despite the difficulties, independent NGOs offering ECD teacher education have made significant progress towards an alternative model of teacher education to replace the model of fundamental pedagogics that has dominated teacher education for primary and secondary schooling in South Africa. There is great potential in the integration of experience and expertise developed in these two very different settings. However, the first step will require developing a shared understanding of the goals and strategies for ECD teacher education. Several initiatives during 1995, such as the Project for the Advancement of Education in South Africa (PRAESA), Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and Early Learning Resources Unit

(ELRU) conferences and SACECD training forum, had begun to address this issue of linking formal and non-formal ECD teacher education. However, insufficient attention had been given to developing a framework and structure to ensure that individuals do not talk past each other in a deadlock of conflict.

Uncertainty and tension generated when teachers trained by different kinds of organisation work together in the same school, was becoming increasingly apparent. In some areas qualified junior primary teachers have been seconded to community initiated pre-schools. NGO INSET trainees are often unable to implement the training as they work under senior teachers or supervisors who have been trained in a different approach. Some primary schools have initiated pre-school classes and sent the qualified junior primary teachers to an NGO for training. The NGO trainers have reported difficulty in changing the approach of these trainees. NGO trained teachers in community initiated schools who have for years offered a dedicated service under extremely difficult circumstances are increasingly being replaced by formally trained college graduates.

No national inter-ministerial mechanism had been established to develop coherent policy to meet the needs of young children. The National Education Department had made 1995 a year of planning for the reception class and had not clarified its future responsibility for redress of services for children under five years old. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) school feeding programme had excluded most of the children in greatest need of supplementary feeding as under five year old children are outside of the formal school system. The limited number of community controlled services that had been able to access feeding, had not been able to cope with the influx of children. The future funding and control of services for young children was uncertain.

Amidst the uncertainty, the professional status of teachers of young children had surfaced as a key area of contestation. There was in 1995 a strong lobby arguing that the needs of children under five are distinctly different from the needs of children of five years and older. Many formally trained junior primary teachers, teacher educators and subject advisors are still proposing that the older group need a more subject orientated curriculum. This group insists that there should be a distinction between "Junior Primary" and " Educare" or "ECD". They argue that the reception class for five year olds should be part of the "formal school system" and children

under five years old can remain the responsibility of "Educare" or "ECD", which is understood to be a welfare rather than educational function. Many inherent dangers arise from this view. Firstly, it negates the need to assess the current methods used in the primary school and assumes that five year olds can benefit from the same methods. Secondly, it does not recognise the needs of out-of-age children who will be entering the school system for the first time. Thirdly, it prohibits the development of co-ordinated and integrated services for young children. This opens the door for continued neglect of services for children under five years old. It undermines the popular model of educare centres for children between the three and six, and relegates non-formally trained teachers to non-professional status. The possibility of teachers with different levels of education and different kinds of training, operating as teams under the supervision of senior teachers, is excluded.

The challenge for teacher education in general and ECD in particular has remained constant since 1995. Agreement about the "learning outcomes" for teacher education in terms of the proposed NQF as a prerequisite for the implementation of a national system of education that can guarantee national standards for qualifications that are portable across geographic areas and different learning "pathways" must be established. In addition, it is clear that teacher educators can play a key role in reconstructing the system of education in the long term. Encouraging reflective practice was identified as a mechanism for enabling teachers and teacher educators to make the critical shift from the perspective of fundamental pedagogics to outcomes-based education.

In 1995, since it was apparent that it would be some years before the NQF was in place, sectors were being called on to initiate the process. This research proposal was conceptualised to contribute in some way to the long-term process which government would implement once resources and personnel were in place and started in the Northern Province, where the new department of education was confronted by enormous problems created by apartheid. Over and above the enormous poverty facing all governmental departments, the problems in education are still particularly daunting. While ten thousand Northern Province teachers were unemployed in 1995, vacant teaching posts could not be filled because there were insufficient teachers qualified to teach mathematics and science. The need to rationalise colleges had created a climate of uncertainty and defiance, with teaching in many colleges disrupted for several months during 1995.

The context sketched above constitutes the background against which this action research project was conceptualised and initiated with the first series of workshops held in the Northern Province between July and October 1995. To a large extent ex-departments were still operating out of their original offices and the slow process of "absorption" into the new offices had just begun. No staff responsible for ECD had been appointed in the new Northern Province or Gauteng Departments of Education. The notion of ECD still had to be defined and initial discussions towards an Interim ECD Policy had just begun.

2.3 Part two: Approaching the millennium

Between 1995 and 1999, this research project has spiralled into the current rich and complex ECD policy context. South Africa is still in a period of transition, but the background has shifted significantly as the new government is nearing the end of its first term of office. Effective delivery has replaced the earlier priorities of establishing new departments and initiating policy development processes. There has been no new legislation specifically for ECD as the 1996 South African Schools Act (SASA) and Gauteng School Education Act specifically exclude ECD. However, key ECD milestones in this period include: the publication of the ECD Interim Policy in 1996, the launch of the national pilot project, Curriculum 2005 and the National Programme of Action (NPA).

ECD policy developments are discusses in this chapter under three broad headings: **legislation and intersectoral collaboration**; **ECD Interim policy and pilot projects**; and **national standards, teacher development and curriculum**. The mismatch between the ECD policy framework offered by the White Paper (1995) and Interim ECD Policy and the national ECD implementation plan is highlighted. In particular, the limitations of the current national narrow ECD policy-focus on the Reception Year or Grade R, with its Illustrative Learning Programme is identified. An alternative perspective, that argues for a broad intersectoral approach that includes all ECD role-players in dialogue about goals and strategies for child development is presented. The Gauteng adaptation of the national ECD implementation plan, through a series of linked pilot projects, known as Impilo, offers a concrete example of this proposed alternative collaborative approach to ECD policy development. The Gauteng Draft ECD Green Paper (1998), proposes a new legislative framework for

ECD that provides for the new notion of ECD as a developmental initiative linked to family and community development through building partnership.

2.3.1 Legislation and intersectoral collaboration

Legislation dealing with young children is both sparse and disparate and does not deal adequately with this new notion of early childhood development. This is not surprising, given the inherited situation described in part one, but no substantial change is evident since 1995. As explained, the new Gauteng and National Education Acts repealed old legislation but deal specifically with schools and not with services for children under compulsory school going age. Similarly new welfare legislation both promulgated and in discussion form, impacts directly on ECD but no proposed new national legislation provides the enabling framework for ECD as a developmental initiative. This subsection provides a brief overview of the national context and then focuses more sharply on the development of intersectoral collaboration in Gauteng and the preparation of a provincial intersectoral ECD Green Paper.

Setting the scene

The Education White Paper provides direction for ECD policy development. The Constitution (1996) entrenches the rights of young children and the National Programme of Action (NPA) offers a mechanism for co-ordinated action in the interests of young children. These three documents are used to structure this description of the broad national policy context. The Interim ECD Policy (1996) and National Implementation Plan are discussed in more detail in the subsequent subsection.

The Education White Paper (1995) moves beyond the 1994 draft, referred to in part one, by defining ECD as "an umbrella term which applies to the processes by which children from birth to nine years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and socially" (1995:33) and proposes

> the establishment of formal interdepartmental committees on ECD with their counterparts in the Departments of Health and of Welfare and Population Development and the linkages of these with RDP human resource development planning at national and provincial levels. The role of the inter-departmental ECD committees will be to develop and promote a comprehensive multi-disciplinary approach to the welfare and development of

young children from birth to at least nine years of age (Interim ECD Policy 1996:7)

The developmental needs of the young child are continuous from birth onwards and require appropriate programmatic intervention that provides continuity between "the home, the educare and pre-school phase and the early years of schooling" (White Paper 1995:7).

The Interim Policy for ECD (1996) quotes from the White Paper (1995) as its starting point:

> It is proposed that ECD form part of a comprehensive, national community development strategy linking economic and social development which will include housing, health welfare and education, planning, safety and security
> * that there be joint responsibility for planning of ECD strategy by the relevant government departments at all levels, with the Department of Education co-ordinating the process
> * the establishment of representative consultative structures at national, provincial and local levels to guide policy development and implementation
> * that the priorities for delivery by government, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations etc. be planned at local level in relation to local needs and circumstances and in collaboration with all concerned groups, service organisations and agencies (Interim policy for ECD 1996:15)

The Education White Paper (1995) includes the following ECD provisions: (a) the scope of ECD policy should cover the full phase from birth in collaboration with other state departments responsible for this area; (b) Department of Education responsibility for developing national policy frameworks for the education of the young child, including the structure of provisioning, determination of financial responsibilities, and establishing of national norms and standards for ECD curricula and training and (c) need to promote continuity between home, pre-school and early years of schooling.

The White Paper (1995) makes provision for the General Education Level within the school system to include a Reception Year and nine school years from Grade One to Nine. In recognition of the enormous financial implications of this provision, the policy provides for implementation over a period of years with priority to under-resourced areas and the possibility for supporting a variety of institutional forms of reception year. Provision is made for the Reception Year to be state supported but not compulsory in the first phase. However, this is potentially problematic in terms of redress and equity. No clear direction or criteria have been established to avoid

entrenching inherited inequity. In 1995, the majority of previously white schools had established reception classes, known as grade 0, while a very small percentage of other schools had this kind of provision. Schools in the most under-resourced communities, such as informal settlements, are most crowded and do not have vacant classrooms to accommodate reception programmes.

Instead of viewing Grade R as one component of a much broader strategy to support ECD, the National Department of Education (NDE) has focused narrowly on this aspect at the expense of broader requirements of the policy. No sustained action at a national level engages all government and non-government ECD role-players in dialogue. The CCECD has not delivered on its potential to provide mechanisms for dialogue, as a result of the narrow focus on Grade R as well as structural problems. Department of Health has attended CCECD meetings consistently from the start and more recently Welfare has been regularly represented, but there has been virtually no representation from any other national departments. There is no provision for involvement of local government, which is particularly problematic in view of its constitutional responsibility for "child-care facilities" (Government Gazette No 18739 1998:39) and already provided for by the Gauteng Welfare Relations Bill (1998). One-day quarterly CCECD meetings allow for information exchange rather than dialogue.

An audit of "departmental policies, programmes and processes as they affect the ECD sector" commissioned by NDE in 1998 has not been published and a national intersectoral summit is proposed for 1999. However the need for a national legislative framework that supports intersectoral ECD delivery has not been acknowledged. The new Constitution (1996) and the National Programme of Action (NPA), which constitute the most significant national developments for ECD are discussed in turn below.

The Bill of Rights (1996), Chapter two, contains special provisions relating to children and education. The following provisions are of particular relevance for ECD.

Extract from **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996**

> Every child has the right: to a name and a nationality from birth; to family care or parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment; to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services; to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. (1996: Section 28-1)

> A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child. (1996: Section 28-2)
>
> Everyone has the right ... to a basic education (1996: Section 29-1). Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. (1996: Section 29-2)

The National Programme of Action (NPA) for Children in South Africa offers potential for supporting integrated delivery of ECD, but it has been established as a co-ordinating mechanism and there is at this stage no intention to provide any legislative framework. The NPA, rooted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is an integration of all policies and plans developed by government and NGOs to promote the well being of children. It was first published in a working document in May 1996 and a Cabinet-appointed Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee oversees the NPA co-ordination of which has recently moved from the Department of Health to the Office of the Deputy President. Provincial Plans of Action based on provincial needs and resources have also been developed in accordance with the framework. For example, Gauteng launched its programme of action (GPAC) in 1998, and a strategic planning workshop is scheduled for April 1999.

NPA (1996) has identified seven policy priority areas, including, child and maternal health, nutrition, water and sanitation, early childhood development and basic education, social welfare development, leisure and cultural activities and child protection measures. Within each of these, special attention is given to children living in difficult circumstances.

The NPA Working Document (1996) outlines goals, national strategies, role players and targets for each priority area. ECD specifically appears both in the ECD and Basic Education and Social Welfare Development priority areas, while the other areas, in particular maternal and child health, impact on this age range.

The goals of ECD and Basic Education include

- Expansion of early childhood development activities, including appropriate low cost and community-based interventions
- Universal access to basic education, and achievement of primary education by at least 80% of primary school-age children through formal school or non-formal education of comparable learning standards
- Reduction of adult illiteracy rate to at least half of its 1990 level
- Increased acquisition by individuals and families of knowledge, skills and values required for better living, made available through all educational channels, including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication and social action, with effectiveness measured in terms of behavioural change.(NPA 1996:7)

Social Welfare Development goals include

- To ensure that appropriate social welfare services are provided to children, especially those living in poverty, those who are vulnerable and those who have special needs. These services should include preventive and protective services, facilities, social relief and social security programmes
- To promote and strengthen the partnerships within governmental departments and between government and organisations in civil society which are involved in the delivery of social services
- To give effect to international conventions of the United Nations that have been ratified by the Government of National Unity
- To realise the relevant objectives of the Constitution and the Reconstruction and Development Programme. (NPA 1996:8)

It is unclear how this shopping list of goals will be translated into implementation.

Issues raised at the evaluation workshop of NPA (1998) include

- the lack of common purpose and clear attainable objectives makes it impossible for the structure to co-ordinate the different sectors;
- the agenda format and reporting structure does not allow the capturing of pertinent information or effective sectoral reporting;
- there is a weak link between the NPA and provincial structures (Report back to the GPAC Steering Committee, January 1999)

Further challenges are identified in terms of structure and representation; co-ordination; research and development; communication and capacity building. Proposed solutions include: developing a common vision, mission and objectives, reviewing its structure and operations, clarifying roles and responsibilities and developing a capacity building strategy to support the work of the NPA. Although GPAC reflects many of these same problems, it seems that it is progressing better than most other provinces.

Intersectoral collaboration in Gauteng

ECD policy development in Gauteng differs markedly from other provinces in two significant respects: firstly, the national implementation plan has been extended beyond the narrow focus on Grade R, and secondly, an ECD intersectoral committee was established by the Gauteng Cabinet in 1996. Dialogue between key ECD role-players has identified the urgent need for an enabling legislative framework for an ECD approach, which promotes overall community development and "enables families and communities through their own efforts to improve the quality of life, health and learning opportunities for young children," (Taylor 1992a:41). A provincial ECD Green Paper developed through dialogue with key ECD role-players in the

intersectoral partnership in Gauteng and the key Green Paper proposals. The Impilo pilot project is contrasted with the National Implementation Plan in the next subsection.

Early dialogue in the ECD Intersectoral Committee, led by GDE, culminated in the first major workshop of provincial and regional officials from the Gauteng Departments of Health (GDH), Welfare and Population Development (GDWPD) and Education (GDE) in February 1997. Each department presented its own definition of ECD and the scope of ECD work. Agreement was reached on the following joint definition of ECD as involving:

> a process of physical, cognitive, emotional, social and moral development, which starts prior to birth and continues into the early school years; occurs within the context of the family and community and may be affected by intrinsic and extrinsic factors (including physical, psycho-social and environmental factors). (Gauteng ECD Intersectoral Committee 1997a)

All participants agreed that ECD is an area of policy and programmes that involves promoting optimal development on an inclusive basis by means of a variety of cross-sectoral programmes, interventions and experiences (promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative) directed at the child, the family and other caregivers, as well as the community.

This joint definition recognises the need for a new comprehensive policy for young children, given the inherited fragmented and inequitable system of provision. A variety of strategies is needed to assist families to meet basic needs of young children. The popular centre-based model is too expensive to ensure access of all children and does not necessarily match the needs and circumstances of children in Gauteng. There is a need for partnership among all three spheres of government (national, provincial and local) and among the different provincial departments and between government and non-government role players. Families and communities are key role-players in ECD. District ECD forums can play an important role in facilitating consultation and making information available.

An Interim Statement (1997b) made by the three departments (Health, Welfare and Education) clarified the agreement and noted the intention to begin developing new approaches to ECD provisioning. The GDE indicated that it would no longer register pre-primary schools under the old legislation, but ECD services could continue to apply for registration through the GDWPD.

Since February 1997, the intersectoral committee has been extended to include the Department of Labour; other provincial departments and local government through the Gauteng Intergovernmental Forum (GIGF) structures. Further dialogue delivered agreement about new approaches to service provisioning for young children. Local goals and strategies for child rearing should be supported and take account of circumstances of young children. New multi-functional models of ECD provisioning should be developed through a process of re-defining "child-care" facilities and "quality" in ECD services. A new single, comprehensive system of registering, monitoring and subsidising services should recognise (a) the role of community in quality assurance (b) new standards for accreditation of ECD services (c) new standards for qualifications of practitioners in ECD services.

The urgent need for enabling legislation for integrated delivery of ECD services in Gauteng prompted the preparation of the Gauteng Draft ECD Green Paper (1998), which invites all ECD role-players to develop policy to meet the basic needs of all young children in the province. It quotes from Article 5 of the 1990 Jomtien World Declaration on Education-for-All

> Early Childhood Care and Education is an integral part of basic education and represents the first essential step in achieving the goals of Education-for-All. Recent world conferences testify to the growing appreciation of the crucial importance of the child's earliest years, and the need to support families and communities in their role as the child's most influential educator. The learning capacity and value orientations of children are largely determined by the time the child reaches the age of primary schooling. Any sustained effort in Education-for-All must set targets and programmes for early childhood and attempt to raise the life-skills of families.
>
> Well conceived quality early childhood programmes help meet the diverse needs of young children during the crucial early years of life, enhance their readiness for schooling, have a positive and permanent influence on later schooling achievement.
>
> In addition, countries that succeed in mobilising local and provincial government, communities and voluntary organisations in the care and education of young children have been able to decentralise and innovate in their educational systems, and at the same time, make an important contribution toward population information and family education. (1990: article 5)

The Gauteng Draft Green Paper identifies three key policy challenges. Firstly, the need for a broad definition of ECD to include a range of strategies that support families and communities. Secondly, the question of the location of ECD. Thirdly, the need to decentralise decision making to the lowest possible level and at the same

time allocate funding centrally. The proposed option suggests webs of services co-ordinated from a hub, governed by a prescribed structure that includes representation of all key government role players at a regional or district level as well as community representation with mechanisms to ensure active involvement and support from all relevant government role-players. Any one of a variety of role-players can lead the team in applying for funds operating out of a variety of different kinds of "hubs". Requests for proposals for specific geographic areas would be offered in terms of regulations for accessing funds, co-ordination and monitoring still to be developed. The proposed system of provisioning, linking implementation, research and advocacy, will eventually include all children but state funds must always target children "at risk".

A range of pilot projects have been initiated by the GDH, GDWPD and GDE. The following subsection, however, describes only the GDE Impilo pilot as an adaptation of the National ECD Implementation Plan, beginning with an overview of the Interim ECD Policy (1996).

2.2.2 Interim ECD policy and pilot projects

The Interim ECD Policy (1996) provides the framework for ECD as a whole and the National ECD Implementation Plan for which all provincial education departments received European Union (EU) seed funding through NDE at the end of 1996. Gauteng launched its ECD pilot in June 1997. However, Northern Province has only awarded its training contract at the start of 1999. This overview of the Interim ECD Policy (1996) and the National Implementation Plan as a mechanism for developing new policy and standards for ECD is followed by a brief description of the adapted Gauteng ECD pilot, known as Impilo. The interim policy curriculum framework is discussed in more detail in the subsequent subsection together with the implications for policy on teacher development.

Tension between policy framework and the national pilot

The Interim Policy (1996) shares the vision of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the World Conference on Education-for-All (1996) and the World Summit for Children (1990). As explained above, it is based on the definition and vision of ECD in the Education White Paper (1995) that "the care and development

of young children must be the foundation of social relations and the starting point of human resource development strategies" suggesting that

> ... a system/model for ECD provisioning that must be put in place will consist of a facilitative state apparatus working in collaboration and in partnership with a range of role players within civil society such as religious groups, women's groups, NGOs and CBOs (Interim policy for ECD 1996:7)

The policy proposes long term "multi-pronged and integrated" strategies (1996:7) and suggests that

> Effective planning and provision of ECD services requires a collaboration between the government departments of Health, Education, Welfare and Population Development, etc. and institutions such as teacher education and training colleges, technikons and technical colleges, non-governmental organisations, especially at community level, unions, employers and donor agencies together with the active involvement of parents (1996:11).

The policy document provides the framework for comprehensive long-term ECD strategies to meet the basic needs of young children from birth to at least nine years and makes a commitment to a multi-faceted approach to ECD emphasising that "Government ECD policy ... will aim at the empowerment of parents, families and communities to foster the care and development of their young children". At the same time the Interim Policy (1996) provides the framework specifically for the introduction of Grade R through the National Implementation Plan. Tension arises since this is the only national ECD pilot project and it focuses narrowly on Grade R instead of developing more detailed policy for ECD as a whole. The NDE approved R50 million seed money for this three-year ECD policy development pilot which should contribute to the development of the NQF, create a subsidy system, increase systems capacity, develop provincial capacity and collect and analyse data. The intention is to test innovations in the field in standard setting and curriculum, to build provincial government and NGO capacity and to establish sustainable subsidies for community-based ECD services (Interim Policy 1996).

This fund was split between the nine provinces and three national processes: (a) an information campaign; (b) an accreditation process and (c) a research component. The Information Campaign, to inform ECD stakeholders of the Interim Policy (1996) and implementation plan, was funded for an initial eighteen-month period, while the other national components were funded for three years. The Interim Accreditation Committee (IAC) consists of ECD experts appointed by the Minister of Education, is supported by a Technical Secretariat (TS). The IAC has developed a *Draft Qualifications Framework and Interim Unit Standards* (1997) for the pilot project

through limited interaction with ECD stakeholders. The Research component will document the pilot and provide feedback on the efficacy of the Interim Policy.

The provincial allocation for one year, conditional on provinces providing matched funding in the subsequent two years, consists of two kinds of linked subsidies. Firstly, for community-based ECD sites participating in the pilot at a rate of R2 per child of five to six years per school day for running costs, and secondly, for provincial NGO contracts to provide ECD training to practitioners in the community-based sites participating in the pilot.

A variety of forms for the reception programme will be supported, such as play-groups, child minding, family-based programmes, alongside more institutional forms. Pilot sites can be located in schools, community ECD centres and homes. The project requires that participating community-based ECD services will qualify for government subsidies: (a) if registered with the Department of Education; (b) able to demonstrate that their programmes subscribe to the national curriculum and guidelines and (c) participating practitioners are accredited.

Guidelines are proposed for interim accreditation of those service providers outside of the formal schooling system falling outside the scope of the Norms and Standards for Teacher Education. Accreditation will be undertaken at two levels: firstly, practitioners will be accredited for the interim period on the basis of required knowledge, skills and abilities; secondly, training providers will be accredited considering the training programme, training staff, teaching methodology and access to and utilisation of resources. Accreditation is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Given the flaws in the conceptualisation of the plan described above, the GDE negotiated permission to implement the plan flexibly. The following discussion of the GDE concerns extends into the next subsection. Three inter-linked issues provide the structure: (a) the invalid assumption that a pilot project in which only five and six year olds qualify for subsidy can deliver standards for ECD as a whole; (b) the requirements for subsidy as a pilot site; and (c) the proposed strategy for developing national standards. The first base-line report of the national research component prepared by Vinjevold and Desmond (1998), referred to in this dissertation as the Khulisa report, is used to highlight these issues, starting with its overall purpose, which

> ... is to advise the Minister of Education on policy related to the compulsory provision of the reception year (Grade R). Thus the research team is required to examine issues of quality, equity, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness, as well as examine issues related to norms and standards, accreditation, Pilot Project delivery models and appropriateness of the subsidies. At the end of the three year process, the research team will recommend to the Minister whether the reception year should be provided at community-based sites, at primary schools or at a mixture of both (Khulisa 1998: executive summary).

This explanation highlights the invalid assumption that an additional year of compulsory education is either feasible within the current financial constraints of provincial departments of education or advisable. It draws attention to the misconception that the "reception year", whether it is "provided at community-based sites, at primary schools or at a mixture of both" is an effective mechanism for redress or achieving the goals of Education-for-All. Before deciding where Grade R should be located, it is necessary first to examine whether this reception year should be a priority in terms of other potential ECD strategies.

By focusing narrowly on sites that are included in the pilot, the Khulisa report (1998) excludes the possibility of understanding the needs and circumstances of children who do not have access to ECD services. The following three key questions are not addressed: What are the implications for the large number of sites and practitioners who are not included in the pilot? What are the implications for the even larger number of children who have no access to any form of ECD service and are unlikely to have access unless more appropriate models of provisioning are developed? Could the introduction of Grade R undermine the development of other ECD strategies?

An additional year of compulsory education is not a valid mechanism for achieving equity. If children are to have an equal opportunity to benefit from primary schooling in South Africa, it is critical that the basic needs of all children are met in the critical early years. ECD research must investigate the hardships of poverty that undermine child development from conception to entry into the compulsory school system so that government intervention can remove the barriers and obstacles to development.

The national pilot project does not take account of the potential difficulties in implementing any one of these three possible scenarios. Even more serious are the potential negative consequences that the new policy might have in terms of developing more appropriate strategies to support families in meeting the basic

needs of young children. The focus in the pilot on standards for qualifications of practitioners neglects the more critical questions about registering, licensing and monitoring ECD services. This approach does not take account of the urgent need to establish intersectoral collaboration and a new single integrated system of registering, monitoring and funding ECD to overcome the inherited inequitable and fragmented system of provisioning.

The Khulisa report (1998) does not seem to recognise the valued skills of each community that constitute the goals of development. Understanding which skills and goals are valued in children's communities is essential for defining developmental endpoints. The degree of universality or variation in these goals is the key to understanding the preparation of caregivers of young children. Skills in academic activities, such as formal operational reasoning and scientific, mathematical and literate practices are an endpoint valued in some communities. Replacing all other goals with this one could impede development in other directions.

In terms of Rogoff's framework presented briefly in the introduction of this dissertation and in more detail in Chapter three, the first Khulisa report (1998) highlights some of the "hardships" of poverty, but does not recognise the need for *dialogue in searching for effective solutions to the problem.* There is no evidence of the recognition of the variety of child-rearing goals or ECD curriculum approaches. General instructions to the provincial departments of education and RTOs show little understanding of the potential difficulties in carrying out the recommendations. Unrealistic expectations on the ECD practitioner, RTOs and provincial education department officials, do not acknowledge that solving these enormous problems will require a concerted and co-ordinated effort from all government and non-government role-players. *Provincial departments of education can* lead intersectoral collaboration and ECD practitioners can play a pivotal role within a network of ECD services, but none of these ECD role-players can succeed alone. The potential role of local government and the provincial departments of Health and Welfare in particular have not been carefully interrogated in the Khulisa report (1988).

Recommendations do not take account of the limitations of the small subsidy being received by ECD pilot sites or contracted RTOs and make a realistic assessment of the "hardships" in each context. For example, the report (1998) quantifies the problem of access to water, washing facilities and sanitation without showing any

strategy to answer critical questions, such as: What strategies can be used to solve the problems of inadequate supply of water and sanitation? What steps are necessary to ensure that children who live in communities without sanitation and water are not effectively excluded from all ECD services? (Khulisa report 1998)

The report notes that "31% of practitioners guarded against unsafe access only by instructing learners not to enter the cooking area rather than taking any other safety measures." It suggests that kitchens should be guarded against unsafe access by a door or by having the kitchen located in a separate building (Khulisa report 1998:14). Does this mean that children should not be allowed into the kitchen? Are children only safe if they are denied access to kitchens? What about the need to learn safety in the kitchen of an ECD site and at home? Should children be excluded from participation in the preparation of food and other "kitchen activities"?

What about the more important debate about fuel options? Are children safe if a paraffin stove is used in a kitchen in an adjoining room, even if they are denied access? Is there any merit in investigating the potential of "lorena mud ovens"? Do sites need to provide heating in winter? What are the safest and most economical options for providing fuel for cooking and heating?

Recommendations relating to training include (a) "Encourage practitioners to respond quickly to learners who are distressed or having difficulties" and (b) "Observe, assess, record and use practitioner observations of learners to plan activities for the learners" (Khulisa report 1998). These are all excellent examples of good ECD practice. However, the research assumes that training alone will solve these problems without taking adequate account of the high child-to-adult ratio in most ECD sites. There is no discussion about the feasibility of the proposed ratio of one adult to 40 children. In reality the ratio is frequently higher. The research report does not in any way address the problems of "overcrowding" in sites.

Several other examples point to an extremely limited understanding of the community context of the majority of children in South Africa, such as: the assumption that reporting in writing on children's progress is critical for promoting parent involvement. Is this necessarily true in communities with low literacy levels? What other strategies could be used to promote parent involvement? What factors impede parental involvement? What is the potential for involving family members

other than parents? What strategies could be used to get families to assist in the service on a regular basis, for example four hours, once or twice a month? What are the advantages of this kind of family and community involvement?

Similarly, findings on financial management (Khulisa report 1998) do not suggest an investigation of the barriers and successes in meeting the financial requirements of the national ECD pilot. It does not address questions such as: What kind of banking method is most appropriate? What is the cost of transport to meet the requirements of the pilot?

An assumption seems to have been made that it is necessary to accept the "de facto Grade R" classes rather than investigating the implications and alternatives. Based only on the cost of fees paid by parents of children in the schools identified as the control group for the research, Khulisa finds that it is "generally cheaper for parents to send their children to primary school Grade R or Grade One than to community-based sites" (Khulisa 1998:56). However, information required for making any comparison between community-based and primary school sites should be the real costs of running the service, especially those paid directly from the provincial education budget. All information about costs not necessarily gleaned directly from the school, such as salaries and benefits of all staff; maintenance, rates, electricity and water; teaching and learning materials and support from district officials must be carefully calculated.

Many other examples pointing to an apparent lack of understanding of the context and ECD goals and to inaccurate data collection have been identified by provincial officials and contracted RTOs, but the primary problem lies in the conceptualisation of the pilot rather than the research report.

The inherent difficulties in the National Pilot led GDE to implement an adapted version of the National ECD Implementation Plan in all eighteen GDE districts, with the Gauteng EU allocation and additional funds from the GDE budget. This first District Pilot complemented by two additional regional pilots in Kathorus and Inner City form the initial three linked ECD pilot projects known as Impilo. Together they include the full ECD age range and respond to the urgent need to develop and test new approaches to ECD provisioning. The conceptualisation of Impilo is developed from the action research projects in Northern Province and Gauteng described in

Chapters four and five. These three components of Impilo are described briefly in turn below. Additional regional pilots will be initiated with funds from the GDE 1999/2000 budget and any additional funds that can be raised.

GDE Impilo ECD Pilot

ECD District Development Forums were invited to identify services with children in greatest need that would be eligible for funding through the **District Pilot**. A per capita subsidy is allocated to a small number of children in each site, with a suggested guideline of R800 for one out of every six children. Districts were encouraged to specifically target children in small family-based services, with the condition for funding that one adult responsible for taking care of the children take up the offer of free training for the three-year period of the pilot.

Aims of the District Pilot include: (a) developing and testing new national standards for ECD practitioner qualifications, and developing appropriate mechanisms for quality assurance of ECD services; (b) ensuring the improvement of training of community-based ECD practitioners serving the ultra-poor groups of children; (c) improving the status of practitioners by enabling them where possible to be accredited for the training undertaken; (d) ensuring the involvement of stakeholder participation by involving ECD District Development Officers (ECD DDOs), resource and training organisations (RTOs), ECD practitioners from the formal school system and the non-formal sector, all government ECD role-players as well as families and parents.

The main criterion for the identification of Impilo pilot sites, is the need of the children rather than the training requirement of their caregivers. Consequently the extent of training required by the group could not be accurately assessed in advance. The intention is to shift from the current policy of funding specific institutions to funding children in the target group in a range of different kinds of service. Families should have more control over how they choose to use their ECD grant. At the same time, it is necessary to ensure that caregivers can earn adequately without having too large a group of children in their care.

The Kathorus Regional Pilot Project complements the District Pilot by targeting children in the lower and upper ends of the birth-nine age range. It also focuses

more specifically on the challenges of resourcing small family-based ECD services and overlaps with the District Pilot geographically, as it straddles part of two different GDE districts. This eighteen-month pilot consisting of three components will shortly publish its findings. The Family-based ECD Project develops and tests a model for registering, resourcing and monitoring small family-based ECD services. Back-to-the-fast-track Action Research Project develops and tests appropriate strategies to bring compulsory-aged children (seven to fourteen years) into the school system and to assist them in catching up with their peers. The ECD Action Research Project, closely linked to all Impilo pilot projects in the Kathorus geographic area, seeks to understand the circumstances and needs of young children, to identify potential human and material resources in the area and to make recommendations for appropriate strategies to support families who need help to meet the needs of their young children.

Kathorus consists of the Katlehong-Thokoza-Voslcorus residential areas with high urbanisation and unemployment rates as well as high levels of violence prior to the 1994 election that have had a negative impact on young children. Families and communities have been dislocated and cycles of violence and illiteracy have taken root. All components of the project target children-at-risk in vulnerable families and all training targets the families and caregivers of children at risk both inside and outside the school system. For the purpose of this project, children at risk are identified as follows: children designated as coming from "ultra-poor" families whose income falls in the lowest 20% of the income bands in South Africa; children living in informal settlements; children with special educational needs or disabilities; children exposed to domestic violence or abuse; children exposed to violence in the community; children of teen mothers without family support; undernourished children; children living in families with HIV/Aids; children living in families severely affected by TB and other debilitating diseases; children in families suffering from severe "hardships".

The second regional pilot in the **Inner City** provides a contrasting context of need as many children spend most of their waking hours in dark or dingy high rise buildings, never enjoying sunlight as caregivers are afraid to take children out of the building without help. This service, located in a public park next to a primary health care clinic offers an ideal opportunity to develop intersectoral collaboration. GDE has begun intensive work with local government, other provincial departments and two NGOs,

Step-by-Step and Curriculum Development Project in Arts Education (CDP) to develop and test new ways of establishing a multi-functional ECD resource service to support the needs of young children, their families and the ECD practitioners in the Inner City area. The ECD pilot is part of the broader provincial Inner City renewal project working toward integrated delivery through inter-sectoral partnership, including local government and provincial departments: Agriculture, Conservation and the Environment; Safety and Security; Health, Welfare and Population Development. The ECD project aims to create "a safe place for children and their families to play and learn". Step-by-Step is responsible for supporting and developing the ECD practitioner and community worker in the project.

These three major pilot projects form the foundation of Impilo and have already informed the development of the provincial ECD Green Paper. Additional complementary projects will extend the potential for developing effective ECD policy for Gauteng. This approach contrasts sharply with the NDE focus on curriculum within the school context as opposed to seeking to resolve the broader more complex provisioning difficulties. This problem is explored further through the discussion of two important national policy development processes in the next section.

2.3.3 National standards, teacher development and curriculum

Policy for ECD must be considered against the background of the broad educational policy developments for primary schooling, where INSET specifically for the introduction of curriculum 2005 constitutes the primary thrust of educational transformation at present. In parallel, the development of self-governing schools is required by the South African Schools Act (SASA) 1996, but unfortunately compartmentalisation has constrained the potential for whole-school development and mechanisms have not been established for integrated policy development and implementation. For example, currently, different GDE teams of district and head office officials work with the same school each addressing different aspects of school development, such as school governance, school management and curriculum. Policy for providing learning support materials is not developed in conjunction with other curriculum policy processes. Transversal task teams, consisting of representatives from all involved offices or units, have been established for each component. However this has not solved the problem because different junior

managers participate in each team while there is no mechanism at senior management level to ensure effective communication among these different teams.

Implementation of curriculum 2005 in the foundation phase has neither been linked directly to the NQF developments nor been accompanied by immediate appropriate curriculum change in colleges of education. Policy revision has not adequately addressed primary provisioning issues, as the existing model of primary schooling is taken as given and efforts towards transformation are directed narrowly at the prescribed outcomes of each "learning area". However, the overarching problem is the absence of a dialectical relationship between the development of national norms and standards and understanding of the provincial context, which has led to a mismatch between policy framework and implementation.

In this subsection, the implications for ECD of the COTEP revised *Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development* discussion document, hereinafter referred to as COTEP (1997)[ii], is explored in some detail as it raises the same important policy questions and debates being addressed through the accreditation component of the national ECD Implementation Plan. This is followed by a brief discussion of the ECD implications of curriculum 2005 in the foundation phase.

Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development

The revised COTEP (1997) recommends a significant shift into a more progressive outcomes-based mode including ECD and recognising the work of NGOs. The Technical Committee on the Revision of Norms and Standards for Teacher Education (TC), reports that they have adopted "an inclusive approach that attempts to weaken the strong boundary between traditional teacher education qualifications for primary and secondary school teachers and those qualifications associated with ... ECD practitioners" (COTEP 1997: 25). However, it is not yet clear whether this

[ii]COTEP produced a subsequent revision after November 1997, but the dissertation has not been revised to accommodate the most recent changes.

proposed inclusion will overcome or entrench the current division between formal and non-formal ECD services. Exclusion of ECD would mean that ECD practitioners would find it very difficult in future to be recognised for employment in the education system and solutions to the inherited fragmented and inequitable system of provision would be out of reach. However, unless ECD is understood to be more than Grade R and the specific needs of provisioning beyond the primary school are considered, the qualification framework will marginalise the majority of ECD practitioners.

The definition of ECD and determination of sub-fields is critical as the document presents some confusion about the notions of ECD, pre-primary education, Grade R and the foundation phase (1997:30 and 31). COTEP proposes that ECD fall into Field Five (Education, Training and Development), and presents three possible ways of conceptualising sub-fields, that is "Who is taught? What is taught? or Where teaching takes place?" (1997:31). The third option is most problematic as it would entrench the current fragmented and inequitable system of ECD provisioning. Problems with all three options arise from the narrow conceptualisation of ECD from the perspective of *teaching* rather than *development*. The COTEP explanation below is confusing and contradictory.

> The ECD sub-field is defined primarily by age - covering ages 0 - 9 years - and by what is taught (basic knowledge, skills and values). This field overlaps with General Education which is defined by age (6 to 15 years), by what is taught (general formative education) and by where it is taught: the site of learning is the schools. (COTEP 1997:33)

Either the notion of ECD is limited to Grade R, in which case it does not include children in the youngest age range, or there is an intention to "teach" children under six years in schools. In reality, ECD straddles the full spectrum of sub-fields as modules on child development should be included in the curriculum of all General Education (GE) phases. ECD specialisations should be included in Further and Higher Education. COTEP does not accommodate the complexity of ECD in terms of meeting basic needs and supporting development.

The TC acknowledges "its own brief to be primarily concerned with professional qualifications for school-based teachers" and recognises the potential danger of creating anomalies if the boundaries are too strong or the sub-fields too discrete (COTEP 1997:33). However, to extend the scope effectively, it is essential to move beyond the notion of institutions to webs or networks of ECD services. An equitable

system of qualifications and accreditation for ECD services can only be achieved through small multi-skilled teams of ECD practitioners, including a range of people, who might be at different levels, but who are all on a career path. These levels could include some below the major exit points on the NQF. Instead of controlling all post provisioning centrally, some appointments could be made at the network level in terms of the needs of the service, competence and responsibility of the members.

The proposed separate requirements for **academic** qualifications; **professional** qualifications; **occupational** (or employer) qualifications for teachers (COTEP 1997:27 to 50), could also be problematic if applied without the necessary adaptation to accommodate a new approach to ECD provisioning. This centralised system will be difficult enough to manage, even if it only includes "teachers" in primary, secondary and technical vocational schools. Including the much larger number of ECD practitioners is likely to be very cumbersome in a centrally controlled system but might be feasible if managed regionally or locally. Quality assurance systems which include local government and community participation are essential for licensing and monitoring ECD services as the scale and number is much greater than schooling. Professional and occupational requirements of ECD practitioners must be considered in terms of a completely new comprehensive system for registering, monitoring and funding ECD services.

The implications for ECD of applying South African Council of Educators (SACE) criteria for registering and licensing teachers needs careful investigation. It is now legally necessary for all primary and secondary school teachers to register with SACE, while ECD practitioners can apply although it is not yet compulsory. Only those ECD practitioners trained in colleges would qualify in terms of the current regulations. The Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) is currently the only role-player in SACE while ECD practitioners are not included in teacher unions. So far the National ECD Implementation Plan has focused primarily on academic requirements. It is critical that all three of these dimensions are considered holistically. Academic qualifications of ECD practitioners will be of no value without the requirements for employment and licensing.

The inherent problems of the national ECD implementation plan, presented in the previous subsection (2.3.2), have far reaching implications as it attempts to develop

standards for the full spectrum of ECD qualifications by narrowly focusing on a pilot project for five and six year old children in Grade R.

In terms of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), membership of Standard Generating Bodies (SGBs) should be drawn from key education and training stakeholders and critical interest groups in the respective sub-field. SGBs are responsible for generating standards and qualifications, recommending these to National Standards Bodies (NSBs) and liasing closely over assessment and moderation with an Education and Training Qualification Authority (ETQA) (COTEP 1997: 36).

An SGB will perform the following functions

- generate standards and qualifications in accordance with SAQA in identified sub-fields and levels
- update and review standards
- recommend standards and qualifications to NSBs
- recommend criteria for the registration of assessors and moderators or moderating bodies; and such other functions as may from time to time be delegated by SAQA (COTEP 1997:37)

COTEP recommends that the Interim Accreditation Committee (IAC), the accreditation structure of the National ECD Implementation Plan, should become the official SGB for ECD (including the Foundation Phase) and that qualifications be articulated with the *Norms and Standards* at the higher education level (COTEP 1997:36). The proposal (subject to ratification by the IAC) is made on the assumption that this would give more flexibility for ECD and more clout to negotiate with COTEP, but does not consider the nature of representation on the IAC or mechanisms for communication between IAC, the provinces and CCECD. Although some of these problems have already been noted, the scope of this dissertation does not allow for an extensive discussion of each of these barriers. The discussion of the accreditation of practitioners, which follows, illustrates the underlying problem.

Provincial IAC workshops have discussed rules of access, rules of combination and unit standards. The proposal to accommodate both whole qualifications and unit standards would provide a more flexible system in terms of a career path, both upward and across sectors. However, the IAC consultation on accreditation of ECD practitioners does not acknowledge the problems created by the existing model of provisioning.

Currently, each ECD practitioner is responsible for a wide range of different functions - from community development to caring for young children - as she must, invariably, manage the service, collect fees, do the banking, keep books, monitor and promote the good health of the children and much more. There are three core unit standards for all qualifications in ECD: Managing a learning programme; Active learning and Health provisioning. Expectations of competence in these three areas are unrealistic as requirements for qualification as ECD practitioners go far beyond those for a classroom teacher in an ordinary primary school.

The new approach to provisioning proposed by GDE, provides for multi-skilled teams working together to undertake all these functions, although they might not all be based in the same service. Quality ECD services should not require all these different skills to be held by one isolated person each in an independent service. As explained above, this problem can be overcome by establishing webs of services co-ordinated from a hub. ECD practitioners should be able to function and earn at a variety of different levels on a career path, which allows progress as they develop competence.

The three levels, 1, 4 and 5 currently being developed as part of the system of Unit Standards for ECD, do not accommodate the possibility of new models of provisioning, but are confined to the existing model only. The national policy development processes deal with qualifications of practitioners without addressing the issue of registering, licensing and monitoring services. There is an assumption that practitioners with recognised certificates will automatically ensure good quality services. However, the question of quality assurance goes beyond the training of practitioners.

Concerned that the new system will perpetuate existing inequity and fragmentation instead of developing a more equitable and viable system, GDE has tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to raise these problems. The narrow definition of competence to include academic qualifications equivalent to matric (for level four) or standard eight (level one) is at the heart of the problem.

The TC suggests the possibility of Teaching Assistants to be introduced once the NQF framework is functional and compulsory education culminates in a GETC at level one of the NQF. It would then be possible for a learner to take Unit Standards and certificates at level two, three and four in the fifth field of Education, Training and Development. These qualifications could be linked to a form of apprenticeship with INSET (COTEP 1997)

This potentially helpful new perspective relies on the notion of "academic studies" being clarified in terms of developing necessary competence for the job in order to avoid the problem created in the past when "under-qualified" teachers were required to pass matric. Subjects passed did not necessarily impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Historically, competent ECD practitioners trained by NGOs have been regarded as "unqualified", while all college graduates are assumed to be "qualified" although even if they do not have the necessary "competence".

COTEP (1997) stresses the need for a flexible system that will constantly evolve in relation to changing economic, political and social imperatives. It argues the need for comprehensive in-depth analyses of occupational roles and requirements, both academic and professional (COTEP 1997: 49 and 50) This is especially true of the ECD system of provisioning where we need to develop and test new comprehensive and integrated approaches. Any discussion of norms and standards for teacher development must be located within the debate about developing new approaches to provisioning. The complex ECD context must be acknowledged, if new policy is to link caring and reason in a transformative relationship that offers viable strategies that can break the cycle of poverty. A three-year pilot project offers great potential for establishing the foundation for a flexible and responsive system, if dialogue and consensus between all interested parties is valued and the relationship between process and product is carefully interrogated.

Decisions about interim accreditation and curriculum for the national implementation plan have undermined the potential for developing flexible and responsive ECD policy. The national pilot requires that participating ECD practitioners will be "accredited for the interim period on the basis of required knowledge skills and abilities" (Interim Policy 1996:19). This assumes a shared understanding of assessment criteria and levels at the start of the pilot.

Interim accreditation requirements were waived for the Gauteng pilot, as they were judged not to be feasible. Instead RTOs would adapt their training to the needs and circumstances of trainees and over the period of the pilot expertise would be developed so that practitioners could be assessed and certificated at the level they achieved by the end of the pilot. It has taken eighteen months of intensive interaction with practitioners in Gauteng, for RTOs to begin to understand the proposed levels

achieved by the end of the pilot. It has taken eighteen months of intensive interaction with practitioners in Gauteng, for RTOs to begin to understand the proposed levels and to develop the necessary expertise in assessment. The serious problem of accrediting a practitioner at an unrealistic level has been avoided.

In reality the national ECD pilot provides an opportunity to adapt rather than generate standards. Similar constraints created by the introduction of Curriculum 2005 and a Draft Illustrative Learning Programme for Grade R (1997) are discussed briefly in the next section. The South African curriculum development process is contrasted with that of Te Whariki in New Zealand.

Curriculum 2005

Early policy proposed a flexible approach to curriculum development, which would provide a broad framework within which provincial departments of education, schools and teachers could develop learning programmes adapted to local needs and circumstances. However the direction taken in the development of curriculum 2005, and the introduction of the Draft Illustrative Learning Programme for Grade R (1997) conflicts with the early stated policy intentions illustrated by the quotation below

> The shift tc developing national curriculum outcomes in terms of learning areas rather than developing core syllabi may, furthermore, encourage a flexibility that allows for the devolution of curriculum development and optimum teacher participation.
>
> In addition, a curriculum framework is flexible enough to allow for inter- and intra-departmental interaction and integration, co-operation and consultation. (Interim Policy 1996: 5 \ppendix 2).

A fresh approach to learning "based on an ..teractive approach to learning and aimed at encouraging children's curiosity, developing confidence ... and cognitive skills" is promised. The crucial intersection between familial and non-familial child-care settings is acknowledged, through "an enriched play- and activity-based curriculum which emphasises continuity with the home and community and recognises the value of children's own knowledge and experience" (Interim Policy 1996:16).

However, the consultation about the goals of education was limited to a relatively short national process and sixty-six specific outcomes that define what should be achieved in the eight learning areas during the General Education (GE) phase, have now been prescribed. For the foundation phase, three Learning Programmes: Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills, have been derived as a mechanism for integrating the eight learning areas (NDE Foundation Phase Policy 1997).

The foundation phase curriculum has been extended to include Grade R and consequently the interim curriculum framework is "in line with" the eight areas of learning proposed in the *Draft Curriculum Framework for General and Further Education and Training* and "contextualised for ECD" (Interim Policy 1996:6 Appendix 2). One consultant was commissioned to write an Illustrative Learning Programme for Grade R which was published in draft form in 1997 before any consultation had taken place. It has been proposed that during 1999 workshops for about 25 representatives from each province, will develop guidelines for learning support materials for Grade R. Collated comments will inform the final revision of the Illustrative Learning Programme although the pilot is only starting now in some provinces.

The South African curriculum development process described above, contrasts starkly with that of Te Whariki in New Zealand, "which involved complex interconnections between the nature of early childhood ... and it history (the setting), the opinions, ideas, and practice of current practitioners (the consultation), and decisions about which frameworks should be constructed (the model) (Carr and May 1993:7). The process sought to "link the voices of practice to those of theory" during the period of development as the trailing in programmes (1993:12). The New Zealand curriculum framework covers the age range from infants to school age and is concerned with the development of the whole child and learning in a social and cultural context, guided by the work of Piaget (Piaget and Inhelder 1969), Erikson (1950), Vygotsky (1968) and Bruner (Bruner and Haste 1987) (Carr and May 1993:14).

Based on the understanding that developmentally appropriate practice and assessment is largely dependent on what the goals are for children, reflective questions elicit examples from adults who work with children (Carr and May 1993:15). This process raises debates and compromises have to be negotiated. The

title of the guidelines, "Te Whariki" means a woven mat, as the framework provides the guiding threads but each service or programme is expected to weave its own curriculum mat. The value of the curriculum is measured by the discussion and reflection generated in its development and beyond (Carr and May 1993:17).

While the New Zealand curriculum development process generates debate, the South African approach prescribes outcomes and provides exemplars. Teaching Curriculum 2005 requires elaborate preparation and cross checking specific outcomes (SOs) against complex grids. No attention has been given to reflective practice and engagement with theoretical frameworks. Debate is a hurdle rather than a goal and effective strategies for dialogue have not been developed.

2.4 Conclusion

Inadequate dialogue between NDE and provinces has resulted in a mismatch between the national plans and needs and circumstances in the provinces. Defining "quality" and setting standards without due regard to the complexity of the task, the interests of our young children and appropriate strategies for enabling real dialogue poses a serious danger of undermining the potential for flexible and responsive ECD policy.

The action research project described in this dissertation develops and tests a model for dialogue that enables participants to come to a shared understanding of the subject being discussed and empowers ECD role-players to rethink the way they see the world and judge practice. Action research is concerned with the question of control of education. If education is to be controlled by self-critical communities of researchers, it is necessary to identify approaches to management in education and school governance that support the educator as critical reflective practitioner.

The ECD context stretches this challenge even further as the distinction between professional and non-professional caregiver is blurred. Family and community members are acknowledged as partners in the educational endeavour. Dialogue should enable participants to come to a shared understanding of the subject being discussed. Practices and values of ECD services that are consistent with and complement rather than contrast and conflict with the values of the home support development. Families and communities need opportunities to interrogate their

existing child-rearing practice in terms of the rapidly changing context in this period of transformation. The need for intersectoral collaboration and questions about licensing and monitoring services can not be ignored. The challenge lies in developing new multi-service approaches to ECD provisioning that respond effectively to the needs and circumstances of children and their families.

Literature that informs this perspective on ECD policy development and supports the rationale for this action research project is reviewed in Chapter three.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the introduction to this chapter, the rationale for the choice of emancipatory action research is presented briefly. The theoretical framework for the project is then discussed under three main headings: quality and participation; development; and reflective practice. The conclusion leads the reader back to the aim of the project, which is to build an ECD educative community so that consensus can be reached on the best way to meet the needs of young children by linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue. (Bullough and Gitlin 1991)

3.1 Introduction

"Educational theory" is viewed as "the whole enterprise of critically appraising the adequacy of the concepts, beliefs, assumptions and values incorporated in theories of educational practices" (Carr and Kemmis 1986:116). From this perspective, there is a dialectical relationship between theory and practice. It is not a matter of one informing the other, but rather that "theory informs and transforms practice by informing and transforming the ways in which practice is experienced and understood" (Carr and Kemmis 1986:116).

Consequently, educational research must be "interpretative" in that it generates theories that can be grasped and utilised by practitioners in terms of their own concepts and theories. At the same time it must be "scientific" in the sense that these theories provide a coherent challenge to the beliefs and assumptions incorporated in the theories of educational practice that practitioners actually employ (Carr and Kemmis 1986:118). Following this argument,

> .... the only legitimate task for any educational research to pursue is to develop theories of educational practice that are rooted in concrete educational experiences and situations of practitioners and that attempt to confront and resolve the educational problems to which these experiences and situations give rise. (Carr and Kemmis 1986:118)

Action research offers an ideal mechanism for integrating theory and practice through cycles of action and reflection. Emancipatory action research extends practical action research into a collaborative context. It involves an understanding of

the dialectical relationship between individual and group responsibility. The practitioner group takes joint responsibility "for the development of practice, understanding and situations, and these are recognised as socially-constructed" (Carr and Kemmis 1986:203). The guiding ethic of emancipatory action research embodies the social and political ideals of freedom, equality and justice (Grundy 1987:156).

In this project, emancipatory action research was chosen specifically to counter fundamental pedagogics and to address the educational problems in the current context of transformation in South Africa, on the grounds that this approach can respond to the complex layers of fragmentation created by apartheid. The obvious consequences of racial segregation in South Africa have tended to obscure other divisions between rich and poor, rural and urban, school and community, teacher and learner, "health and "welfare", "care" and "education", theory and practice. Compartmentalisation has fractured society and atomised the way we think and act. Possibly the most devastating consequence has been the separation between "caring" and "reason", a crucial concern in early childhood development policy and practice. The proposed ECD educative community, that links "caring" and "reason" through dialogue, has the potential to determine the most effective strategies for meeting the basic needs of all young children and to inform the development and implementation of ECD policy.

Many consultations during the past decade have sought to involve stakeholders in education policy development. The ECD sector has taken up this challenge particularly vigorously since 1990 when the Independent Development Trust (IDT) asked how best to spend R50 million on ECD projects that would target the "poorest of the poor". However, the IDT and all subsequent ECD consultative processes, have left many of the most important questions unanswered. These attempts at consultation have invariably been driven by ECD "specialists" who have prepared "discussion" documents for presentation at national meetings characterised by an absence of a coherent theoretical framework and mechanisms that support the group in reaching consensus. Discussion is seldom structured and most participants tenaciously maintain their own positions. Personal experience is the most common defence of any particular argument. Theory does not "inform and transform the way practice is experienced and understood" (Carr and Kemmis 1986:116). The limited number of participants able to attend such a national gathering frequently talk past

each other and the proceedings seldom change the substance of the initial document.

Responding to the limitations described above, this emancipatory action research project is rooted in the concrete reality and includes all ECD role players in consultative dialogue. This literature review sets out the theoretical framework that informs and transforms the project by informing and transforming the way practice is experienced and understood. This chapter is structured around three broad interlinked facets of ECD praxis: **quality and participation**; **development**; and **reflective practice**. Guided by the social and political ideals of freedom, equality and justice, reflective practice locates child development in the context of community development, taking due account of the child-rearing goals and intentions of families and practitioners.

3.2 Quality and participation

The current period of transition in South Africa can be compared with New Zealand in the late 1980s, when that country embarked on a significant reform to its provision and regulation of early childhood services. A major element in New Zealand reform was a system of charters designed "to recognise the diversity of programmes, philosophies and cultures while balancing support for that diversity with certain national values and objectives" (Smith and Farquhar 1994:123). Various stakeholders (parents, staff and the community) and a government agency negotiated a charter that forms the basis of accountability procedures for government-subsidised ECD services. The aim of this process was to strike a balance between centrally determined criteria of quality and the philosophy and local needs of ECD services. Although there was some positive impact, the framework of quality guidelines for early childhood centres was short-lived as a new government was voted in soon after it had been approved. In the new deregulated climate in New Zealand, the main ingredient in policy designed to improve quality is parent choice. This "market force" approach creates problems since many parents do not have the necessary knowledge and understanding to make an informed choice. Access to quality services can also be prohibited by financial constraints or geographic location (Smith and Farquhar 1994).

Similarly, Dahlberg and Asen (1994:169) draw attention to the problem of a recent shift to a "market-orientated" model of determining the quality of ECD services in Sweden, where serious efforts are under way to restructure the public welfare system in the context of the current economic and fiscal crises. In their discussion of the relationship between goal setting, goal governing and evaluation, they describe different models and argue for an "associative approach" as a valuable means for dealing with the "meaning of quality and evaluation" of ECD services. This model is based on a vision of combining the professional and political model with an idea of participation and democracy. Since ECD services are "concerned with basic human and societal processes aimed at integrating children into society and building some basic skills and competence in the coming generation, value can neither be assessed in terms of what they produce nor be determined in a simple and unambiguous fashion" (Dahlberg and Asen 1994:162). ECD policy and practice must be developed in relation "to eternal philosophical questions of what society hopes for and expects of its children" (1994:164). Examples of the development of reflexive discourse in early childhood and other human services are the growth in Sweden of numerous arenas or "plazas" enabling this kind of reflective dialogue between independent citizens.

This South African action research project also recognises the need for a new type of evaluative thinking, "in which evaluation is seen as a learning process building on documentation and reflection" (Dahlberg and Asen 1994:170). It assumes the need for dialogue as a prerequisite for reaching agreement about questions of quality in ECD. The *Co-ordinators' notebook* (Issue 18) addresses this difficult issue of defining quality. The warning is clear:

> Identifying basic standards is too often a euphemism for adopting the quality indicators that preoccupy programme managers in materially affluent, industrialised, urban societies (notably building standards, staff qualifications and ratios and material resources). (Evans 1996:8)

Defining quality needs to be an integral, ongoing part of the programming process, and needs to include all stakeholders in young children's lives, particularly in multi-cultural societies, where dialogue may need to happen at a national and local level (Evans 1996). While there are multiple perspectives, this does not mean that quality itself is arbitrary. "Judgements of quality are the expressions of complex systems of belief, knowledge and values, which relate to particular cultural, familial and institutional contexts and aspirations for childhood" (Evans 1996:10).

A quality environment for children is one that supports the child's whole development (Evans 1996). In order to judge "quality" in this sense, it is necessary to consider not only the physical facility but also the outcome of the service or activity. The focus on the process rather than entities assumes change, continuity and development (Rogoff 1990). What it means to support a whole child's development is closely linked to the belief system of each community with its own specific historical and economic contexts. It is logical therefore, "that the process of defining quality, when it includes all stakeholders in a child's life, should in fact be the first step in assuring that quality services will exist" (Evans 1996:7).

Quality in the past has been defined and measured in terms of standards set by wealthy industrialised nations. Unless the historical and social circumstances of a society are taken into account a child-care policy does not work. There is a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive family policies. An array of options are needed to allow parents to choose child-care arrangements that are most appropriate given the ages of their children, their own economic and social circumstances and the values and attitudes they hold.

New policies must focus on the nature of the care, the quality of the care, and the way these two factors, interacting together, affect children with different characteristics, from different family backgrounds and with different educational and individual needs. In addition, the crucial intersection between familial and non-familial child-care settings may play an important role in facilitating a child's healthy development since clashing practices and values in the two contexts could produce conflict and undermine development. Practices and values of the care facility must be consistent with rather than contrast and conflict with the values of the home. In short, the two systems must work in synergy.

Consequently, if including all ECD stakeholders in the dialogue is the first step, the second must be developing an accessible theoretical framework that can inform and transform the way participants understand their practice. Barbara Rogoff's framework based on Vygotsky and her own extensive observations of the way in which young children are socialised into the culture in different communities, explains the development of cognition in young children and its relationship to community development and social transformation.

3.3 Development

The key elements of Rogoff's constructivist explanation of cognitive development could be summed up in her view of

> ... children as apprentices in thinking, active in their efforts to learn from observing and participating with peers and more skilled members of society, developing skills to handle culturally defined problems with available tools, and building from these givens to constructive new solutions within the context of sociocultural activity. (Rogoff 1990: 7)

The notion of "apprenticeship", " guided participation", and "building bridges" contextualise the role of children, caregivers, their educator and the relationship between them. This framework stresses:

1. children's active role in making use of social guidance;
2. the importance of tacit and route arrangements of children's activities and their participation in skilled cultural activities that are not conceived as instructional;
3. cultural variations in both the goals of development and the means by which children achieve shared understanding with those who serve as their guides and companions through explanation, discussion, provisions of expert models, joint participation, active observation, and arrangements of children's roles. (Rogoff 1990:8)

This view of cognitive development is derived from the theory of Vygotsky (1978) and Piaget (1926) and is similar to the theoretical explanation of Valsiner (1987) who acknowledges the contribution of Baldwin and Lewin. All these theories could be classified as constructivist, in contrast to both the innatist and behaviourist view. Vygotsky (1978:24) challenges the notion that the "child's mind at birth contains all stages of future intellectual development existing in complete form, awaiting the proper moment to emerge". This notion denies the idea that knowledge is either only a product of experience, or already present at birth. Instead it suggests that knowledge is constructed through self-regulations and the regulations of others and takes into account maturation as well as environmental circumstances.

Piaget, as a trained biologist, understandably focused primarily on the individual and did not give much attention to the role of the social world in providing structure to reality, or in helping the child make sense of it (Rogoff 1990). The theories of Piaget and Vygotsky differ in focus and perspective. Piaget describes the causal mechanism as "equilibration", while Vygotsky describes it as "mediation". In addressing the questions relating to the role of social interaction, they come to rather

different conclusions. Vygotsky refers to Engels in highlighting the contrast between a naturalistic and a dialectical approach to the understanding of human history. He rejects naturalism, which suggests that only nature affects human beings and only natural conditions determine historical development. Vygotsky supports a dialectical approach, which "while admitting the influence of the nature of man, asserts that man, in turn, affects nature and creates through his changes in nature, new and natural conditions for existence" (1978:60). Since human behaviour transforms nature, it must therefore be understood historically as the process of change. This view highlights the importance of context in explaining behaviour. Rogoff concludes that both cognition and development must be studied in the light of the particulars of the goals being sought and the circumstances and tools available.

Vygotsky's model for the mechanism through which social interaction facilitates cognitive development is interpreted by Rogoff as resembling apprenticeship. The relationship between self-regulation and the regulation of others, is explored through the notion of "guided participation", which suggests that the generative mechanism for learning and development is problem solving. This relationship between problem solving and development is important for ECD policy not only in terms of the young children but also in terms of the adults who define the goals of children's development and the context in which it takes place.

Development in Rogoff's view consists of changes in quality and quantity that allow a person to manage more effectively the problems of everyday life. In this process the individual relies on "the resources and restraints offered by companions and cultural practices to define and solve problems" (Rogoff 1990:11). Four levels of development are identified: ontogenetic development that proceeds across the full life span of an individual; phylogenetic development across the history of the species; sociocultural history; and microgenetic development, which can take place from moment to moment. Phylogenetic and sociocultural history are distinguished by the difference in the legacy that is passed from one generation to the next. The slow change in the gene pool can be traced across the history of the species, while the change in the inherited technologies and values of the society, such as literacy, number systems, scripts, and norms for handling situations, constitute sociocultural history (Rogoff 1991:71).

This view of development assumes a dynamic notion of knowledge and culture and stresses the inter-relatedness of the development of individuals and the development of the cultural context in which they are embedded. "The complex human structure is a product of a developmental process deeply rooted in the links between individual and social history" (Vygotsky 1978:30). From their earliest years children build on the skills and perspectives of their society with the aid of other people (Rogoff 1990). Sociocultural history is the ever-changing context of individual development that provides tools and practices that facilitate reaching appropriate solution to problems. Individual cognitive activity is structured by the immediate social interactional context (Vygotsky 1978).

Child development involves the appropriation of intellectual tools and skills of the surrounding cultural community through formal institutions and informal interactions. Culture in turn develops as people transform the "given" institutions and practices to meet current needs, as one generation succeeds the next (Rogoff 1991). To understand development, which is channelled by specific as well as universal givens of human physical and social endowment, it is essential to understand both the underlying cultural and biological similarities across individuals and groups, and the essential differences between them. As development proceeds across any life-span, the individual's developing ways of thinking contribute to the understanding, skills and perspectives of the community. As individuals manage new roles and new intellectual challenges or achieve shifts in perspective, they influence the social institution and interpersonal relationships (Rogoff 1990).

Since the notion of change is implicit in the notion of development, questions about the goal and directions of the change are central to understanding the essence of the development process. Accepting that development, change and activity are inherent to all human existence, determining the circumstances in which development takes one course rather than another is the underlying challenge of early childhood policy development. Change can be understood through exploring the patterns of life, which organise change in a specific direction. The definition of the ideal endpoints of development, influence the direction of socialisation. The valued skills of each community constitute the goals of development. Understanding which skills and goals are valued in children's communities is essential for defining developmental endpoints. The degree of universality or variation in these goals is the key to understanding the preparation of caregivers of young children. Skills in

academic activities, such as formal operational reasoning and scientific, mathematical and literate practices are an endpoint valued in some communities. Replacing all other goals with this one could impede essential development in other directions.

Cognitive development consists of "coming to find and handle particular problems, building on intellectual tools inherited from previous generations and the social resources of other people" (Rogoff 1990:190). A key assumption of this theory is that thinking and learning are functional efforts by individuals to solve specific problems of importance in their cultures. Since the purpose of thinking is to act effectively, activities are goal directed, with social and cultural definitions of goals and the means of handling problems. Problem solving involves interpersonal and practical goals, addressed deliberately, but not necessarily consciously or rationally (Rogoff 1990).

This broad view of cognition as problem solving integrates thinking, feeling and acting, and emphasises the active nature of thinking as a process rather than a product. The efforts of the child and the domain of the problem are central, but must also be considered in the light of the activity and its interpersonal and sociocultural context. The **unit of analysis is activity** and, therefore, it focuses on the intelligent adaptation to interpersonal and practical problem solving. The focus on the process rather than entities, means that change, continuity and development are inherent in the unit of analysis, rather than needing to be added on the static elements.

Wartofsky sums up the elements of this view of cognitive development in this statement, which highlights the interdependence of cognitive activities of individuals within the context in which thinking is embedded:

> The child is an agent in its own and the world's construction, but one whose agency develops in an ineluctable social and historical praxis, which includes both the constraints and potentialities of nature and the actions of other agents (Wartofsky in Rogoff 1990:25).

Children play an active role, not only in bringing about personal development, but also selecting changes in the environment and society. This notion of the child's construction of self implies that cognition is an integral part of development and draws attention to the role of self-regulation in this process. The influence of sociohistorical (material) or cultural context is highlighted. The power of the individual to effect change is determined by personal circumstances. "Praxis" refers to the

accepted customs and practices of a particular community and consequently locates development within the social context of activity. Variations in the specific context in which each individual is embedded influence development. Advantages and disadvantages in each situation should be analysed in terms of the child's "nature" or inherited qualities as well as the external circumstances and regulations of others.

Several broad conceptual issues in theorising about cognition emerge from this argument: the central question about the generative mechanisms of learning and development; the notion that knowledge and learning are constructed in the course of the child's activity; a dialectical approach to the "nature-nurture" debate through understanding human history; a dynamic view of culture based on activity, rather than a static notion based on given or ethnic characteristics; the interrelationship of the individual and the social world through the interrelationship between self-regulation and the regulation of others.

Answers to questions about the transformation in a relatively short period of time from helpless new-born to a being with impressive human capacities, "have to do with the nature of human nature, the nurture of human nature, and the nurture of human nurture" (Rogoff 1990:3). The relationship between the individual activities and the features of the environment have been viewed in a variety of ways and while all theories recognise both nurture and nature are necessary, most have focused on one aspect and simply assumed the other. The focus on the sociocultural context is in contrast with dominant theories that in recent decades have stressed the individual.

According to Valsiner, Vygotsky highlights the dynamic nature of culture by distinguishing between "meaning" and "sense":

> The sense of a word ... is the sum of all the psychological events aroused in our consciousness by the word. It is a dynamic, fluid, complex whole, which has several zones of unequal stability. Meaning is the most stable and precise zone of sense. A word acquires its sense from the context in which it appears; in different contexts, it changes its sense. Meaning remains stable throughout the changes of sense. (Valsiner 1987:68)

The developing child is from the beginning embedded in the context of meaning, as defined within that culture, including different expectations of abilities of children at different ages. In the immediate social environment of a developing child in any culture, these meanings guide the child's development by providing a framework for parental understanding of child-rearing goals and methods, as well as by creating a

basis for the organisation of children's everyday environments. These cultural meanings also help to interpret the development with which any behavioural events in children's lives are interdependent.

Meaning is therefore not a pre-given and immutable ideal entity, but dynamic. Meanings "emerge, develop, and dissipate in their cultural contexts, interdependently with changes in the personal sense of the members of the culture" (Valsiner 1987:69). At the same time, cultural meanings themselves are constantly undergoing change, part of which is due to the innovations that children introduce into their (and their parents') senses during development.

Cultural-historical meanings are coded into the objects and events of the particular child's environment, through the actions of the people who surround the child, and on the basis of their personalised senses derived from the meanings. Within such culturally structured and personalised environments, developing children "invent (or re-invent, by imitation) novel ways of acting and thinking, out of which only those that end up being accepted by the child and his social environment might be retained" (Valsiner 1987:9).

Culture defines the available tools of communication. Both Vygotsky and Rogoff stress the importance of language as tools for problem solving. Language is the vehicle of interpersonal interaction and the key element in Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In any person at any time, there are two levels of development. The actual level is what a person can do on her own and the potential level is what the person can do with the help of someone who has greater expertise. Learning takes place in this zone between the actual and potential levels of development which Vygotsky called the ZPD. According to this theory, instruction is a key feature of development. Vygotsky explains that "development follows instruction like a shadow follows the object of which it is the shadow" (Valsiner 1987:64). The most appropriate time for linking instruction with learning is "at the time when new functions are beginning to emerge, but have not unfolded yet" (Valsiner 1987:65).

The ZPD is a theoretical construct that makes it possible to view the child-environment relations in the context of the individual-sociocultural frame of reference. This notion is particularly helpful in understanding the relationship of

adults, peers and access to material resources in the development of young children. The crucial characteristic of instruction is the fact that instruction creates the ZPD. Instruction "elicits in the child, promotes, and brings to movement a number of internal developmental processes" that are not possible without other people (Valsiner 1987:65). Since instruction takes place between individuals, language is essential in establishing the inter-subjectivity in negotiating an appropriate starting point of common understanding. In joint action with peers, this interaction in the ZPD is not as conscious as "instruction" but nevertheless a valuable contribution to development.

Once learning takes place in the ZPD, it is internalised and then what a child was unable to do without help can be done alone. Learning always takes place twice: first inter-individual or between people and then intra-individual as it is internalised. At the first level of learning between people, communication is crucial. Non-verbal communication plays an important role in the socialisation of infants who are attentive to the slightest glance, grimace or smile of the guide. However, as children get older, language becomes the dominant mode of communication. Since instruction takes place between individuals, language is essential in establishing the inter-subjectivity in negotiating an appropriate starting point of common understanding (Vygotsky 1978).

The ZPD can also be constructed without direct effort at instruction by adults. It can, for example, be constructed by simple organisation of the child's environment. Vygotsky's discussion of child development at the pre-school age is particularly relevant for this framework as he introduces the notion of "embryonal instruction or pre-teaching" (Vygotsky 1978:437). Guidance is accomplished within the total structure of the life environment of the developing child, rather than in only some aspects of it. Drawing on Lewin's field theory, Valsiner concludes that the growing child "tries increasingly to organise the environment so that the satisfaction of his needs is not left to chance (Valsiner 1987:3).

Valsiner builds on Vygotsky's theory by adding two additional notions: the Zone of Free Movement (ZFM) and the Zone of Promoted Action (ZPA). The ZFM is a term used to describe the binding constraints set by people to regulate the child's relationship to the environment in ways that fit the cultural meaning system. Later the child internalises the constraints as a cognitive control mechanism that keeps the

child within the culturally acceptable realm of thought and action. The ZPA refers to the actions that caregivers often use to promote children's actions in one direction rather than in another. This is particularly important within the ZPD in terms of instruction. The ZFM and ZPA are constructed theoretically to be part of the same holistic scheme of the organisations of the child-environment relations. Specific content of such a ZFM/ZPA complex depends upon the particular setting in which it is used. The ZPD provides the conditions under which any particular ZFM/ZPA complex can be instrumental in guiding the child's future development.

Although the scope of this project does not allow for an adequate exploration of these notions, it draws attention to the "canalisation" of child development in relation to the nature of instruction in early education. It is important to note, that while actions in the ZFM and ZPA can guide the child, the child's interest and level of development are crucial factors. Valsiner refers to the example of a parent placing a very young child in front of a piano and pushing his fingers onto the keys in anticipation of the child becoming a pianist. Clearly this "canalisation" and "promotion" of activity cannot succeed as the child is too immature to benefit. Even with an older child, other promoted action might be more effective. Active participation, interest and maturity are factors that need to be taken into account in terms of this parent's goal.

Guided participation in apprenticeship

The notion of apprenticeship as a model of children's cognitive development helps to focus our attention on: "the active role of children in organising development"; the active support and use of other people in social interaction and arrangement of tasks and activities; and the socioculturally ordered nature of the institutional contexts, technologies and goals of cognitive activities (Rogoff 1990:39). Apprenticeship in different cultures and activities highlights the different arrangements in structuring sub goals of the task. The order of participation of Liberian tailor apprentices is the reverse of the stages of making a garment. Their first task is the final stage of finishing off the garment and they are only required to undertake the most difficult stage of cutting once they have mastered all the later stages.

This model of guided participation assumes an active learner and a more expert guide in activity. Emphasis is placed on the interdependence of novice, expert and

context. Individual, interpersonal and cultural processes are brought to the foreground in turn for examination, but must always be seen against the background or the other two, since they mutually constitute the activity as the unit of analysis (Rogoff 1992).

Guided participation is defined as

> ... involving children and their caregivers and companions in the collaborative process of (1) building bridges from children's present understanding and skills to reach new understanding and skills, and (2) arranging and structuring children's participation in activities, with dynamic shifts over development in children's responsibilities. Children use social resources for guidance - both support and challenge - in assuming increasingly skilled roles in the activities of the community. (Rogoff 1990:8)

A key element in this notion of guided participation is the active participation of the learner. Young children are eager to participate and increase their understanding. Whether events are specially staged and adjusted for the purpose of learning or part of the regular activity of the community, the responsibility of the child in grasping the essential features of the activity is stressed. The interest of the child is crucial.

Culture is also a crucial factor in guided participation as it is the social system in which the child is embedded and thus channels development. Cognitive activity is socially defined, interpreted and supported. People, usually in conjunction with each other and always guided by social norms, set goals, negotiate appropriate means and reset goals as activities evolve. In this view, culture is not static but formed by the efforts of people working together, using the adapted tools provided by predecessors and in the process of creating new tools.

Interactions in the ZPD are the source of development and culture as they allow children to take part in activities that would be impossible on their own. Through observing young children in a variety of cultural settings, Rogoff is able to draw the distinction between the **universal patterns and cultural differences** in young children's learning and development.

Certain patterns are universal across all cultures. Children put themselves in a position to observe a trusted guide. They involve themselves in the ongoing activity. They influence the activities in which they participate and demand some involvement with those who serve as their guides for socialisation into the culture that they are learning. They attend to any instruction the guide provides (Rogoff 1991). Children's

participation in cultural activities with the guidance of more skilled partners allows them to internalise the tools for thinking and enables them to take the more mature approaches to problem solving that they have practised in a social context (Rogoff 1990).

This notion of guided participation provides many pointers for increasing children's opportunities for learning. However, within a context of a dynamic notion of culture, development involves children's progress towards local ideals of mature thinking and action, rather than progress towards a universal goal. Key differences lie in the goals of socialisation, the nature of communication, and strategies of interaction. The differences in age segregated cultures and those in which children are integrated in adult activities provide important insights for the role of peer interaction. The difference in the level of responsibility expected of children at a specific age is closely linked to the extent to which children are allowed "to err in manageable ways". This in turn creates different views of the need to balance sensitivity and challenge (Rogoff 1990:128).

Having drawn attention to the differences in cultural goals and strategies of socialisation, Rogoff cautions against judging development in one community against values of a different community. Imposing outside goals should be avoided when interpreting activities of a functional human group. Heath's (1983) work is used to illustrate that in a community in which young children are not regarded as appropriate conversation partners, they may be poorly prepared for school, but proficient in language and other skills in their community. Interpreting the activity of people without regard for their goals renders the observation meaningless (Rogoff 1990).

On the other hand within any community, differences in their "genes, family position in the community, material resources, and chance circumstances of life" will impact on the success of different families in reaching the goals of the community. Extreme poverty, poor health, "or a history of habits that impede functioning" are referred to as " hardships" which could restrain development (Rogoff 1990:118).

Communication and shared problem solving inherently bridge the gap between old and new knowledge and differing understandings as partners resolve contradictions. It is through dialogue that shared understanding of the problem is reached and new

knowledge can be synthesised into existing knowledge. Dialogue in this context, resembles the ideal of reflective practice described in the literature on teacher education.

Bullough and Gitlin's (1991) explanation of dialogue in educative communities, and Goodman's (1991) description of the attitudes that are necessary for reflection are helpful in understanding how caring and reason are bound together through dialogue as necessary characteristics of educative communities. This theory of teacher development, described below, informs the method used in this project to develop and test a model of dialogue that links reflection to caring and reason.

3.4 Reflective practice

Emancipatory action research is in sharp contrast to the dominant theoretical discourse in South African teacher education under apartheid. Enslin traces the origins of fundamental pedagogics as the dominant discourse, describes its flaws and argues the need to counter it and challenge its presuppositions (1990:78). From the perspective of fundamental pedagogics, the political has no legitimate place in the realm of science. On the other hand emancipatory action research "promotes emancipatory praxis in the participating practitioners; that is, it promotes a critical consciousness which exhibits itself in political as well as practical action to promote change" (Grundy 1987:154). The crux of the debate lies in the different views of what counts as science. It raises the fundamental question for the philosophy of social science: What is the most appropriate strategy for explaining human action? Should the explanation of action be understood as caused or as meaningful?

Rosenberg (1988) contrasts naturalism with anti-naturalism or interpretational social science. Naturalists, including empiricists, behaviourists and positivists, believe the causal model of explanation used in natural science to explain physical phenomena is appropriate for social science. However, opponents of naturalism identify the notion of agency as the essential human characteristic that links desire and belief to human actions and makes them meaningful to those who perform them. Desire and belief cannot be linked to human actions, in the same way that cause and effect is logically linked in natural science. Anti-naturalists, including idealists, phenomenologists, students of semiotics or hermeneutics and post modernists, therefore believe that the aim of social science must be intelligibility.

Both positions are problematic. The strength of one is the weakness of the other (Carr and Kemmis 1986:117). Rosenberg (1988:87) conceptualises the debate around the possibility of "reconciliation between explanation of action as meaningful and its explanation as caused". Carr and Kemmis (1986:123) advocate emancipatory action research and argue for a view of educational research that is both scientific and interpretative. From this perspective, educational action research is defined as,

> ... a term used to describe a family of activities in curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programs, and systematic planning and policy development. These activities have in common the identification of strategies of planned action, which are implemented, and then systematically submitted to observation, reflection and change. Participants in the action are integrally involved in all these activities (Carr and Kemmis 1986:164).

Enslin (1990) explains that despite the confused accounts of phenomenology used by fundamental pedagogicians in their claims to practice the phenomenological method, they succeed in excluding the political as forbidden speech. By defining its field of study as the phenomenon of education it justifies the exclusion of the political as having no legitimate place in the realm of science. Doctrines of education are evaluated on behalf of practitioners, and only Christianity is found to be acceptable. The scientific procedures of fundamental pedagogics "boil down to pedagogicians intuiting their own beliefs, which are paraded as if they were scientific findings free of such beliefs" (Enslin 1990:86).

The pretensions to scientific objectivity of fundamental pedagogics, together with the way it is taught, does not provide student teachers with the concepts necessary to critically assess claims about education, either their own, or those of others (Taylor 1992b). The most serious consequence of this view of science, "controls individuals by creating them as subjects ... and determines how teachers come to see themselves and their activities as teachers" (Enslin 1990:86).

The dominant theoretical discourse "provides little illumination of present social order and possible alternatives to that order or how teachers might contribute to transformation" (Enslin 1990:86). On the other hand, emancipatory action research frees teachers from the role of subject. Reflection must be a collaborative rather than an individual practice, as change must be part of the coherent transformation of education and society. Collaborative reflection could be identified as a key factor in

transforming government in general, and the education system in particular, to serve a new vision of society.

The NEPI Teacher Education report calls for a "reconceptualisation of the role and nature of teacher education" to "enable the development of competent, flexible and resilient" teachers (Taylor 1992b: 2). It argues the need to break the stranglehold of fundamental pedagogics and develop the knowledge and skills necessary for reflective practice. The debate between reflective practice and effective practice in teacher education arises from questions about the nature of good teaching and in particular the relationship between theory and practice.

Since the National Party came to power in 1948 "the doctrines of fundamental pedagogics became the overriding influences in the professional training of students" (Hartshorne 1992:229). Although, as Enslin (1990:89) points out, not all teachers were thoroughly duped by fundamental pedagogics, most practitioners in South Africa today follow this approach. A major shift in perspective will be necessary before practitioners can implement the values of what is popularly referred to as "the new South Africa". Reflective practitioners, on the other hand, are empowered decision makers, "intrinsically motivated to analyse a situation, set goals, plan and monitor actions, evaluate results, and reflect on their own thinking" (Coulton and Sparks-Langer 1993:45). Morals and democratic practice must guide the actions of teachers.

As part of the process of transforming itself into a democratic state, South Africa has to transform the education system to support the new values of society. It is necessary for practitioners not only to reflect on their current practice in the light of old theories, but also to challenge and transform their understanding in terms of current problems, practice and new values. The challenges facing educational practitioners, include recognising their responsibility beyond the classroom walls. Outcomes-based education requires much greater flexibility and the capacity to understand learners in terms of their individual family and community context. Integrated delivery requires that not only teachers, but all other service providers also understand and acknowledge new roles and modes of operation. Meeting the needs of young children in particular, requires partnership between a large number of different role-players. Established perspectives and practice constitute major

obstacles to co-operation within and across different spheres of government and between government and non-government role-players.

Although "reflective practice" is steadily gaining popularity, the general rather than specific use of this term results in it hiding more than it reveals. Many questions about the content, criteria and critique of the context of reflection are left unanswered. Teaching is not better, just because it is more deliberative. It is essential to reveal the motives and passions behind popular slogans and to identify the educational and political commitments that stand behind one's own and others' proposals for reflective practice. Zeichner and Tabachnick (1991) point out that it does not make much sense to encourage or to assess reflective practice in general without establishing priorities for the reflections that are derived from a reasoned educational and social philosophy

The four traditions of reform in teacher education, described by Zeichner and Liston (1992) provide a helpful framework for analysing the historical context, current practice and future policy. The academic, the social efficiency, developmentalist and social reconstructionist traditions provide a comprehensive picture of all the possibilities for reform. Zeichner and Liston not only describe the most distinguishing characteristics of each tradition, but also present internal debates within that paradigm. A comprehensive account of these debates is beyond the scope of this review. Only issues relevant to this dissertation are highlighted. A handout describing the four traditions prepared for the Northern Province workshop and used in subsequent phases of the project is attached as Appendix D2.

To some extent, fundamental pedagogics could be classified as an example of the social efficiency paradigm in its narrowest sense. This tradition involves "faith in the power of scientific study of teaching" as the basis of teacher education. It views knowledge as static and teaching as the process of bringing the child to adulthood on a predetermined route. It emphasises the "acquisition of specific observable teaching skills that are assumed to be related to pupil learning" (Zeichner and Liston 1992:8). It does not encourage a deliberative orientation, but limits the conception of "teaching to telling", without acknowledging the complex and uncertain nature of teaching. This approach undermines the potential for change as it prevents teachers from developing an understanding of the relationship between education and the

context in which knowledge and understanding are created and shared (Taylor 1992b).

According to Hartshorne's description of missionary education, the academic tradition influenced teacher education in South Africa before 1948 as it "reflects the broad education of the whole man ... in the liberal, Christian tradition" (1992:231). Some aspects of this tradition, such as the emphasis on sound understanding of subject content together with practical apprenticeship in schools (Zeichner and Liston 1992:6), could hold potential in the current context.

ECD has been far less constrained by the doctrinaire approach of Christian National Education (CNE) and fundamental pedagogics than lower primary education has. A comparative analysis of the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) Teacher Education and Educare reports (Taylor 1992a and 1992b) shows that developmentalist strategies have been given more attention in ECD. As "naturalist", artist" and 'researcher", the role of the developmentalist teacher includes:

> ... the skills of observation and study of children's behaviour in natural settings and in building a curriculum and classroom environment consistent with patterns of child development and children's interest. (Zeichner and Liston 1992:10)

According to the NEPI Educare Report,

> ... early childhood education has always had its roots in a child-centred, process oriented, play-based, participatory learning approach, which is much more progressive and democratic in its general ethos. (Taylor 1992a: 37 and 38)

A wide variety of curricula have been developed based on different conceptions of what early childhood education is (Taylor 1992a). "Child development theory" is contrasted with a "teacher-directed" approach. It suggests that the former, developmentalist approach "is likely to foster self-sufficiency, critical thinking and problem solving skills, co-operation, and the respect for others that is needed for democratic participation" (Taylor 1992a:85) and points out that this approach was developed by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) "in the context of meeting the learning needs in local disadvantaged communities" (Taylor 1992a:38).

The NEPI Educare Research Group extended the notion of development beyond the tradition described by Zeichner and Liston (1992) to include the development of the individual child within the development of the community. A "comprehensive

approach to meeting developmental needs of the whole child within the community development context" is advocated (Taylor 1992a:59). Child and community development policy aims to promote

> ...the optimal development of young children and improve the quality of life in a comprehensive and holistic way through the empowerment of communities, especially women to provide better health care and learning opportunities before school, on as wide a scale as possible but with priority in rural and marginal communities. (Taylor 1992a:65)

This understanding unites the social reconstructionist and developmentalist traditions by recognising that the developmental needs of learners should be addressed within and beyond the learning and teaching situation. In the case of young children, for example, it is evident that adequate nutrition in the early years is essential for learning and development. Consequently, in a society in transformation, the "natural development of the learners", should provide the basis of the curriculum for all learners and their teachers (Zeichner and Liston 1992:9). ECD has extended this understanding to include the education of caregivers and wider society who are responsible for ensuring that all children develop their full potential.

The developmentalist tradition complements the social reconstructionist tradition. The social reconstructionist tradition offers most potential for countering fundamental pedagogics. Although there is a great deal of variation in contemporary proposals from this perspective, the common thread is the development of "critical perspectives on the relationship between schooling and social inequalities and a moral commitment to correcting those inequalities" (Zeichner and Liston 1992:15). This tradition also supports the role of teachers in making educational policy (1992:14). Although social reconstructionist goals are clearly articulated in the NEPI reports, ANC policy framework and new legislation, reflective practice consistent with these goals is not evident in the implementation of new policy.

Bullough and Gitlin (1991:38) use the following three general headings to analyse different views of reflectivity: the technical; interpretive; and critical. They suggest that the critical orientation holds most promise for confronting structures and ideologies that underpin the training orientation to teacher education. Technical proficiency (Berliner 1985) has been regarded as a priority for teacher education in South Africa. This is evident, for example, in the emphasis on rote memorisation of syllabus content. Routine action is guided by tradition, external authority and circumstances (Comeaux 1991). The concern is with causal explanation and the

technical skills of learning are derived from theoretical standards prescribed by experts. This technical orientation in teacher education also encourages a strong sense of individual isolation through focusing "intellect narrowly on the development of teaching techniques" (Bullough and Gitlin 1991:38). This orientation has limited the capacity of teachers to collaborate and work as part of a team.

The goals of redress, access and equity have not yet been realised on account of inadequate provincial education budgets and a variety of transformation difficulties. Self-esteem continues to be eroded by the appalling physical conditions in which the majority of teachers have to work. Problems of overcrowded classrooms, high pupil teacher ratios and lack of material resources continue to demoralise and isolate teachers.

Building educative communities

In order to confront this individual isolation, Bullough and Gitlin (1991:39) suggest that reflection "needs to be grounded in a project and an alternative ideal that powerfully challenges the training orientation". They advocate collaboration in communities of a particular kind and suggest that through dialogue reflection is linked to caring and reason. The purpose of dialogue is to enable participants to come to a shared understanding of the subject being discussed. Instead of hiding prejudice or prejudgements, they should be apparent so that they can be critically tested. In dialogue, actors are empowered to rethink the way they see the world and judge their practice.

Dialogue assumes the existence of some form of group or community in which membership is valued as an end and many and significant aspects of the lives of the members are concerned. "Competing factions" must be allowed in the context of a shared commitment to common purpose for handling conflict in the group. Groups of this kind are referred to as "educative communities" and through dialogue "caring and reason are bound together as necessary characteristics". Decisions are made in terms of reason and not imposition, status or the ability to control resources (Bullough and Gitlin 1991:40).

This model for enabling dialogue (Bullough and Gitlin 1992) was developed and tested first in Northern Province and then adapted and extended through the three-

year Impilo pilot in Gauteng. The notion of the educative community has been expanded to include not only teacher educators but all key government and non-government role-players in the life of young children. It seeks to establish the commitment "to find means for breaking down barriers and identifying common interest" among previously discrete groups, such as policy makers and implementers; officials in different provincials government departments; educators and trainees, professional and non-professional caregivers; employers and employees. Collegiality replaces competition and all members ideally exercise reason within a context of a caring community rather than power and authority (Bullough and Gitlin 1991:41).

This ideal can only be achieved though changing attitudes and building self-esteem. The current context of change and uncertainty often results in practitioners responding defensively when confronted with new and different ideas. Goodman (1991:59) identifies "**open-mindedness, responsibility** and **wholeheartedness**" as three necessary attitudes for reflective practice. Open-mindedness allows teachers to realise "that traditional perceptions of education may or may not be valid". Responsibility creates "the desire to synthesise diverse ideas and apply information in an aspired direction". Wholeheartedness gives individuals strength to move beyond abstract notions and put their ideals into practice. Many teachers and teacher educators express fears of making mistakes, being criticised, disturbing traditions and making changes. Wholeheartedness enables practitioners to work through their fears and insecurities, and thus provide a basis for action.

Two variables help practitioners to think about their work and learn from experience. These can be categorised as "social" and "artifactual". The social involves interaction with peers and mentors in partnerships, small group work and seminars. Artifactuals provide help in remembering experience. They are tangible representations that record a given aspect of the situation (Richert 1991:134). Examples of artifactuals that could be used for reflection include: journals; quick notes made at the end of a lesson; and video or audio tape recordings.

These practical strategies support the view of teaching as an

> ... intellectual task requiring the ability to ask questions, search for answers, tolerate ambiguity, take risks and proceed in a thoughtful and caring way toward goals that are multiple, complex and constantly shifting to meet new and challenging imperatives. (Coulton and Sparks-Langer 1993:45)

"Collaborative group learning" is defined as the "group's efforts to reach consensus by their own authority" and should not be confused with co-operative group learning models. The primary difference lies in its "emphasis on how group consensus is negotiated and the placement of authority" (Comeaux 1991:153). This requires a common understanding or agreement about the answer or completion of a task. When used effectively, it can encourage divergent thinking or group differences channelled through a process of "intellectual negotiation". The need for consensus creates pressure to take ideas seriously, to modify and revise them in the light of other ideas and to recognise and tolerate differences. This can only be done if value systems and beliefs that underlie differences are recognised (Comeaux 1991:153).

The key lies in shifting from a conception of the teacher as the dispenser of knowledge to the epistemological model of knowledge as socially constructed. A thorough going transformation of teacher education for democratic ends will involve "rethinking not only curriculum content, but also the prevailing conception of knowledge and education" (Taylor 1992b:76). This reconceptualisation of the role of teacher, cannot be confused with a laissez-faire approach (Flanagan, Soudien and Sayed 1992). The way in which the task is structured and group behaviour is negotiated is key to the effective use of group learning.

Conditions created for teachers to think about their work, makes them think about "different things and they think about them in different ways" (Richert 1991:130). Both the social and artifactual variables are crucial in the case method, which is particularly useful as a way of considering whether activities are consonant with the aims and purposes (Richert 1991:134). Opportunities embedded in the construction, individual study and group discussion of cases based on practice within the group being studied, outweigh the difficulties presented for consideration in using the case method (Richert 1991:138 to 145).

However, the difficulties should not be underestimated and to minimise problems and disappointments, careful consideration of suggested guidelines is necessary. Group projects should be planned with painstaking attention to details, such as, the group composition, the establishment of ground rules for collaboration, roles in the group, and the definition of each task. It is crucial that participants understand what is expected and are kept on track throughout the process. Tasks must be concrete

and challenging without creating frustration (Comeaux 1991:161). The role of the researcher is therefore multi-faceted and demanding.

Despite the disadvantages, the case method nevertheless holds great potential as a strategy for preparing reflective practitioners. In order to challenge what is in schooling and consider what might or ought to be, it is necessary to reframe as problematic that which is seen as given (Richert 1991). The case method offers one way of challenging the dominant view of teaching as a "set of skills requiring technical mastery that are clearly identifiable and easily measured" and is in sharp contrast to a performance based approach that serves an ideology of externally defined accountability (Richert 1991:145).

3.5 Conclusion

The policies of the previous government were supported by empirical research and used "reason" to justify unconscionable human suffering. While the new "caring" policy and legislation of the ANC-led government elected in 1994 recognises the fundamental rights of every person and seeks to abolish all suffering, the chasm between policy framework and implementation has not yet been bridged. The enormity of the problem and complex texture of the "hardships" of poverty frequently leave viable solutions beyond reach. Through dialogue, this project seeks to link "caring" and "reason" in order to solve specific problems in meeting the basic needs of young children. The notion of guided participation informed the multi-faceted aspects of development in this emancipatory action research project, which started in the Northern Province with a series of workshops described in Chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR
ACTION BEGINS IN NORTHERN PROVINCE

4.1 Methodological matters

Needs and circumstances of children in South Africa vary considerably across an extensive landscape of geographic, cultural and economic difference. Meeting the basic needs of young children requires partnership between a variety of ECD role-players with the same understanding of quality and effective utilisation of limited resources. Since conflicting practices and values in familial and non-familial contexts could undermine development, the new integrated system of ECD provisioning must support families as the primary caregivers of young children and ensure synergy between home and public ECD services. Cultural differences in the goals and strategies for socialisation must be supported while "hardships" are alleviated. To meet this challenge, caring and reason must be linked through dialogue in a learning process that builds on documentation and reflection to produce a new type of evaluative thinking. A qualitative method and action research in particular, was chosen for its potential to evolve the future out of present opportunities inherent in the complex context being investigated.

"Action research" is conventionally defined as "a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention" although "usage of the term varies with time, place and setting" (Cohen and Manion 1994:186). The following four tangible features of action research are all present in this project. It is situational; collaborative; participatory and self-evaluative. It seeks to diagnose and solve a problem in a particular situation through building an educative community. Teams of ECD role-players, including the researcher, work together on the project. Team members take part directly or indirectly in implementing the research. Modifications are continuously evaluated within the on-going situation, with the ultimate objective being to improve practice (Cohen and Manion 1994:186).

The impressive scope and flexibility of this method is evident in the more sophisticated and large-scale project in Gauteng that spiralled out of the initial relatively small intervention in the Northern Province.

According to Blum, the use of action research in the social sciences can be resolved into two stages: a diagnostic stage in which the problems are analysed and a therapeutic stage in which the hypotheses are tested by a consciously directed change experiment, preferably in a social life situation (Cohen and Manion 1994:186).

In these terms, this case presents one complete action research cycle in the Northern Province and a second incomplete cycle that evolved in Gauteng. Impilo, described in Chapter two, is an indirect product of the Northern Province intervention. The Impilo research design is based directly on the model for building an educative community developed and tested in Northern Province. The process by which Impilo grew out of the Northern Province action research project is described in detail in Chapter five. However, completion of the three-year Gauteng project, now in its second year of implementation, lies beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Action research interprets the scientific method much more loosely than applied research and seeks "to bring about lasting benefit to the on-going process itself rather than to some future occasion, as is the purpose of traditional research" (Cohen and Manion 1994:192). Since the distinction between on going practice and research is blurred, it is frequently difficult to pause the action for accurate description of each stage and simultaneously maintain continuity. The basic flexible framework offered by Cohen and Manion (1994) and presented in Table one below provided the template for the selection of procedures appropriate to the needs of this particular change situation.

Table one: Action research

Blum's two stages	**Cohen and Manion's eight stages**
diagnostic	1. identifying, evaluating and formulating the problem 2. discussion and negotiations among interested parties 3. the literature review 4. a redefinition of the initial statement 5. the selection of research procedures 6. choice of evaluation procedures
therapeutic	7. implementation of the project itself 8. interpretation of the data, inferences to be drawn and the overall evaluation of the project

The diagnostic stage is sub-divided into six sub-stages and the therapeutic stage into two main sub-stages (Cohen and Manion 1994). In terms of this model, Impilo, now in its seventh stage, evolved from the eighth stage of the Northern Province project. These stages are interrelated and do not necessarily follow sequentially. Stages five and six could not be completed in detail in Northern Province before stage seven was complete. Stages one to seven were started in Gauteng before stage eight was completed in Northern Province. This framework has been adapted to guide the conceptualisation, implementation and description of this entire case

In both provinces, action research was chosen in order to involve ECD role players as researchers and to provide the context for learning to solve problems co-operatively. Although the scope of the project and range of ECD role-players expanded significantly in Gauteng, "the evaluative frame of reference remains the same, namely, to add to the practitioner's functional knowledge of the phenomena she deals with" (Cohen and Manion 1994:187).

This chapter illustrates the broad research method by describing the initial action research project to build an ECD educative community in the Northern Province. In this context the group of ECD role players was limited only to those organisations developing ECD practitioners. The eighth stage (Cohen and Manion 1994:198) constitutes the heart of the chapter and driving force for the subsequent cycles of action in Gauteng. The documents prepared for the workshops in Northern Province and one additional case developed from the data are attached as appendices.

4.2 Part one: Preparing for action

The first four stages

The project was initially conceptualised from the perspective of an ECD development practitioner confronted by transformation, fragmentation and uncertainty. In the first series of workshops, the group identified for research consisted of organisations in the Northern Province developing the teachers of children between the ages of 3 and 9. This category was perceived as significant in two respects. Firstly, because this group of organisations intersects the complex division between formal and non-formal created by apartheid education. The formation of this new sub-group is a crucial step towards integrating ECD into the national system of education and

training. Secondly, the Northern Province was chosen since it is one of the most impoverished. The potential for transfer was assumed to be more feasible if the lessons were derived in the most challenging context, which would necessitate a realistic appraisal of anticipated difficulties from the outset.

Relevant literature, described in Chapter three, was reviewed in order to develop the model in broad outline and to select research procedures. Three theoretical positions informed the model: the principle of dialogue (Bullough and Gitlin 1991); the case method (Richert 1991); and reflection theoretically informed by the four traditions of reform in teacher development (Zeichner and Liston 1992). Collaborative learning methods were investigated and special attention was given to the role of the facilitator.

Building an educative community in this context proved complex and challenging. Dialogue assumes the existence of some form of group or community in which membership is valued as an end and many and significant aspects of the lives of the members are concerned (Bullough and Gitlin 1991). Within the context of fragmentation created by apartheid, members of this group did not initially recognise or understand their membership of this particular group of ECD teacher developers.

Guided participation, which assumes an active learner and more expert guide engaged in activity, was used to structure the action research process. The individual, interpersonal and cultural processes are brought to the foreground in turn for examination, but must always be seen against the background of the other two, since they mutually constitute the activity as a unit of analysis (Rogoff 1992). Tasks and sub-tasks had to be carefully organised in relation to the evolving existence and autonomy of the group. Although a general plan for the three workshops was prepared in advance, the detail and content of each workshop was developed from evaluation of the previous workshop and communication with participants between workshops through telephone, fax and field visits.

An initial invitation and questionnaire (Appendix A) were sent to fifty organisations requesting an indication of their interest in the project and information about the organisation. In the light of data collected the initial statement of the problem was redefined with implications for the aim of the workshops, composition of the participating group and the expected amount of time required for participation.

Questionnaire responses indicated a strong interest in the project, arising out of the hunger for information and co-operation, but organisations were concerned about the amount of time required. In the light of severe fragmentation in the Northern Province, the scope of the action research project was limited to building an educative community as the foundation for future collaboration that could lead to agreement about "outcomes". The urgent need for information sharing and co-operation shifted the perspective towards critical reflection and an opportunity to meet and find out about other organisations. Enabling dialogue was clearly a prerequisite for co-ordinated action within a comprehensive and integrated policy for education and development.

A concerted effort was therefore made to welcome all interested organisations, including those not offering courses for this target group at that time, but planning to do so in 1996. Participation in the project was limited only in terms of the geographical area and the target age group of the children to be taught by the practitioners developed by the participating organisations.

The selection of research procedures and choice of evaluation procedures

Critics of action research, such as Marris and Rein (1967), "conclude that the relationship between the principles of action and experienced research are so different and so often mutually exclusive that attempts to link them into a single process are likely to produce internal conflict and the subordination of one element to another (Cohen and Manion 1994:195). Although the inevitable tension created by all action research cannot be underestimated, this project is based on the understanding that a "precise but flexible, relationship between the two components" can be achieved (Cohen an Manion 1994:195). This requires a careful analysis of the context of the project and that all participants understand the implications of a clear and unambiguous statement of the project's objectives. It is then possible "to ensure that the positive contributions of both are maximized and that the constraints of each on the other are kept to a minimum" (Cohen and Manion 1994:196). In this project the more specific tension between research and development also had to be resoived in a similar way.

The following characteristics of action research were considered in the light of the particular undertaking. It is an on-the-spot procedure designed to deal with a

concrete problem located in an immediate situation. The step-by step process is monitored over varying periods of time and by a variety of mechanisms so that the ensuing feedback may be translated into modifications, adjustments, directional changes and re-definitions as necessary. Action research is particularly helpful in a period of transition as it brings into question that which is taken for granted. Practitioners are encouraged to regard practice and its context as cultural constructions rather than as social givens and there is much potential for developing co-operation as well as changing attitudes and behaviour. Flexibility and adaptability is particularly advantageous given the shifting policy context of this project. It is empirical and relies on observation and behavioral data (Cohen and Manion 1994: 191).

While action research generates precise knowledge for a particular purpose, insights can also be transferred to other geographic areas and sectors. In this case it was assumed that the purpose of developing a model for building an educative community, could be adapted for use in other contexts and that through self-evaluation, it could improve practice and make theory more accessible to practitioners. Action research can provide "a means of in-service training", equipping teacher educators with new skills and methods, "sharpening their analytical powers and heightening their self awareness" and "injecting additional or innovatory approaches" (Cohen and Manion 1994:189).

"Ethnography", defined by Wolcott (1988:188) as a "way of life of some identified group in a cultural context", provides a strategy for resolving the tension between the involvement of a participant and the detachment of a researcher. This method integrates the advantages of being a participant in the culture, with a broad analytical perspective (Wolcott 1988:194). As the focus moved constantly between figure and ground, the ECD policy context constituted the primary concern.

On-going **reflection by the researcher** on her own role was perceived as crucial for the success of the project. The role of investigator was combined with that of educator, mentor and negotiator. The researcher's power in asking questions, holding information and in designing the project, was not ignored. Comeaux (1991:153) uses a theatrical metaphor to describe the role of enabling collaborative learning. The "play director" provides the "props" and ensures that the "actors" have materials and know the task. It is then up to the "actors" to create what happens.

Patience, humility and understanding on the part of the researcher were essential to gain the trust of participants. The terms of co-operation needed to be negotiated with sensitivity.

Carr and Kemmis (1986:205) describe the role of "moderator" who helps practitioners to problematise and modify their practices, identify and develop their own understandings, and take collaborative responsibility for action to change their situations. However, once the self-critical and self-reflective community is formed, any continuing dominance of the moderator would be destructive of the collaborative responsibility of the group. Throughout the entire process, the researcher assumed the role of a reflective practitioner in the developmentalist and social reconstructionist tradition, with a strong commitment to collaborative group learning guided by three key attitudes; whole-heartedness; open-mindedness and responsibility. A problem-solving approach demonstrated the benefits of viewing difficulties as opportunities rather than threats.

A variety of strategies for collecting data were built into the process although it was not clear until the completion of the Northern Province workshops exactly how the data would be analysed. Data was collected through observations, questionnaires, written evaluations after each workshop, the products of collaborative exercises during and between workshops and key participant interviews. Over the entire period of the project information was collected, recorded in some way, evaluated and acted upon. From time to time this sequence of events formed the basis of "reviews of progress" (Cohen and Manion 1994:192).

The potential advantages and disadvantages of each strategy for collecting data had to be carefully considered in relation to role of the researcher and autonomy of the group. For example, while it was clear from the outset that tape recordings of the workshops would be a useful source of data, it was necessary to negotiate this with participants. As facilitator, the researcher was a participant observer in all three Northern Province workshops and one field trip. In addition, permission was negotiated to video and tape-record workshops for further observation.

Evaluation forms (Appendix B) were completed by each participating organisation after each workshop. The same three open ended questions were asked:

> *What did you find most useful about the workshop? What did you find least useful about the workshop? What suggestions can you make for improving the next workshop?*

All responses were collated into one report that was circulated to participants, used for discussion and to develop the content for the subsequent workshop. The evaluation of the first workshop was used to plan the field trip between the first and second workshop. An evaluation meeting for interested participants was held on the first evening of each workshop. At the end of the third two-day workshop each participant completed a final questionnaire that was also posted to absent participants. Key participant interviews were conducted during the seventh and eighth stages.

The products of all collaborative exercises and discussions were collected for analysis. This included newsprint, and faxed submissions and the exercises and cases prepared for analysis and discussion during workshops. A reflective journal was kept and the formation of collaborative area groups was monitored and supported by telephone and fax.

Triangulation provided a way of addressing the problem of bias, by using a variety of techniques to ensure varying perspectives on complex issues and events (Wolcott 1988: 192). This mechanism was used to ferret out information and cross check perceptions to develop a rich understanding and description. The interventive power of the case study and its methods were not underestimated, particularly in the context of contestation for power in this period of transition. Great effort was made from the outset, to ensure that all participants had a clear understanding of the aim of the research and understood the complexity of all vested interests. The ethics of all aspects of the process was carefully investigated and discussed. Confidentiality was given the highest priority and the research had to find space for itself and be accommodated by other interests.

The researcher combined those methods (or sources) that would "in complementing each other build up as full a picture" of the area being investigated as time and facilities permitted (Cohen and Manion 1994:242). In selecting these strategies particular attention was given to resolving the tension between research and development. The research and evaluation procedures were chosen through careful

consideration of the objectives of the project and the role of the researcher and the project participants in particular. The model of enabling dialogue was developed and tested by using field experience, relevant literature and an evaluative dialogue including the facilitator and all participants. The researchers own judgement was "a crucial factor when integrating or contrasting the data and drawing inferences from them" (Cohen and Manion 1994: 244).

The original objectives of the study, the choice of methods, and the kind of data accumulated determined the way the data were used. The most challenging task was in drawing meanings or explanations from the data themselves. Wherever possible, "meaning was negotiated" with the subjects who were their source (Cohen and Manion 1994:244). It is inevitable that different actors will have different meanings and each meaning is equally valid. Throughout the process, incongruent sets of data were presented for reflection either through the discussion of cases or by means of the evaluation reports after each workshop. Attempts were made to account for differences or use them as the basis for hypothesis (Cohen and Manion 1994: 244).

Combined levels of triangulation were used, including, "the individual level, the interactive level (groups) and level of collectivities (organizational, cultural or societal)" (Cohen and Manion 1994: 236). Workshop participants were given an opportunity to provide their personal opinions in individual questionnaires and key participant interviews. Most of the data was collected at the interactive level through the recording of group discussions. The interactive process had most impact on the on-going development of individuals and organisations. Participants reported on their own organisational practice and were encouraged to engage their colleagues and students in the debates and discussion emanating from the workshops. A single workshop evaluation form was completed jointly by both representatives from each organisation at the workshop. Groups of organisations in a particular area group were also given tasks. The researcher participated directly in the dialogue through commenting on participant responses in the evaluation reports.

Respondent validation was sought through evaluation reports, which participants could scrutinise, correct or confirm that it was an accurate reflection of their views. Key participant interviews and questionnaires were used to check validity throughout the project and particularly in the eighth stage. In the interests of confidentiality

evaluation responses were anonymous and participant responses to questionnaires are identified only by category, non-governmental organisation (NGO) or college (GO) and by number.

4.3 Part two: The Northern Province workshops

Table two: Northern Province workshop cycles of action and reflection

Workshop one	Workshop two	Workshop three
Agenda *Workshop plan* Introductions Brainstorm: • action research • reflective practice Rules for discussion Case one: *Changing unhelpful ways.* Case two: *The Jabulani Pre-school* Explain homework tasks Evaluation	*Agenda* *Workshop plan* Presentation about organisations Classify beliefs Case three: *An observation visit to school N* Case four: *Accreditation: How do I know this course will be of good quality?* Reflection on the case method Exercise: *Action research outcomes* Clarify homework tasks Evaluation	*Agenda* *Workshop plan* Present activities Assessment of equipment making Document analysis one: *Learning outcomes for this project* Document analysis two *Teacher development assessment* The way forward Evaluation Final questionnaire
Follow up tasks for participants		
After workshop 1 Read handout one *Building an educative community* and handout two *The four traditions of reform in teacher education* Collaborative tasks • beliefs about children • observation and writing case	**After workshop 2** Read handout three *Early childhood Development (ECD)* and handout four *Practical hints for teaching cases* Collaborative tasks: complete observation visits and case writing	**After workshop 3** Submit additional cases Develop area groups and provincial network
Follow up tasks for researcher		
After workshop 1 Collates and disseminates evaluation 1 responses. Undertakes field trip visit to one college and attends two area group meetings. Plans and prepares workshop two.	**After workshop 2** Collates and disseminates evaluation 2. Supports collaborative tasks by phone and fax. Plans and prepares workshop three.	**After workshop 3** Posts final questionnaire to absent participants. Collates evaluation 3 and final questionnaire responses Prepares and circulates minutes of final session. Report to Northern Province education department and funders. Analyse data Key participants interviews and questionnaires

The seventh implementation stage consisted of a spiral of three major cycles of action and reflection marked by three two-day workshops. The same venue and format was used for each workshop. Careful attention was given to the curriculum preparation including content, organisation and materials. Documents were colour coded and the accessibility of language and layout was considered. Documents prepared for each workshop provided an overview with a suggested time frame as well as a more detailed programme explaining the workshop process and instructions for each task. Whenever possible these documents were pre-tested with ECD teacher developers not participating in the project.

Discussion groups were formed for the duration of each workshop. An attempt was made to balance opportunities for participants to get to know each other and continuity between discussions as well as achieving in each group a mix of participants from different kinds of organisation and different areas. Additional meetings in area groups were held to plan collaborative exercises undertaken between workshops. Ground rules and participatory strategies for discussion were introduced, negotiated, revised and clarified in subsequent workshops. Two primary rules for discussing all cases were accepted: participants would try to reach consensus and ensure maximum participation. The roles of timekeeper "participation observer" would be rotated so that everyone would have a turn. Additional strategies for increasing participation and preventing domination were introduced as the need arose.

Table two, above, sets out the content of the three workshops and follow up tasks for participants and the researcher. In the **first workshop**, two brainstorming exercises introduced the concepts *action research* and *reflective practice*. The facilitator presented a brief history of the ECD sector, described the problem of fragmentation in education and provided background information on the NQF and the nature of action research. Two cases, one set in a non-formal ECD context (Appendix H1: *Changing unhelpful ways)* and the other in a formal context *(*Appendix H2: *The Jabulani pre-school)* were discussed in small groups and in plenary. The concept of an educative community was introduced through carefully phrased questions that focused on attitudes, *open-mindedness, responsibility* and *whole-heartedness,* and the use of the case method, including the criteria for writing a good case and structuring group discussion (Appendix E1).

Reflection on the case method and guidelines for preparing cases was started in the first workshop and continued throughout the project. Between the first and second workshops, participants were expected to undertake one collaborative exercise with neighbouring organisations and another with their own students. They were asked to collaboratively write a teaching case based on an observation visit to any ECD service in the area. The second exercise required that they submit a list of 20 belief statements about young children generated by their own students. The two handouts, *Building an educative community* (Appendix D1) and *The Four Traditions of Reform in Teacher Education* (Appendix D2) were to be read and discussed.

In **the second workshop,** the four traditions of reform was introduced as a framework for evaluation and research ethics was discussed. Issues introduced in the first workshop were revised as part of the on-going reflection on the action research process, including discussion of the evaluation report and feedback on the first collaborative exercise. The NQF was introduced in the context of the history of ECD and fragmentation in education. The aim of the action research project was clarified by listing the intended products of the project and reflecting on progress.

In the first group exercise, the belief statements about young children submitted by participants (Appendix I) were classified using the four traditions of reform. The aim of the exercise was to generate discussion leading to consensus and provide an opportunity to engage practically with the four traditions of reform. Questions were then used to focus a reflective discussion on the exercise. The notion of a tradition or paradigm was developed in discussion emphasising the relationship between traditions as well as the tension between reaching consensus and there being no right and wrong answers. The third case, *An observation visit to school N* (Appendix H3) developed by one of the collaborative area groups, focussed further discussion on different approaches to education. Case four, *Accreditation: How do we know that this course will be of a good standard?* (Appendix H4) and the plenary reflection centred around accreditation and research ethics.

In order to engage with the notion of "learning outcomes", area groups were given an exercise in which they set out what might be considered appropriate strategies for assessment of successful participation in the action research project. As a homework task, participants submitted a description of the assessment approach of their own organisation. Two more handouts were distributed for reading and

discussion after the workshop. Both had been prepared in response to needs identified in the first workshop. The first *Early Childhood Development (ECD),* (Appendices D3), provided an overview of the ECD context in South Africa and posed questions for the policy development process. The second, *Practical hints for teaching cases,* (Appendix D4), was an extract from an article in *Changing Public and Development Management: South African Cases* (Schutte 1995).

Documents based on the final exercise of the second workshop and the descriptions of approaches to assessment submitted by organisations were used to develop documents for analysis in **the third workshop.** Documents about "learning outcomes" generated in the previous workshop were analysed and classified using the four traditions of reform. The final group exercise consisted of an analysis of a second set of four documents developed from the descriptions of systems of assessing students and examples of assessment strategies submitted by participating organisations. Three fictitious organisations described their system of assessment for teacher development. The first fictitious organisation is a college offering PRESET courses for lower and senior primary teachers. The second organisation offers a one year INSET course for educare workers, childminders, crèche teachers, pre-school teachers and play-group teachers. The third offers a PRESET course consisting of one year full-time and another year in an apprenticeship. Groups read and classified each element of the assessment strategy using the four traditions of reform. This was followed by a similar analysis of examples of tasks and assignments, examinations, tests and interviews and five different formats for assessing implementation or teaching practice.

In the final plenary session, there was a general discussion about assessment strategies starting with reflection on the two workshop exercises and leading into a discussion about assessment within the current ECD context and the relationship between assessment strategies and "learning outcomes". At strategic points during the workshop, participants were given an opportunity to present activities made from waste. A general discussion about the action research process and future collaboration in the province, followed by a musical event in which participants played musical instruments they had made from waste concluded the series of workshops.

4.4 Part three: Analysis and interpretation

Since interpretation and evaluation had been an integral part of all the previous stages, it is not possible to draw a clear distinction between this eighth stage and those before. The main aim of this stage is the evaluation of the proposed model for building an educative community in order to answer the following three underlying questions: What potential does the case method hold for preparing reflective practitioners? Has reflection based on dialogue but grounded in a project and an alternative ideal succeeded in challenging a training orientation and making the necessary paradigm shift described in the new education policy? How could the lessons of this project inform ECD policy development and implementation?

The following criteria have been used to evaluate the model for building an educative community: **(1) degree of consensus reached though participation; (2) quality of participation; (3) scope of participation** and **(4) sustainability of participation**. These four broad inter-linked evaluation components could be used to assess any consultative policy development process. The quality and scope of participation must be used to check the validity of the agreement reached through dialogue. From a perspective of policy as praxis rather than product, the sustainability of the educative community is essential to bridge the potential gap between policy development and implementation.

The educative community in the school context consists primarily of teachers. Although they might hold a variety of different perspectives on the best approach to education, in terms of their broad qualifications, status, roles and functions, they could be regarded as a fairly homogeneous group. In contrast, the new multi-functional approaches for ECD provisioning that the GDE is attempting to develop through Impilo, assumes a team of different ECD role-players operating in a network or web of services. These could include employees in the provincial Departments of Health, Welfare and Population Development or local government as well as family volunteers. The effectiveness of mechanisms for dialogue used in the Northern Project workshops must be assessed with a view to their potential for the broad ECD context. New ECD policy requires agreement about all the problems, proposed solutions and strategies for implementation. The scope and quality of participation are critical factors in evaluating the success of policy. In this case, successful implementation will depend on the sustainability of the educative community.

Through cycles of action and reflection the model was refined from the initial broad outline. Evaluation and interpretation were built into the entire action research process. Given the nature of the project, it is not always easy to distinguish between the factors that impact directly on the effectiveness of the model and other external factors that affected the outcomes of each stage of this particular project. The first series of workshops was intentionally undertaken in a province where the external constraints such as poverty and fragmentation were greatest, on the assumption that this would provide the best test for replication in other provinces. The intention of the project in Northern Province was to include only resource and training organisations (RTOs), also referred to as ECD providers, and dialogue focused relatively narrowly on agreement about qualifications of ECD practitioners.

4.4.1 Degree of consensus reached through participation

The nature of consensus reached through participation in the project is the most important success criterion for the model. External constraints in the Northern Province at the time of the workshops meant that it was not possible, in the limited time available for workshops, to conclude the proposed process of reaching agreement on all outcomes for ECD teacher development. However, a high level of agreement was reached on three preliminary issues that could form the foundation for consensus on outcomes: **the need for changes; linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue;** and **young children need activity.** These three areas of agreement are explored in turn below.

The need for changes

By the end of the workshop there was unanimous agreement that a period of transition would inevitably require many major changes and that it is necessary continuously to reflect on one's practice and change unhelpful ways. There were constant reminders about the difficulty and discomfort of change. The difference in the nature of change required in each of the two main groups of organisation became apparent. The need for good communication and information to support change was highlighted. The new outcomes-based approach to education and appropriate assessment strategies constituted the main focus of discussion about the need for changes. Evidence for the inferences drawn below were collected primarily from the transcripts of discussions of Case One and the document analysis

in the third workshop. Evaluation reports and the final questionnaire also illustrate the increasing acceptance of the need for change. Responses to the final questionnaire showed strong support for working together for change in the interests of young children.

Case One: Changing unhelpful ways (Appendix H1), in which three ECD practitioners talk on their way home from an ECD INSET workshop about using pictures to stimulate children's conversation, placed the need for changes firmly in the minds of all participants. The tone of the discussion was generally hopeful, as reflected in these statements referring to the ECD practitioners in Case One:

- "They gained a lot by going to that workshop"
- "It became clear to the. ' that they can use alternatives"
- "The new knowledge was useful to them"
- "One of the teachers went out and tried it and came back and said it worked. She said she invited the parents. She applied the knowledge immediately" (July 1995)

But there were also constant reminders of the difficulty of change,

- "I wouldn't say that they came out with clear strategies because after the workshop they were still talking about how they were still worried".
- " It was useful to them but they did not know how they would make it useful to the children and the parents" (July 1995).

Participants agreed that new knowledge meant "throwing out old ways" and that "change is often uncomfortable", During the group discussion, one participant remarked, "Today was a big eye opener. You must have a paradigm shift. Each one will go away by having gained something from each other" (July 1995 transcript ws1big1a).

Reflection on the first case also highlighted the difference in perspective about change in the two main groups of participants. One of the NGO participants indicated that he did not expect the action research project to change his practice as a teacher educator, but to reaffirm it. Some participants from colleges, started immediately to focus on the need to change inappropriate practice in the "old education department" referring, for example, to the authoritarian approach of most inspectors who criticise rather than help teachers.

The lack of information and ineffective mechanisms of communication were identified as obstacles to change, with many references to uncertainty created by inadequate communication, including the impending "rationalisation" of colleges.

The most important prerequisite for reaching agreement on outcomes is an understanding of what is meant by an "outcomes-based" approach to education. At the time of the Northern Province Workshop in 1995, none of the participants had begun to engage with the new concepts of outcomes-based approach, although some were using an approach that could be classified as outcomes-based. This change was identified as a priority and nearly two workshop days were devoted directly to this. The group exercise completed at the end of the second workshop (Appendix F1) provided documents for analysis in the last workshop (Appendices J and K) so that discussion could start from the existing understanding of the participants. By analysing their own responses, it was possible to identify their own limitations and move to a more developed understanding, simultaneously reaching a high level of agreement about the need to change.

The **approach to assessment**, in teacher development and in the learning of young children, surfaced as a key element of change, reflected in comments such as,

- "In the past students didn't really know what was expected of them. Officials made all the rules and students could not participate in the process".
- "Now we need a formative approach - a process of learning rather than an imposed thing. Observation rather than marks."

The participants' list of the most useful aspects of the action research project included: "I started to realise the difference between the criteria used for admission, assessment, etc. This was most useful because I started to pick up some good ideas which can be used in the education system" (NGO4: October 1995). The nature of the change was clearly much greater for those organisations following a norm-referenced approach to assessment as opposed to those already focussing on the development of individual learners.

Workshop evaluations and final questionnaire responses provide evidence of the general agreement, not only about the need for change but also the need to work together and **unite efforts** towards change. One college participant noted, "The primary intention of the project is to empower teacher training educators with the skills that will enable them to manage the unavoidable changes in education effectively from an informed position" (GO3: October 1995). Another summed up the situation, "There is general consensus about future collaboration and the need for sharing about the better future of our kids" (GO4: October 1995).

The effective use of collaborative group learning channelled group differences through a process of intellectual negotiation. The need for consensus created pressure to take ideas seriously, to modify and revise them in the light of other ideas and to recognise and tolerate differences. The value systems and beliefs that underlie the differences had to be recognised.

Linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue

By the end of the series of workshop in the Northern Province, there was almost unanimous agreement about the value of critical reflection and collaborative group learning techniques. Most participants recognised the value of all three components of the model used to enable dialogue in the project. Two of the workshop handouts presented the notion of an educative community and provided an overview of Zeichner and Liston's (1992) theoretical framework (Appendices H1 and H2). The exercises classifying belief statements in the second workshop and the document analysis in the third workshop, provided participants with opportunities to engage actively with the framework. The case method and theoretical framework provided by the four traditions were recognised as useful in terms of future practice. Several participants indicated that a developmentalist and social reconstructionist approach rather than a social efficiency perspective would inform their future practice.

The four traditions (Zeichner and Liston 1992) proved to be a crucial component of the model as it provided the theoretical framework that moved participants from approving only what they knew to interrogating their own approach in the light of other possibilities. Although the handout was in accessible language, it took some time for participants to be able to engage with this framework. It was necessary to start with a simple exercise categorising belief statements using the four traditions. The notion of there being no right or wrong answers troubled some participants, who tried to bring the facilitator into the group to mediate disagreement. They were initially unhappy when she refused but later understood the rationale as reflected in this response to the final questionnaire, "I would have liked to have had the facilitator's opinion on things a bit more, but I understand why she could not get involved" (NGO7: October 1995).

Although the list of **belief statements** (Appendix I) was derived directly from those collected by participants from their own students, the composite list did not associate each belief directly with any particular individual or group of participants. The first

exercise of classifying belief statements had two direct aims. Firstly, it was a mechanism to introduce participants to the notion of traditions or paradigms, help them engage with the theoretical framework and encourage them to reread the handout on the four traditions. Secondly, it reinforced the need for the group to reach consensus.

Placing each statement in one of four envelopes labelled: social efficiency; academic; developmentalist or social reconstructionist helped participants to move beyond their attachment to their own beliefs and consider the broad context of historical development. The second stage of the exercise in which each group compared its own classification to that of another group helped participants understand the nature of a paradigm or framework and the relationship between these traditions. For example, the groups acknowledged that some statements, such as, "Young children should be given freedom within sensible limits" could be viewed as either developmentalist or social reconstructionist and that aspects of one tradition can either support or contradict another.

This first exercise using the four traditions pushed groups to reach consensus, while later exercises allowed groups to acknowledge the overlap in their classification. Some used Venn diagrams to present their classification. By the time the four traditions were used to analyse outcomes in the third workshop, participants were better able to engage with these concepts and use the framework to reflect critically on the limitations of their training and their own short-comings. Almost all participants acknowledged the limitations of fundamental pedagogics and began to recognise the need to understand their learners within their family and community context. Participants noted that Christian National Education prescribed behaviour without encouraging teachers to reflect on the needs and circumstances of their students. In particular they noted the value of the NGO emphasis on involving parents.

Participant responses show that the most commonly identified lessons learned from the project referred to the case method and the four traditions. Twenty-one references were made to the case method and group discussion as most useful aspects of the first workshops (Appendix E2) including:

- The cases were very useful and enabled participants to share their expertise and knowledge amicably in a cordial atmosphere.
- The case method is very good for solving problems.
- All participants must share ideas and end up reaching consensus (Appendix E2 July 1995:3).

The effectiveness of the model is evident from the more penetrating understanding reflected in answer to the same question after the second workshop, such as:

- Overall, we found this workshop even more engrossing than the first because we were more skilled perhaps in using the case method.
- The cases, especially the one on accreditation, was very challenging and revealing
- In our discussion we also learnt how important the community is (Appendix F2 September 1995:2).

In response to the final questionnaire, sixteen out of twenty-three respondents referred directly to either collaborative reflection, the case method or both in answering one or more of the four questions inquiring about the benefits of the project and new methods learned or tried. A selection of the most common answers is quoted under each question in Appendix L2. The use of collaborative group learning techniques delivered two related but different outcomes. Firstly, participants experienced strategies that they could transfer to their own teaching situation to enable collaborative group learning and critical reflection. Secondly, many participants also began to recognise the limitations of their own perspective, for example, "I have learned more about moving from an academic and social efficiency tradition to one in which issues are looked at in a developmentalist and social reconstructionist view. The case method makes it easier for one to learn" (NGO5:October 1995).

The most concrete example of this **paradigm shift** surfaced in the support for an "activity method" referred to in different ways, including "learning through play", "discovery-method" or "child-centred approach". Participants noted as new methods of education learned from the project, recognition that the young child learns best through play and through observation and that teaching aids are important for the learning child. Rote learning and drilling of information should be replaced by the active participation of the child in the lesson and young children cannot just be kept silent with their arms folded at any stage in the classroom (Final questionnaire October 1995).

Young children need activity

Participants recognised the need for a paradigm shift early in the first workshop, but mechanism supporting reflective practice helped to refine the specific nature of the required change and illuminate the disjunction between current education practice

and the needs and circumstances of young children. The exercise requiring each organisation to present an activity made from waste helped to achieve this. The inadequacy of primary schools in meeting young children's need for activity was the most important insight for many participants. Someone pointed out, "It is difficult for teachers to adopt the activity method because of reasons based more on the system of education than on the ability of teachers and pupils. Through this project we realised that the activity method is more effective and possible" (GO2). This new understanding also helped to build the foundation for partnership between participants from the two groups of organisations, as college participants recognised the advantages of the NGO approach.

Recognising young children's need for activity surfaced as the most important change required in the education of young children and could be regarded as the most significant change in perspective achieved by the project. "The exposure to participants with approaches very different to our own" was acknowledged as valuable by both groups of participants as this difference emphasised the need for a *dialectical relationship between theory and practice in teacher development*. While this generally required a much bigger paradigm shift for participants from colleges, one NGO participant reflected, "I'm thinking that it could be debated that our training is specially looking at practical work and very little at theory. ... we are doing the very same as the colleges because they concentrate on theory and very little practical. I hope we can try to balance these two because they are both necessary" (NGO3 October: 1995).

Identification of this key issue resulted in the model being adapted to include a focus on preparing and presenting activities for young children, which proved particularly important for college participants since their approach to education relies primarily on 'chalk and talk'. Each organisation was asked to bring to the third workshop an activity made from waste. The instruction (Appendix F2) stated that "the activity should be designed to hold the attention of a child between the ages of three and nine". Assuming that some organisations would not bring an activity, the researcher provided a large quantity of waste and tools for making equipment. Those who had brought activities presented them on the first day and the group reflected on the purpose and effectiveness of the activity. Those who had not brought an activity, were given an opportunity to make one that evening and present it the next day. Many NGO participants helped their college colleagues who had previously had no

experience of making activities from waste. Some organisations brought a large selection of activities that they set out on display and demonstrated to interested participants during breaks. In the closing session of the workshop, one NGO participant gave each person a musical instrument made from waste and facilitated a short music workshop.

The introduction of activities made from waste helped the process in several different ways. It strengthened the message about the need for activity; it provided an opportunity for many participants (particularly from NGOs) to acquire new ideas that could easily be transferred directly to their organisations. The expertise displayed by some NGO participants was recognised and could well have influenced the change in attitude of college participants towards the NGOs. Participants noted the following aspects of the workshop as most useful:

- "the openness of NGOs in sharing ideas about making toys for tiny tots"
- "ideas for making toys and learning how to use them"
- "waste to keep children occupied and learning"
- "thinking about ways to hold a child's attention, give them opportunities to explore, taste, smell, develop senses, language and concepts" (October 1995: 2)

This could well have been the most important contribution towards building the foundation for collaboration and a shared understanding of a new approach that was needed, illustrated by these selected responses:

- "A paradigm shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred education was something I found most useful about the action research project (GO8 and GO9)"
- "It would seem we (colleges and NGOs) are working in opposite directions when referring to the training of teachers (GO4)"

Through collaborative dialogue the group drew valuable conclusions about teacher development. However, the potential success of implementation of this consensus lies in scope and quality of participation and sustainability of educative community.

4.4.2 Quality of participation

Significant improvement in the quality of participation from the first to the third workshop is evident in the recordings of discussions and the participant perceptions reflected in the evaluation forms, final questionnaire and key participant interviews. Case method strategies built trust and gave all participants an equal opportunity to express their views and be taken seriously. No one, including the researcher was

allowed to use status to dominate. By the third workshop almost all participants were able to transcend the animosity that prevailed at the first workshop.

In this section, progress towards increased capacity for dialogue is tracked through a discussion of the strategies used to create an enabling environment for dialogue. The case method was used to focus discussion and strategies were introduced to enable participants to monitor and increase participation. Three key attitudes, "open-mindedness, whole-heartedness, and responsibility" were promoted (Bullough and Gitlin 1991). After each workshop, the researcher studied the recordings of discussions in order to assess the quality of participation, identify problems and develop remedial strategies. The evaluation reports, field trip and collaborative exercises between workshops were additional enabling strategies. The key indicator of participation, is the extent to which participants were able to transcend the initial animosity between different categories of ECD educators in order to hear and take seriously other perspectives. Full participation was achieved in the third workshop, as all participants were able to speak and be heard.

Capacity for dialogue

Transcribed recordings reveal a steady improvement in the capacity for dialogue, marked by the change from poor listening and participation in the earlier discussions to full participation in later sessions. Discussion during the first workshop was characterised by domination of a single participant in each group. Case Five: *Three Examples of discussion domination* (Appendix H5) highlights this problem of poor listening and domination by describing three different group discussions. The most vociferous participant in each of the three early examples described in Case Five was the leader of an NGO, however the nature and extent of this domination varied considerably. In the first example, Mrs. Tipi expressed her opinions with little consideration for the question under discussion or the contribution of other participants. In the second two examples, Tess and Veronica made useful contributions to the discussion arising out of a clear understanding of the problem under discussion. Tess was relatively sensitive to other participants in the group, while Veronica who also played the role of discussion leader delivered a monologue for almost the entire session. Fictitious names are used to disguise the identity of the participants in Case Five, but the content of discussion is transcribed accurately from recordings of the first workshop.

It is interesting to note that the group in the third example in Case Five (Veronica's monologue) had missed one stage in the sequence of discussions in the workshop programme. The intention was to alert the group to potential problems early in the workshop. After discussion of Case One, groups were asked to reflect briefly on the progress of the group toward reaching consensus and to consider problems such as domination in the group (Appendix E1: 2), using a set of questions including the following:

- *What do we mean **by status**? How do some people use their status to force others to accept their opinions during group discussions? What other methods do people use to impose their opinions?*
- *What do we mean by **making decisions in terms of reason**? How can **caring and reason** be linked to reflection through dialogue?* (Appendix E1:3)

Instead, Veronica's group immediately began discussing Case Two: *The Jabulani Pre-school* (Appendix H2) and after they had completed all the case questions early in the third discussion session, they proceeded with their own unstructured discussion. The passion that Veronica felt for the approach of her own organisation prevented her from listening or taking seriously the contributions of the other participants.

This problem was remedied on the second day of the first workshop with a similar group reflection on discussion of Case Two followed by a more comprehensive plenary reflection guided by further questions focussing on strategies used in the project to build an ECD educative community (Appendix E1:3). The cycles of action and reflection providing participants with strategic opportunities to reflect on the quality of participation form an integral part of this model for enabling dialogue.

The quality of participation in subsequent workshop discussion sessions improved significantly and there is no evidence of the same level of domination in any other sessions. The antagonism between NGOs and colleges, usually in a milder form, was present in other discussion groups during the first workshop, but during subsequent workshops participants listened more carefully to each other. In workshop three, some groups used the *Five Token Strategy* to monitor and improve participation (Appendix G1: 1).

Hostility also appeared as a strong trend in the participant evaluation at the end of the first workshop (Appendix E2: 7). Comments included: "It was quite terrifying to interact with Teacher Educators from Colleges and ... realise how closed, small minded and short sighted they are". There were complaints that college participants did not

participate fully and took discussion off track by repeatedly saying, "We don't deal with pre-school" (Appendix E2: 7). On the other hand college participants complained that, many NGO participants displayed a negative and hostile attitude towards government institutions. "It was like they felt *this was their workshop; they know best;* and *they do better.* This was not helpful for collaboration and co-operation. However, the organiser's attitude was good and positive". (Appendix E2: 7). College participants also expressed frustration arising from their perception that the workshop was not relevant. The strongest example stated: "I expected we would be doing something related to the 3 to 9 year old child throughout the workshop, but to my dismay we were only doing a research towards the facilitator's masters degree" (Appendix E2: 5).

Inclusivity was used as a theme to structure one section of the first workshop evaluation report, presenting *problems and suggestions* under three sub-sections: *inviting other organisations, content and attitudes.* This helped to refocus problems as opportunities for change and improvement.

Building an enabling environment

Participants identified the researcher's style of facilitation as contributing to the quality of participation. Nine evaluation forms completed after the first workshop referred to this with statements such as the following:

- "The facilitator's style was excellent. "
- "The facilitator enabled the participants to understand what she had to deliver. "
- "Involving participants in evaluation, feedback and planning broadened ownership."
- "The organiser's attitude was positive." (Appendix E2: 4)

Drawing on the three key attitudes, open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility, the researcher was mindful in building trust and a sense of ownership in the project. Particular attention was directed at illuminating the link between pre-school and primary education implicit in the notion of ECD. The researcher made a strong commitment to flexibility and being responsive to all proposals made by participants, either taking action to implement ideas or explaining why the proposed solution was not appropriate in terms of the dialogical model or method.

In the workshop evaluation reports, where ever possible, problems were followed by solutions proposed either by participants themselves or by the researcher. All participant views and proposals were recorded meticulously. Incongruent sets of

data were presented for reflection. Even those views that were contrary to the objectives of the project were recorded but were followed by a *facilitator's response* presenting an alternative perspective. For example, one participant suggested "Maybe some *informalish* evening sessions that would give participants room to express their aspirations, fears and where they are coming from. This might help to keep these issues out of the workshop itself and stop tangents" (Appendix E2: 5). The facilitator's response to this comment in the evaluation report drew participants' attention to the need to express feelings and opinions and not hide them. The researcher explained, "This is an important part of our dialogue and cannot be removed from the workshop, but must be included in a way that problems can be solved and differences can be negotiated" (Appendix E2: 5).

Similarly, the suggestion by one participant, that only general primary school teacher educators or curriculum developers should participate was used to clarify the need for inclusivity. The facilitator added the following response:

> *The collaborative exercises and facilitator follow up is intended to solve these problems and ensure that the content is relevant and that participants are able to relate the project to their own situations.*
>
> *Collaborative group learning requires a common understanding or agreement about the answer or completion of a task. When used effectively it can encourage divergent thinking or group differences channelled through a process of 'intellectual negotiation'. The need for consensus creates pressure to take ideas seriously, to modify and revise them in the light of other ideas and to recognise and tolerate differences. This can only be done if the value systems and beliefs that underlie differences are recognised (Appendix E2: 7).*

Learning from mistakes and difficulties

Lessons for improving the model were drawn from problems identified by the researcher and participants. The unsuccessful introduction session at the start of the first workshop provided a vivid demonstration of this principle early in the project. Pairs of organisations introduced themselves and then one person from each organisation introduced the other organisation to the plenary group. This exercise was devised to serve the dual purpose of an icebreaker and to provide information about organisations. However, the reporters were not able to present a coherent picture of the organisation they introduced. Participants, in turn, were not able to link the information about the organisation with the representatives at the workshop. The researcher's observations were confirmed by the evaluation responses (Appendix

E2: 5) and so all organisations were requested to prepare a two minute introductory presentation for the start of the second workshop. The first homework task for participants arose directly from their own solution to a problem they had identified. The success of the introductions at the start of the second workshop is evident in the thirteen references to collaboration and meeting other participants noted as success in the evaluation, including the following:

- "Meeting with the other institutions".
- "Sharing ideas with different organisations which have different educational approaches". "Informal discussion with other people from different organisations/colleges".
- "The workshop involved both NGOs and government institutions".
- "Knowing about other organisations".
- "The idea of collaborative work" (Appendix F2:3).

Similar examples, of the researcher's responsiveness to participant needs, include: the handout providing information about the NQF and ECD context (Appendix D3); Case Four (Appendix H4) addressing concerns about the ethics of research; the adjustment of plenary seating arrangements (Appendix F2: 4); and *Five Token Strategy* (Appendix G1). In some cases opportunity for change were handed back to participants to take action. For example, participants were invited to find better accommodation within the budget and assist with administrative responsibility during workshops (Appendix E2). Participants were also invited to assist with preparation of the second and third workshop. Interested participants met on the evening of the first day of each workshop to evaluate the project and suggest adjustments to the programme for the second day where necessary. On one occasion, when the evening evaluation meeting pointed out problems with questions that had been prepared for case discussion, the set of questions was reframed and replaced with hand-written copies the following day. Every opportunity was used to support explicitly the formation of an educative community by ensuring that all intentions were transparent at all stages of the project.

There is much evidence of the effectiveness of this approach in comments from participants indicating that their initial disappointments or problems had been solved with new insight. For example, one noting that nothing was least useful, "It is just at first I didn't understand the whole process before the explanation was done. I just thought you need us for your master's degree" (NGO11). At least fourteen participants referred in some way to collaboration and co-operation as successes of the third workshop suggesting that the initial animosity had been transcended. Participants noted that an harmonious spirit had evolved between participants and that

a healthy atmosphere conducive to growth and sharing views had replaced earlier domination (Appendix G2)

Enabling dialogue between workshops

The cycles of action and reflection were also strengthened by three strategies used between workshops: firstly, the collated evaluation reports already mentioned; secondly, the field trip between the first and second workshop and thirdly, the collaborative exercises.

As explained above, the **workshop evaluations** provided the researcher with an opportunity to intervene strategically through participation in the reflective dialogue. All opinions expressed were meticulously collated into reports (Appendices E2, F2 and G2). All views were recorded with the researcher's response to critical concerns. Anonymity provided an additional channel for dialogue between participants. For example, only one participant felt it necessary to refer back to the first evaluation report in the evaluation of the second workshop,

> Focusing on comments in the *previous* evaluation report. I would like to indicate that the accusations on college lecturers that they are narrow minded and closed is unfounded. The commentator proved to be suffering from inferiority complex and that I think is not the fault of the lecturer from college. If we still have people of such minds in your so-called NGOs then I am afraid your aim or wish of our working together is *infutility*. We would rather work with people of our own calibre and standard of education if that's what you wish (Appendix F2: 6).

By the second workshop, this was clearly a minority view. The evaluation reports also allowed for different perspectives to be counterpoised, as seen in the examples in the box below.

ethics discussion ^^	Because I had absolutely no problems with the "master's" question, I found the research ethics discussion a bit of a waste of time, even though I know it was necessary for others. I had no problems about ethics.
	I found the fact that the problem was tackled as a learning experience very useful. Learning more about research ethics and practically applying them. We learnt and understood the research ethics.
Participation in discussion ^^	People interrupted others who were speaking in the group discussions. Some people talked a lot without giving others a chance to air their views in group discussions.
	The discussions about cases was most useful because in our group, openmindedness and taking turns created a healthy atmosphere (Appendix F2:5).

During **the field trip**, the researcher attend two area meetings, visited one college that had not participated in the first workshop and observed in ECD services. Immediate experience of the texture of the lives of participants proved extremely helpful in planning the second workshop and building trust. The first evaluation report was discussed in detail and all concerns explored fully during the fieldtrip meeting with college participants in Pietersburg, emphasising the need to express opinions and listen and take seriously the views of others. This was an important intervention in terms of helping the colleges recognise the relevance of the workshop process and understand the importance of collaboration with NGOs. A detailed report on this important meeting is included as an example of reflective journal entries prepared throughout the project (Appendix L1).

The fieldtrip also supported the formation of **collaborative area groups** and strengthened communication between organisations. Five area groups were formed at end of the first workshop. Each group was asked to observe an ECD service together, discuss their observations and prepare a case for discussion in the second workshop. A list of the groups can be found in the first evaluation report (Appendix E2: 1). Since groups were organised in terms of geographic area, some only had three organisations while others had five. This problem was compounded by the fact that some organisations did not return after the first workshop and others joined later. Unfortunately there was also an uneven distribution of formal and non-formal organisations in each group. For example, in one of the groups two NGOs that were antagonistic towards each other were left as the only members. Some groups consequently functioned better than others.

Although not all organisations participated in the collaborative exercise between workshop this proved to be a most valuable experience for those that did. The invitation to write cases helped those participants who initially had difficulty in recognising the relevance of the workshop to their own situation. It also provided an opportunity for colleges participants to experience and understand the work of NGOs as reflected in this comment

> I managed to meet some student teachers of an NGO ... at one of these project centres ... and have noted how devoted they were particularly in a meeting with the parents (Final questionnaire GO6).

Improved quality of participation

The success of the model is summed up in this extract from a key participant interview

> ***Quality of participation***
>
> *The workshop strategies and collaborative exercise between workshops played an important* role in enhancing the quality of participation. By the second and third workshops, participants were more able to speak about domination. Participants reflected openly and spontaneously on their own and others level of participation in discussion. No-one felt threatened about being reminded about domination or alerted to lack of participation. They were more at ease about admitting either their own domination or silence. In the first workshop, some participants stood out as dominating. By the second workshop it was already more levelled. By the third workshop, no-one was quiet. There was no longer a need to talk about participation, it was just happening. I personally suffer to keep quiet in group discussions, but felt relieved by the third workshop that I didn't consciously have to hold myself back. The group was participating fully and responsibly.
>
> Trust had been built between NGO and state organisations. The homework case-writing exercise played an important role. We became more than colleagues, we became friends (Key participant interview NGO1:January 1998).

While the model proved effective in terms of the participating group, the value of consensus reached must also be assessed in terms of the scope and sustainability of participation.

4.4.3 Scope of participation

The model was initially designed to enable dialogue between ECD teacher educators that have historically operated in different contexts within a highly fragmented sector. As explained in Chapter two, apartheid has left a legacy of fragmentation in education, particularly in the case of ECD. There are a large number of different kinds of organisations training ECD practitioners. However, these can be divided into two main groups of ECD teacher educators: those employed by state-funded colleges of education preparing teachers for the formal school system; and those employed by non-governmental organisations developing practitioners already responsible for children in community-based ECD services. In this research, three broad categories are used to analyse the scope of participation: **the range of organisations participating in the project; participation of government ECD policy makers** and **the status of the representatives from each organisation.**

Range of participating organisations

Only organisations providing either INSET, PRESET or both, to adults responsible for the care and education of children between the ages of three and nine were invited to the workshop. The two largest sub-groups of this major category of ECD role-players, namely, non-government resource and training organisations (NGOs) and state-funded colleges (GOs) were well represented. Other kinds of organisation within the broad target group unfortunately did not participate.

Identifying and contacting organisations proved exceedingly difficult in the context of major political and administrative transition, described in Chapter two. A high level of anxiety about the future of both colleges and NGOs shadowed the project. College employees did not know what impact the policy of "rationalisation" would have. Many colleges were interested in introducing pre-primary qualifications as a mechanism for cushioning them against the effects of rationalisation. The NGOs on the other hand were facing a rapidly changing funding climate and some organisations decided not to participate and to avoid the possibility of undermining their capacity for delivery.

All possible strategies were used to include as many organisations as possible. In February 1995, no comprehensive directory of organisations offering ECD teacher development in the Northern Province could be found. The National Business Institute had recently started an audit. In fact there was still some uncertainty about the borders of the newly established provinces. Invitations and initial questionnaires were sent to forty organisations identified from various lists provided by the Northern Transvaal Educare Forum (NEF), the Centre for Cognitive Development, the SA Congress for ECD (SACECD) and the Northern Province Department of Education (NPDE). Attempts were made to phone all organisations that did not reply, however, many telephone numbers had recently changed in the Northern Transvaal and others were out of order. Available lists did not indicate the kind of courses offered by colleges. Of the 22 colleges contacted, only six offered a junior primary qualification and none offered pre-primary courses. Once it became clear that very few colleges fell into the group identified for participation in the project, the scope was adapted to include those organisations intending to offer ECD courses in the near future.

The concerted effort to find organisations operating in the Northern Province and make the project as inclusive as possible delayed the start of the first workshop until July 1995. Nevertheless, it was still not possible to include all categories of organisation, such as universities, technikons, technical colleges and those RTOs funded by the Department of Labour. A total of twenty-two organisations, ten non-governmental resource and training organisations, ten state-funded colleges, one small private church-sponsored training college and one government education department INSET provider, participated in the project. These organisations varied considerably in terms of the size, structure and curriculum and several did not attend all workshops. Although all participating organisations offered courses in the Northern Province, eight participants were actually based in Johannesburg or Pretoria.

While the two main sub-groups of the broad target category of organisations were relatively well represented, it became clear that the educative community would need to be broadened to include a greater range of ECD role-players. Participants suggested after the first workshop "To contact more teacher training colleges and interested organisations, such as associations of educare agencies; lecturers involved in pre-school education; nurses who are community orientated and would like to affiliate with educare as many are keen" (Appendix E2). This observation above touches on key lessons about the nature of partnership in ECD. As explained in Chapter two, meeting the diverse needs of young children, particularly in poor communities, requires partnership of a large range of ECD role-players. The range of participating organisations, in the Northern Province project, was sufficient for developing and testing the model for dialogue, but it became apparent that long-term strategies for ECD would require including a much larger range of ECD role-players, including families and government ECD policy makers in the dialogue.

Participation of government ECD policy makers

Although the project had the support of the Education MEC and Head of the Northern Province Department of Education (NPDE), the exclusion of other NPDE officials as participants in the workshop proved to be a major limitation. At the start of the workshop, the researcher decided to include only organisations directly involved in teacher development or planning to do so in the near future. Only the ex-Lebowa Department of Education was directly involved in ECD INSET as they were retraining primary teachers for pre-primary classes. Unfortunately the representative of the ex-

Lebowa Department was the only participant employed in the NPDE. When she was tragically killed in a car accident shortly after the first workshop, no-one was identified to replace her. At the time of the workshops, the officials responsible for ECD in the new NPDE had not yet been appointed, and there was at that time no provincial government led process of developing new ECD policy.

College participants in particular felt that they needed a more official mandate for participation as illustrated in the following comment and facilitator response:

> The facilitator must take some recommendations from the participants representing government to the Minister of Education so that colleges can be able to embark freely on this project as they would have been mandated (Appendix F2: 5).

The issue of a mandate in relation to organisational status of participants is discussed more fully in the next section and is closely related to the assessment of sustainability of participation.

Status of the representatives from each organisation

The status of representatives within each organisation appeared to be a more significant factor than race or gender in terms of the scope of participation. For this reason, gender and race will not be addressed in any detail.

Twenty black females, eleven black males, seven white females and two white males participated in the workshop. The black males were all from colleges and the white males from NGOs. Although this does not reflect the South African population as a whole, it is fairly representative of the sector. There is no evidence of gender or race being a factor in terms of domination in group discussions. The three examples of domination in Case Five, were all women. Two were white and the third black. Gender and race mix proved to be far less significant than the status of participants in their organisation, which influenced the extent to which participants were able to implement new ideas from the project.

Two NGO representatives who hold management status in their organisations were most successful in transferring lessons to their organisation and reported using the case method and Four Traditions framework in their teaching (NGO1 and NGO6). One reported that the project influenced the approach used for assessing students at the end of their 1995 course. On the other hand, some college participants felt that

they could not even find space in the inflexible curriculum to ask students to write belief statements about young children.

At the start of the project, the role rather than status of participants had been considered as relevant. The initial invitation was extended to two representatives from each organisation, suggesting that "one should ideally be responsible for curriculum development and the other a senior trainer or teacher educator". All representatives from colleges were lecturers who explained that they did not have the necessary status in the organisation to use the experience of the action research project to influence the organisation.

Both the status of individual NGO representatives within the organisation and structure of the organisation influenced the transfer to the organisation. The two organisations that were most successful in transferring were those in which the participants themselves were responsible for curriculum development and had senior management positions.

4.4.4 Sustainability of participation

As explained above, at the start of the project many participants did not identify as part of a group of ECD educators. By the end, all participants that attended all three workshops, understood the term ECD and their own relationship to the group. Some expressed sentiments such as, "now I have a high regard for ECD". The intention of the project according to one participant was "to work towards a greater understanding of ECD training using the possible facilities of the formal sector and the knowledge and experience of the non-formal sector". By the end of the series of workshops, the two subgroups were recognised to have complementary strengths that offered potential for collaboration and amalgamation and there were some suggestions for the establishment of forum and 'clusters' of services. In this section sustainability of participation, both during and after the period between the first and third workshop is discussed in terms of **transference into the organisation, consistence of attendance** and **sustainability of the educative community**.

Transference into the organisation

While all participants who completed the final questionnaire claimed that the project would benefit their organisation, the organisation's approach to curriculum development and status of representatives in the organisation appear to be major factors influencing transference into the organisation during the workshop period. At the time of the project, all college lecturers by and large followed a relatively inflexible syllabus with little scope for curriculum development through praxis. In a similar way, according to the initial questionnaire, most NGOs implemented the training they received from ELRU. Two of the participating organisations use a dialectic approach to curriculum development. A third NGO initially developed its curriculum in collaboration with trainees. However, the project participants were from a recently established satellite, which followed the curriculum developed by the parent organisation. It seems that these participants from the satellite understood their role as primarily implementing the existing curriculum and consequently the project had little immediate influence on the head-office staff responsible for curriculum development. The two organisations that reported greatest success in transferring new methods creatively were represented by a senior manager with a high level of authority and responsibility for curriculum development and implementation.

Most participants were able to use strategies for improving participation in group discussions. Several indicated that they had used the case method. Only one had used the four traditions with groups of their trainees. All reported success although the difficulty in writing cases was noted. Someone developed role-plays from which students created different scenarios (NGO1). Several used belief statements in some way.

A selection of the difficulties in implementing new ideas during the workshop period reported by participants is quoted below.

- My own ability, restriction to change, set habits and thinking. People not yet understanding this way of thinking and training (NGO7).
- The apartheid regime prevented people from practising what was more humane. Everything was imposed on people and as such they didn't have an opportunity to raise their own methods (NGO5).
- The time factor as a well as the unstable condition due to the evictions of both the rector and an English HOD since last year in August to date. (GO3).
- I thought they would say I was lazy to teach (GO8/GO9).

On the other hand, one NGO director indicated that, "We are very fortunate to be able to do what we want to do without having rectors et al placing constraints on us" (NGO6). Although it is not possible to measure transference accurately, it is likely that the most immediate impact would have been as a result of the new understanding about the importance of activity for young children and new ideas for making activities. It is also not possible to assess accurately the relationship between consistent attendance and transference, but those participants who attended all three workshops clearly benefited most and many who were absent reported disappointment at not having been able to attend all three workshops. Having two representatives from each organisation ameliorated the impact of inconsistent attendance to some extent.

Consistent attendance

Regular attendance at workshops and participation in collaborative exercises between workshops was a requirement for participation in the action research project. However, two factors external to the model affected attendance: the workshop venue and other demands on the time of participants. The cost of transport and accommodation also had an impact on attendance during workshops and the potential for future collaboration.

To avoid any organisation being excluded for financial reasons, funds were raised to cover the costs of the workshop venue. However, given the limited funds available very basic accommodation was used and this could have influenced attendance. Six participants did not return after the first workshop. Unfortunately, as explained above, one participant was killed in a car accident soon after the first workshop. Another was promoted to a post in the NDE. At least one participant did not return after the first workshop on account of the accommodation. Several organisations joined the project only after the first workshop.

The most important influence on participation was the competing demands on the time of participants. In particular the final workshop conflicted with examinations in the colleges. When the date was set, college participants indicated that exams would not yet have started, but for some reason the situation changed and a number of colleges could not attend the last workshop. One person missed the second workshop but returned for the third. Two representatives from one organisation and two more from two other organisation were replaced after the first workshop.

While the series of workshops provides the primary unit of analysis of the project in the Northern Province, this must be explored against the broader context. In terms of Rogoff's model of guided participation, "the individual, interpersonal and cultural processes are brought to the foreground in turn for examination, but must always be seen against the background of the other two, since they mutually constitute the activity as a unit of analysis" (Rogoff 1992:319). In this case, the purpose of the workshops was to develop and test a model for building an educative community. Consequently the analysis must consider issues of sustainability beyond the series of workshops and in particular the formation of an educative community.

Sustainability of the educative community

The success of the model needs also to be gauged by the extent to which participants acknowledged membership of the group and recognised the need for an educative community. At the time of the project the term ECD had only recently been introduced as an umbrella term with the express intention of establishing linkages between services for children from birth to the end of the foundation phase of primary school /integrated provisioning. While the NGO participants were generally more aware of this development, college participants were not familiar with the term ECD, did not recognise it as a distinct sector nor see the relevance of ECD to them as primary school teacher educators. The model succeeded in so far as all participants recognised themselves as ECD teacher educators by the end of the third workshop. They also recognised the value of engaging in dialogue with other teacher educators and a few recognised the need for dialogue with a wider group of ECD partners.

While most participants recognised that responsibility for sustaining the educative community lay with its members, some still sought outside intervention to enforce implementation. However, the intention of the project was to help participants to recognise the benefits of building an educative community and provide an enabling environment for them to take up the invitation. It was hoped that organisations would want to implement new ideas and that collaborative democracy would benefit all ECD role-players and children in particular.

Four major categories of necessary future action to take the process further were identified at the end of the third workshop: focused collective action to influence policy

development and governmental intervention the establishment of partnerships further collaboration in area groups; and documentation. One NGO and one GO representative agreed to represent the group and co-ordinate collaboration in the next phase.

Accurately tracking development of the educative community beyond the workshop period was not possible. The establishment of the Northern Province ECD Resource and Training Forum (NERTOF) is the most significant evidence of the sustainability of participation. Fourteen organisations are currently members of this forum that grew directly from the action research project. Most of the participating organisations are NGOs with one private college, two government colleges and one university. Six of the participating organisations were part of the action research project and an additional two organisations are represented by staff who participated in the action research project as employees of other organisations. One of the college members of NERTOF has started offering an ECD course as a direct result of the action research project (GO4 key participant interview. October 1995). Unfortunately, by December 1998 the tender for the Northern Province component of the national ECD pilot had not yet been awarded. Consequently, it was not possible to evaluate the sustainability of the educative community in terms of the consultative policy development process.

Leadership and resources are important factors in terms of sustainability of participation. Emancipatory action research assumes that members of the group will take over responsibility once the educative community has been established, however, this can be significantly enhanced with adequate resources and strong leadership. As explained above, partnership between organisations is costly, particularly in terms of the geographic size of the Northern Province. Unfortunately it was not possible to establish a direct link between the action research project and the NDE and hand over the process to be taken forward within the process of provincial development as new appointments were only made in about August 1996.

4.5 Conclusion

Survival of the educative community beyond the life of the project, in the form of the series of workshops, is not a necessary condition for the effectiveness of the action research project. The immediate aim of developing and testing a model for enabling dialogue was achieved, as is evident in the shared understanding of the broad goals

of ECD teacher education and commitment to continued collaboration. Despite its limitations, the project offers both a mechanism for reconciling the tension generated in any consultation process by conflicting views and a strategy for overcoming the increasingly common problem of a mismatch between the intention of a policy document and the subsequent practice.

As described in Chapter two, both these complex inter-linked problems are particularly acute in ECD. The history of fragmentation has created strong interest groups holding conflicting perspectives and at the same time, it is necessary to include a much wider range of ECD role players in the dialogue to define quality. The inclusion of all ECD role-players, especially families, in dialogue suggests a possible route to building the necessary partnership for meeting the basic needs of all young children. Goals and objectives can be adjusted through the on-going experience of delivery. Barriers can be deciphered and removed.

The primary limitations of the Northern Province cycle of action and reflection, particularly in terms of scope and sustainability of participation were addressed in the subsequent Gauteng series of workshops described in Chapter five. Although the eighth stage of the Northern Province action research cycle (Cohen and Manion 1994) was not complete in February 1996, the following key lessons were carried forward into the next cycle in Gauteng. The basic model for enabling dialogue was effective. The combination of practical activities and a theoretical framework linked through cycles of action and reflection, supported by collaborative exercises and an analysis of evaluation responses between workshops was particularly useful. The format of a series of three two-day workshops over a period of three months, reflection on belief statements generated by participants, the four traditions, collaborative group learning methods and role of facilitator in the developmentalist and social reconstructionist tradition would be carried forward. The scope of participation in terms of the range of organisations and the organisational status of representatives, together with the absence of participation of department of education officials could be regarded as the most significant weaknesses that would need to be remedied.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ACTION MOVES TO GAUTENG

The proposed strategy for developing ECD policy by linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue, initially developed and tested in the Northern Province is now being implemented in Gauteng. The project started with the series of three two-day workshops in Northern Province in 1995, described in Chapter four. A similar series of workshops, based on the same model was implemented in Gauteng in 1997. The basic principles and lessons of the model are now being transferred to the much broader ECD provincial transformation process in Gauteng and have the potential to influence national ECD policy, described in Chapter two.

The degree of detailed analysis, required in the first stage of the action research project was greatest as the model was being developed. While the scope of the project broadened from the start to end, the nature of the analysis changed. The action shifted from a small-scale series of workshops, to a major three-year pilot project. While written cases and improvisation served as focus of discussion in the workshops, the daily experience in over one thousand ECD services is the focus of reflection in the Impilo pilot. The dialogue includes a much broader spectrum of ECD role-players and issues.

This chapter describes the Gauteng workshops and the Impilo pilot that evolved from it. The same basic model for enabling dialogue remains constant and the same categories used to interpret the data collected in the first two phases in Northern Province and Gauteng workshops were adapted for evaluating the three-year Impilo pilot. Key questions are posed and assessment tools developed, but the actual analysis and interpretation of the pilot data fall beyond the scope of this dissertation.

5.1 Part one: Gauteng workshop preparation and implementation

The first six stages of action research

About 18 months after the last workshop in Northern Province, the first of three two-day workshops was held in Gauteng. By then all nine provinces had been allocated funds for the first year of a three-year national ECD Implementation Plan. The Gauteng workshop process was a project of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and served to build partnership as the foundation for the launch of the Gauteng ECD pilot.

As explained in Chapter one, by the time the workshops were held in Gauteng, the researcher and facilitator of the Northern Province workshop was employed in the GDE. The facilitator of the Gauteng workshop, who had participated in the Northern Province workshop, was also employed by the GDE as Impilo Pilot Project Manager. The researcher handed full responsibility to the Impilo Project Manager to facilitate the Gauteng workshops. The researcher did not interfere in any way in the planning or facilitation, but assisted and advised only on request. Although it was agreed that the model would be adapted, the series of workshops would follow the same pattern of two three-day workshops over a three-month period with collaborative exercises to be undertaken between workshops.

The research problem was identified directly from the needs of the impending pilot project but was evaluated and formulated in terms of the experience of the Northern Province workshops. Tenders for the pilot project training contracts being finalised at the time created an immediate goal for forming real partnerships. There was a more conscious intention to overcome prejudice and false perceptions between different groups of ECD RTOs and to broaden and change practice.

Identification of RTOs was much easier in Gauteng as the researcher had already engaged directly in consultative processes over a number of years with a large number of organisations in the target group. Gauteng-based participants in the Northern Province workshops had reported on the action research experience to

their colleagues and requests were being made to initiate a similar project in Gauteng.

The role of the provincial department of education in the Gauteng workshop constituted the most significant difference between the workshops in the two provinces. This in turn influenced the scope and scale of participation. Not only was the facilitator an employee of the GDE but ECD district officials constituted a major new sub-group of participants. ECD District Development Officers (DDOs) employed by the GDE are key players in building an ECD educative community in the province. A wider range of ECD RTOs participated. Two of the Gauteng participants also attended the Northern Province workshop.

An invitation was directed to all organisations developing the educators of children from three to nine years to join an ECD action research project explaining that a high level of collaboration would be needed in ECD and for Impilo in particular. The aim of the project, as stated in the invitation, was to build an ECD educative community in Gauteng using the case method to enable dialogue that could lead to consensus on the best strategies to meet the needs of young children.

Literature reviewed for the Northern Province workshops, and described in Chapter three, provided the framework for Gauteng. The initial statement was redefined in terms of the Gauteng context and the most recent national policy developments, described in Chapter two. Information provided in returned application forms, negotiations with interested parties and developments in the Impilo tender process, determined the revised aims as presented in the box below.

Aims of the Gauteng series of workshops

- To present and discuss the ECD priorities and concerns of the GDE
- To introduce prospective consortium partners to one another
- To clarify some of the questions which had to be answered in the tender
- To explain the aims of the training programme in the Impilo tender document, which include: enabling all ECD providers to revisit, reshape and revitalise their learning programmes; planning jointly between the formal and non-formal sector; piloting and evaluating different models of training; adhering to the basic principles of ECD set out in the interim policy document; negotiating with appropriate bodies for accreditation of the pilots; doing these tasks efficiently and economically. (GDE 1997a:1)

Once again all intentions were transparent in the interests of resolving the tension between action and research. A similar mechanism for evaluation was followed so that the content of the workshops could evolve out of the needs and circumstances

of the group. Participants completed a similar evaluation form after each workshop and participants volunteered to form a review and planning team. The facilitator studied the evaluation responses in order to prepare for the next workshop, and circulated a comprehensive report on the workshop, including an evaluation summary after each workshop.

While similar research and evaluation procedures were selected, this series of workshops constituted the diagnostic stage of the pending Impilo project, rather than a complete self-standing action research cycle. No recordings were made of the Gauteng workshops. Analysis and interpretation was ongoing and fed immediately and directly into the conceptualisation and implementation of Impilo.

Stage seven: Implementation

The content of the Gauteng workshops, summarised in table three, below, focussed more sharply on ECD curriculum and practice in terms of the needs of the Impilo pilot project. Since this was the first time that many of the organisations had ever participated in a tender process, time for discussion and clarification of the tender requirements was included in the agenda of each workshop. The role of government funded providers and the differences between the GDE and national pilot were discussed. While the intention of the National Pilot is to develop national standards for ECD, the funding grant specifically excludes providers, such as colleges, that are already receiving state funds. The position taken by the GDE was that consortia that include formal and non-formal partners would be favoured, but that the state-funded providers would not be able to earn from the contract. One challenge required including all ECD providers in the policy development process while only offering financial support to very few providers in the pilot phase.

The National Pilot aims to develop standards for the entire ECD age range from birth to nine, but only provides per capita subsidies for five and six year olds. The GDE committed additional funds to include children from three to six in the Gauteng District Pilot in order to begin to address this mismatch between outcome and strategy in the conceptualisation of the National Pilot, described in Chapter two. The National Pilot in Gauteng was adapted in response to the need to develop new approaches to ECD service provisioning and promote the inclusion of family-based services as pilot sites.

TABLE THREE: Gauteng workshop cycles of action and reflection

Workshop one	Workshop two	Workshop three
Registration *Welcome* *Agenda* *Aims of Workshop* *The tender process* Introductions: *What is ECD?* Ground rules for discussion *What is ECD not about?* Brainstorm "consortiums" Share views in small regional groups •What are you doing? •Who are you working with? •What obstacles are you facing? Four Traditions Making training relevant Explain homework tasks Evaluation	*Agenda* *Workshop outcomes* Establishing ground-rules for constructive feedback Reflection on belief statements about ECD Presentation and reflection on previous collaborative homework task The NQF and ECD Preparation for next collaborative homework task Provincial intersectoral collaboration Update on Impilo tender process – including ECD non-contracted providers Columbian family-based model Evaluation	*Agenda* *Workshop outcomes* Presentation and reflection on collaborative tasks More collaborative exercises •indirect preparation •storytelling •creative and purposeful activity •finger games Presentation on new foundation phase curriculum development process Roles and responsibilities of GDE ECD DDOs The way forward Evaluation
Follow up tasks for participants		
After workshop 1 Design an ECD programme for a group of people (mixed ability, family background etc.) Describe the group and its needs Identify and describe the expertise of members Explain how you will complement each other Prepare the first session of the programme	**After workshop 2** Plan a workshop for the family of children in an ECD service you are supporting to discuss community quality assurance. Use an outcomes based approach. Submit written plans to workshop facilitator within three weeks. Prepare to present the workshop at the next workshop. Reflect on problems and solutions in collaborative process.	**After workshop 3** Launch Impilo Form consortia and submit tenders. Contracted ECD providers start training.
Follow up tasks for facilitator		
After workshop 1 Prepares and disseminates report. Supports collaborative groups through phone communication. Plans and prepares workshop two. Facilitates special meetings	**After workshop 2** Prepares and disseminates report. Supports collaborative tasks by phone and fax. Plans and prepares workshop three.	**After workshop 3** Launches and manages Impilo Contracts ECD providers. Supports development of ECD district forums Pays per capita subsidies Monitors, support and guides all components

Workshop agendas, reports and a series of interviews with the facilitator provide the primary source for this summary in table three and more detailed overview of the three Gauteng workshops that follows. Several presentations were made on policy developments and other experiences that could help build partnership. The order of workshop items was sometimes adapted in terms of the availability of the outside presenters and this description does not always follow the running order of events.

The first workshop started with an explanation of the purpose and format of the series of workshops. The tender process was explained with a special focus on the need to form partnerships in order to apply for training contracts as consortia. Before the first small group discussion, agreement was reached on ground-rules for discussion in the workshop. The following roles would be allocated for each discussion: group facilitator, time-keeper, scribe and process observer.

In small groups participants introduced themselves and shared their understanding of ECD. The group then had to reach agreement and write down on a piece of paper five statements starting, *"I believe that ECD is not about ... "* After the lunch break a small group that had volunteered as collators presented a summary of the statement of all groups.

In plenary the word "consortium" was brainstormed. Participants then exchanged views and experiences about their work in four regional groups. Four tenders that would be offered, North, South, Central and Kathorus. Questions to focus discussion included: *"What are you doing? Who are you working with? What obstacles are you facing?"* In the second stage of this group discussion groups were asked to *"Look at the helpful and hindering forces in forming a consortium in your area, in your organisation"*. In plenary, groups reported on the forces they had identified as helpful or as hindrances.

The instruction, *"Look at your expectations and then each one share one thing that was either important, surprising, disappointing or valuable"* focussed reflection on the proceedings of the first day. Participants were asked to read the same handout, prepared for the Northern Province workshop, on the four traditions (Appendix D2) that evening and to complete a homework task in which they listed beliefs about non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government training organisations (GOs). The second day started with a brainstorm, *"What do we mean by 'reflective*

practice'?" Four small groups were then formed to prepare and present a role-play depicting one of the four traditions. In plenary, participants reflected on the role-plays. They started by sharing views about surprising aspects of the role-plays they had watched.

Participants returned to the same four regional groups that had been formed. In order to get to know each other better, the following questions were used to focus discussion about ECD training: *"What do I think is vital in ECD training? How does this help young children? How do I help adults learn this? What have I learnt from my students over the years? What questions do I have about what I do? What would I love to change?"* Each participant was asked to offer one statement in answer to each question. All responses to each question were listed on a single sheet of newsprint under the appropriate question. Then groups were asked to reach consensus on one single statement describing the best way to make training relevant to their trainees and the children in their care.

After a collaborative exercise in different small groups using song and movement, the following questions were used by groups to reflect on the exercise: *"What worked and why? What didn't work? How did we overcome the problems? What did we learn about collaboration?"* Some of the "artistic renditions" were then presented.

A further collaborative exercise was set as a homework task to be completed before the next workshop in the same four regional groups formed during the first workshop. Each group, consisting of both NGO and government providers, was asked to design an ECD programme for a fictitious group of trainees that was not homogeneous. The task included describing the group and its needs. This required giving information about the extent of previous education and training, social background and language capacity. The challenge lay in preparing the first session of the programme that would meet the needs of all trainees and build on existing competence. Expertise of each of the participants in the group also had to be identified and decisions made about the contribution of each member of the group. The aim of the exercise was to get RTOs to think about multi-level training, as this would be an important requirement for Impilo. Services eligible for per capita subsidies were to be identified in terms of need. Each service receiving a subsidy was required to identify one practitioner who would receive training. This meant that the trainees would not all be at the same level. Some might have undertaken several

courses while others might well have had no training at all. The workshop was reviewed briefly and the evaluation form completed

Proposed outcomes of **the second workshop**, presented in the box below, were clarified before the representative of the technical secretariat of the national pilot project provided a comprehensive explanation of the NQF and its implications for ECD. The notion of a paradigm shift and "school readiness" were discussed.

AIMS OF DAY ONE	AIMS OF DAY TWO
Participants would	**Participants would**
• have a better understanding of each other's issues	• understand what is meant by *intersectoral collaboration*
• deal constructively with each other's issues	• understand Impilo and the tender process
• work constructively in a team on tasks and assignments to facilitate change	• begin to develop ideas and strategies on the role of parents in ensuring quality in ECD
• understand the NQF and its implications	

Reflection on the collaborative homework exercise was linked to reflection on the belief statements about ECD that providers had generated in the previous workshop. Preparation for reflection on the belief statements included establishing the following ground-rules

- be open - allow space for each other's different points of view and experience
- listen carefully - don't make quick judgements
- listen and ask questions for clarification
- be supportive
- try to reflect back before you respond, particularly if it is difficult
- manage time well

A summary of the belief statements generated about NGOs and GOs organised under the following headings: Relationship to the other group, Training and curriculum, Management and organisation, were presented to the group. Participants were given an opportunity to expand on the reasons for their beliefs or to counter what they believed to be misperceptions. Further ground-rules were established, before groups began to present the products of their collaborative homework task:

- give positive and constructive options
- give positive feedback first
- try to understand why there is a problem
- when accepting feedback, try to learn, don't be defensive

Each group presented and then received feedback in plenary. Participants talked about the way in which the experience of undertaking a practical task together had

modified previous perceptions. Discussion included lessons learned and the next steps in building the relationship between different kinds of organisation that would be clarified further in the next homework task in the box below.

The researcher and facilitator of the Northern Province workshops was invited to the Gauteng workshop to present the broader context of intersectoral ECD collaboration initiated by the ECD committee established by the Gauteng Cabinet described in Chapter two. The handout *How can the NQF solve the problems of fragmentation and inequality in ECD?* (GDE 1997b) was presented and discussed. The challenge of developing new curriculum and practitioners' qualifications was contextualised within the more immediate challenge of developing a comprehensive and equitable system of ECD provisioning. The idea of teams of ECD practitioners at different levels on a career path was introduced.

A video of the Columbian ECD model, which relies heavily on the involvement of families in ECD services, was shown and discussed giving particular attention to the role of families in quality assurance. The distinction between family-based and centre-based ECD services was introduced and ECD was considered from the perspective of parents focussing attention firmly on the urgent need for new approaches to ECD provisioning.

Discussion was led about the tender process, included concerns about those providers that might not be contracted in the pilot project. While only limited funding would be available for contracts, the process was intended to be inclusive. RTOs were encouraged to look at the long-term benefits of participating in the pilot as opposed to the immediate financial benefits and to include as many organisations as possible in the partnership.

Evaluation of the second workshop was followed by clarification of a further collaborative homework task to be undertaken in the same groups. Each group was asked to plan a meeting of family members of the children in one of the ECD services supported by an RTO in the group. The aim of the planned meeting had to be discussing the role of the community in quality assurance. An outcomes-based approach was to be used to plan and facilitate the meeting. Written plans were to be submitted to the workshop facilitator within three weeks. Groups were asked to

prepare to present their plan at the next workshop. Instructions for the tasks are presented in the box below.

COLLABORATIVE TASK AFTER WORKSHOP TWO

Taking cognisance of the next steps you agreed on to help overcome obstacles and perceptions that block your progress, plan a workshop using an outcomes-based approach for parents connected to practitioners whom you are training.

MAIN AIMS
You wish to enable them to actively participate in helping the service by giving some of their time on a monthly basis. You wish them to help in monitoring the quality of care in a supportive way.

Review your working together and look at the problems you encounter and how you dealt with them. Decide on the next steps in furthering your collaborative work. Be prepared to share these in the next workshop.

Send in your written proposals by the 28th March 1997 to Carol fax 355 0620 telephone 355 0873. Be prepared to demonstrate your workshop at the next ARP workshop.

GOOD LUCK!

At the start of **the third workshop**, the proposed outcomes were clarified. It was agreed that the ECD district officials (ECD DDOs) act as scribes in all small group discussions. There was further reflection on ground-rules for discussion and a reminder about identifying a time-keeper, facilitator and social process observer during small group discussions.

Presentations prepared by collaborative groups as homework were discussed in the plenary session. One of the groups had undertaken this exercise with the parents in one of the services they were training at that time. They were able to report on the difficulties and lessons drawn from their real experience. One immediate outcome is discussed further in the analysis.

In the same collaborative groups, another exercise was undertaken in order to provide more experience in developing multi-level training. This time the facilitator prepared a description of a diverse group of trainees of different ages, both sexes and using different languages. All four groups had to prepare a short training session with the same major outcomes, firstly, to develop self-confidence in the participants and, secondly, "validating and using language diversity as an opportunity". However, each group was allocated a different content focus as shown in the task instructions in the box below.

Outcome of task for group 1. The trainees should understand the difference between direct learning and indirect learning and what is appropriate for young children. (Example - how to tidy up.)

Outcome of task for group 2. The trainees should understand the value of storytelling and be able to demonstrate their own original short story.

Outcome of task for group 3. The trainees should understand the value of creative and purposeful activity with children and demonstrate their own original creative and meaningful activity.

Outcome of task for group 4. The trainees should understand the benefits of finger games, their relationship to storytelling and how to awaken the child to its body. They should demonstrate a finger game made/devised by them (GDE 1997c:Workshop three programme).

Feedback on each demonstration was structured around the following questions; *Did they achieve what they set out to do? How? / Why not? Are there any suggestions for improvement? Are there contentious issues?"* Extremely problematic or difficult issues could be noted and "parked" to be dealt with at a later stage.

A plenary presentation on the roles and responsibilities of GDE ECD DDOs was structured under the following headings, *"Frequently asked questions. Synopsis of difficulties they face"*. An opportunity was provided for questions of clarity on the presentation and then specific problems and solutions were discussed in more detail in regional groups.

The discussion was structured in such a way that information could be provided and each group had an opportunity to describe their challenges and identify help needed and assistance that could be offered as set out in the box below

MEETING WITH ECD DDOS IN REGIONAL GROUPS
ECD DDOs inform what is happening in their district / region.
What are the challenges facing ECD DDOs?
How can the RTOs assist them?
What difficulties are the RTOs facing?
What support can the DDOs give the RTOs?
Identify the strategies for working together in their regions (GDE 1997c: Day 2).

The impact of the exercise is described further below. The entire workshop process was evaluated and recommendations made for the way forward including the following considerations: the need for further action research workshops; involving other RTOs; the roles of GERTOF and GDE in future; ensuring continuous co-operation".

Although the same basic model was used to facilitate dialogue, the scope and focus of the process changed significantly in the Gauteng workshops. It was nearly eighteen months after the Northern Province workshop, and significant developments had taken place, including the publication of the Interim Policy (1996) and the allocation of funds to provinces for the national ECD Implementation Plan. Although the analysis and interpretation of the Gauteng workshop was not complete, lessons learned from both workshops were used to adapt the National ECD Pilot and conceptualise the Gauteng ECD pilot called Impilo.

5.2 Part two: Gauteng workshop analysis and interpretation

It is not possible to evaluate the Gauteng workshops in isolation of the pilot project that developed directly from it. In this section of the chapter, the workshop process in Gauteng will be evaluated and contrasted with that in the Northern Province using the same four broad categories used in the previous chapter: **(1) degree of consensus reached though participation; (2) quality of participation; (3) scope of participation; (4) sustainability of participation.** From this discussion criteria for assessing the three-year ECD pilot in Gauteng are developed later in this chapter following a brief summary of the Impilo implementation stage, already described in Chapter two. Once again the starting point must be the specific agreement that emerged.

5.2.1 Degree of consensus reached though participation

In this case, the Gauteng workshops constitute only one component of the larger ECD consultative process initiated in the province at that time. Consequently, the distinction between consensus reached directly and exclusively through dialogue in the workshop and collaborative exercises as opposed to agreement emerging from the broader ECD constituency is frequently blurred. The degree of consensus reached through participation is discussed under three broad headings: linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue, the need for multi-level training starting from the needs and circumstances of trainees and the key messages of Impilo. While evidence for the first two comes directly from data collected through the workshop process, the key messages of Impilo were generated indirectly from the workshop process and then validated by the broader ECD constituency through ECD district forums and plenary meetings.

Linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue

From very early in the workshop process in Gauteng there was generally more agreement about the need for partnership and the value of collaborative learning strategies. Almost all participants mentioned this in some way in their first workshop evaluation and the following selected responses to the question, *"What did you find most helpful?"* are presented by way of illustration:

- "Meeting different people from different organisations and sharing ideas. It was a great help that Colleges and Varsities were included in this research as well. Knowing the people who are in your region."
- "Meeting all organisations and seeing other people's point of view."
- "Meeting other agencies and knowing who does what where."
- "Being part of a group which included different training circumstances. Talking to one another - forming partnership."
- "To have met others working in ECD and to find out they are just as confused as we were!"
- "To meet other organisations and to work with people from the formal sector."

The training contracts for which consortiums would be eligible to tender gave extra impetus for building partnerships. Belief statements collected at the end of the first workshop indicate a willingness to co-operate. The role of this exercise in creating an environment for dialogue is discussed further below.

There was also agreement about the helpfulness of the handout and exercises based on the four traditions. Group role-play based on the four traditions was specifically acknowledged as helpful in making the framework accessible. Presentations and simulations devised by groups of participants replaced written cases as the focus of discussion in this workshop. Reflecting directly on their own work context and experience helped alert participants to the need for adapting training to the needs and circumstances of trainees.

The need for multi-level training starting from the needs and circumstances of trainees

The simulation of training for a fictitious non-homogeneous group presented in the second workshop had a significant effect in establishing the need for responding to the needs and circumstances of individual trainees. Most training in South Africa is designed in the form of standard modules assuming that the group of trainees will be homogeneous. As explained in Chapter two, NGOs have historically provided INSET for people who have taken responsibility for caring for young children in a non-

regulated sector. Government neglect of ECD particularly in disadvantaged communities has led to a situation where ECD services are established either as small private business or as a community service. No requirements for qualifications of ECD practitioners in these situations have been established. Consequently the extent of prior learning and capacity of these caregivers varies considerably. This has been compounded by the fact that there was no comprehensive NGO system of accreditation or training provision. Practitioners frequently completed the same level of training with a number of different NGOs in the hope of getting recognition of competence through "paper qualification". Some progressive NGOs have identified this need and responded by adapting their training using a Freirian approach based on Training for Transformation (Hope and Timmel 1984).

Belief statements generated about the "do's" and "don'ts" of NGOs and GOs point to this distinction between different approaches. NGOs believed that GOs should "shape training to fit each training situation" and "respond to the needs of their students". This was linked to the notion of "developing students' confidence and self esteem". NGOs believed that GOs should "be more flexible with their approaches and methods" and should not "be prescriptive and recognise one single approach" (GDE 1997a: 5).

This exercise proved especially helpful in those cases where RTOs transferred this to the approach to training in Impilo. As explained, this capacity is essential in terms of the conceptualisation, not only for Impilo but the National Pilot as the prior learning and capacity of trainees varies considerably. As explained in Chapter two, identification of pilot sites is based on the needs of children as opposed to training needs of practitioners. Problems have arisen in Impilo where RTOs have not been able to adapt their courses to the needs of the trainees.

The key messages of Impilo

The key messages of Impilo, widely publicised during the launch of Impilo and quoted in the box below, were drawn indirectly from the action research project and were validated in the broader stakeholder consultative process.

KEY DEVELOPMENT MESSAGES OF IMPILO

Children need

- clean water
- a safe environment which includes proper shelter and sanitation
- enough good food to help their bodies grow and resist disease
- health care (both preventative and curative)
- to feel loved and secure
- activities that hold their interest, build concentration and encourage curiosity, independence, perseverance, creativity and co-operation
- opportunities to move, explore, and interact with the world around them through play
- to talk about their experiences with peers, older family member and adults

The first years of life of a child are the most important years for development

- young children who receive good quality care tend to thrive
- if all a child's basic needs are met in the first years of its life it will be resilient and thrive
- resilient children can fight disease and cope with any circumstances in life
- young children who feel loved and secure will develop self-esteem
- self- esteem is essential for success in school and life
- development of our nation depends on the development of our young children
- families are the first and most important educators of young children

Partnership is essential for meeting the basic needs of all children in Gauteng

- some families cannot meet the needs of young children without the help of government
- a variety of different strategies are needed to help families and communities meet the needs of their young children
- government can assist families without taking away responsibility of families as the first and most important educators of young children
- all spheres of government and non-government ECD role players must work together to meet the needs of young children

Government policy for children must respond to the particular needs and circumstances of young children

- previously South Africa uncritically imported child-care models from Europe and the USA
- Government and communities must work together to develop new policy for children
- new policy must start by redefining 'quality' in ECD
- there are many different kinds of child-care facilities and programmes that can ensure that all children learn and develop well
- every home can be a "child-care facility"

All children have a right to ten years of free and compulsory education starting in the year they turn seven

- the admission age of entering primary school is the year in which the child turns seven
- no child of seven years or older can be excluded from primary school
- If a child is having difficulty in finding a place in primary school the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) District Office must help. If you do not know where to find your district office, ask at your nearest school (GDE Press Statement June 1997).

Consensus reached about meeting the basic needs of young children provided a broad framework to be developed further through Impilo. The requirements of the Impilo District Pilot tender were based directly on discussion with stakeholders in the workshop. The Kathorus regional pilot sought to begin a rigorous investigation into the needs and circumstances of young children. The quality of participation had a direct impact on the consortiums formed.

5.2.2 Quality of participation

The same three theoretical positions informed the model: the principle of dialogue (Bullough and Gitlin 1991); the case method (Richert 1991) and reflection theoretically informed by the four traditions of reform in teacher development (Zeichner and Liston 1992). Similar collaborative learning methods were used and the facilitator was mindful of building trust in the developmentalist and social reconstructionist tradition. In this section, the quality of participation will once again be discussed in terms of the mechanisms for enabling dialogue and ensuring that participants can speak and be heard.

Although there was no specific focus on the three attitudes "openmindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility" (Bullogh and Gitlin 1991), the facilitator was also guided by these attitudes and provided an excellent model. One participant noted as most helpful, "The positive attitude of everybody. The supportive and knowledgeable leadership! Thank you ... - Congratulations!" Similar strategies were used to help participants monitor and increase participation. As explained above, instead of predominantly using written cases and document analysis for reflection, role-plays and presentations were used more frequently. While the collaborative tasks in the Northern Province required observation in an ECD service in order to write a teaching case based on the experience, Gauteng participants engaged directly with community ECD role-players and then reflected on this experience.

As in the Northern Province, there was a general improvement in the quality of participation from the first to third workshop as strategies for enabling dialogue were strengthened and trust was built. Although there was some initial tension between the two main groups of RTOs, there was at no time the same level of animosity apparent in the first Northern Province workshop. By the end of the first workshop, there was already a clear expression of appreciation for the opportunity to meet and work with "other sectors" as illustrated above.

The assumption that beliefs must be brought into the open is key to the development of the model in both provinces. The belief exercise early in the first workshop contributed significantly to building an enabling environment for dialogue by eliciting prejudgements and encouraging the expression of all feelings and opinions so that problems could be solved and differences negotiated (Bullough and Gitlin 1991). By linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue, misconceptions could be corrected and unhelpful approaches reviewed.

Ground-rules for discussion were reviewed and expanded regularly throughout the workshop and much more detailed attention was given to the preparation for giving and receiving feedback and special roles of group facilitator, time-keeper, scribe and process observer.

Although the Gauteng series of workshops was based directly on the model developed in Northern Province, the relevance and potential value of each element was assessed before it was introduced. The content of the workshops evolved from the needs and circumstances of that particular group of participants at that time and in that context. The facilitator drew on her own observations and the evaluative discussions and forms completed by participants to plan workshops. In addition a planning team of three ECD DDOs, one NGO and one college participant assisted in planning the second and third workshops All participant suggestions were taken seriously and process developed organically.

In a key participant interview in January 1998 the Gauteng facilitator contrasts the quality of participation in the two workshops. An extract is quoted in the box below.

> In Gauteng workshops there was a shift in terms of methodology and perceptions from both sides. In the Northern Province workshop, there was a polarisation in the perspectives of the sectors and NGOs generally regarded the College participants as rigid. In the Gauteng workshop, the NGOs began to recognise that in many respects they too are rigid. It became clear that it was not possible to assume that all NGOs are flexible, active and developmental. Similarly there are some maverick college participants willing to take risks (Key participant interview: NGO1 January 1998).

5.2.3 Scope of participation

Two critical new dimensions to the scope of participation emerged in the Gauteng workshop: firstly, the direct involvement of the GDE and secondly, the indirect involvement of a much wider range of ECD role players. In addition, the range of RTOs was extended and the problem of the organisational status of participants was addressed.

As explained above, identifying organisations was much easier in Gauteng. Various NGO networks had been active in Gauteng for several years and since the Northern Project workshop, the Gauteng Curriculum Group, the Alternative Strategies Group, the Flagship Consortium and the Gauteng ECD Resource and Training Organisation Forum (GERTOF) had been initiated. Up-to-date lists of colleges and technical colleges were available from GDE. Communication was much easier as almost all RTOs had working telephones and facsimile and several also had e-mail.

The scope of participation is discussed here under the following broad headings: **range of organisations and status of participants**; **GDE ECD officials join the action** and **indirect participation of other ECD role players**. GDE raised funds to pay for accommodation but participants had to cover their own transport. However, the smaller geographic size of the province meant that far less travelling was needed than in the Northern Province and there was a significant increase in the scope of participation compared to the Northern Province workshops.

Range of organisations and status of participants

Eleven Colleges of Education, one Technikon, thirty-three NGOs, two Technical Colleges, two Universities, one Department of Labour Training College and one Youth College participated in one or more of the workshops. Although there was a decrease from 75 participants in the first workshop to about 50 in the second and third workshops, a much larger number of participants from a wider range of RTOs nevertheless attended the Gauteng workshops as compared with the Northern Province workshops. The Gauteng group included two NGOs specialising in Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN). Consistent attendance was once again a problem, but the negative impact was diminished by the fact that a total of

forty-eight different organisations participated in the first workshop. Three additional NGOs joined the second workshop and no new organisations joined after that.

Having identified the problem of the organisational status of representatives in the Northern Province workshop, this was specifically addressed in the invitation which required that, "One participant from each organisation should be a senior manager and the other a trainer or lecturer". This was an important improvement in the model as it improved communication within organisations and enhanced the potential for transference into the organisation. It was a critical factor in the formation of consortia. The managers had an opportunity to deepen their understanding not only about the process of building partnership and applying for tenders, but also about key training challenges.

GDE ECD officials join the action

As explained above, the most significant extension of the notion of the educative community in the Gauteng workshops, was the direct involvement of the GDE, which initiated, facilitated and managed the project. This meant that the project could be contextualised within the GDE policy development process and GDE ECD officials could be included.

A decision was made not to allow all of the 25 ECD DDOs appointed at the time to attend as this would make the large total number of participants unmanageable and could have lead to domination GDE officials over the RTOs if the proportion of officials was too high. Four ECD DDOs attended all workshops and other GDE head-office staff, including members of the curriculum unit attended some sessions.

Involvement of the ECD DDOs in the workshops had a significant impact, not only on the workshop, but also the implementation of Impilo and broader ECD developments in the province. The initial organogramme of the new GDE included two ECD posts as part of the development unit in each of the 18 districts. Within the context of rapid transformation, the new notions of a development unit and ECD created much confusion as new roles and responsibilities had to be defined against the background of severe financial constraints. At that time, very few districts had been able to fill both ECD posts and some districts had no appointed ECD officials. In several districts the recommended candidates could not be appointed because they

did not have CS educator qualifications and no mechanisms are as yet available for assessing prior learning and competence for the post. Many District Directors had little or no understanding of the GDE vision for ECD or its importance. ECD is frequently marginalised and ECD DDOs were experiencing increasing frustration out of the general confusion and lack of resources allocated by the district to ECD. On the other hand, ECD role-players outside the GDE had major expectations of the ECD DDOs and could not understand why they were not able to deliver.

At that time, the team of ECD district officials and the GDE vision for ECD was in its infancy. Major efforts were being made by the head-office ECD and Primary Unit to clarify roles and responsibilities. Senior GDE officials in all offices and units were being informed about ECD and their support was requested. The plenary and small group sessions on the last day of the third workshop, described above, provided an excellent opportunity for reflection through dialogue on the roles and responsibilities of ECD DDOs and their potential relationship with RTOs. New understanding forged through this process had a significant impact on the development of ECD in the province and provided a solid foundation for the partnership required between RTOs and ECD DDOs in the implementation of Impilo. Through the collaborative tasks these two major ECD sub-groups were able to begin their preparation for engagement with their other ECD partners. Lessons learned were transferred to the larger ECD DDO team.

Indirect participation of other ECD role players

Meeting the basic needs of young children requires partnership between a large number of ECD role-players, with families and communities constituting the most important sub-groups. As described above, the collaborative exercise required that the workshop participants plan and facilitate real meetings with families in a site supported by an RTO in the area group. This moved the demands of collaboration to a much higher level than did the tasks required in the Northern Province workshops. Participants had an opportunity to engage directly with a wide range of ECD role players, including practitioners, families and other groups indirectly responsible for meeting the needs of young children. One of the groups, which had prepared very carefully for the family meeting were flexible and open enough to involve the taxi drivers who regularly transport children to and from the service. Once there was a shared understanding about the harm inflicted on young children who were required

to wait in the heat in a crowded taxi for over two hours, the problem could be solved through dialogue. Reflection on this immediate outcome of the collaborative task provided an excellent example of linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue.

5.2.4 Sustainability of participation

The long-term effectiveness of the educative community depends on the sustainability of participation. Direct involvement of the GDE in the Gauteng workshop provided the opportunity to address the problem of sustainability beyond the worksho through Impilo. While consistent attendance and transference into the organisation during the workshop process has some relevance, it is sustainability beyond the workshop that is more critical. Consequently sustainability of participation during the workshops can not be discussed in isolation from the longer-term development of an educative community through **Impilo, broader ECD structures and proposed new ECD policy for the province**. These are discussed briefly in turn below and then the research component of Impilo is discussed in more detail in the following part.

Tenders for training contracts for Impilo closed soon after the series of three Gauteng workshops. The primary objective of the workshops consequently was to build the foundation for establishing consortia to be contracted to provide training over a three-year period. The GDE decided to offer three separate contracts for the District Pilot, one for each of the GDE regions and a fourth for the training component of the ECD Kathorus pilot. The tender offer indicated that consortia would be favoured. Lead organisation and all major partners of all four Impilo consortiums participated actively in all three workshops. Interested smaller sub-contractors were all included by the lead organisations. The following extract from one Impilo consortium report (1998) illustrates the impact of the Gauteng workshops on Impilo

> **IMPRESSIVE AGENCY ADAPTIBILITY, WILLINGNESS TO SHARE**
> Given the previous distrust and competition between ECD RTOs, the current level of sharing and co-operation could be called miraculous, if one hadn't witnessed the energy and time put into creating the correct climate for the growth and co-operation. The Action Research Project early in 1997 was a very important factor. We acknowledge that there still remains a great deal to do, especially in relation to co-operation between formal and non-formal, but are heartened to note some of the currently shared aspects of our work, including: budget; training; problem solving in relation to Impilo's unique problems; management issues and ECD issues outside Impilo (Impilo consortium lead RTO report, 28 May 1998)

At the time of the Gauteng workshops, GDE had already started to build District Development Forums in each of the 18 GDE districts and hold regular provincial plenary meetings to provide all ECD role players with an opportunity to participate in the consultative ECD policy development dialogue. Since the workshops, the GDE has continued to build these forums which will eventually elect representatives onto the Gauteng ECD Specialist Council, which will replace the plenary meetings once it is established. During 1998 a series of facilitating skills workshops were held for small interersectoral ECD teams in each district. It is understood that good facilitating skills are essential for enabling dialogue and building the district ECD forums. These structures provide a potential support for the sustainability of participation in the Gauteng ECD educative community.

Participation in the ECD educative community could also be sustained through the webs of ECD services proposed in the GDE ECD Green Paper presented in Chapter two. This proposal responds directly to the challenge of engaging as wide a variety of ECD role-players in dialogue so that ECD decision making can be decentralised to the lowest level while maintaining effective accountability mechanisms.

The research component of Impilo will evaluate the series of linked ECD pilot projects in its third year of implementation, within the broader context of partnership building and ECD policy development.

5.3 Part three: The Impilo research component

Impilo consists of a series of linked ECD pilot projects in Gauteng, described in more detail in Chapter two. The District Pilot targets children from three to six years and was launched in all 18 GDE districts in June 1997 with the Gauteng allocation of the national ECD Implementation Plan and additional funds from the GDE budget.

In the District Pilot there are two categories of financial support: firstly, a direct subsidy to the delivery agency (ECD service or site) and, secondly, payment for training (by resource and training agencies) of the ECD practitioners in the delivery agency receiving a subsidy. There is a commitment of funding for a three-year period. The budget for the financial year 1998/99 is R4 666 000 for subsidy payments made in two instalments, one in July 1998 and the second in February 1999. Training contracts for the same period will cost R1 860 084 and will be made

in three instalments in June and October 1998 and February 1999. All delivery agencies are required to use the subsidy to improve the service. This is monitored by the Resource and Training Organisations (RTOs) and District Development Officers (DDOs). There is a direct link between the financial support for training and for service delivery.

The second and third are regional pilots. The first 12 month phase of the Kathorus ECD pilot, for which one and a half million Rand was provided by the Presidential Lead Project, is complete and the action research findings will be published early in 1999. The Inner City Project in Joubert Park originated out of an inter-governmental RDP Inner City renewal initiative and started early in 1998. These three projects are all co-ordinated by the Impilo Project Manager.

The intention is to inform provincial policy and if possible national policy as well. The framework of Impilo is flexible and can accommodate additional projects as proposals crystallise and resources become available. At least two additional regional pilots are planned for 1999 as additional funds have been allocated from he GDE budget. The ECD Green Paper proposed structure of webs of ECD services has been developed through the Kathorus pilot and will be tested and developed further through an extension of the Kathorus pilot and additional pilots in 1999.

The eighth stage of the third action research cycle

While the analysis and interpretation stage of this third action research cycle lies beyond the scope of this dissertation, the research procedures have been developed directly from the first two workshop cycles of action described above. Key stakeholder reports and interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, evaluation forms, attendance registers, observation, video and audio recordings will all be used for collecting data. Selection of mechanisms for collecting data will be determined by the specific questions being investigated and criteria being measured. Permission will also need to be negotiated, in some cases, such as using video recordings. The framework for analysing and interpreting the data is based on the eighth stage of the workshop action research cycles in Northern Province and Gauteng. The same four broad categories are used.

As explained above, the key features of the model for building an ECD educative community remain constant. However, the scope of the project has shifted from a series of workshops over a four-month period to a three-year pilot project including

over one thousand daily delivery services and including comprehensive ECD stakeholder participation through district forums, a proposed statutory representative body and provincial legislative consultative processes. Experience in pilot sites replace written cases as the primary focus for reflection. District Development Forums constitute the primary location for consultation and small local webs of services the basic educative community unit. Building partnership across and within spheres of government and other role players is the key challenge.

Not only is it necessary to achieve consensus among local ECD role-players, but there must also be coherence with the nationally and internationally accepted understanding of child development and the rights of young children. The entire research process must be seen against the background of the provincial and national policy context described in Chapter two.

The key questions and direction of the research component are described below using the four categories used to analyse the action in the Northern Province and Gauteng workshops: (1) ***degree of consensus reached***; (2) **quality of participation** (3) **scope of participation** (4) **sustainability of participation.**

5.3.1 Degree of consensus reached though participation

Action research can solve a particular problem in a particular context. In this case the overarching problem is that of meeting the basic needs of young children with limited resources. By linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue, Impilo and the provincial ECD consultative policy development process seek to establish agreement about the basic needs of young children and devise the best strategies to achieve this in terms of local conditions.

The Key ECD Development Messages, presented in more detail above, list the following needs of young children

- clean water
- a safe environment which includes proper shelter and sanitation
- enough good food to help their bodies grow and fight disease
- health care (both preventative and curative)
- to feel loved and secure
- activities that hold their in... build concentration and encourage curiosity, independence, perseverance, creativity and co-operation
- opportunities to move, explore and interact with the world around them through play
- to talk about their experiences with peers, older family members and adults

The intention is to adapt, develop and refine this understanding of the basic needs of young children, through the consultative process. Impilo is based on the assumption that partnership is necessary to meet the basic needs of young children. The consultation is about the best strategies for building partnership and meeting the basic needs of young children. The actual delivery of services provides an opportunity for experimentation. An evaluation of the successes and problems in delivery provide the focus for discussion. The pilot sites are the primary focus of dialogue and a critical link between theory and practice.

The content of agreement or the products of the dialogue will form the basis of policy about outcomes of training, requirements for qualifications and standards for licensing and monitoring ECD services.

New regulations for registering, monitoring and supporting ECD services

The training should develop ECD services that provide an environment that supports the development of the children. Training is adapted to the nature of the service and needs and circumstances of children and families using the service. Two processes are taking place concurrently. Individual practitioners are being trained as representatives of the site in which they work. The trainee is expected to use her new skills and understanding to improve the quality of the service. This includes collaboration with the committee and parents. At the same time, a process of dialogue between resource and training agencies will develop new policy for training curriculum and standards for licensing and monitoring ECD delivery agencies. The needs of young children provide the primary focus of policy development. This is illustrated here, by listing a range of questions about basic needs of young children and then discussing the last two in detail to illustrate the policy development strategy. These questions must first be answered in each individual site and web of services. Shared understanding and effective solutions to problems emerging from this dialogue will then inform ECD provincial policy.

The challenge of this research is to develop appropriate indicators and benchmarks from a shared understanding of child development and the necessary conditions for meeting the basic needs of young children. In this phase of policy development, research must focus on progress toward effective models of provisioning. It is not yet possible to measure the effectiveness of the model outside of the process of developing and testing these new approaches.

Key questions would include: How can the management of the service be improved? How can the health status of the children be improved? What steps must be taken to remedy any problem of access to clean water and safe sanitation? How can the children's opportunities for learning be improved? How can the quantity and variety of activities be increased to keep all the children productively or creatively occupied and challenged? What is the quality of the relationship between the educator and the children? What steps must be taken to ensure that the children are happy and not afraid? Are family members welcome and involved in the service? How can family members support the service? What steps must be taken to ensure that the environment is safe at all times? What steps must be taken to ensure that there is sufficient space to ensure optimum activity and movement of the children?

These questions are generally open rather than closed, in order to support the development of the service. The last two questions listed above will be discussed in more detail to illustrate the broad plan to measure progress and solve problems simultaneously. Services that were not meeting the basic needs of children were intentionally chosen as pilot sites so that specific problems could be solved through action research and generate lessons for new policy. At the start of the project, "overcrowding" was identified as one of the major problems. This problem had two dimensions. Firstly, there might not be enough adults to meet adequately the needs of the number of children. Secondly, there might not be sufficient indoor and / or outdoor space to ensure that children can move freely and participate in a range of activities. Training agencies agreed that the first challenge was to ensure that all services were "safe". This included solving the problems of overcrowding.

During the first phase of training a relationship of trust had to be established between the service and the training agency. In some cases this involved supporting the establishment and development of the committee. Guidelines have been prepared to assist services in measuring the problem of "overcrowding" in their site. RTOs have assisted services to develop a plan to solve this problem within a specific time-frame. For example, one solution might be to identify "satellite" sites. This plan will need to be negotiated with all stakeholders. Payment of the second subsidy allocation will be made only if a plan to solve the problem is in place and there is a firm commitment to implement the plan within the agreed time-frame. Payment of the third subsidy allocation will depend on effective implementation of the plan.

GDE officials, RTOs and delivery agencies are all involved in dialogue which must deliver consensus on standards to measure, monitor and solve the problem of "overcrowding". The extent to which the problem of "overcrowding" has been overcome will be a key indicator of the impact of training.

5.3.2 Quality of participation

The model of dialogue developed through the Northern Province and Gauteng workshops provides the indicators to measure the quality of participation. Progress towards building an enabling environment for dialogue in which all voices are heard and taken seriously must be tracked. The model of policy development is based on the notion of "deliberative democracy", which assumes that effective implementation requires that all stakeholders must own and support the policy and must actively participate in its development. It also takes account of the problem of ensuring that less articulate, less organised or less powerful sectors of the community are heard. Three theoretical positions informing the model remain constant: the principle of dialogue (Bullough and Gitlin 1991); the case method (Richert 1991) and reflection theoretically informed by Zeichner and Liston's (1992) four traditions of reform in teacher development.

Dialogue that delivers consensus is necessary for teams or networks to function effectively and this is essentially the same challenge faced by all sectors of government recognising the need for integrated delivery.

5.3.3 Scope of participation

The new notion of ECD as a developmental initiative requires the broadest possible definition to include a wide variety of strategies to support the development of young children and support families as the primary caregivers. This approach assumes that external agencies alone, cannot adequately monitor services and consequently the users and local community will need to play an important role in quality assurance. Since the primary aim of Impilo is to build partnership to meet the needs of young children, the scope of participation will be measured in terms of the range of role-players involved. This will need to be done in a variety of contexts: firstly, in the pilot sites; secondly, in the district ECD forums and thirdly, in the intersectoral committees and ECD Specialist Council. Involvement of families in the pilot sites will be assessed.

The primary site for local partnership is the ECD District Forum. The development of the forum will be an indicator of the quality and sustainability of partnership between local ECD role-players. Membership of the ECD forum includes the full range of both government and non-government ECD actors (described above) in the area. The ECD Specialist Council will be a statutory body that advises the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE). Legislation has been prepared to create the Gauteng Education and Training Council (GETC) with additional specialist councils representing particular sectors such as ECD and Adult Basic Education. The GETC is the mechanism for consulting on education policy in Gauteng. Members of the ECD Specialist Council will be elected by the ECD District Forums. The constitution is being developed through a consultative process. The intention is to create an intersectoral structure on the understanding that ECD functions must be co-ordinated through integrated policy.

Representivity in terms of gender and race will also be measured as an indicator of the scope of participation. Although responsibility for the care of young children rests primarily with women, committees of ECD services are frequently dominated by men. A key indicator of the quality of participation will be the extent to which representation in consultative processes reflects the composition of key stakeholders.

The intention is to include all ECD role-players in the dialogue. This includes the two major categories of government and non-government role players. The **government role-players,** include local government and provincial departments, with regional and district offices. The Welfare Department is currently devolving some welfare responsibilities, including ECD, to local government. The three largest provincial Departments are Education, Health and Welfare and Population Development. The Department of Labour is also an important player as it provides funding for ECD training as part of its job creation programme. The Department of Safety and Security needs to be included in terms its role in addressing child abuse and generally in terms of giving high priority to the safety of young children. The Department of Agriculture can assist through its food security programmes.

Non-government role-players include families, all community structures, community based service organisations and resource and training organisations. Families are regarded as the primary caregivers of young children. Rather than dis-

empowering families, they need to be supported in their child-rearing function. The intention is to locate ECD within family and community development. In the South African context, the family cannot be conceptualised narrowly in terms of the nuclear family. We must acknowledge and nurture the extended network of family support. The intention is to give voice to the most marginalised groups. The parent bodies of the pilot sites are one important group. Important requirements for accessing funding through Impilo is that each site has an elected governance structure and that family members are directly involved as far as possible in the functioning of the service. Initial training is focused on building the capacity of these committees as most members have limited literacy skills.

Different kinds of **consultative meetings** are proposed to bring together different groups of ECD role-players as part of the Impilo research component. The RTOs operating in different components or regions are brought together to share experiences and reach consensus on standards and strategies for training. RTOs and trainees in pilot sites meet with GDE officials. District Forum and Specialist Council meetings will bring players directly involved in pilot sites together with other ECD role-players and training agencies that are not part of the pilot. It is important that lessons learned and evolving policy are owned by ECD role-players that could not be accommodated in a relatively small pilot project that will have policy implications for everyone. The advisory committee will bring together key government ECD role players from different spheres of government and different departments and directorates within GDE. All these meetings will discuss the different approaches to ECD provisioning under Impilo and their success, challenges, and lessons learned. They will also discuss other questions related to the ECD policy context and solutions to a variety of different related ECD problems.

5.3.4 Sustainability of participation

The key indicator of sustainability of participation is the extent to which the range of structures from committees of delivery agencies to the ECD Specialist Council is able to function effectively and independently as structures of civil society. The cost of dialogue will be a key factor. This includes the time of participants as well as more direct costs such as travel, administration and the cost of the meetings themselves.

The primary focus for the evaluation of sustainability of participation will be the proposed webs of inter-linked services co-ordinated from a hub, being tested as

examples of new multi-service approaches. Dialogue must deliver information that can effectively implement the broad policy framework currently being discussed through the ECD Green Paper process. Criteria for establishing and funding webs must be determined, as well as minimum standards for individual ECD services of different kinds. An appropriate legal framework and sources of funding are currently being investigated as part of the preparation of the ECD Green Paper.

5.4 Conclusion

Impilo has grown out of the experience of the first two cycles of this action research project in Northern Province and Gauteng and responds to the flaws and weaknesses of the national ECD interim plan outlined in Chapter two. The Impilo research complements the National Pilot in two key respects: firstly, the scope of the investigation and secondly, in terms of the research method.

Impilo will address the needs of children in the entire ECD age range from birth to at least nine years. The regional pilot projects and monitored experiments will also address the needs of children at the two ends of the age range. The National Pilot is limited to children of five and six years only. The interim findings of the Kathorus pilot provide important insights into the needs of children from seven to fourteen years, particularly those that are currently outside the school system or older than they should be for the standard in which they have been placed.

Impilo recognises the urgent need to develop and test new approaches to ECD provisioning, rather than merely developing standards for the inherited fragmented and inequitable models. The critical difference between the national and Gauteng research approach is in the chosen method. While the national research follows a quantitative method, action research has been chosen in Gauteng, for its potential to solve specific problems. The workshops in Northern Province and Gauteng between 1995 and 1997, constitute the first six stages of the Impilo action research cycle which is now in the seventh stage (Cohen and Manion 1994). The two-year research component based on the design proposed here will begin soon and lies beyond the scope of this dissertation.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

Achieving a sense of completion could well be the greatest difficulty of action research, particularly in this case in which the submission for an academic degree is an integral part of a more substantial ongoing policy development process. Composing and evaluating this case study in the developmentalist and social reconstructionist tradition requires open-mindedness, wholeheartedness and responsibility. Errors, mistakes and problems have already been considered as part of the ongoing process of cycles of action and reflection and many recommendations have been implemented and then evaluated in their turn. This chapter therefore evaluates of the overall action research project, reported in the form of a case study, using the five general characteristics of an exemplary case study, which Yin (1994) suggests to help the researcher assume the role of historian rather than mere chronicler. This is followed by a brief summing up.

6.1 Evaluation of the case study

Yin (1994:147) points out that despite the difficulty in defining the boundaries of each particular effort, a sense of completion must be achieved. The case study must be composed in an engaging manner and the significance of the case must be evident as the underlying issues should be nationally important and the specific instance should be unusual or of general public interest. The study must display sufficient evidence and consider alternative perspectives.

These five characteristics will be used to structure this concluding chapter and overall evaluation of the project, which seeks to answer the underlying questions about the effectiveness of the model posed in Chapter four: What potential does the case method hold for preparing reflective practitioners? Has reflection based on dialogue but grounded in a project and an alternative ideal succeeded in challenging a training orientation and making the necessary paradigm shift described in the new education policy? How could the lessons of this project inform ECD policy development and implementation?

Sense of completion

Although this project started as a relatively small intervention in the Northern Province, the search for strategies to support families and communities in meeting the basic needs of young children in Gauteng transformed it, through Impilo, into a large-scale provincial ECD policy development exercise. Completion of the third major cycle of action and reflection, in the form of the analysis and interpretation of the research findings of Impilo, lies beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, the description of the first two complete workshop cycles, and the first seven stages of the Impilo action research project, constitute a comprehensive case study that can already begin to inform national ECD policy development. It might also provide lessons for enabling dialogue in other consultative policy development processes beyond ECD. For this reason, it is necessary to conclude this dissertation, although the action continues beyond the boundaries of this case study.

Determining an appropriate point to present this dissertation has proved to be extremely difficult. Reporting on a consultative policy development process based on action research requires a form of tentative finality. Each cycle of action and reflection forms part of a series of other cycles, and any particular cycle or even series of cycles is seldom absolutely discrete or complete in itself. During the period of writing the dissertation, significant new developments continue to present themselves for consideration, particularly in a period of transformation and rapidly changing policy context. Policy framework documents are revised, new legislation is published, recommendations are implemented and evaluated and provide new lessons to be implemented.

The shifting policy context has created tension between the demands of completion and improvement. For example, although the 1997 COTEP document has been revised recently, a decision had to be made not to delay completion in order to include these revisions in the policy context in Chapter two. Similarly, although the Gauteng ECD Green Paper will probably now not be published till about May 1999, reference has been made to the incomplete draft still in development stage. The GPAC strategic planning scheduled for April also constitutes a significant development that could outdate the description in Chapter two. New information about the proposed consultation on the Illustrative Learning Programme might emerge tomorrow or the next day.

"While the search for ideas militates against early foreclosure" (Woods 1985:104) the potential value of communicating those lessons that could already be of benefit urges presentation in a less that perfect form.

Composition

Constructing the case study similarly proved difficult as it required presenting coherently and accessibly a series of extremely complex processes against an even more complex background without distorting the sense of flux, process, messiness, inconsistency which is inherent in the story being told (Woods 1985). Action needs to be paused for reflection and description, while the various threads are presented in relation to each other, without losing continuity and a sense of the whole. Action research does not allow for the traditional presentation of goals, method and findings in linear form. For example, the Impilo pilot, which constitutes the seventh stage of the third cycle of action in this project, is simultaneously a critical component of the policy context. The same activity can be both action and context depending on the time at which that particular frame is being viewed.

While description in this case study moves between figure and ground, the ECD policy context remains the primary concern. Every effort has been made to produce a well-balanced composition, but in instances of tension between process and form, the process is regarded as more important than the product and the writer remains faithful to the unfolding process. The researcher seeks to lead the reader on a journey though cycles of action and reflection, providing sufficient information for a thick description of the texture of each stage, without overwhelming the reader with unnecessary detail.

The various chapters in this case do hang together and follow one another almost inevitably (Woods 1985:90). However, the problem of the relationship of figure and ground, described above, requires that the reader be constantly reminded of the changing status of each strand of action. A lesson learned could later become a recommendation that requires further reflection once implemented or even become part of the policy context. Chapter two sketches the policy context in two parts in order to give a sense of the changes between 1995 and 1999. This includes a description of Impilo, which to a large extent grew out of early lessons learned from

the initial intervention in Northern Province. The Gauteng ECD Green Paper policy proposal in turn draws on early lessons from Impilo,

Chapter three presents a review of literature, which directed both the identification of the initial research questions, as well the development of the project. The international ECD literature provides the challenge for developing a model for dialogue that can engage all players in the life of the child in defining quality in ECD. The teacher development perspectives guided the development of the model for enabling dialogue that links caring and reason to reflection. Literature on child development provides the framework for developing strategies to meet the basic needs of young children.

Chapter four is the heart of the project as it describes in great detail the development of the model for enabling dialogue. It starts with an explanation of the method, based on Cohen and Manion's eight stages of action research and then takes the reader through each of the stages of the project in Northern Province. All the documents prepared for the first series of workshops are provided as appendices and three additional appendices were added during the data analysis stage. As explained before, these eight stages do not necessarily follow in linear order. Data were rigorously collected during the workshop, although it was not clear at that stage how they would be used. Analysis and evaluation was an ongoing part of the workshop process. Wood's (1985) advice for recording ethnography proved most helpful, when it was time to begin to formulate the structure for presenting the interpretation of data. Analysis had to be multi-layered as it does not all take place at the same mental plane (Woods 1985:92) and in this case did not take place in the same sequence as the main action.

While the sifting and resifting of data from the Northern Province workshop was still in progress, the Gauteng workshop described in Chapter five had already taken place. There was sufficient evidence from the immediate outcomes or early findings of the Northern Province workshop, that it would be beneficial to hold a similar series of workshops in Gauteng. As explained, the changing policy context and new employment circumstances of the researcher and one participant from the Northern Province workshop, provided an ideal opportunity to use the model to build partnership and the foundation for forming consortia that could tender for three-year ECD training contracts. The immediate product of the Gauteng workshop was the

conceptualisation and implementation of the provincial ECD pilot project, which did not have to wait for the analysis of data from either of the workshops to be completed.

Writing the case study started in 1995 with the first part of the policy context, but the final stage consisted of applying and refining the categories used for analysing the data in both workshops and investigating their potential for evaluating the first three-year period of Impilo. It was then possible to see the relationship of the parts and compose the report, as a sense of tentative finalisation had been reached.

A sense of growth is evident as the unfolding action moves toward strategies for solving problems, although no final solutions can be presented in this report. The test of the model for enabling dialogue must be in the deepening understanding of open-ended questions, rather than quantitative measures of the scale of specific problems without progress toward solutions. Sustained development and integration arises from the action research methodology used to develop and test a model for enabling dialogue.

Significance

The significance of this case study lies in its potential to influence ECD policy development in South Africa and other countries struggling to define quality in terms of the unique context of its children. The model for enabling dialogue could also be transferred to other contexts, such as helping school governing bodies and school management teams reach a shared understanding of the goals of their school and their respective responsibilities for school development. The same basic model could be used to enable dialogue within and between different offices, divisions or units within an education department or across different spheres of government or provincial departments.

The national importance in the underlying issues can be found at two levels: firstly, the principles of Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), to which the ANC government is committed and secondly, in terms of the search for effective strategies to meet the basic needs of young children. The RDP is based on the central assumption of people-driven development, which means that people must come together to shape their own future. If beneficiaries are to be active agents in

policy development, then effective strategies for enabling dialogue are essential. In terms of the more specific focus of this project, an effective model for enabling dialogue is necessary for building an educative community through which the key players in the life of the child can reach agreement on the best strategies for meeting basic needs and defining quality in ECD.

The significance of this study can be traced from the individual child through to the international challenge of social transformation. However, the immediate challenge in recording the case study, requires the selection of specific instances that are unusual or of general public interest and at the same time provide adequate evidence for the argument.

Evidence

The effectiveness of the model of building an educative community is evident in the partnerships already forged. These can be found within and across RTO consortia; within the GDE team of ECD officials; between these GDE officials and their counterparts in other provincial departments and local government and in the development of district intersectoral ECD teams. The basic principles of the model have been adapted for each of these specific ECD contexts. The strategies for curbing domination have been most effective. Theoretical frameworks have assisted people in moving beyond their current system of beliefs to engage with other perspectives. Helping participants reflect on their attitudes and actions has provided skills that can easily be transferred into other operational situations. The case method has proved particularly helpful and reports indicate obstacles in the way of collaboration have been removed by discussing a fictitious case based on the elements of conflict being experienced.

Evaluation of the workshops shows that reflective practice and group learning techniques have been introduced. What is more, reflection based on dialogue but grounded in a project and an alternative ideal has succeeded in challenging a training orientation and making the necessary paradigm shift described in the new education policy. Although much work still remains to be done, it is evident that those RTOs and ECD DDOs that participated in the series of workshops in Northern Province or Gauteng have a better understanding of the nature of a paradigm and

what is meant by a paradigm shift. Most have moved toward a more developmentalist and social reconstructionist approach.

As explained above, in composing the case study an ongoing tension exists between providing adequate evidence for the interpretation and conclusions drawn without overloading the reader or obscuring the direction of the argument. The main categories used for evaluating the model: degree of consensus reached though participation; quality of participation; scope of participation; sustainability of participation, could be regarded as both necessary and sufficient. The challenge lies in the way in which each category is understood and how the material is aligned and reclassified, clearing out debris, identifying strengths and constantly relating the data to the theory (Woods 1985: 93). The three issues identified as the product of agreement in the Northern Province workshop (need for changes; linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue and young children need activity) might at first glance appear to be self-evident. However, significance must be measured in terms of the perspective with which participants entered the first workshop. Development is apparent in the product of agreement in the Gauteng workshop (linking caring and reason to reflection through dialogue; need for multi-level training starting from the needs and circumstances of trainees and the key messages of Impilo). The intention is to develop further the detail of agreement through Impilo so that policy regulations can be developed. The policy framework has already been developed through the initial lessons of the workshop and interim findings of Impilo. However, the most significant product of this research should be the future ongoing dialogue in the educative community, so that available resources can be used in the best possible way to meet the needs of young children in terms of a sound understanding of child development and the specific needs and circumstances of that particular geographic situation.

Alternative perspectives

Through triangulation the action research project seeks to accommodate alternative perspectives which are diligently recorded in the case study. At the start of both workshops but more especially in Northern Province, the different perspectives of two groups of ECD practitioners are in direct conflict. The aim of the model is to deliver consensus and consequently, the issue of alternative perspectives in terms of the findings is complex. Only when consensus is not reached, is it necessary to investigate the obstacles and present all points of view.

Another interesting dimension in relation to different perspectives arises from the separation in the role of facilitator and researcher in the Gauteng workshop and Impilo project. By transferring responsibility for facilitating the Gauteng workshops to a second person, the researcher relinquished control in the interests of accommodating an alternative perspective. Management of the Impilo pilot created a similar opportunity, which was augmented by additional delegation of responsibility for managing the pilot, developing forums and facilitating dialogue to GDE officials at the district level. A flexible approach has allowed for adaptation in terms of the unique circumstances and leadership in each district. Development of the educative community has been uneven across districts and it will be necessary through the Impilo research to assess the impact of different levels of capacity and alternative perspectives of district officials.

However, in terms of the main argument, there has been no attempt to increase its strength by constructing an apology of an opposing one, which does not exist (Woods 1985:101). The temptation to create a "straw person" has been intentionally avoided.

6.2 Summing up

Cohen and Manion explain that in the final stage of action research, there may be "general summing-up" in which the outcomes of the project are reviewed, recommendations made, and arrangement of dissemination of results to interested parties decided" (1994:199). The outcomes of this research project can be categorised under three broad headings: the case study itself; the potential influence on ECD policy development and implementation and potential influence on policy and implementation beyond ECD.

The complete case study and appendices could potentially be used in different ways. The most important role that this case study could play is in stimulating debate about ECD policy development in South Africa by offering this particular perspective on the complex ECD context and challenges. The handouts, examples of exercises using belief statements and cases could be used as they are, be adapted or stimulate the development of other cases and activities. Primarily they provide a concrete example of the use of the case method to promote reflective practice through dialogue.

However, the most important outcome of this research project lies beyond the case study in future ECD policy development through Impilo and the Gauteng ECD Green Paper consultative process. This research argues that the National ECD Pilot project is flawed by the invalid assumption that the introduction of the Grade R is an effective mechanism for educational redress or achieving the goals of Education-for-All. Effective schooling depends primarily on meeting a wide range of basic needs of all young children before compulsory schooling begins. This in turn requires partnership between all ECD role-players, including national departments, provincial departments, local government, community based service organisations, communities and families. The challenge of ECD lies in supporting families as the primary care givers of young children within the context of family and community development. One additional year of compulsory primary schooling is too little too late.

Effective ECD policy development and implementation requires dialogue that provides consensus about the best strategies for solving specific problems in each local context. Research that merely quantifies the problem is insufficient. New cost-effective multi-service approaches to provisioning that respond to the needs and circumstances of young children and their families should replace the existing inequitable and fragmented system. New legislation supporting a single comprehensive system of licensing, monitoring and funding ECD services is urgently required. A new approach to quality assurance must include families and communities, rather than relying entirely on external inspectors. The new policy should recognise and build on existing child-rearing practices to ensure that the goals of schooling do not impede development in other directions. A developmentalist and social reconstructionist approach would acknowledge the diversity in child-rearing and ECD goals, rather than imposing a perspective based on fundamental pedagogics.

The Impilo project in Gauteng provides one example of a flexible approach to implementing the national pilot project. This series of linked pilot projects acknowledges the complexity of the ECD challenge and seeks to provide the mechanisms for dialogue to solve the problems families face in meeting the basic needs of young children in Gauteng. Lessons learned so far could inform the reconceptualisation of the National Pilot Project. Intersectoral collaboration at a national level is critical to provide the legislative framework that can replace the

existing fragmented and inequitable system of ECD provisioning inherited from the previous government.

The distinction between the differences in the goals of different cultures and the hardships that impede development should be interrogated in the ECD policy development process. ECD programmes should help communities overcome hardships without impeding development in other directions. Understanding development in different local settings is essential for the development of ECD and primary school curricula. The challenge lies in redressing the consequence of hardships without undermining the beneficial values of the community. Impilo and the provincial ECD Green Paper recognise the need for an ECD educative community that links caring and reason to reflection through dialogue so that the basic needs of all young children can be met.

In addition, the model is tentatively offered in terms of its potential to support policy development and implementation beyond ECD by building an educative community that links caring and reason to reflection through dialogue in other relevant contexts.

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Appendix A

Northern Transvaal Action Research

INVITATION

TO EDUCATORS OF TEACHERS

OF CHILDREN BETWEEN 3 AND 9 YEARS OLD

What is it all about?

Accreditation of teacher education in future will be based on stakeholder agreement about "learning outcomes" for each level. the old separation between "formal" and "non-formal" training will disappear.

The national Qualifications Framework (NQF) proposes a new accrediting structure for all teacher education and all other education and training. learners will be able to accumulate credits towards higher qualifications in the same learning path or carry credits across to a different learning pathway. For example, someone who is qualified as a nurse could get credit for some modules of her nursing training towards a new career as a teacher of young children. Courses will be accredited according to "outcomes" achieved by learners at each level rather than the kind of organisation offering the course.

What is the aim of this action research project?

This project gives your organisation an opportunity to find out practically what other organisations are doing and discuss what the "learning outcomes" for levels of teacher education should be.

What will it involve?

There will be a series of workshops in the second half of 1995. The same participants will be required to attend all workshops and undertake collaborative exercises with other organisations.

Who can participate?

All organisations training teachers of children between the ages of 3 and 9 in the Northern Transvaal are invited. Two representatives from each organisation should participate. One should ideally be responsible for curriculum development and the other a senior trainer or teacher educator.

Who will organise and fund this project?

The is a joint project of Woz'obona and the University of the Witwatersrand. Funds have been raised to pay for all the workshops. Accommodation will be provided.

How can you apply?

If you are interested, please complete the attached questionnaire and return it immediately. If we do not hear from you by the end of May, we will assume you are not interested.

For further information contact Norma Rudolph at:

(011) 488 5507 telephone or

(011) 484 2729 by fax.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Why would your organisation like to participate in the action research project?

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Briefly describe the course that your organisation offers for the teachers of children between 3 and 6 years old. "Teacher" refers here to adults responsible for the care and education of young children whether they are in primary school, creches, pre-schools, educare centre or any other kind of service.

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Does your organisation visit students to observe them put what they learn into practice. if so, please explain **WHEN** and **WHERE** these visits will take lace in the second half of 1995.

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Who would represent your organisation in the research project? Please give the name and position.

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....

Would you prefer workshops midweek or on a Friday and Saturday?

midweek .....

Friday and Saturday .....

Do these tentative dates for workshops suit you? Explain any problems you might have with any of the dates.

June 13 and 14
July 18 and 19
August 31 and September 1
October 10 and 11

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Are there any questions about the research project that you would like answered? Please list them here.

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Please indicate the best address, phone and fax number at which you can be reached

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Please complete one per organisation

EVALUATION FORM

NORTHERN PROVINCE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT: WORKSHOP THREE

What did you find most useful about the workshop?

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What did you find least useful about the workshop?

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What suggestions can you make to the facilitator to improve the next workshop? You can give advice about administration and planning; accommodation; workshop content ,structure and facilitation; documentation; and any thing else that needs improvement. Write on the back of this page if you need more space.

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Name of participant: .....

Name of organisation: .....

Final questionnaire

If you do not have enough space to complete your answer on the lines provided, write the **correct** number of the question on the back of the page and continue with the rest.

1. What did you find most useful about the action research project?

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2. What did you find least useful?

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3. Describe the intention of the project in your own words.

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4. What were your expectations from the project?

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5. Did the project meet your expectations? Which expectations were not met?

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6. Do you think your organisation will benefit from the project? Give reasons for your answer.

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7. What new methods of education have you learned from this project?

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8. What new methods have you already tried? What successes and problems did you have when trying these new methods?

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9. What new methods do you still plan to try?

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10. What difficulties have prevented you from trying new methods?

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11. Did your organisation complete all the collaborative exercises? If not, make a list of each task not completed.

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12. What problems and successes did you have in doing the collaborative exercises?

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13. What successes and problems did your area have in setting up a collaborative library lending system?

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14. Describe your suggested plan for the way forward to build an educative community in your area.

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15. Describe your suggested plan for the way forward for collaboration in the whole province.

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16. Did a representative from your organisation attend all three workshops? If not, give reasons for the absence of your organisation. If one individual was replaced by another from the same organisation, this is not an absence that needs to be explained.

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17. What kind of recognition do you expect from this project?

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18. What are your expectations about the dissemination of findings?

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19. What are your expectations about anonymity and confidentiality?

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20. What are your expectations about possible publication?

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21. What information would you like to find in the directory of organisations?

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22. What suggestions can you make for the format of the directory?

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23. Have you checked that the information about your organisations captured on the data base is correct? What corrections still need to be made?

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Appendix D 1

THE NORTHERN PROVINCE
ECD TEACHER DEVELOPMENT ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

Building an Educative Community

The primary aim of this Action Research Project (ARP) is to develop and test a model for enabling collaboration between different kinds of organisations developing the teachers of young children. This ARP includes all organisations educating the teachers of children between the ages of three and nine years old in the Northern Province.

The proposed National Qualification Framework (NQF) is intended to overcome the problems of fragmentation in education created by apartheid. It is a key mechanism for integrating all role players into the new single system of education. However, implementation of the NQF requires that stakeholders reach consensus about the learning outcomes required by different levels of certification in each career path. This in turn necessitates strategies for collaboration and dialogue.

The model being proposed in this ARP is based on the use of the case method to focus dialogue within the context of an educative community. The ARP will be undertaken between July and November 1995. However, the intention is to initiate a process that will continue after the completion of this specific project. It is hoped that the educative community initiated for the ARP will continue to function without the assistance of an outside researcher.

The action research method

Educational action research has been defined as

> a family of activities in curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programs, and systematic planning and policy development. These activities have in common the identification of strategies of planned action, which are implemented, and then systematically submitted to observation, reflection and change. Participants in the action research are integrally involved in all these activities (Carr and Kemmis 1986:164).

The reason for choosing this research method is its potential for achieving immediate benefits. It is not necessary to wait until the research has been completed to start implementing change. Instead of

a researcher making all the judgements, practitioners try out new ideas and then evaluate them within their own organisation and in collaboration with representatives of other organisations.

Most research methods require that the researcher collects and analyses data and then writes up the findings. In action research, the distinction between the researcher and the practitioners in the situation being investigated is less clear. For example, in this ARP, organisations developing teachers are the subjects of the research, but the teacher educators themselves play an active role as researchers.

This method could also be used to provide an opportunity for teachers and even student teachers to participate as researchers and learn about reflective practice at the same time.

Action research is rooted in concrete educational experiences and situations of practitioners. It generates theories that can be grasped and utilised by practitioners in terms of their own concepts and theories. At the same time it provides a coherent challenge to the beliefs and assumptions incorporated in the theories of educational practice that practitioners actually employ.

This ARP will provide teacher educators with the tools and opportunities for collaborative reflection. Many organisations are currently reviewing their own courses and are eager to co-operate with other organisations. Questioning current assumptions is a necessary preliminary step to enable integrated and co-ordinated action.

Reflective practice

The debate between reflective practice and effective practice in teacher education arises from questions about the nature of good teaching and in particular the relationship between theory and practice. Effective teachers are expected merely to implement the theories they have been taught. Reflective teachers, on the other hand, are empowered decision makers, "intrinsically motivated to analyse a situation, set goals, plan and monitor actions, evaluate results, and reflect on their own thinking" (Coulton and Sparks-Langer 1993:45). Reflective practice assumes that the teacher's actions must also be guided by morals and democratic practice (Coulton and Sparks-Langer 1993: 45)

While reflection on one's own is useful, it is not sufficient. Since values are socially constructed, it is necessary to reflect together with other practitioners in order to ensure that the values fit the social context.

The Educative Community

The three key attitudes **open-mindedness**, **responsibility** and **wholeheartedness** are identified by Goodman (1991:59) as essential for reflective practice. **Open-mindedness** allows teachers to realise that "traditional perceptions of education may or may not be valid". **Responsibility** creates "the desire to synthesise diverse ideas and apply information in an aspired direction". **Wholeheartedness** gives individuals strength to move beyond abstract notions and put their ideals into practice.

Many teachers and teacher educators express fears about making mistakes, being criticised, disturbing traditions and making changes. **Wholeheartedness** enables practitioners to work through their fears and insecurities, and thus provide a basis for action (Goodman 1991:59).

The years of apartheid have resulted in fragmentation and isolation in education. Most teachers struggle alone in their own classrooms with few opportunities for team teaching and collaboration.

In order to confront this individual isolation, Bullough and Gitlin (1991:39) advocate collaboration in communities of a particular kind and suggest that through dialogue reflection is linked to caring and reason. The purpose of dialogue is to enable participants to come to a shared understanding of the subject being discussed. However, this does not require that all prejudice or prejudgements be removed. Instead, "prejudgements are expected to be apparent and critically tested". In dialogue, actors are empowered to rethink the way they see the world and judge their practice (Bullough and Gitlin 1991:41).

Dialogue assumes the existence of some form of group or community in which membership is valued as an end in itself. "Competing factions" must be allowed in the context of a shared commitment to a common purpose to resolve conflict in the group. Groups of this kind are referred to as "educative communities" and through dialogue "caring and reason are bound together as necessary characteristics". Decisions are made

in terms of reason and not imposition, status or the ability to control resources (Bullough and Gitlin 1992:40).

This model described by Bullough and Gitlin will be used to build an "educative community" of teacher educators in the Northern Province. It will be necessary to establish the commitment "to find means for breaking down barriers and identifying common interest". Collegiality will need to replace competition. All members will ideally exercise reason within a context of a caring community rather than power and authority (Bullough and Gitlin 1991: 41).

This ideal can only be achieved though changing attitudes and building self-esteem. The current context of change and uncertainty often results in practitioners responding defensively when confronted with new and different ideas. However, support and trust within the group provides an opportunity to evaluate our old ways and habits and changes our practice.

Collaborative group learning

"Collaborative group learning" is defined by Comeaux (1992: 153) as the "group's efforts to reach consensus by their own authority" and should not be confused with co-operative group learning models. The primary difference lies in the "emphasis on how group consensus is negotiated and the placement of authority". A common understanding or agreement about the answer or completion of a task must be reached.

When used effectively, it can encourage divergent thinking. Agreement can be reached through a process of "intellectual negotiation". The need for consensus creates pressure to take ideas seriously, to modify and revise them in the light of other ideas and to recognise and tolerate differences. This can only be done if value systems and beliefs that underlie differences are recognised (Comeaux 1991:153).

Two variables help practitioners to think about their work and learn from experience. These can be categorised as "social" and "artifactual". The social involves interaction with peers and mentors in partnerships, small group work and seminars. The artifactual provides help in remembering experience. They are tangible representations that record a given aspect of the situation (Richert 1991:134). Examples of artifactuals that could be used to record a given aspect of a situation for reflection include: journals; quick notes made at the end of a lesson; and video or audio tape recordings. A case is an artifactual in narrative form.

The case method

The case method will be used for collaborative group learning in this ARP. The teaching case describes a specific situation in narrative form. The case does not have to be a true account of a real situation, but needs to represent real problems faced by practitioners.

Teachers come to their work situation with the experience of all the years of their own schooling. This situation is so familiar that it is easy to assume that there can be no other way.

The case method reframes as problematic that which is seen as given. A familiar situation that is assumed to be correct can be analysed in a new way. Discussion of cases makes it possible to check whether specific activities fit with our aims and purposes.

These practical strategies of collaborative group learning support the view of teaching as an

> ... intellectual task requiring the ability to ask questions, search for answers, tolerate ambiguity, take risks and proceed in a thoughtful and caring way toward goals that are multiple, complex and constantly shifting to meet new and challenging imperatives (Coulton and Sparks-Langer 1993:45).

Applying the theory in the Northern Province

In the first provincial workshop, participants will start with individual study and group discussion of two fictitious cases based on the practice within the group being studied. The group will reflect on these discussions and then prepare to construct their own cases in collaborative exercises with other organisations in their own area.

This proposed model for collaboration will be evaluated throughout the process of implementation. This will take the form of questionnaires, key participant interviews and observation. The process of evaluation has already started with responses to the initial questionnaire being used to adapt the initial plan of the project.

The complete process will be recorded in the form of a case study, which will be submitted to the University of the Witw[illegible]d as a dissertation for a Master's Degree in Education

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THE NORTHERN PROVINCE
ECD TEACHER DEVELOPMENT ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

The Four Traditions of Reform in Teacher Education

The four traditions of reform in teacher education provide a framework for analysis and evaluation. Teacher education changes across time and place. The four taditions are categories that Zeichner and Liston (1992) use to classify and analyse changing trends in reform in teacher education in the United States of America.

Understanding the broad context of historical development in the field is necessary for making public policy and for deciding one's own direction as a practitioner. Open-mindedness is necessary when formulating opinions. Zeichner and Liston (1992:16) point out that "ideological insularity" hampers the improvement of teacher education. They identify the need for debate across as well as within particular traditions. However, they also warn against an eclectic combination of incompatible ideas.

This short handout summarises the **Academic, Social Efficiency, Developmentalist** and **Social Reconstructionist Traditions**. The primary reference is an article by Zeichner and Liston in *Journal of Teacher Education* (1992). The relationship between traditions as well as internal debates are described briefly, followed by an analysis of some aspects of the South African history of teacher education described by Hartshorne (1992) in *Crises and Challenge: Black Education 1910 - 1990.*

The Academic Tradition

The Academic Tradition "emphasises the role of teacher as scholar and subject matter specialist", supporting the view that a "sound liberal arts education, complemented by an apprenticeship in a school", is the most sensible way to prepare teachers for their work (Zeichner and Liston 1992:4). The western, white middle class biases in the liberal arts curriculum have been challenged. In response to this criticism, multicultural perspectives have been incorporated into the curriculum for teacher education in this tradition. Teachers are prepared to work in economically depressed and culturally divers inner cities (Zeichner and Liston 1992:6).

The Social Efficiency Tradition

The Social Efficiency Tradition assumes faith in the power of the scientific study of teaching as the basis of teacher education. The "acquisition of specific observable teaching skills related to pupil learning" is emphasised (Zeichner and Liston 1992:8). The major criticism of this tradition has been "a questioning of the empirical validity of teaching competencies" (1992:8). Combs argues that "requiring a teacher education programme to define precisely the behaviors it hopes to produce may be the surest way to destroy the effectiveness of its products" (1992:8). This tradition undermines the reconstructionist ideals of many teacher educators and legitimates the status quo in school and society"(1992:8). The current version of the paradigm has a broader cognitive orientation than the early behaviourist version. This new "deliberative orientation' acknowledges "the complex and uncertain" nature of teaching and therefore attempts to develop teachers' "capabilities to exercise judgement about the use of teaching skills" (1992:9).

The Developmentalist Tradition

The most distinguishing characteristic of the Developmentalist Tradition is the assumption that "the natural development of the learners" provides the basis of the curriculum for pupils and their teachers (Zeichner and Liston 1992:9). The critical element in these early developmentalist ideas was that teachers should be educated: "in the same kind of supportive and stimulating environment that they were expected to provide for children" (1992:10). The related idea that teacher education takes account of the developmental needs of the novice teacher is significant. The emphasis on the practical aspects of teacher education suggests the need for integrating theory and practice. Communication plays an important part in the education of children and their teachers.

The three central metaphors associated with the Developmentalist Tradition present the teacher's role as **naturalist, artist** and **researcher**.

An example of the teacher's role as **naturalist** focuses on the

> skills in the observation and study of children's behaviour in natural settings and in building a curriculum and classroom environment consistent with patterns of child development and children's interests (Zeichner and Liston 1992:10).

The **teacher-as-artist** metaphor has two dimensions. Firstly, the ability "to excite children about learning by providing them with carefully guided

activities in a stimulating environment". Secondly, this approach provides prospective teachers with a variety of experience in dance, creative dramatics, writing, painting and story telling.

The Co-operative School for Student Teachers is an example of the third guiding metaphor in the developmentalist tradition, the **teacher-as-researcher,** and highlights the aim of preparing teachers with a scientific attitude towards their work and life. This school recommends that teachers have

> an attitude of eager, alert observation: a constant questioning of old procedures in light of new observations; a use of the world, as well as of books, as source material; an experimental open-mindedness; an effort to keep as reliable records as the situation permits, in order to base the future upon accurate knowledge of what has been done.

The historical progress of the developmentalist tradition can be traced from the early thirties to the late eighties. In 1931 Ayer expressed disappointment that the child-centred perspective had not transformed mainstream teacher education as had been expected (Zeichner and Liston 1992:11).

Apprenticeship is an acknowledged characteristic of this tradition. The open education movement translated developmentalist assumptions into a teacher education curriculum with

> ..... a commitment to involvement in one's own learning, an active approach to learning in terms of direct experience with materials, an encouragement of children's communication and prospective teachers' communication with children using skills of observing, reading, speaking, and writing; early field experiences, offerings in expressive arts as well as in academic areas, and an understanding of children's development which reflects the writings of Jean Piaget.

Many different versions of the developmentalist paradigm have emerged. One "humanistic" programme identifies the notion of "self-as-an-instrument". The University of California-Berkeley is one prominent contemporary example of the developmentalist tradition. Students are exposed

> ... to theories of cognitive, social, moral and language development and then focus on various practicums on the application of developmentalist principles to the teaching of mathematics, science and literacy" (Zeichner and Liston 1992:12).

The same Californian programme recently

> shifted from an application of the content-free developmental principles to a concern with the development of domain specific knowledge within each of the basic school subjects (Zeichner and Liston 1992:12)

The Social Reconstructionist Tradition

The Social Reconstructionist Tradition "defines both schooling and teacher education as crucial elements in a movement towards a more just society" (Zeichner and Liston 12992:12). The principle of "redress" is identified as an important principle in correcting "the evils of capitalism". This tradition is located historically as having existed in the 1920s and having emerged in the 1930s. This tradition was strengthened by economic depression and widespread social unrest and "stressed the role of the school allied with other progressive forces in planning an intelligent reconstruction" of society (Zeichner and Liston 1992:12). A dynamic view of knowledge, in this tradition, requires that education prepare "individuals to take part intelligently in the management of conditions under which they will live".

The major internal debate of **Social Reconstructionism** questions the degree to which teachers and teacher educators should "consciously indoctrinate" their students with socialist and collectivist values (Zeichner and Liston 1992:12).

Unlike many contemporary reconstructionists, the earlier "frontier educators" identified the need for "awakening social consciousness among teacher educators" to address "the dominant tendency towards conformity" (Zeichner and Liston 1992:13). Two prominent early examples of the application of this tradition are presented to illustrate the strategies for "deepening insight into basic problems of human living" and encouraging debate and political education (1992:13).

The role of teachers includes making educational policy and breaking down "conventional subject matter boundaries" (1992:14).

The major challenge to this tradition was that the interdisciplinary focus of the foundations approach destroyed the integrity of the disciplines (1992:14).

Contemporary examples of this **reconstructionist** tradition draw attention to the need for "uniting reflective enquiry and practical action". Teacher education is viewed as a form of "cultural politics". Teachers are

"transformative intellectuals" capable of empowering students both inside and outside schools" (Zeichner and Liston 1992:15). Proponents of the reconstructionist tradition include Gitlin and Smyth, who propose "emancipatory" supervision methods.

There is a great deal of variation in contemporary proposals from this perspective but the common thread is the development of "critical perspectives on the relationship between schooling and social inequalities and a moral commitment to correcting those inequalities (1992:15)

The relationship between the traditions

These traditions need not be viewed as watertight and mutually exclusive. The framework highlights common concern and focus. It is possible for particular aspects of different traditions to either complement or contradict each other. For example, there is no reason for a sound understanding of the "natural development of learners" not to strengthen a reconstructionist approach to educating teachers. However, a social efficiency approach can undermine reconstructionist ideals.

Traditions of reform in South African teacher education

The Social Efficiency Tradition has had the most profound influence on teacher education reform in South Africa. Before 1910, the dominant influence was an adapted version of the Academic Tradition. The strong missionary influence required the active role of teachers in church work. "Early training programmes were directed towards improving the general education of students and equipping them with basic teaching skills and techniques" (Hartshorne 1992:220). The pupil-teacher system introduced in 1859 consisted of a three-year apprenticeship with four hours of special tuition each week. It is interesting to note that this kind of apprenticeship is a feature of both the Academic and Developmentalist traditions.

The reforms proposed by Loram in 1917 indicate a move away from the academic emphasis (Hartshorne 1992: 223). In the period before 1948 the early seeds of a reconstructionist tradition were sown. This is evident in the Eiselen Commission's findings that the deteriorating economic and political position of blacks had resulted in the increasing frustration of an

active, inquiring body of students which is responsive, as never before, to the stirrings of a new sense of freedom and self-determination everywhere present among emergent peoples today (Hartshorne 1992:231).

However, the "quality of person and spirit of commitment that were typical of many missionary institutions" and the role played in the development of leadership cadre in the black community must be understood within the context of conservatism and paternalism that was a product of that time (Hartshorne 1992:231). Mission education produced the kind of teacher that the reconstructionist tradition seeks. However, it was through the broad education of the whole manin the liberal, Christian tradition (Hartshorne 1992:231).

Once the Nationalist Party came to power in 1948, the progressive gains of the earlier period were replaced by a "prescriptive and paternalistic, if not authoritarian, approach to the preparation of student teachers" (Hartshorne 1992:229). The doctrines of Christian National Education (CNE) and fundamental pedagogics became the overriding influences in the professional training of teachers. This could be regarded as an example of the Social Efficiency Tradition in the narrowest sense. This view does not acknowledge the complex and uncertain nature of teaching and therefore does not encourage a deliberative orientation, but limits the "conception of teaching to telling" (Zeichner and Liston 1992:8).

Fundamental Pedagogics seeks the universality of an autonomous science through using the phenomenological method. This approach seeks to explain education by reference to the functions of its parts. There is the teacher, the child and the lesson. The teacher leads the child to adulthood through the lesson.

Hartshorne (1992:251) suggests that future teachers need to be prepared for "a democratic society". He emphasises the need for teachers to be "committed to a democratic, open, just and equitable future for all South Africans" and that teacher education should be "imbued with these ideas (Hartshorne 1992:254).

Conclusion

The perspective described above, is only one of many different possible interpretations of the history of education in South Africa. This framework can also be used to analyse and evaluate educational policy development processes. Participants are encouraged to start using this framework for analysis and discussion of history and policy proposals. In the next Northern Province Action Research Project workshop the four traditions will be used as a framework for reflection.

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Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Early Childhood Development (ECD) was neglected by the apartheid government, but the new education policy recognises ECD as a new developmental initiative. The National Draft White Paper for Education and Training states that, "The care and development of infants and young children must be the foundation of social relations and the starting point of a national human resource strategy."

The national education policy proposes a Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education which assumes a continuity in the education and development services for children from birth to nine years old. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) proposes a system of equating all teacher education and development in terms of national standards based on "learning outcomes". It also suggests the possibility of "unqualified" or "under-qualified" teachers getting recognition for the expertise acquired outside of "formal" courses.

Fragmentation in education

Apartheid has created fragmentation in education, particularly in the case of services for young children. In the Northern Province more than fifty different organisations are educating teachers, including colleges, ex-Department of Labour training centres, non-governmental organisations, universities, technical colleges and other private initiatives.

Although the new national education policy acknowledges the problem of fragmentation and gives broad direction for solutions, there are at present no coherent policy or mechanisms to co-ordinate the activities of these organisations. The NQF Bill 1995 is an important step, but it will be a long time before these ideas are implemented.

The broad policy context

The NQF is designed to overcome the divisions and limitations of the apartheid system of education. These include the racial divisions in the management, financing and provision of education and training; divisions between sectors of learning; and divisions between theory and application.

The NQF incorporates the following principles for a new national learning system described in the ANC Policy Discussion Document (1994):

- The right of the individual to lifelong learning,
- Integration of the education and training system to ensure maximum flexibility for horizontal and vertical mobility between different levels of the education and training systems, both formal and non-formal;
- Development of a national standards and qualification structure which will reflect the achievement of learning outcomes, defined at different levels from beginner to post-graduate, in terms of national standards
- Mechanisms that will enable learners to accumulate credits earned in the same or different learning contexts, which may be accumulated towards the achievement of national qualifications;
- Recognition of prior learning and experience;
- Promotion of career paths as an aid to mobility within all sectors of economic activity;
- Development of a national curriculum based on the integration of academic and vocational skills; and
- Democratic participation of stakeholders in the education and training system (IPET 1994:5)

Policy processes and positions in South Africa

During recent years there have been two broad parallel policy processes in South Africa. One has suggested major changes and the other has attempted merely to reform the existing system.

The National Draft White Paper came out of a number of progressive policy initiatives and consultative processes. One of the most important is the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) which published eleven reports in 1992, including the Teacher Education and Educare reports. The NQF was the product of a working group set up to redraft the 1981 Manpower and Training Act. In 1992 this task team was restructured to include representatives of the employer groups, state, trade unions and providers. The ANC and COSATU participated in these discussions through the trade unions.

At the same time, the policy process of the apartheid government has been carried forward. Old policies have sometimes been revised to accommodate some elements of the new progressive policy initiatives. For example, The Committee of Teacher Education Policy (COTEP) is a standing committee set up by the Committee of Head of Education Committees (CHED). In July 1995 it published Norms and Standards and

Governance Structures for Teacher Education. An explanatory document explains that

> The Norms and Standards do not constitute an immovable set of regulations. The intention is that there should be maximum institutional autonomy. COTEP meets at least four times a year and proposals for amendments and changes to the Norms and Standards may constantly be made (1995:2).

Mr Andre Le Roux explained to a meeting in Johannesburg on Friday 1 September 1995, that representation can be made through provincial representatives or directly to the national office.

Implementation of the new policy for education

While the 1994 Draft White Paper and IPET set out broad policy proposals, there are several difficulties blocking implementation of new ideas, particularly for ECD. By giving powers to both national and provincial legislatures to oversee education, the 1993 Interim Constitution has created confusion about responsibility. As a multi-disciplinary field, ECD involves a large number of different government departments and non-governmental organisations.

The guarantee that all civil servants keep their jobs has created a complex and time-consuming process of dismantling the old education departments and negotiating new positions in the nine provincial education departments. The 1995 education budgets were prepared by the previous government and do not provide for ECD as a new developmental initiative.

The new National Ministry of Education has adopted a two pronged approach to address both short term and long term curriculum change. The Department of National Education (DNE) and National Education and Training Forum (NETF) joint curriculum process prepared a short term strategy for the start of the academic year in 1995. The primary aim of these "field and phase committees" was to cleanse the syllabi of racist and sexist materials and to consolidate existing syllabi. Unfortunately, this has led some people to believe that revising the syllabus is enough.

The Draft White Paper recommends "a fully participatory process of curriculum development and training in which the teaching profession, teacher educators, subject advisors and other training practitioners play a leading role, along with academic subject specialists and researchers" (199415 par 12). While emancipatory action research projects at district

and provincial level provide an opportunity for realising this vision, current circumstances limit the capacity of provincial education departments to undertake this kind of initiative in 1995.

"Formal" and "non-formal"

Difficulties are compounded by the division between "formal" and "non-formal" training. The perspective and process of teacher education in formal institutions such as universities and colleges of education is generally very different from that in non-governmental organisations (NGO's). The formal institutions usually offer four- year PRESET courses for matriculants. Once qualified, these teachers primarily have been employed in state or state-aided schools and enjoy professional status as lower primary, pre-school or bridging class teachers. The NGOs, on the other hand, have generally offered INSET to trainees in community based or privately owned "educare centres", creches or home based programmes in disadvantaged communities. Some courses require Standard Eight for admission.

Since women with low levels of literacy are already taking care of young children, the aim is often to improve the quality of the existing service and so there is no academic admission requirement. Training agencies contracted by the ex-Department of Labour provide two or three week Pre-school courses to unemployed adults as a strategy for job-creation, but cannot offer INSET courses once trainees have found employment.

Accreditation

There are different systems of accreditation for formal and non-formal organisations. Formal institutions have been able to award certificates of competence that are recognised nationally. A system of voluntary accreditation for "non-formal" training was initiated by the South African Association for Early Childhood Educare (SAAECE). No more than ten NGO courses have been accredited in the past nine years and even organisations offering an accredited certificate can not necessarily guarantee any improvement in the earning capacity or status of the trainees who qualify for accredited certificates. However, some NGO funders have recently introduced accreditation as a requirement for funding training organisations.

The integration of the National Interim Working Committee (NIWC) and SAAECE in 1994 transferred responsibility for accreditation to the South

African Congress for Early Childhood Development (SACECD). Problems identified in the recent review of the system include the complicated and time consuming nature of the process and the fact that courses rather than organisations are accredited (Moodley 1995). The resignation of most of the original SAAECE Training Co-ordinating Committee responsible for accreditation has resulted in uncertainty about the future of this accreditation process.

The need for a coherent policy

Despite these difficulties, independent NGOs offering ECD teacher education have made significant progress towards an alternative model of teacher education to replace the model of fundamental pedagogics that has dominated teacher education for primary and secondary schooling in South Africa. There is great potential in the integration of experience and expertise developed in these two very different settings. However, the first step will require developing a shared understanding of the goals and strategies for ECD teacher education.

Several initiatives during 1995, such as the PRAESA conference, ELRU conference and SACECD training forum, have begun to address this issue of linking "formal" and "non-formal" ECD teacher education. However, without a framework and structure for enabling dialogue, individuals often talk past each other in a deadlock of conflict.

'Sometimes there is tension among practitioners especially when teachers trained by different kinds of organisations work together in the same school. In some areas qualified junior primary teachers have been seconded to community initiated pre-schools. NGO INSET trainees are often unable to implement the training as they work under senior teachers or supervisors who have been trained in a different approach. Some primary schools have initiated pre-school classes and sent the qualified junior primary teachers to an NGO for training. The NGO trainers have reported difficulty in changing the approach of these trainees. NGO-trained teachers in community initiated schools who have for years offered a dedicated service under extremely difficult circumstances are worried about being replaced by "formally" trained college graduates.

The future funding and control of services for young children is uncertain. No national inter-ministerial mechanism has been established to develop coherent policy to meet the needs of young children. The National Education Department has made 1995 a year of planning for the

reception class and has not clarified its future responsibility for redress services for children under five years old.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) school feeding programme has excluded most of the children in greatest need of supplementary feeding as they are under five years old and outside of the formal school system. The limited number of community controlled pre-schools that have been able to access feeding have not been able to cope with the influx of children.

Some people argue that the needs of children under five are distinctly different from the needs of children of five years and older. Many formally trained junior primary teachers, teacher educators and subject advisors suggest that the older group need a more subject orientated curriculum. This group insists that there should be a distinction between "Junior Primary" and " Educare" or "ECD". They argue that the reception class for five year olds should be part of the "formal school system" and children under five years old can remain the responsibility of "Educare" or "ECD".

Others argue that keeping the separation between children under five and over five creates many problems. Firstly, it does not question the current methods used in the primary school and assumes that five year olds can benefit from the same methods. Secondly, it does not recognise the needs of out-of-age children who will be entering the school system for the first time. Thirdly, it blocks the way for co-ordinated and integrated services for young children and could lead to continued neglect of services for children under five years old.

People working in educare centres for children between the ages of three and six are very worried. They know that the older children are the models for the younger children. In this mixed age group children learn from each other in the same way as they do in the family. The popular mixed age educare centre model cannot work as well if five year olds are moved to the reception class in primary schools.

The continued separation between "formal" and "non-formal" creates many other problems. Non-formally trained teachers are worried that they will not have professional status. Without this separation there is the possibility of teachers with different levels of education and different kinds of training, operating as a team under the supervision of senior teachers.

Enabling dialogue

The challenge in 1995 for teacher education in general and ECD in particular is to establish agreement about the "learning outcomes" for teacher education in terms of the proposed NQF. This is necessary to implement a national system of education that can guarantee national standards for qualifications that can be carried across geographic areas and different learning "pathways". In addition, it is clear that teacher educators can play a key role in reconstructing the system of education in the long term.

Encouraging reflective practice could be a mechanism for enabling teachers and teacher educators to make the critical shift from the perspective of fundamental pedagogics. Since it will undoubtedly be some years before the NQF is in place, sectors are being called on to initiate the process.

Stakeholder participation

Since 1990, ECD stakeholders have taken part in various policy initiatives. There has been pressure in the non-formal sector to form networks that can speak with one voice for stakeholders, particularly in terms of funding priorities. Stakeholders are offered a consultative role through the Education and Training Forums (ETF) and the proposed boards of the NQF. However, there are still many hurdles and obstacles in the way of democratic representation. These include structural difficulties arising out of the old compartmentalised view of education as well as limitations in terms of individual skills that support democratic practice. It will be necessary to learn from the lessons of the past. In the case of ECD, the unity building process since 1990, must be carefully analysed.

SAAECE was an organisation that was started by white nursery school teachers in 1939. Although its membership was open to all races, most of its members were in the main cities. There have been two major ECD consultative processes in South Africa since 1994, leading to the establishment of the National Educare Forum (NEF) and SACECD.

In 1990 the Independent Development Trust (IDT) called key ECD players to a meeting in Cape Town to ask how IDT funds should be used for ECD. The meeting decided that a wider consultation process was needed. This led to the formation of the national Educare Forum (NEF)

and provincial forums including the Transvaal Educare Council (TEC), which is in the process of establishing a Resource Base of training organisations.

Key ECD players were invited to another meeting in 1990 to discuss the establishment of a Chair of ECD at Wits University. The meeting decided against the proposal. At the end of the meeting NIWC was formed to address the need for an appropriate representative structure for ECD. At a conference in Cape Town in July 1993, NIWC and SAAECE agreed to integrate to form a new organisation. SACECD was launched with the first election of national officers bearers at a conference in Port Elizabeth in March 1994. In the August 25 Friday News Update, the SACECD national organiser reports that

> The recent tragedy experienced by the Northern Province and the resignation of two committee members has plunged the province into crisis. An emergency meeting is in the pipeline to decide on an Annual General Meeting to hold elections (1995:5)

The NQF states that all stakeholders should be consulted about learning outcomes, but this is more easily said than done. Who are the stakeholders? How will stakeholder groups be represented? Who will facilitate the consultation? What process of consultation will be followed? These are all important questions that still need to be answered.

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PRACTICAL HINTS FOR TEACHING CASES

The success of the case study method depends largely on the level of discussion and debate in the classroom (Meyer, 1989: 7). High-level debate requires that both participants and discussion leaders are well prepared.

Preparation

Students should come to class having read the case thoroughly and having identified the major issues in the case as well as the motivations of the people involved. Analysis and discussion of cases is a self-learning process, the benefits of which are maximised through rigorous debate, and it is therefore of utmost importance that participation in the discussion is high.

High-level participation can be encouraged by discussion leaders through the development of a learning contract within the classroom. A contract can encourage the development of what Christensen calls a "Learning Community" (1991: 19) which holds in high regard values such as civility, willingness to take risks

and appreciation of diversity. Mutual respect a nongst participants and between participants and discussion leader is imperative as a confrontational atmosphere in the classroom is sure to drive out discussion, particularly from those who may feel themselves to be less articulate. Students should feel free to defend their positions but without dogmatism, as there is seldom only one answer to a dilemma or one solution to a problem. Debate and cross-questioning should occur in an assertive, yet respectful and civil environment to be of any benefit (Meyer, 1989: 8). A contract with students can promote deep commitment, encourage accountability and mutual responsibility and build a sense of collegiality within the class.

Discussion leaders need to be even more prepared than the students. Not only do they have to be minutely familiar with the case but they should be able to anticipate the many responses which the students will have to the case. The discussion leader needs to be very clear what she wants to achieve out of the case discussion so she can steer the discussion in the right direction.

Facilitation

Good facilitation of case studies requires mastery of skills in questioning, listening and response. Discussion leaders can direct the debate in the right direction by asking the right questions. Development of competency in questioning is an intuitive process which can be refined only through experience. Christensen has suggested that in order to successfully elicit participation in the class, discussion leaders should develop an extensive repertoire of questions. He has developed a typology of questions (1991: 158) which are useful but by no means exhaustive. They include **open-ended questions** asking for general reactions to the case; **diagnostic questions**, asking for analysis of the problem in the case; **information-seeking questions**, asking for specific details; **challenging or testing questions**, forcing students to question their beliefs or arguments; **action questions**, requesting students to outline a plan of action; **prediction questions**, asking students to forecast consequences of solutions; **hypothetical questions**, asking students to think about possible outcomes of alternative actions, and **questions of generalisation**, asking students to step outside of the case to look at the broader themes raised in the case.

Listening skills are vitally important for good class discussion and need to be cultivated not only in the discussion leader but also in discussion participants. Good listening is not a passive activity but requires intense concentration as it is not merely about hearing but also about synthesising facial expressions, gestures and so on (Leonard, 1991: 138) in order to really get to the meaning of the communication. Discussion leaders need to listen to and assess a student's contribution on two levels: firstly for content and secondly, and perhaps more importantly, for continuity and value to the discussion. A good listener is able to build on the ideas of previous contributors, and students should be encouraged to respond to the previous speaker before moving the discussion in another direction. Class discussion can be stymied by poor listening skills on the part of both students and

discussion leaders. Leonard has identified a number of listening pathologies (1991: 140-145), such as:

- **The Mortar Lob:** When a student has prepared one single contribution to the discussion and spends the entire session trying to decide when the cue has been given to "lob" the "mortar" into the discussion. When the student thinks that the cue has arrived, the mortar is fired often without due regard for building on the previous speaker's comment. Discussion leaders, Leonard suggests, can deal with this pathology by encouraging students to provide a link between the new observation and the preceding discussion;
- **The Pit Bull:** When students within the group slip into a pattern of relentlessly pursuing one particular issue from one perspective only. When this happens, the pit bull listens only for the right opening to pursue his or her hobby horse and the rest of the class tunes out and stops listening. Leonard suggests that the remedy for this is to require the pit bull to present different points of view.

Discussion leaders are by no means exempt from listening pathologies, a few of which Leonard calls:

- **The Teacher's Express:** When a programme is billed as a discussion but is really a lecture, with the instructor "driving the class through a preordained discussion". In this scenario, the instructor does not listen to contributions carefully and students are inclined to feel that they are there to fill in the gaps rather than to think creatively;
- **Hiding the Ball:** When the instructor has in mind a preferred answer to a question and is waiting for this response before moving on to the next item in a preordained agenda. Students feel that they are being asked to play a guessing game and discussion becomes sterile;
- **Everything Goes:** When instructor and class "operate in the mode of false affirmation" out of an attempt to make members of the group feel safe and at ease. In this pathology, every comment is treated as though it were profound and appropriate, which can lead to the discussion degenerating into what Leonard describes as "a dying fish flapping on the docks".

Perhaps the most difficult of the three skills necessary for good facilitation is the art of responding to students' contributions. Response is the "art of the immediate". It is impossible to prepare a reponse in advance and yet responses have the most impact on the nature of the discussion (Christensen, 1991: 166). Appropriate responses depend very much on the lecturer's ability to read the mood of the group and to predict what effect certain responses will have on the individual and the group as a whole. The most important skill to acquire is to know how to challenge students without undermining their contributions. Often allowing an unhelpful or inappropriate response to hang in the air without reply can be very damaging to the self-esteem of the student. The challenge is to find constructive ways of forcing the student to think more rigorously about issues. This can be achieved by allowing the student another chance to reformulate his position or to

raise further questions on the issue.

Students who are used to traditional teaching methodologies will need to be encouraged to have a point of view and to express original thought. Students who are wary of participation should receive support and encouragement from the discussion leader even when making a point that is not particularly brilliant, although the need for sensitivity should be weighed against the need for students to learn to deal with criticism. "The ability to survive public criticism, after all, is an important professional skill, and one that must be learned" (Garvin, 1991: 296). It is surely better to learn this skill in a supportive environment than in a committee room. Public praise, however, can be as damaging to the learning process as public blame, as it reinforces the stereotype that there is only one right answer (Christensen, 1991: 170).

In order to be fair to the discussion process and to the class, discussion leaders need to be able to bring students who are going off at a tangent back to the main discussion without making them feel that their contributions were totally meaningless. The ability to balance fairness to the discussion process with fairness to the feelings of the individual student is a delicate act which depends very much on the intuition and sensitivity of the discussion leader. It is tempting to call on students who we know will move the discussion into deeper territory and to ignore those we feel may not contribute much, but it is important to be fair to all students in order to maintain that Learning Community mentioned earlier. Lecturers may be guided in this by Garvin's distinction that fair treatment does not necessarily mean standardised treatment, as students clearly have different needs. Different and appropriate treatment does not mean that different standards are being applied; it simply means that individuals are being treated in ways that acknowledge their differences as individuals and are being offered "equal opportunities to excel" (Garvin, 1991: 290).

Only the individual discussion leader will really know how to handle this delicate balancing act but this requires that they get to know their students better than is necessary in traditional classrooms. This is not to say that the lecturer need know personal details about the students' lives but rather that they be aware of dynamics between students and sensitive to individual levels of confidence.

Just as there is no single answer to a case, there is no one correct way of studying a case. The choice of approach will depend on the complexity of the case as well as on the size of the class. Regardless of the method chosen, study of a case should always start with independent, personal study of the material to ensure that each student is familiar with the issues.

As part of their preparation, students may be asked to apply their minds to specific questions outlined at the end of the case or simply to try and identify the major issues raised by the material. Individual preparation is an important and essential basis for wider class discussion.

It is often useful in larger classes or when discussing more complex cases to divide the class into smaller groups to discuss the case after individual preparation and before wider class discussion. This technique serves to give each student, particularly those who may feel reluctant to participate in large groups, the opportunity to partake in the discussion. These smaller groups may be asked to address particular topics or themes present in the case for subsequent participation in wider class discussion or for formal presentation. This technique may serve to lighten up the discussion when there are a large number of participants or when the case is complex and multi-faceted.

Glossary

admission criteria
Each organisation has its own rules for deciding which applicants to accept for any particular course. Specific criteria are used to decide whether applicants qualify to be admitted. Most organisations base their decisions on previous academic qualifications. Organisations offering INSET courses usually require that the students are currently teaching. It is also possible to use criteria that assess the potential rather than academic qualifications, for example, previous experience in community work or teaching.

assessment system
Various organisations have different ways of monitoring the progress of students. They have different criteria that are used to set required standards. Specific strategies are needed to evaluate whether each student is meeting the required standard.

facilitator, lecturer, trainer, teacher developer and adult educator
There are different terms used to refer to those people who are responsible for teacher development. Sometimes these terms can be used as synonyms, but at other times the organisation specifically chooses a term that best describes the style of education used by that organisation.

student and trainee
Organisations use different terms to refer to those people who are undertaking teacher development courses. These terms can be interchanged, but organisations might choose a term that matches its own teaching approach.

marking scheme or marking memorandum
Some organisations are concerned that assessment must be as objective as possible. Those organisations emphasise factual content in tests and assignments. A marking scheme or memorandum that lists all possible correct answers is usually prepared.

tests, examination and interviews
These three strategies usually use questions to test theoretical understanding or capacity to implement. Tests are usually shorter than examinations. Interviews are usually more flexible than tests and examinations.

certificate of competence
When a student meets all the requirements for completing a course successfully, a certificate of competence is usually issued.

letter or certificate of attendance
Some organisations give a letter or certificate of attendance on completion of a course. This merely states that the student has attended the required percentage of the course. It does not indicate whether or not the student has the capacity to implement the training that has been offered.

summative assessment
This kind of assessment is usually done at the end of a course to check whether the student has met the required standard.

formative assessment
This kind of assessment is usually undertaken throughout the course. It is used to monitor progress of individual students so that support can be given where necessary. It is also often used to help the adult educator evaluate and monitor her own progress.

PROGRAMME FOR ARP WORKSHOP 18 AND 19 JULY

Registration: Please return name tags before you leave

Folder: Agenda
Discussion outline and plan of workshop
Registration form Please complete immediately: **ADD organisation**
Case One and Two
Handout One and Two
Maps One, Two and Three
Directory
Evaluation form one per organisation before you leave, please

DAY ONE

Welcome and opening by Dr Aaron Motswoaledi

Introductions

Pairs of organisations introduce themselves
One person from each organisation introduces the other organisation

What do we mean by action research?

Brainstorm :Buzz in pairs and report back to plenary

What do we mean by reflective practice?

Brainstorm: Card game

Explanation about project Facilitator input

History
Problem of fragmentation in education
The National Qualification Framework (NQF)
The Action Research Project

1.00- 2.00 **LUNCH**

Explanation about project continued

Facilitator input and participant questions

Forming discussion groups for this workshop

The colour on your name tag indicates your group
You will be in the same discussion group for the two days

Rules for discussing all cases

Try to reach consensus
Ensure maximum participation

Two special roles that will be rotated so everyone gets a turn

1. timekeeper keeps discussion on track
2. participation observer makes sure everyone participates

Read and discuss Case one

Read case alone and then ask three participants to read it as a script

Reflection on Case one

Group discussion questions

Did all members of the group participate in the discussion?
Did any members of the group dominate discussion?

Did your group keep on track and reach consensus about all questions?
What helped your group in reaching consensus?
What hindered your group in reaching consensus?

Can you give the case writer suggestions for improving the case and questions?

Read and discuss Case two: Part one

DAY TWO

Read and discuss Case two: Part two

Reflection on Case two

Questions for discussion

Small group discussions

What do we mean by *open-mindedness, responsibility* and *wholeheartedness*?

How can these attitudes help a group to reach consensus?

What do we mean by *status*? How do some people use their status to force others to accept their opinions during group discussion? What other methods do people use to impose their decisions?

What do we mean by making decisions *in terms of reason?*
What do we mean by *caring*?

How can *caring* and *reason* be linked to reflection through dialogue?

What do we mean by *prejudgements?* What is the difference between *prejudgements* and *prejudice*?

Plenary discussion

Brief report back on questions discussed in small group. Discussion and input by facilitator using questions below as a guide.

Should *prejudgements* be hidden during group discussions? Why?

How can discussion in groups help us to rethink the way we see the world and judge practice?

What is the case method?

Why do we use the case method?

How do we use the case method?

What are the criteria for writing good cases?
How do we structure groups for discussion?

Preparation for collaborative exercise

Forming area groups

We need to form area groups with a communication centre in each

Explanation of tasks

TASK ONE: Collaboration with students

Ask your students to complete these statements:

I believe young children should .....
I believe young children should not .....

Collate their responses and send me a list of 10 belief statements about young children in your area.

Deadline: .....

TASK TWO: Write at least one case in your collaborative group

Observe in a classroom. It can be a pre-school, educare centre or any other service. Decide on the aim of your case. Write the case and prepare questions for discussion. Remember to disguise the identity of the situation on which it is based.

Try your draft on one or two readers. Edit the case and send it to me.

Deadline: .....

TASK THREE: Reading and discussion

Read handout one and two. Discuss these ideas with as many people as possible. Include your colleagues and students. If you hold a collaborative meeting. Please let me know in advance, so that I can attend if possible.

Try out new ideas and bring feedback to next meeting. Fax questions and feedback to me.

1.00-200 **LUNCH**

Preparation for next workshop

Negotiate dates and venue

Complete evaluation forms

Return name-tags

Departure

Appendix E 2

Northern Province Teacher Development Action Research
WORKSHOP ONE: REPORT AND EVALUATION

OVERVIEW

Implementation of the Northern Province Teacher Development Action Research Project started with the first two-day workshop on July 18 and 19 at Lobethal Conference Centre in the Marisane district. Eighteen organisations were represented by thirty-two participants. Some colleges may not have received confirmation of the venue and date, as they had been closed from May till the end of the winter holiday.

The representatives of one organisation arrived late on both mornings and left early on the first day. All other organisations participated in the full workshop.

At the end of the second day, five collaborative groups were formed. Participants agreed to undertake all three tasks described in the programme. The deadline negotiated was 22 August for the first two tasks that must be returned to the facilitator. The third task must be completed before the next workshop on 5 September.

The current provincial sub-regions guided the formation of collaborative groups. The Northern and North Eastern areas were combined to form one group consisting of 4 colleges and only one NGO. There is only one college in the Eastern group. Most participants rejected the request to join a collaborative group in a neighbouring area as a temporary solution to the problem of uneven distribution of different kinds of organisation in one geographic area. However, Giyani agreed to join the Eastern group for this exercise.

One organisation in each area agreed to be a communication centre. In future the facilitator will communicate with that centre by facsimile. Each organisation will have the responsibility of keeping in contact with its own communication centre. The communication centre is listed first and underlined on the following list.

GROUP ONE: Northern
Lemana College of Education; Ntataise (Levubu); Tshishimani

GROUP TWO: Eastern
Golang Kulani ELC; Ntataise (Letaba); Giyani College of Education; Ithuseng

GROUP THREE: Central
Mokopane College of Education; Bochum; Kwena Moloto; Pepps; Didibeng

GROUP FOUR: Western
Learning for All; Baobab; Transvaal college of Education; Church aid in Need (SACELE)

GROUP FIVE: Southern
SEP (Woz'obona); African Child Development Trust; Northern Province Education Department (Ex-Lebowa)

Accommodation

Accommodation was the most frequently mentioned problem, especially the cold and the lack of separate ablution facilities for men and women. Some participants suggested making improvements at Lobethal and others suggested moving to a new venue. In the spirit of compromise, Lobethal will be asked to make improvements *for the second workshop, but an alternative venue will be used for the third* workshop.

Lobethal have agreed to open two blocks, one for men and one for women. It *should be much warmer in September,* but participants are asked to bring warm clothing. Lobethal will be asked to provide more blankets and make other suggested improvements.

Any collaborative group willing to take responsibility for finding and arranging an alternative venue for the third workshop should please make enquiries about cost and availability and bring the information to the next workshop.

Evaluation format

Participants were asked to complete an evaluation form at the end of the workshop. Three open-ended questions were asked.

> What did you find most useful about the workshop?
> What did you find least useful about the workshop?
> What suggestions can you make for improving the next workshop?

Only one form was requested from each organisation. If different participants from the same organisation had divergent views, they were permitted to use two separate forms. Participants were not required to put their name on the form. Nineteen evaluation forms were returned. The names of the organisation were added to eleven evaluation forms. All responses have been collated into one report with no specific reference to any organisation.

The issues identified as most useful were interpreted as successes and the items identified as least useful were interpreted as problems. Problems were also inferred from suggestions. Where possible, the exact words have been quoted from the evaluation form. Instead of quoting every point made, the symbol ^ was used to indicate each time a similar view was expressed by another organisation.

Problems and suggestions of the facilitator have been integrated into the report and are printed in *Italics.* Additional tasks and questions have been included in the covering letter.

The report has been structured under these headings:

- Successes
- Problems and suggestions
- Questions

SUCCESSES

General

We enjoyed the experience! The whole exercise helped us to reflect on our work. The workshop was conducted like a real workshop.

Opening address

^ ^ ^ ^
^ ^

The opening address by Dr Motswoaledi, the Northern Province Minister of Education was useful and helped us understand the situation in our province.

Content and knowledge

^ ^ ^

We increased our knowledge of how pre-schools are run. Content was fine. Input on the case method, including writing cases and structuring discussion.

The focus on educating the communities for changes, accepting other people's contributions and networking in groups in our area has played a major role for our training centres.

Case method and group discussion

^ ^ ^ ^
^ ^ ^ ^
^ ^

The concept of action research and the case method. We understand more about making decisions by linking reason and caring through dialogue - not excuses. Discussion on open-mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness. Learning to use cases, which in turn generates healthy discussion. The cases were very useful and enabled participants to share their expertise and knowledge amicably in a cordial atmosphere. The case method is very good for solving problems. The workshop enlightened participants in the usage of the case method which educators can use in their different institutions to teach students. We can use these cases in our own training and give feedback.

Group work and the way participants were divided into groups. All participants must share ideas and end up reaching consensus. The small number of participants in each discussion group made it intimate and one could participate actively.

Networking and building an educative community

^ ^ ^ ^
^ ^ ^ ^
^ ^

A good opportunity to network more closely. I hope we will solve some of the problems in ECD through this process. Networking and getting to know each other. Finding out what happens in other fields than our own. We were able to establish relationships with other organisations and find out what they are doing.

The idea of meeting "formal" institutions. Getting together and examining the way of bridging "formal" and "non-formal" training. Bringing government, NGOs and institutions together for a common purpose, ECD. This closes the gap in lack of information and workmanship together.

Meeting representatives from other organisations. We feel happy about amalgamating the NGOs and government structures since all are the concerned groups. Non-government structures and the governmental structures were brought together with the aim of improving the child's education.

Awareness of the existence of different kinds of organisations concerned about the child. The opportunity to influence and be influenced by others in the field. The exposure to participants with approaches very different to our own.

This being a slow province in moving forward for creating a sense of direction due to mistrust, tribalism and lack of networking. The research project has helped to evaluate ourselves and ask ourselves who it is that we want to target. Opening up forums for regular meetings.

Facilitation

^ ^ ^ ^
^

The facilitator's style was excellent. The facilitator enabled participants to understand what she had to deliver. Involving participants in evaluation, feedback and planning, broadened ownership. The organiser's attitude was positive.

PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

Problem **Introductions and meeting other participants**

The collaborative groups could have been helped to find each other if the introductions were clearer and more informed. The introduction exercise was not very successful. It becomes tedious to hear people trying to represent organisations they don't really know about.

I didn't get to meet some participants during the whole workshop. There was not enough time for collaborative groups to plan before they left the workshop

Solution The first step of telling each other is great, but let each representative speak about the organisation. Two representatives could answer different questions about the organisation. ***TASK 1.***

Maybe some "informalish" evening sessions that would give participants room to express their aspirations, fears and where they are coming from. This might help to keep these issues out of the workshop itself and stop tangents. ***Facilitator response:*** *We need to express our feelings and opinions and not hide them. This is an important part of our dialogue and cannot be removed from the workshop, but must be included in a way that problems can be solved and differences can be negotiated.*

Problem **Plenary discussion and pace**

^ ^ The group report backs could have been more effective The report back in plenary after thorough discussion in small groups on the second day was boring and repetitive.

Solution *Participants should never be bored.* ***Facilitator suggestion:*** *Perhaps each participant could have a white card to hold up and raise any facilitation problem in the plenary group.*

Problem **Research ethics**

I expected we would be doing something related to the 3 to 9 years old child throughout the workshop but to my dismay we were only doing a research towards the facilitator's masters degree.

solution *This raises important questions about the ethics of research in general and Action Research in particular.* ***TASK 3.*** The work done in workshops should be documented and participants should get copies. ***Facilitator response:*** *This will be done. This evaluation is the first part of that documentation..*

Problem
^ ^ ^

Inclusivity - inviting other organisations

The workshops should be as inclusive as possible
Most of the colleges were not represented. Technikons are presently training teachers and sending them to our agency for field placement. NGOs and government structures should get closer and work hand in hand to promote the educare successfully

One organisation brought three participants to the workshop.

Solution

More publicity to a greater/wider audience. Perhaps holding smaller workshops in different locations. Although this might be expensive, it would be a good way of networking. Then holding one-day workshop and follow-ups.

Contact more teacher training colleges and interested organisations, such as associations of educare agencies; lecturers involved in pre-school education; nurses who are community oriented and would like to affiliate with educare and many are keen.

Facilitator response: *Each organisation can not bring more than two representatives to the workshop. Representatives can report back to their colleagues and include them in collaborative exercises and group meetings.*

Problem

Inclusivity - content

The content of the workshop was not most useful. Nothing concerning the Junior work was addressed and no means of establishing the link was ever talked about. There should be more activities to include Junior Primary work. The content should deal with 3 to 9 years old child and we should discuss the link between pre-school and primary school education.

We should know how the NGOs are operating in order to make a combined effort to improve the young child's education. We need more information on the National Qualifications Framework.

Solution

Cases concerning children from 6 to 9 years old should be constructed.

Facilitator response: *Collaborative groups have been asked to write cases about the settings in which their students teach. Groups can choose the context and focus of the case. The links between pre-school and primary school will become clearer as the process unfolds. The whole action research process is the link. The aim is to establish the link through building an educative community. The workshops and collaborative exercises are an opportunity for participants to meet with NGOs and find out more*

Problem

Inclusivity - attitudes

Many NGOs are negative towards government institutions, i.e. colleges of education. Their attitude was negative and hostile. It was like they felt "this was their workshop"; "they know best"; "they do better". This was not helpful for collaboration and co-operation. However, the organiser's attitude was good and positive.

It was quite terrifying to interact with Teacher Educator's from Colleges and through this to realise how closed, small-minded and shortsighted they are. This important realisation would not have occurred in such a stark and unavoidable manner, if not for the exposure facilitated by the workshop.

Some college participants working in a specific field, took discussions off track by repeatedly saying, "We don't deal with pre-school", instead of trying to understand the links. Little or no sharing by formal institutions.

Solution

Only general primary school teacher educators or curriculum developers should participate. ***Facilitator response:*** *The intention of the workshop is to be as inclusive as possible. The collaborative exercises and facilitator follow up is intended to solve these problems and ensure that the content is relevant and that participants are able to relate the project to their own situations.*

Collaborative group learning requires a common understanding or agreement about the answer or completion of a task. When used effectively it can encourage divergent thinking or group differences channelled through a process of "intellectual negotiation". The need for consensus creates pressure to take ideas seriously, to modify and revise them in the light of other ideas and to recognise and tolerate differences. This can only be done if the value systems and beliefs that underlie differences are recognised.

Problem

Accommodation

^ ^ We need a comfortable place for accommodation. The accommodation was poor: It was cold. Men and women did not have their own facilities.

^ ^ ^ ^ Fine, not bad, but could be improved, for example toilets, bathing facilities, cold food, cold hall and phone.

Information about special diet needs of participants was not requested before the workshop, but a special effort was made to prepare vegetarian meals.

Find an alternative venue

- Look for alternative accommodation with better facilities in Pietersburg town or Magoebaskloof.
- The accommodation must be at least at the centre, which is Pietersburg, e.g. The Ranch Hotel.
- Another suggestion: Wayside Lodge, Tzaneen.
- Workshops should be rotated to different areas in the Northern Province.
- Ask participants to pay a registration of R40 per person to supplement funds already raised. Ask each project to contribute R30 for a slight improvement.

Use another venue in October

A more comfortable venue will be used for the third workshop in October. Participants will not need to pay for accommodation. Would a collaborative group take responsibility for finding and arranging an alternative venue?

Make improvements at Lobethal for September workshop

Lobethal have agreed to open two blocks so that men and women will have separate toilet and washing facilities. A letter will be sent to Lobethal explaining participants problems with the accommodation. We could ask for a mat in the hall and extra blankets, if it is still cold.

General improvements

Participants needing special diets, should inform the facilitator immediately, so that this can be arranged for future workshops.

Participants will be given the venue phone number in case of emergencies.

Problem
^ ^ ^

Framing questions

Some questions constrained discussion because they were closed.

Solution

Questions should be open-ended and close to reality.
More brief, concise and open ended questions that avoid ambiguity.
Case one: The problem was discussed in plenary. The questions will be reframed in the next edit. Reflections on structuring discussion: These questions were discussed in the evaluation on the first evening and were reframed early the next morning. A revised hand-written copy of questions was made for each group before discussion started on the second day. The document will be edited for future use.

Problem

Planning and administration

The aim was not very clear from the beginning. The rush towards closing the workshop. *Important decisions* were taken towards the end when some participants had lost concentration. Both cases were negative. We would appreciate it if pages were stapled together correctly!

What I found least useful was the debate on demarcation and how the educative community is encouraged.

The facilitator did not have time to get to know all participants as she carried too much administrative responsibility during the workshop

The date of the October workshop has not been finalised.

Solution

The aim of the workshop should be very clear right from the start. The pace should be set right from the beginning in order not to rush through. Other configurations for small group discussions. **Facilitator response:** *For the first workshop it was necessary for each group to complete the full cycle together. This suggestion will be considered when planning future groups.*

Date should be in the middle of the month to avoid traffic problems at the end of the month.

Problem
^ ^ ^
^
^

No problems

Our organisation found nothing that was "least useful". Not quite certain about anything that was least useful, maybe next time. Since the most useful aspects I described above formed the crux of the workshop, there was nothing not useful.

QUESTIONS

Question How does this action research project fit into the whole aim, i.e. the future of education and how can we help in the process of integration?

Answer *Implementing the National Qualification Framework (NQF) will require that stakeholder groups reach agreement on learning outcomes for each level in different career paths. In order to reach agreement, it is necessary to develop a model for facilitating dialogue. This research project aims to develop and test a model for enabling dialogue.*

Government personnel are not yet in place to take start implementing the NQF and other new developmental initiatives. The educative community we build in the Northern Province will be able to become part of the new consultative structures once they are in place.

The new education policy recognises Early Childhood Development (ECD) as a new developmental initiative and identifies the need for government and NGO partnerships. This means that NGOs and government organisations need to meet and find ways of working together.

Previously colleges and NGOs operated individually and in isolation. It is now necessary for all teacher development organisations to become part of the new integrated system of education. This project aims to prepare the foundation for co-operation and collaboration.

The rationalisation of colleges can be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat. There is enough work to be done, the challenge lies in finding the best way to serve the ideals of the new education system.

PLAN FOR WORKSHOP 5 and 6 September

Registration: Please return name tags before you leave
Please choose a room on the accommodation register.

Folders:

There are three kinds of folder. The first and second sets of documents are to be shared by one organisation. The third set of documents in a file are to be used by the entire collaborative group. Set up a lending system and choose someone to be lending monitor till the next workshop.

Additional copy: Agenda
Discussion outline and plan of workshop
Case three
Case four
Contacts directory (update)
White card for asking facilitative questions during a discussion

Organisation: *One copy of each document in "additional" folder*
Evaluation form one per organisation before you leave, please
Handout Three
Practical hints for teaching cases Extract from Schutte (1995)

Collaborative group library:
Two copies of Gauteng ECD Task team report
Two copies of Gauteng Open Learning Task team report
Invitation to Anti-Racist workshop

Products of this Action Research Project

In addition to the dissertation in the form of a case study about building an ECD educative community in the Northern Province, the action research project should produce the following outcomes:

- a database and directory of organisations offering ECD teacher education in the Northern Province;
- the introduction of reflective practice and collaborative group learning techniques to teacher educators;
- Collaborative partnerships between different kinds of organisations in the Northern Province; and
- a collection of South African ECD teaching cases.

IMPORTANT DECISIONS

Date of next workshop: .....
Venue for next workshop: .....

DAY ONE

Welcome and introduction

Two minute presentation by each organisation
Forming discussion groups by choosing a coloured sticker.

Plan for the second workshop and collaborative exercises

History of ECD and the problem of fragmentation in education
The National Qualification Framework (NQF)
The Action Research Project: anticipated products (see page 1)
The Four Traditions of Reform: Handout two
Questions about the evaluation.
Feedback on additional questions.
General feedback on first collaborative exercise.
Clarification of tasks during and after the second workshop (see page 1)

Sorting belief statements using the Four Traditions as a framework

Part one:
Each group will be given a set of 24 belief statements.
Take one belief statement out of the envelope. Read it aloud and check that all participants agree about the meaning of the statement. Decide into which of the four traditions it best fits and place it in the appropriate envelope.

1.00- 2.00 **LUNCH**

Part two:
Take all the belief statements out of one envelope. Decide whether your group agrees with the classification of the previous group. Make a list of all classifications with which you disagree. Give your reasons.

Reflections on using the four traditions as a framework for evaluation

1. What did you learn from the exercise?
2. Does one have to choose one tradition and stick to it, or can one combine traditions?
3. Can any traditions be combined, or do some complement each other better than others?
4. Which traditions of reform are most needed in this period of South African history? Why?

Groups read and discuss case three

If you do not complete the discussion during the workshop, discuss it with colleagues and students. Make suggestions for improving the case and questions.

18.00 **SUPPER**

19.00 Evaluation meeting or free time

SECOND WORKSHOP TASKS

1. Suggest "learning outcomes" for this action research project. Time has been allowed during the workshop, so this task can be handed in at the end of the workshop.

   Deadline met: 6 September (OR)
   Additional time till: .....

2. Describe the system of assessing students in your organisation. Give as much detail as possible. Include copies of assessment forms and examples of tests or any other methods that you use.

   Deadline agreed: .....

3. Write a case in a collaborative group of two or three different kinds of organisations. Choose a problem and prepare a case and questions to focus group discussion. Some collaborative groups were not able to write a case before the second workshop. Now that participants have had more experience with the case method, all should be able to meet this requirement. All incomplete cases will be returned with comments.

   Deadline agreed: .....

4. Read and discuss case three and four and handout three with your colleagues and students.

   Deadline: third workshop

Rules for discussing all cases

Try to reach consensus. Ensure maximum participation. Do not hide opinions and prejudgements. Remember the two special roles that will be rotated so everyone gets a turn. The timekeeper keeps discussion on track. The participation observer makes sure everyone participates. Read: Schutte (1995) 'Practical Hints for teaching cases' in Changing Public and Development Management Kenwyn: Juta

Revision

How can *open-mindedness, responsibility* and *whole-heartedness* help a group to reach consensus?
How can *caring* and *reason* be linked to reflection through dialogue?
How can discussion in groups help us to rethink the way we see the world and judge practice?
What is the case method?
Why do we use the case method?
How do we use the case method?
What are the criteria for writing good cases?
How do we structure groups for discussion?

DAY TWO

Groups read and discuss case four

Plenary reflection on case four and research ethics

Questions for discussion

1. What do we mean by *informed consent*? Have all participants been given a credible and meaningful explanation of the research intentions? Is all participation in this research project based on informed consent?

2. Has the researcher succeeded in achieving goodwill and co-operation from participants? How has this been done? How could it be improved?

3. What do we mean by *anonymity* and *confidentiality*? In what way is this important in this research?

4. What are the participants' expectations about the dissemination of findings?

5. What are participants' expectations about any possible publications that arise out of this research?

6. Have the actions of the researcher been guided by *open-mindedness, whole-heartedness* and *responsibility*? How can the researcher improve her behaviour?

Assessing the "learning outcomes" of this action research project

Work in your collaborative group. Hand your answers to the facilitator before you leave the workshop.

Participants in this action research project will not receive certificates.

1. If it were a certificated course, how would you assess the "learning outcomes"?
2. What criteria could be used to assess new understanding, skills and expertise acquired by participants?
3. What strategies could be used to measure these criteria?

Complete evaluation forms Return name-tags

Departure

Appendix F 2

NORTHERN PROVINCE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT
WORKSHOP TWO: EVALUATION REPORT

Organisations were asked to complete one evaluation form each. Fifteen organisations attended the workshop. One organisation left at the end of the first day and did not complete the evaluation form. Fourteen forms were returned. Two organisations added their names, the rest were anonymous. The same format as in workshop one was used. Ten organisations indicated that there were no problems.

Please note these additional questions and tasks:

1. Who will represent your organisation at the last workshop? **Before 3 October,** please send names of representatives or apologies.

2. Are all participants in group four satisfied with the editorial changes made to case three by the researcher? If not, please give details of corrections to be made. Are there any additional improvements that participants in group four **and** other groups would like to suggest? Please send suggestions.

3. There were no names on the newsprint provided for participants to indicate their interest in planning the next workshop. Is there anyone who forgot to write his or her name? Please let me know immediately.

4. Please would participants wishing to help with administrative tasks in the next workshop inform me before 1 October and indicate the task you would like to do. Here is a list of the help I need:

- Registration and handing out documents
- Accommodation: distributing and collecting keys
- Counting number of participants at meals and tea
- Collecting information for the data base
- Tape recording

5. Please will each organisation bring one activity made from waste to the next workshop, It should be designed to hold the attention of a child between the ages of three and nine.

Please contact me by fax if you need any assistance with your collaborative tasks or have any queries.

This report is organised under the following headings:

- Successes
- Problems and solutions
- Different perspectives and debates.

SUCCESSES

General
^^^^^

Overall, we found this workshop even more engrossing than the first because we were more skilled , perhaps in using the case method. A really worthwhile two days. We find these workshops useful because they deal with the problems we are facing, such as the gap between formal and non-formal education. The workshops are an attempt to unite these structures and promote networking. It meant a good deal to us. This has been well run, everything has been covered.

case method: general
^^^^^^^^

The case method is very revealing, helpful and works well for group discussion. It stimulates discussion and understanding amongst the different groups, revealing different perspectives and opinions. New ideas come up and are highlighted. Participants had the opportunity to do their own research to write a case. The effectiveness of group-work in a workshop.

Case 4: Accreditation
^^

The cases, especially the one on accreditation was very challenging and revealing. Criteria for accreditation - useful to us.

Four Traditions
^^^^^

Work on the four traditions - far more penetrating; useful to us. The exercise of using the four traditions to categorise belief statements was: exciting; very interesting and made us reflect on our own organisation. I was able to know more about the four traditions in relation to beliefs about young children.

Content
^^

This time we have learnt at least the ECD and the responsibilities entailed in the course from the teacher's (researcher's) side. In our discussion we also learnt how important the community is, and its involvement in the project or research. I have now clarified on collaborative group and know what is the role I should play in disseminating the information to the relevant people outside. *Facilitator questions: What information will be disseminated? Who are the relevant people?*

Collaboration and meetings ^^^^^^	Meeting with the other institutions. Sharing ideas with different organisations, which have different educational approaches. Informal discussion with other people from different organisations/colleges. I was able to know other people who for certain important reasons failed to attend the first workshop. The workshop involved both NGOs and government institutions. Knowing about other organisations. The idea of collaborative work.
Documents ^	Written information is very useful.
Preparation ^	Excellent
Accommodation	There was a vast improvement in accommodation - separation of male and female - use of bathroom.

PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Four traditions: exercise	I was frustrated during the exercise of categorising belief statements, it was clear that participants did not really understand each of the traditions and ended up guessing. ***Facilitator response**: The intention of the exercise was to highlight the need to read Handout Two very thoroughly. Participants should read Handout Three and reread Handouts One and Two. Cycles of reading, discussion, rereading and further discussion help us to get to grips with difficult and unfamiliar concepts.*

Plenary reflection on case three

The plenary discussion on case three and ethics was not very useful. While it raised questions, it was not very easy for people to report in plenary anything to do with the researcher. It was all positive because the researcher is open-minded, whole-hearted and responsible, but what would have happened if she was not? ***Facilitator response:*** *The intention of this session was merely to raise the questions. Participants were offered an opportunity to give feedback anonymously in the evaluation forms. One of the challenges of the process, is to encourage constructive criticism. In addition to the role of the researcher, the session also addressed questions that must be decided in the next workshop.*

Perhaps we can discuss other ways of tackling the facilitation of the plenary reflection on case three.

Perhaps "participation" is the main problem with the plenary sessions. In the next workshop we can try a technique that ensures that some participants do not dominate. This might also help small group discussions where this is a problem. Look out for the "Five stones strategy!"

Plenary seating/ plan for tables

Try setting out the tables like this, so that everyone can see each other and the facilitator.

librar, idea

The library idea could be a problem with organisations in each group being geographically far apart. Time will tell!

Timeframes

The time for discussion in groups must be extended. More time needed for report back from group discussions. ***Facilitator response:*** *Unfortunately there is only limited workshop-time in which to complete this project. More time can be allocated to the group discussion, but since the process is more important than the product, reporting back to plenary on discussions in small groups is not always necessary.*

There should be enough time interval between workshops for the completing of tasks.

Improve-met

Since we missed the first workshop, we are still going to find out what needs improvement.

Venue	We hope that in future the venue will be rotated to different areas. ***Facilitator response:*** *As you will remember, participants agreed to hold the last workshop at Lobethal. This means that we will not rotate. However, this is something that participants could consider, if the group meets after the end of this action research project.*
The way forward	What do we do after the October workshop to try and solve the problems we are facing? ***Facilitator response:*** *Time will be allocated in the last workshop to discuss the way forward. Participants should come prepared with suggestions.*
help for the facilitator ^^	The facilitator should delegate some responsibilities, such as registration, distribution of materials. ***Facilitator response:*** *See questions at the top of this report.* The facilitator could consult other people who are knowledgeable about the topic to help her structure some of the cases. ***Facilitator question:*** *Who is knowledgeable? How does one become knowledgeable?*
participant preparation	If it is possible, send materials to be used in the next workshop to participants before the workshop. ***Facilitator response:*** *The time limits makes this impossible, but if you read this evaluation report and reread the documents from the first two workshops, this will help you to prepare.*
Department support	The facilitator must take some recommendations from the participants representing government to the Minister of Education so that colleges can be able to embark freely on this project as they would have been mandated. ***Facilitator response:*** *The fax was sent to The Superintendent General, Prof. Z M Chuenyane on 9 September asking that participants be helped with transport and two days to attend the last workshop and an additional one or two days to complete collaborative exercises . Letters were also sent to each of the college rectors as requested.*

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES OR DEBATES

ethics discussion ^^

Because I had absolutely no problems with the "master's" question, I found the research ethics discussion a bit of a waste of time, even though I know it was necessary for others. I had no problems about ethics.

I found the fact that the problem was tackled as a learning experience very useful. Learning more about research ethics and practically applying them. We learnt and understood the research ethics.

Participation in discussion ^^

People interrupted others who were speaking in the group discussions. Some people talked a lot without giving others a chance to air their views in group discussions.

The discussions about cases was most useful because in our group, openmindedness and taking turns created a healthy atmosphere.

Workshop plan

The members of the discussion group should change for each discussion session. ***Facilitator response:*** *This is a difficult decision. Changing groups helps participants get to know more people during the workshop. However, keeping to the same groups, helps continuity from one discussion to the next. The compromise has been to change groups for each workshop. Choose a group with participants you have not yet met for the last workshop.*

There must be something on ECD and junior work. How does the NGO involve the colleges in this in the best interests of the child. What teachers in the junior primary must expect from pre-school kids and visa versa (at least one hour deliberation on this). The agenda should also include the need for a common approach in all pre-schools and junior primary although there can be some slight differences according to the environment of the school. ***Facilitator response:*** *These are very complex issues and can not be decided in a short discussion. The whole workshop process is intended to help prepare participants for these discussions that will be facilitated by the NQF.*

Continue as first workshop. We are satisfied with the whole system of procedure. We were satisfied with all.

Collaboration

Focusing on comments in the last evaluation report. I would like to indicate that the accusations on college lecturers that they are narrow minded and closed is unfounded. The commentator proved to be suffering from inferiority complex and that I think is not the fault of the lecturers from college. If we still have people of such minds in your so-called NGOs then I am afraid your aim or wish of our working together is infutility. We would rather work with people of our calibre and standard of education if that's what you wish.

PLAN FOR WORKSHOP 10 and 11 October

Registration:
Please **mark the attendance register and collect your name tag.**
Choose a discussion group for this workshop by sticking a new coloured sticker over the old one on your name tag. Try to join a group with at least two people that you still do not know well.
Choose a room on the accommodation register.
Read the final questionnaire in your folder and start answering questions when you have time during the workshop. If you do not understand any question, ask a colleague or the facilitator. On the newsprint headed Plenary Discussion list questions needing discussion.
Make suggestions for possible dates of 1996 meetings on newsprint.

Documents:
Each organisation will be given one folder with a complete set of the following documents:

Agenda
Discussion outline and plan of workshop three
Document analysis one
Document analysis two: Documents A, B, C and D
Scrap paper for asking facilitative questions during a discussion
Final questionnaire to be completed by each participant
Evaluation form to be completed by each organisation
Glossary

Each additional representative will receive the following documents:

Agenda
Discussion outline and plan of workshop three
Document analysis one
Document analysis two: Documents A, B, C and D
Scrap paper for asking facilitative questions during a discussion
Final questionnaire to be completed by each participant

Rules for document analysis in groups
Try to reach consensus. Ensure maximum participation. Do not hide opinions and pre-judgements. Remember the two special roles that will be rotated so everyone gets a turn. The timekeeper keeps discussion on track. The participation observer makes sure everyone participates.

Strategy for increasing participation in small group discussions and plenary
At the start of each session, each participant will be given five tokens: each time a participant speaks, a token must be returned to the collection container. Once a participant has used all five tokens, she must wait until all participants have used all five tokens before getting another turn to speak.

DAY ONE

Welcome, introduction and presentation of activities

10.00 -11.00 Each organisation will have two minutes in which to present its activity made from waste. Those organisations that have forgotten to prepare this homework task will have time in the evening to make an activity from the waste provided. If necessary tools are not available, the participants can explain how they would make and present the activity.

Document analysis one using the four traditions as a framework

11.30 - 12.00 **Part one: Comparison of five documents**

Read all five suggestions and then use questions one to three to guide discussion. Write group answers on newsprint.

12.00 - 13.00 **Part two: Classifying strategies using the four traditions**

Cut document F into separate strips with one item on each. Divide a piece of newsprint into five sections. Label four sections with each of the traditions of reform in teacher education. Label the fifths section Not an outcome. Start by taking out all items that are not "outcomes" and sticking them onto the appropriate section of the newsprint. Discuss each of the other items and stick each one under the most appropriate heading on the newsprint.

13.00- 14.00 **LUNCH**

Document analysis two using the four traditions as a framework

14.00 - 15.3 0 **Part one: Document A**

Read the descriptions of four fictitious organisations. Look at each element and decide which tradition of reform it best represents. Remember that one organisation might have strategies from different traditions.

15.30 - 16.00 **TEA**

16.00 -17.00 **Part two: Documents B, C and D**

Work in pairs. Allocate one of these three documents to each pair. Discuss the elements in terms of the four traditions.

17.00 - 17.30 **Part three: Pairs report back in plenary on documents B, C and D**

18.00 **SUPPER**

19.00 *Free time, voluntary evaluation meeting, or making activities*

DAY TWO

Presentation of activities and discussion about making equipment
Plenary discussion about equipment making as an outcome of ECD teacher development.

Suggested questions:

What have you learned from the presentation of activities?
Why do some organisations include making equipment in their teacher development courses?
How can the capacity to make equipment be assessed?
How do we decide what level of skill in equipment making is necessary at level one (assistant teacher) or level two (teacher)?

Reflections on assessment strategies

1. What did you learn from discussion about assessment strategies and learning outcomes?
2. Which strategies of assessment are most useful for ECD teacher development in this period of South African history? Why?
3. What is the relationship between assessment strategies and "learning outcomes"?

Complete workshop three evaluation forms
Each organisation is asked to complete one form. This form asks participants to evaluate workshop three only and can be submitted anonymously.

Complete final questionnaire
Each participant is asked to complete one final questionnaire. This form will be used to evaluate the complete action research process, including all three workshops and the collaborative exercises. Information will also be used to plan the way forward. Participants are asked to give their names as this will help the facilitator follow up. If there are questions in the questionnaire that you would rather answer anonymously, please use the evaluation form. If you feel strongly that you do not want to be identified, then you may hand in your questionnaire anonymously.

12.00 - 13.00 **Plenary: Summary, way forward and closure**

Possible additional provincial workshop in 1996:
Suggested date:.....

First 1996 area meetings: Suggested dates:.....

13.00 -14.00 **LUNCH**

Departure Return name-tags, evaluation forms, questionnaires and keys

Products of this action research project

What has been achieved so far?

- **a database and directory of organisations offering ECD teacher education in the Northern Province:** contact information about organisations has been captured on access database. Participants will make suggestions in the final questionnaire for the format of the directory.

- **the introduction of reflective practice and collaborative group learning techniques to teacher educators:** participants will have discussed cases and analysed documents using the four traditions as a framework.

- **a collection of South African ECD teaching cases:** All complete and original cases submitted by November 10 will be typed, edited and copied. These will be made available to ECD teacher educators. In the final questionnaire, participants will suggest strategies for acknowledgement and confidentiality.

- **a collection of documents which focus discussion about assessment and learning outcomes:** The first set of documents focuses on the outcomes of the Northern Province action research project. The second set focuses on outcomes for ECD teacher development.

- **collaborative partnerships between different kinds of organisations in the Northern Province:** some area groups have made more progress than others. Collaborative groups take time to build. Some participants are still experiencing difficulties. All organisations have agreed that open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility are necessary for building an educative community. The challenge lies in negotiating individual differences in the interests of the common good. In the final questionnaire, participants will suggest plans for the way forward. Future collaboration will be the responsibility of each participating organisation. Tentative plans will be discussed in the final plenary session.

- **glossary:** Some of the key ECD and action research concepts and terms have been explained. This may be especially useful where different kinds of organisations use different terms. Please suggest additional terms that should be explained.

Appendix G 2

NORTHERN PROVINCE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT
WORKSHOP THREE: EVALUATION REPORT

MOST USEFUL	
General ^^^^	Thanks for this wonderful opportunity. I wish you good luck for your degree. We enjoyed the workshop. Thanks. Everything was well run. There was adequate time and we could discuss in full without pressure. We felt that we were able to get to grips with many of the concepts. I enjoyed this workshop because there was a smaller number of participants. It was easier to spend time with everyone. The environment was very conducive to growth. The workshop content was okay and impressive.
Document analysis ^^	The assessment strategies of different organisations. Analysis of assessment procedures. Looking at different assessment procedures analysing learning outcomes.
Understanding change	Seeing what needs to change in government organisations
Four Traditions	I finally feel that I understand the four traditions reasonably well. That the four traditions have their place but it becomesdestructive if one-sided.
Collaboration Co-operation ^^^^	Sharing ideas and views was useful and beneficial. The realising of common goals between NGO and GO. A harmonious spirit has evolved between participants. Working together and uniting efforts towards change (NGO and government). Working with some people over three workshops. Working together practically on projects the fact that there is a general consensus about the future, collaboration and the need for sharing ideas for the better future of our kids on a broader basis. Establishment of a working relationship with ECD organisations, both government and non-government. was able to know more about other organisations and I was impressed to find that we have a lot in common. The artificial barriers between NGOs and government organisations were broken.
Ideas for making activities ^^	Sharing ideas about activities for young children. The openness of NGOs in sharing ideas about toy making for tiny tots.Ideas for making toys and learning how to use them.
Attitudes/ action research	Skills in action research project, such as responsibility and open-mindedness.
Group discussions ^	The collaborative group discussions. The ability to make members of a group share ideas instead of some dominating the discussions.
Facilitation	The way in which the facilitator handled the plenary sessions.
Accommodation	Menu is very good.

LEAST USEFUL	
Information	Not enough information on government colleges and how they run. It is therefor difficult to assess their problems, sensitivities and lack of attendance.
General ^^^^^	I really did not find anything that wasn't useful. None. All was good, nothing to report.
SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT	
Planning ^^^	More time for plenary discussion. More time is needed between workshops in order to complete homework tasks. Because of the limited time of the workshops, it could be much better if participants who indicated to grace the workshop could be given some documents to read and discuss before the workshop, to solicit contributions from their colleagues, hence this could further enrich the findings of the workshop. To take note that smaller groups work faster - but that's not your fault.
Accommodation ^^^	The venue should be changed for the next workshop, that will make the project to be established because more people will start knowing about what the project is doing then they will participate in numbers. Accommodation is not suitable that is another reason which makes the people to withdraw from the workshop. People also need places where they can refresh their minds after the workshop e.g. where they can buy refreshment, cold drinks etc. but here is very remote. Mosquitoes were a problem at this workshop. Remind everyone to bring mosquito repellent to Lobethal in summer. Accommodation involves some health risks.
Input	More input re methods for ECD and then further application in primary.
Planning and facilitation	Different facilitators for each session to give opportunity and change tempo. *Groups were asked to choose a different facilitator and participation observer for each session.*

Appendix H 1

ALL THE CASES PRESENTED AT THIS WORKSHOP ARE FICTITIOUS. THEY HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED TO FOCUS DISCUSSION ON PROBLEMS OR ISSUES.

CASE ONE: Changing unhelpful ways and habits

There was even more excitement than usual in the conversation of Mathokelo, MamLidia and Thandi this Wednesday as they walked together to the bus stop after the workshop. MamLidia had taught standard one until she was asked two years ago to start a pre-school class attached to the primary school which employed her. MaThokelo was a retired primary school teacher who had decided to start a private educare centre in a hut in her own yard. Thandi had been looking after her sister's two children and a neighbour's child, when the Induna asked her to start a community crèche.

All three teachers are attending an Early Childhood Development course at Jamludi Development Project. It is an INSET course. INSET is short for in-service education and training. All students have to be working with children in order to attend. Workshops take place each Wednesday, and students are expected to put what they learn into practice straight after each workshop.

This conversation took p[illegible], after a workshop about using pictures to stimulate children's' conversation.

Thandi — I really enjoyed the workshop today. I'd never thought I could use pictures from the newspaper to get children talking.

MaThokelo — Yes, but the big problem will be finding card to paste the pictures onto. And if we don't put contact paper over the pictures they won't last.

MamLidia — I once visited a teachers' centre in Johannesburg. They had a machine that teachers could use to cover cards and posters. I wish we had that here!

Thandi — It makes a lot of sense to get children talking to each other. I'd never thought about the difference between repetition and meaningful communication. I always found that children learned the words very quickly when they repeated them.

MaThokelo — That's true, but remembering words is very different from learning to use language. Some children are very good at repetition and chorus, but when you ask them a simple question, they look blank.

MamLidia I'm looking forward to trying all the new ideas, but I'm worried about the parents. They liked my old ways, how can I suddenly start doing things differently?

MaThokelo I've had that problem already. The parents at my school have already started to complain. They said that they do not send their children to school to play. They can play all day at home! At school they need to learn "a-e-i-o-u"!

Thandi I know exactly what you mean. After I started the course, I invited all the parents to a meeting. To my surprise, it was a big success. I did some role-plays and showed the parents that children can learn and have fun at the same time. The parents were very excited, they said we should hold a meeting like that every term.

MaThokelo What kind of role-play did you do?

Thandi I asked two parents to throw a ball to each other. Then we discussed how playing with a ball helps children develop. We spoke about big and small muscles, hand and eye co-ordination, and co-operation ... .

MaThokelo Of course that is an excellent idea. Children also build concentration, confidence and perseverance while playing with a ball.

Thandi I presented about five different activities and explained to the parents how each of the activities helps the children. I also explained how at home they could support what we do at school. Children need to practice new skills in their homes and community.

MamLidia That 's a really good idea, I always find that the activities with pegs help me to explain indirect preparation. Using clothes pegs in a game helps children develop the muscles in their fingers. This is important for controlling a pencil when they write.

MaThokelo You are right, I find that once a parent understands the importance of indirect preparation, they understand much better what I am doing.

Thandi Oh, look Mathokelo, your bus is already here. Have a good week. See you next Wednesday.

MaThokelo Goodbye and good luck.

MamLidia Go well. We'll meet again next week.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What worried MamLidia in this story?

2. Do you think that the new knowledge that these three teachers gained at the workshop was useful?

3. Did the new knowledge mean that they would have to change some of their old ways?

4. Do you think that the problem of changing old ways could affect many practising teachers in South Africa in 1995?

5. Could this be especially common among practising teachers who are attending INSET courses?

6. Do you think that this Action Research Project could change your own practice as a teacher educator?

7. How do you think that students will react to changes in your practice?

8. What advice could you give to teacher educators who decide to change their practice after participating in an action research project or INSET course?

Appendix H 2

ALL THE CASES PRESENTED AT THIS WORKSHOP ARE FICTITIOUS. THEY HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED TO FOCUS DISCUSSION ON PROBLEMS OR ISSUES.

CASE TWO: The Jabulani Pre-school

Background

A school, let us call it Jabulani, used to be a combined primary and secondary school. When the secondary school moved into a sr[illegible] t new building in June 1992, the primary school remained in the old building. [illegible]nen school opened for the first term in 1993, the principal found that although all the children had birth certificates that stated that they were six years or older, many children seemed to be under age.

The principal made enquiries and found that many parents were so desperate to get their children into school that they misrepresented the age of the child when they applied for a birth certificate. One of the reasons parents gave for wanting their children in school was to avoid leaving them alone at home and to protect them from dangers in the community. Children often wondered off and got hurt. Children could easily get hit by cars in the street. There were even some reports of child abuse.

Parents explained that, the government primary school fees are far less than community educare centre fees. In addition, children get school feeding at the primary school. Parents also believe that children will learn more at primary school.

Once the principal understood the problem better, she decided that a large unused classroom should become the pre-school class. She allocated this class to one of the primary school teachers and registered her for an INSET pre-school course.

Last year, 1994, there are 40 children between the ages of three and six in the Jabulani pre-school class. The classroom has a big carpet that almost covers the whole floor. Except for a large teacher's table and chair, several large metal cupboards, and one child-sized chair and table, there is no other furniture in the room.

Each child has a standard lined exercise book in which to do creative activities. These books are kept in the cupboard with a few magazines, two containers with about 60 wax crayons all together, 6 pritt sticks, 4 pairs of scissors, and paint. There are two dolls and a box with a few cars. There are no other indoor activities.

The parents have built a small jungle gym and swing for the playground. There are no other activities prepared for the children outside. On the southern edge of the school, about 200 meters from the pre-school class, there are 15 clean new VIP pit toilets that the parents helped to build for all the children.

PART ONE: ROUTINES AND TIMETABLES

This is the time table found on the wall of the Jabulani pre-school class.

7.10 - 7.20	arrival
7.20 - 7.35	morning devotions
7.35 - 7.45	toilet and hand-washing
7.45 - 7.50	exercises
7,45 - 8.50	free play (inside and outside)
8.50 - 9.00	toilet and hand-washing
9.00 - 9.30	religious instruction
9.30 - 10.00	creative activities
10.00 - 10.20	break
10.20 - 10.30	music or developmental play
10.30 - 11.00	toilet and hand washing and breakfast
11.00 - 11.10	exercises
11.10 - 11.30	developmental play
11.30 - 12.00	toilet and tidy up time

Questions for discussion

1. Have you seen similar timetables in schools in your area?
2. What problems could this timetable create for the children in the "Jabulani" pre-school class?
3. What problems could this timetable create for the teacher?
4. What important activities are not listed on the timetable?
5. What steps would the teacher need to take to put this timetable into practice?
6. If you were the teacher, what changes would you make to this timetable?
7. What does this timetable tell you about the teacher's educational approach?

PART TWO: AN OBSERVATION ONE SUNNY MORNING

This is what a visitor recorded when she observed in this classroom on a warm and sunny September morning.

When I arrived at 8.15 am the children were all sitting on the floor with their arms folded and a finger across their lips. The teacher said that it was time for free play, and reminded the children that they need to share. They all rushed outside and fought for a chance on the jungle gym or swing. The teacher called ten children back into the classroom. They played listlessly with the dolls and cars.

At 9.20 the children were all called inside. They all took off their shoes and sat on the carpet. The teacher gave the instruction, "Roly -poly" and all the children sang in chorus, "Roly-poly fold your arms" as they folded their arms. They then chanted "Roly-poly close your mouth", and put the index finger of one hand over their lips. They repeated this several times for about three minutes.

The children were told the story of David and Goliath. The story was told in English. The teacher would make a statement and then ask the children a question and the children would repeat the teacher's statement in chorus.

Here is an example of the dialogue:

Teacher: Goliath was a giant. What was Goliath?

Children: Goliath was a giant.

Teacher: David used a sling to kill Goliath. What did David use to kill Goliath?

Children: David used a sling to kill Goliath.

There was a great deal of repetition and sometimes the teacher and the children repeated the sentence in Xhosa. Each time the children started losing concentration, the teacher would give the "Roly-poly" instruction. Many children were no longer concentrating by the end of this story time at 9.55. The teacher announced that it was time for creative activities and began to hand out the exercise books.

She called out the name of each child to come to the front of the class to collect his or her book. When all the books were handed out the teacher started handing out the rest of the equipment from the cupboard. She started with a jar of green paint that was already mixed and standing in the cupboard. She chose three boys who were sitting together at the edge of the carpet. She asked them to move off the carpet and gave each one a paintbrush. She placed the one jar of paint in the middle. She put the two containers of wax crayons at different ends of the room. She placed all the magazines in the middle of the room for children to share. She handed the scissors and pritt sticks to those children who stretched out their hands to her first. It was 10.15 by the time the teacher had handed out the books and equipment. One child clung to her pritt stick for the rest of the lesson, but did not have a magazine or scissors, so she could not cut

out a picture to stick. At 10.20 the teacher started to collect the books and equipment. During break, the teacher herself cleaned the paint-brushes and cleared up the paint that had spilled on the floor.

The children each had about four pieces of work in their books. The teacher had signed her name and written the dated in the middle of the child's work .

Questions for discussion

What is the difference between asking children to share or to take turns?

Can children under six be expected to share?

What systems do children need to learn to take turns?

How long would it take for 40 children to go to the toilet and wash their hands?

Is it healthy, economical or necessary for young children to be expected to all go together to the toilet at regular times during the day?

In order to give children real opportunities to choose activities, it is necessary to have enough activities, to structure the environment and to divide children into groups that can rotate from one area to another. What advice could you give this teacher, so that the children in her class could have real opportunities to choose activities?

All these questions draw attention to the way in which the timetable either enables or constrains the teacher's classroom practice. What other questions can you think of that draw attention to the way in which the timetable enables or constrains classroom practice?

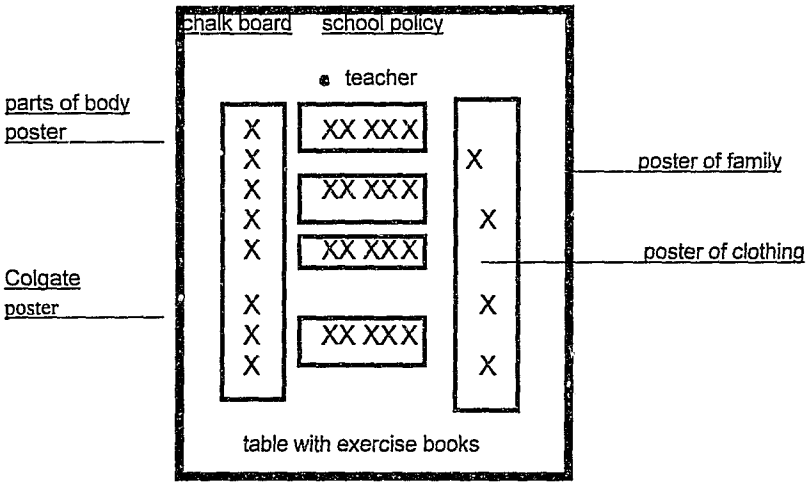
Appendix H 3

ALL THE CASES PRESENTED AT THIS WORKSHOP ARE FICTITIOUS. THIS CASE HAS BEEN PREPARED BY COLLABORATIVE GROUP FOUR.

An observation visit to School N

It was a cold and windy day in August when I arrived at School N, situated in a township where people speak five different languages: Xitsonga, Sepedi, Tshivenda, Setswana and isiZulu. As a result of the apartheid policy each language group has its own schools and lives in a different section of the township. School N is in the Xitsonga area and the children are Xitsonga speaking. However, this is not simple as it looks because many Xitsonga speakers have married people from other groups. The children attending School N live close by and walk to school. The parents are generally unskilled or semi-skilled workers in industries in the city adjoining the township.

I was visiting Mrs Khosa's Sub A class of 32 children seated as shown in the diagramme below:



The children in the two rows along the side of the class face each other and not the front where the teacher is. All the labels on all the wall charts were in English. One chart had pictures of family members, including granny, grandfather, mother and father. Each picture was labelled in English. There were two more charts with pictures of items of clothing such as a jacket, cap and pants. There was also a picture of a white child wearing underwear, with the parts of his body labelled in English. There was also a Colgate toothpaste poster.

There was a small chalkboard in the front of the class and next to it, was a poster made by the teacher. This is what it said:

CLASSROOM POLICY
Be quiet in class
Don't move around
Keep school tidy
Don't fight each other
Sit properly
Be friendly

The timetable was not displayed but the teacher gave me a copy which looked like this:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
MON	Rel	Math	Math	Eng	Eng	Ts	He	Eng	Env
TUES	Math	Math	Eng	Eng	Env	Eng	Eng	Eng	Mus
WED	Rel	Eng	Eng	Eng	Math	Math	Env	Phys	Phys
THUR	Rel	Math	Math	Eng	Eng	Env	Env	Eng	Eng
FRI	Rel	Math	Math	Eng	Eng	Env	He	Eng	Mus

KEY:

Rel:	Religious Instruction	He:	Health
Math:	Mathematics	Phys:	Physical Education
Eng:	English	Mus:	Music
Env:	Environmental Studies	Ts:	Tsonga

The teacher announced that they had just finished with Mathematics and that an English revision lesson about prepositions was about to start. This is the dialogue that followed:

Teacher *(Kindly and gently)* Close your books, fold your arms and sit up straight, ne'. Felicia, you didn't close your book! Good. Who will come to the front? *(All the children put their hands up - Jerry jumps up and is called to the front. The teacher whispers)* Do you all see Jerry?

Children *(In chorus)* Yes!

Teacher Where is Jerry?

Children *(In chorus)* Jerry is sitting in the chair.

Teacher Good! *(Teacher whispers in Jerry's ear and he sits on the table)* Where is Jerry?

Children *(In chorus)* Jerry is sitting on the table.

This procedure was repeated until Jerry had stood behind the door and crawled under the table.

Teacher Who else wants to come to the front? *(All the children put up their hands except Amos)* Amos, come to the front!

This time Amos had to do the routines, while the teacher asked questions and the children sang the answer in chorus. When the children got it right, the teacher applauded and said "Shine!" The teacher then repeated the actions herself. The children found this amusing, especially when she crawled under the desk.

Teacher Where is Ma'am?

Children Ma'am is under the table! *(Children laugh loudly)*

The teacher then invited anyone to come forward. All the children wanted to except Sipho. The teacher walked up to Sipho and moved in very close to his face, took it in her hands and asked him if he was hungry. He nervously said that he was, to which she said that was fine and that he was not hungry. As she moved away he caught my eye and gave me a thumbs up and a broad smile.

Prudence came forward and repeated the whole exercise again although the teacher said that she could do any action that she wanted. Throughout the lesson there were many interruptions - older children with messages, some teachers and even the principal - the teacher pushed them out of the door.

As an aside to me, the teacher announced that the lesson was finished and said that she was now going to do a Xitsonga lesson. She was very nervous and asked if this was all right. I indicated that she must follow her programme as planned as I was merely an observer here to learn.

The teacher then told a very animated story about members of the family in a mixture of Sepedi and Xitsonga. She kept asking the children questions. They would put up their hands, but she would merely answer the questions and continue the story. The children sat for most of the lesson with their hands up. They were asked to point out the family members on the chart that was on the wall. Some of the children had to stand and lean forward to see the pictures. Some of them were sitting with their backs to the poster.

As another aside to me the teacher apologised for the chart being in English as she was still busy making a Xitsonga version. At the end of the lesson a colleague of mine came into the classroom to observe and when I left the classroom the teacher repeated the same English lesson for her.

Questions for discussion

1. Does the timetable help or hinder learning in relation to time and subject? Give reasons for your answer.

2. What did the children learn in the lessons? What was the aim of each of the two lessons?

3. Were the children participating in the lesson? What was the nature and quality of their participation?

4. Do you think that the lessons were appropriate for the children at this time of the year (August)? What would you expect children in sub A to be able to do by August?

5. Does "kind behaviour" by the teacher always lead to a relaxed atmosphere or can it be a method of intimidation?

6. What was the quality of the Xitsonga that the children were learning? What do you think of the language policy of the school?

7. Why do you think the teacher was so nervous and so concerned to get the visitor's permission to do what she wanted to do, considering that the lessons were both "revision" lessons?

8. If you were the teacher, which aspects of the classroom arrangement would you keep and what aspects would you change? Give reasons for your answer and describe the changes you would make.

9. Which of the Four Traditions best describe the methods used by this teacher? Which other traditions could help her improve her teaching?

Appendix H 4

ALL THE CASES PRESENTED AT THIS WORKSHOP ARE FICTITIOUS. THEY HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED TO FOCUS DISCUSSION ON PROBLEMS OR ISSUES.

Accreditation: How do we know that this course will be of a good standard?

As we drove towards Tsadika College at noon on a Monday, many children were already on their way home from school. Despite the fact that most had bare feet, they walked with apparent ease. A few carried a tattered plastic bag.

Mr Baja, a member of the local education and training forum, had met me in the nearest town and we had travelled together. When we arrived at the college, we were warmly welcomed. The secretary apologised because there was once again a problem with the water, but two students had been sent to fetch water from the pump on the other side of the village. Tea would be served once they returned. She showed us to the room where the meeting was about to begin.

As we walked in I greeted Mr Ukutheta from the local transitional council, who was seated closest to the door. We had all been called to a consultation. The Yellow Canary, a plastic manufacturer with a factory in the area, had decided to donate a large sum of money for Early Childhood Development (ECD). Factory workers during wage negotiations had identified the need for a work -place day-care centre.

Mr Bokomo, the owner of the factory, had young children of his own who attended an educare centre in the city. He thought that this would be a good way of contributing, not only to the workers but also to the community in general. He started investigating the situation himself.

Through the Ministry of Education, Mr Bokomo had found out that Tsadika College had been targeted as one under threat of closure as a result of the need for rationalisation. He found out that the province has 25 colleges and 20 of them in the past have only offered courses for secondary school teachers. There are already thousands of unemployed secondary school teachers in the province. Mr Bokomo is considering providing funds for the college to start offering ECD teacher development. Initial discussions had centred on this idea.

There was a sense of excitement in the room when the Rector opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the college. Introductions followed. Mrs Balebedu was from the local university, which has started offering ECD enrichment courses on Saturday mornings. Mr Mololo represented the Bingo Training Centre, funded by the Department of Labour. Seated next to him was Mrs Moya, from a non-governmental organisation (NGO) called Ringo. Mr Bokomo and the plant manager Mr Ritsedi represented management and Mrs Tsetsi and Mr Anchebe had been elected by the

workers to attend the meeting. Next to Mr Ukutheta was Mrs James who had recently started a new ECD training NGO called Trinkets.

Most of those present seemed to support the proposal. It would be an excellent opportunity for co-operation between government and the private sector as suggested by the new education policy. There seemed to be instant agreement on almost every point, until Mr Bokomo asked, "How can I be sure that the course offered by the college will be of a good standard?"

The rector said that all the courses offered by a college are always of good quality. Mr Ritsedi and Mr Ukutheta supported this. Mrs Moya disagreed and this discussion followed:

Mrs Moya:	Training organisations and crèches are mushrooming everywhere. People are being given a certificate of attendance after a ten-day course and parents do not know whether they have been trained or not. To whom is this training directed? Is it pre-schools? Is it child-minders?
Mr Ukutheta:	People who have the right qualifications are not being absorbed into the mushrooming crèches.
Mr Baja:	That is the problem! The mushrooming crèches.
Mr Mololo:	But in a democracy anyone should be free to open a crèche, just like anyone is free to open a Spaza shop.
Mrs Moya:	But parents need to know if the teacher is fit to look after the children. It must be on accreditation lines.
Mr Bokomo:	What does that mean, "Accreditation"?
Mrs Moya	The criteria to judge standards.
Mr Ritsedi:	What are these criteria?
Mrs Moya:	Admission requirements; the language being used for training; duration of training; modules and material.
Mr Bokomo	This all seems much more complicated than I expected. I think we need someone who can help us to do some research.
Mrs Balebedu	There's a qualified pre-school teacher, Mananda, who's doing a BEd course in my department this year. She's still looking for a topic for her special project. Perhaps she could help.

Questions about the case

1. How does a customer judge the quality of the goods sold in a Spaza shop? How does a parent judge the quality of the service provided by an educare centre or crèche? Do you agree with Mr Mololo that anyone should be free to open a crèche? Support your answers with reasons.

2. Do you think anyone should be free to offer ECD training courses? Give reasons for your answer.

3. What do you think Mrs Moya meant by each of the four criteria she listed? Do you think the criteria Mrs Moya suggested are sufficient to make a real judgement?

4. What criteria would you use to judge the quality of an ECD course?

5. What do you think about Mrs Balebedu's suggestion of getting a BEd student to help with research? What ethical questions does this suggestion raise?

6. You are Mananda and you have been asked to help with this research. Give a brief outline of your plan of action.

Appendix H 5

CASE FIVE:
THREE EXAMPLES OF DISCUSSION DOMINATION

Listening skills are vitally important for good case discussion and **need to be cultivated** in the **discussion leader** and **participants**. Discussion leaders need to listen to and assess participant contributions at two levels: firstly for content and secondly, for continuity and value to the discussion. Poor listening skills on the part of both students and discussion leaders can stymie discussion (Schutte: 1995).

This case highlights the problem of poor listening and domination by describing three different group discussions. In the first example, Mrs. Tipi expressed her opinions with little consideration for the question under discussion or the contribution of other participants. In the second two examples, Tess and Veronica made useful contributions to the discussion arising out of a clear understanding of the problem under discussion. Tess was relatively sensitive to other participants in the group, while Veronica who also played the role of discussion leader delivered a monologue for almost the entire session.

Example one: Mrs. Tipi won't let go

Mrs. Tipi is the director of an NGO. She is a prominent figure in her community and in the ECD NGO network in the province. During the discussion of the first case, *Changing unhelpful ways and habits*, she slipped into a pattern of pursuing her own hobbyhorse without due regard for building on other speakers comments or relating to the question under discussion.

While discussing the question, ***Do you think that the new knowledge these three teachers gained at the workshop was useful?*** Mrs. Tipi said:

> *Workshops are always useful. It is a chance for networking and to meet other organisations with the same objectives. You can learn a lot from each other. Share ideas.*

The next question is read. ***Did the new knowledge mean that they would have to change their old ways?*** Mrs. Tipi stepped in once again. *"Workshops are very important. They help the younger ones."* Some of the participants tried to address the question, but were interrupted again by Mrs. Tipi; *"Workshops help you to share ideas. I'm looking to try all the new ideas."*

The discussion leader reads the next question; ***Do you think that the problem of changing old ways could affect many practicing teachers in South Africa in 1995?*** Mrs. Tipi leaps in again, *"I find in the rural areas, number one, parents are worried about admission. We need to tell them what pre-school education is".*

In an attempt to lead the discussion back to the question, the discussion leader asks, ***"But can it affect teachers not parents."***

Mrs. Tipi, *"I was going to say ..... "*

Discussion leader, ***"How does it affect teachers?"***

Mrs. Tipi continues *"I have a problem because the question talks about 1995. Teachers might be having the idea that you need to talk to stakeholders."*

Another participant steps in firmly,

> *Practicing teachers are affected in more ways than one. Information dissemination is very slack. Teachers don't hear of the changes that they must implement. A classical example is the way school reports must be written. They are still doing it in the old way, writing two-and-a-half over ten instead of writing comments about the child's behaviour and participation.*

Mrs. Tipi enters again, *"That is why we must network. We must organise and teach each other. Many teachers, if you look in my area, tell children to shut up. Children have no freedom to go to the toilets. At that point you begin to see that this problem is a question ..."*

The participant observer tries to intervene unsuccessfully, but like the Pit Bull described by Schutte (1995), Mrs. Tipi pursues her point relentlessly, *"So when you go to that workshop, very often nine out of ten ...."*

Despite another attempt to intervene, Mrs. Tipi continues, *"I know I talk a lot, just let me finish one point. Eight out of ten will come from the education department".*

The next question is read. ***Could this be especially common among teachers attending INSET courses?*** The pattern continues in much the same way.

Example two: Tess must have the first word

The second example of domination in group discussion is very different. Tess is also the director of an NGO. The training offered by her organisation responds directly to the problem being discussed in the second case. She relates her experience directly to the questions most of the time. Occasionally when she digresses, one of the participants quickly and easily gets the discussion back on track. Speakers change frequently and most members of the group do participate. However, it is usually Tess who speaks first each time the group moves on to a new question. She also speaks much more frequently than any of the other participants. Never the less, it is clear that the group respects Tess's opinion which is often used to summarise before checking consensus. For example, someone asks, *"Shall we stick to Tess's original answer that the teacher controls too much".*

Example three: Veronica's monologue

Veronica also leads an NGO, but her organisation uses an approach very different to that used by the teacher in the case being discussed. In this group Veronica dominates discussion to such an extent that other participants have little chance of participating. The problem is compounded by the fact that Veronica also plays the role of discussion leader. She either does not listen to other perspectives or does not take the views of other participants seriously.

In the first part of the session, the group is discussing the timetable presented in Case Two: *The Jabulani pre-school.* The question under discussion is, ***What problems could this timetable create for the children in the "Jabulani pre-school class?*** The group is discussing the time of arrival between 07h10 and 07h20 in the morning. Someone suggests that being early should not be a problem because parents usually leave the children on the way to work.

Veronica explains, *"In our area many parents do not work because there is no work and then the older brothers and sisters take the children on their way to school. The time of arrival is determined by the time of the older children starting school."*

Someone asks, *"Where is the departure time?"*

The group chorus, *"Ja".*

Veronica continues, *"From my way of thinking this timetable creates a whole lot of problems for the children. I would disagree with this timetable completely. The first problem is that breakfast is at eleven o'clock and that means that the first meal that children have in the day is eleven o'clock because they don't get food at home because there is no food. And that to me is crazy. If parents are being told that the children are getting breakfast, it should be early, but lunch can be later. Children will be hungry and won't be able to concentrate till eleven. They would be bad tempered and irritable and whatever. Number two, ... the five or ten minute periods for toilet and hand-washing, I disagree with because you cannot, in my experience, nor should you, tell a three year old when to go to the toilet. A three-year-old has no control over their bladder what so ever. I completely disagree with the concept of toilet time in*

the pre-school. Absolutely. How difficult is it for us as adults to keep it in we have to go". There is a slight giggle from the group. *"I have a personal problem with that and our method does not have toilet time at all. I do not think there is enough time for any activities to take place. The timetable is far too complicated and trying to fit in too much. But I am talking too much."*

Another participant steps in, *"I would like to add, on that. Religious instruction is followed by creative activities and I think with my opinion that this too needs a lot of concentration. If they are one after the other, then as she has already said the children will be hungry and tired and the concentration will not be there. This will be a problem. They will be hungry and tired. Too much concentration is required for two different subjects in a row. This is too much. It is traumatic."*

Veronica continues, *"The method we use is different. The children here have no freedom to choose. They are controlled and we do not believe that children from three to six years should be controlled in this way because then they will not be free to develop at their own pace and with their own interest".*

Someone else suggest, *"I see another problem if there are no toys or equipment for free play what will the children keep themselves busy with?"*

Veronica, *"Sure".*

Someone asks, *"My other problem .... exercises. What do they mean by exercises for five and ten minutes?"*

Mrs. Green, *"It is just filling up the time."* The group laughs.

"But it is such a short time, how will they do it?" Veronica asks a rhetorical question and continues, *"Just look at it. We do not do exercises with the children. We make sure there are activities outside like sandpit or ball or skipping ropes that make sure that children have exercises and not artificial exercise like touch your toes, touch your whatever"*

This last remark causes some confusion and several participants talk at the same time. There is a question about outside games and singing. Someone points out that on the timetable under discussion, *"Singing is with music and developmental play. They sing and do their actions to them".*

Veronica responds, *"I think it works differently for different methods. Our schools do their singing and rhymes first thing in the morning when they come in. Then later in the day when they are playing outside they .....* The timekeeper suggests that the group should move on to the next question. So Veronica reads the next question. ***"What problems could the timetable create for the teacher?"***

A few participants contribute to the discussion, suggesting for example, that *"the teacher would easily start screaming on the children"*, and that *"insufficient time is allowed for the changes between activities".* The point is made that, *"A lot of preparation would have to be done if the teacher is to do all these activities properly.'*

Someone mentions breakfast and then Veronica explains, *"It is different from area to area. In our area they do not get breakfast. They get lunch".* Disregarding the contribution *"In our area they do get breakfast"* Veronica proceeds, *"The only thing is lunch which children bring from home which is only pap. There is no government pre-school feeding programme."*

Veronica then takes the group on a diversion about poverty, problems with water and funding for salaries. She makes sweeping statements about donors not paying teacher salaries anywhere in the country. When challenged she insists that this is not unusual, and the story she is telling is true for the whole country because educare is not recognised by government and it is all left up to the community. Someone redirects attention to the question and Veronica bursts in again, *"There are too many activities. The children will be tired and hungry. The teacher will not cope with the timetable at all."*

The group starts discussing the adult child ratio in the case and someone suggests that forty children to one adult is not advisable, but someone else points out that, *"It is quite normal. In normal circumstances ... "*

Veronica challenges her, *"What is normal circumstances?"*

She tries to explain, *"Normal circumstances..... ..."*

But Veronica does not give her a chance and buts in again *"In other parts of the world, 1 to 20 would be the absolute most. We have one pre-school where there is one teacher for 380 children, one teacher, and not even a proper place."*

The group gasps. Mpho asks, *"What does she do with them all day?"*

Veronica confesses that she doesn't know and then leads the group to the next question: ***What important activities are not listed on this timetable?***

By this stage in the discussion only two participants, Mrs. Green and Mpho continue to try to participate. Mrs. Green is leader of an NGO. Mpho, who was previously employed in the same NGO as Victoria was at the time teaching in a small college.

Mrs. Green	*Story time for those who want to listen to a story.*
Veronica	*We have a totally different approach. We don't have timetables we have routines.... so..*
Mpho	*I would suggest that ..... I feel that the children should get more time to be free... play according to their interest*
Victoria	*(buts in) Jah, and do what they want.*
Mpho	*There must not be too much directed work.*
Mrs. Green	*The programme is too full.*
Mpho	*Yes*
Mrs. Green	*They don't have enough time to choose their own activities*
Veronica	*I think the next few questions actually talk about what we are talking about now. The question we are on merely asks about the important activities not listed on the timetable. There is also no attendance register taken in the morning, which is quite an important thing.*
Mrs. Green	(tries to make her point about stories again) ... *communication through using stories ... way of involving your children in discussion.*
Veronica	*So we do it as well but we don't have prescribed story time.*
Mrs. Green	*We have story time on the time table but it is not compulsory. Those children who want to come can do so.*
Veronica	(reads the next question) ***What steps would the teacher need to take to put this timetable into practice?*** (and comments), *Poor teacher!*
Mpho	*There is no time for free play.*
Veronica	*No! How would she have to prepare herself to carry out this very timetable.*

Although the group want to move on to the next question and suggest changes to the time-table, Veronica keeps pulling them back to the previous question although it is quite clear that everyone has assumed that the time-table cannot be implemented and must be changed. Veronica repeats the question again. ***What steps would the teacher need to take to put this timetable into practice?***

Mpho	*She should change it.*
Veronica	*But the question is saying if you are a teacher and this timetable is on your wall and you are not allowed to change it.*
Mrs. Green	(obliges).*It will be difficult*
Veronica	*Like in a situation like ours, she would have to carry a lot of water for all the hand washing. I think that in order to put this time-table into practice the teacher needs to be a genius (someone in the group laughs) or a someone who does not think very much and is prepared to follow orders and do what she is told to do.*

Veronica then reads the eagerly awaited question, ***If you were the teacher what changes would you make to this time table?*** The groups laugh heartily and someone suggests that they can now go back to the problems discussed earlier, but Veronica continues,

OK Well I am going to talk here. What I would do... what changes I would make to the timetable ... The arrival, um, the attendance register. The next thing I would have on the timetable is twelve o'clock lunch time, twelve thirty or one departure. That is all I would put, because the rest of the day is much too ... to the way we train should be free for the children to do what they wish with whatever activity. You as the teacher know that at some time during the day you must do story time, at some stage of the day you must make sure that the children who have been inside also have some time outside. The only things we have on our timetable are "arrival, food and departure". So there you go.

One of the college participants tries to present a different perspective, but Veronica interrupts,

"But you train primary school teachers and secondary. "

Yes.

OK. You have not yet worked with training pre-school teachers?

No.

OK. So you are starting to understand now some of the problems.

Yes.

After a short silence Veronica lobs her next mortar in response to the question, ***What does this timetable tell you about the teacher's education and approach?***

Formal! You must understand that in our NGO world (speaker laughs) *formal education has been something that we have seen as very strict, not adaptable at all, not able to reflect on itself or to look at what is the real needs. Rigid! So because in school you are rigid. Arrival that time..... toilet, that time..... what ever, that time, that time, that time! We find that teachers trained at the colleges as primary school teachers try to work in the same way when they come to the educare centres. Ja. So very often if someone is trained as a primary school teacher and they come to a pre-school environment, they come to use those rules and this is the kind of timetable* (laughs again) *that they use coming from that environment. Ja. But I find this very interesting because it raises a lot of the problems.*

Another college participant invites Veronica to continue,

You can educate us more about the pre-school. There is a nervous laugh from the group.

The discussion rambles on, being directed by Veronica, who seems oblivious of the specific task set for the group. In terms of the programme, the group should by that time have started reflecting on the quality of participation in the discussion of the case. Instead Veronica poses her own question for the group and there is no further reference to the case or the workshop questions during the rest of the session.

When you do your training, do any of you do training on the timetable or routines or whatever?

Yes, the Daily Programme.

So you do have a daily programme. And do you have it quite rigid and at specific times?

Yes.

OK. You do.

But we have free play outdoors for children while the teachers drink tea. We use the method from Cape Town.

You get your training in Cape Town. From ELRU?

Yes.

Veronica directs the same question to someone else, *"What do you do?"*

Because we are training teachers we help those teachers to be able to make their own daily programme that will fit their environment, because we believe every environment is different and it is better if every programme suits the environment, even the needs of those children. So the teachers must make their own programme.

Veronica proceeds with the explanation of the method she uses,

And what we do because our method is such that the environment is always there in the classroom for the children. All the activities are constantly on display and available to the children.

Someone asks for examples and Veronica grabs the opportunity to continue with a lecture on her method

OK. We have a pouring activities. We have a pegging activity. We have opening and closing, umm .. sponging ... whatever ... What else do we have? ummm ... you know all of this (directed at Mpho) *... In the sensorial area we have matching and grading, developing sense of touch, sight .... then there is the number area etc. ... In each area there are lots and lots of activities and they are kept out on the shelf all the time. The child is free to choose any activity that she wishes to use and if she gets tired of doing this and decides she wants to go outside to play with a friend then she can do so. The teacher must observe the children while they work and keep quite a close eye on all of this. If she sees a problem in the way the child is working with an activity she will make a note or just remember to present the activity again soon. She will choose a good time and invite the child and present the activity to the child again, showing the child how to do it correctly but without actually saying, "You were doing wrong, this is the correct way". She will just gently show the child.*

So each activity is introduced to the child in the correct way and when she sees the child having difficulty she will introduce it again. Umm ... At the same time, some children will be working with the activities, other children will be painting. The paint is also freely accessible to them if there is paint. Other children are outside. Other children are in a group with the teacher who is reading stories or maybe they are playing with puppets in the corner.

So there are a lot of things happening and enough activities to keep all the children busy and challenged. The teacher makes sure that each child, according to the teachers understanding of the child's development, is being introduced to something new as well. So it is a combination of a free but a controlled environment. Freedom within sensible limits. So we don't say from this time to that time you should have this. Some of the teachers find that they want to have group one inside in the morning and outside in the afternoon. They will divide the children into two groups.

I think that is when you are having many children.

Yes. Also we don't divide the children into ages. The ages are mixed. Two, three, four, five year-old children are all together because we believe two things: one, that children learn from each other, ja, a lot. It's one of the main ways that children learn. And the other, that, children develop differently. I mean, if you think ... for example, When did your first born get teeth? Can you remember? How old was the child?

Seven months

And how old was your second born?

Eleven months.

So, how come? Children do not develop in exactly the same way and you will find that one three year old can catch a ball perfectly so their motor co-ordination skills are fine but they still can't climb up a tree or pour water from one container to another without spilling. While another child cannot catch a ball but can count up to ten. Children develop at their own pace and we also believe that you have to follow the interest and needs of the child.

Wouldn't you have a problem where perhaps the group of children would like to use the same activity.

What we have are what we call "social skills groups" to teach children the ground-rules and the correct way of behaving. We show them the correct way of doing something without smacking or telling wrong. These groups should be fun and give children a chance to practice skills that build a harmonious community. If the teacher sees any problems or misunderstandings she plans a social skills group. She calls a group of children together including those that need to learn the new skill and some who already have the skill she plans to present. For example she might say, "if you want to have a turn and another child is using the activity, this is what you do". She shows them how to ask for a turn after the child has finished or ask to join the child who is using the activity. Taking turns in pairs, the children all have a chance to practice asking and responding. And people think it won't work, but it works a hundred percent and from a very early age, children get a sense of behaving politely and a sense of order and a sense of caring about each other and the activities and it works very well.

Mpho adds,

And they learn to take turns as well.....and be patient ...

Veronica interrupts,

Which is part of social and emotional development. With a young child, you can't just tell them to take turns. You can't.

Mpho tries to enter again,

And it helps to have ground rules.....

Veronica butts in *"And we have the three ground-rules: no-one should harm anyone or damage anything; everything has a place and should be in its place when it is not being used; and no-one may interrupt someone who is busy working or concentrating "* ....and then points out with a laugh, *"Mpho knows all of this, she used to work with us as well".*

Reference

Schutte L B (1995) Changing Public and Development Management: South African Cases. Kenwyn: Juta.

Appendix I: Belief statements about young children

1. The level of development of young children should be considered in their education.
2. Young children should be given problem solving activities.
3. Young children learn best by chanting and reciting.
4. Young children should not be turned away from school if parents can't pay fees.
5. Children between the age of six and nine should be taught in a formal way.
6. Young children should be given opportunities to analyse and question.
7. Young children should be given freedom within sensible limits.
8. Young children should be taught social skills and life skills, so that they can take care of themselves, others and the environment.
9. Young children should not be exposed to sex education before adolescence.
10. Young children should not be told lies.
11. Young children should not be disturbed while they are concentrating.
12. Young children should learn to take turns and co-operate.
13. Young children should be happy and healthy.
14. Young children should not be afraid at school.
15. Young children should not use vulgar words.
16. Young children should not be bored.
17. Young children should be treated with respect by adults.
18. Young children should be taught to know God.
19. Young children should be punished by anyone who witnessed their behaviour.
20. Young children should be smacked, if they do not listen to the teacher.
21. Young children should have a proper education based on Christian principles.
22. Young children should learn about nature.
23. Young children should not be abused by teachers or other adults in any way.
24. Young children do not have inborn knowledge, they need to be taught by adults.
25. Young children should be exposed to technological artefacts.
26. Young children should be encouraged to work independently.

Appendix J

Document analysis one:
Learning outcomes for this project

These documents are identified by letters of the alphabet to disguise the identity of the collaborative groups. The aim of the exercise is to evaluate the documents and not the groups.

DOCUMENT A

Question ONE:
- *Performance*
- Task completion

Question TWO
- Assignments
- Tests
- *Tasks to implement in the field*

Question THREE

Criteria	Strategies
Assignments and tests	determining averages
Practical work	evaluation

DOCUMENT B

1. The skills acquired and implementation thereof
2. Responses from groups in the form of cases
3. Participants' attendance at the workshop
4. The contribution of the participants
5. Co-operation and responsibility
6. Plan of action in terms of continuing the project
7.
8. Individual participants should be given questionnaires.

DOCUMENT C

Objective of this action research project is to build an educative community

Skills involved

Participants should have a clear understanding of the following:

- the meaning of the concepts "action research project"
- "reflective practice"
- attitudes like responsibility, whole-heartedness and open-mindedness
- agreement through informed dialogue (informed consent)
- knowledge about traditions of reform in teacher education
- the value of networking

Suggested Criteria

1. Write an essay about the concept action research project
2. Suppose you are charged with organising an action research project about ECD in your area, how would you handle such a task?

Evaluation

The skills mentioned above should be used as the guide lines for marking the essay

NOTE: Individual organisations should submit their own responses

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DOCUMENT D

The course was about collaboration, setting aside ones personal or institutional interests and coming to terms with general problems. The idea is to find ways of tackling these issues through a common understanding and approach gained through collaboration. The course, however, has to be judged on a basis of what an individual can do. The person must therefore show certain skills.

For example:

1. To be able to write a case
2. Demonstrate use of a case to facilitate group discussion
3. Demonstrate the use of the Four Traditions in a teaching situation to promote understanding of these in a group of students. Analyse ones own organisation using the four traditions.
4. A process of self-assessment on the basis of a set of questions that would have to be drafted.
5. A group assessment would have to be made by colleagues in the collaborative group. For example: Was I listened to? Was the other able to compromise? Was the other able to change? What changes did I notice?
6. A mutual form of assessing (i.e. by a dialogue between students) How have students achieved their aims? In what way have students changed and grown?
7. Attendance
8. A project would be given to a collaborative group - possibly of a hypothetical nature. An observer would assess the process.

- How would an NGO and college collaborate?
- Discuss the various problems and possibilities to come to a solution.
- You are starting a pre-school. How would you go about it? What things would you need to consider?

9. How has the course altered your training of others? Can you come to creative solutions to common problems in the country's education? This could be assessed by an evaluation by ones students.

The assessment is in itself a learning process. Various levels have to be developed. It has to be done on a common basis of what worked, what could be improved etc. It is important that the trainees tell their students that they are taking a course and are thereby gaining additional resources.

DOCUMENT E
This group reported that it could not reach consensus on this task

Would assess by seeing if participants understand the aim of this project:

- How has the person participated (been involved)?
- Has there been work done by the collaborative group?
- Would give participants projects to do and base assessment on the process and products of this project.
- Ask individuals questions that test their understanding. This might be in written form.
- Individual written assignment to assess if goal reached.
- Check if the representatives are able to pass on the knowledge gained here to other members of the organisation.

Would also look at manner and confidence of participants as one of the criteria. The criteria for success (i.e. are people able to understand and participate).

- Judge the "teacher" by the pupil's competence.
- Also look at level of care: open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility

IS THE PERSON BEING ASSESSED COMPETENT?

The group could not reach consensus on these issues:

- Would expect the researcher to decide this (the criteria for assessing outcomes for the action research project)
- Oral examination in which students repeat all that the teacher has said

Questions for discussion

Please write group conclusions about first three questions on newsprint. For question four, hand in your envelopes.

1. Which document, A, B C, D or E, gives the most detailed strategy for assessing outcomes of this action research project?
2. Which document gives the least detailed strategy?
3. Why is specific detail necessary when describing learning outcomes?
4. Cut **Document F** into sections. Take each item, discuss it and place it in the envelope in which it best fits. *Do not write on newsprint. Hand in the envelopes once the exercise is complete.*

DOCUMENT F

Each card has a suggested criteria and strategy for assessing outcomes for the Northern Province teacher development action research project. Some items may not in fact be outcomes, although they may be requirements of the course. Start by putting aside any items that your group does not regard as an outcome. Note that sometimes the same criteria may be assessed using a different strategy. Discuss each strategy and decide into which of the four traditions it best fits. Follow the instructions on the workshop discussion outline.

1. **Skill in preparing cases:**
   You are preparing a teacher development course. Write a teaching case and prepare questions to focus discussion.

2. **Skill in facilitating discussion**
   Demonstrate ability to facilitate group discussion using a teaching case.

3. **Skill in using four traditions**
   Demonstrate the use of the four traditions of reform in teacher education as a framework for ECD curriculum development and evaluation.

4. **Attendance at workshops**
   Participants are required to attend at least 2 out of the three workshops.

5. **Capacity and commitment to collaboration**
   The facilitator assesses the contribution of each participant during workshops. A checklist is used to focus and record observations.

6. **Capacity and commitment to collaboration**
   Self and peer evaluation: Participants are asked to evaluate their own and other participants' contribution in workshops and collaborative exercises. Guidelines are used to check understanding of key concepts and demonstration of attitudes such as open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility.

7. **Integration of theory and practice**
   Self and peer evaluation: Participants are asked to evaluate tasks and assignments completed by themselves and other participants.

8. **Completion of all tasks and assignments**
   The facilitator checks that all tasks and assignments have been completed by participants.

9. **Skill in writing reports based on integration of new skills and understanding**

Participants are asked to write a report on one of the following topics. The report must be based on participation in the action research project:.

- Planning an ECD action research project.
- You are starting a pre-school. How would you go about it? What would you need to consider?
- Describe and evaluate your experience in this action research project.
- What are the obstacles and opportunities for collaboration in the Northern Province?
- What are the obstacles and opportunities for collaboration in your area?
- Describe your experience of implementing new skills and understanding developed in the Northern Province teacher development action research project.

10. **Understanding new concepts**

A final test or examination is written. All questions must relate to content discussed in the workshops. Marking is done with the aid of a marking memorandum or scheme. Test results are calculated. Students must answer 60% of the questions correctly.

11. **Understanding new concepts**

At the start of workshop two, a diagnostic test is written. The facilitator uses test results to determine need for general revision and individual student support.

12. **Integration of new understanding and skills**

Each participant is interviewed twice during the course of the project. A list of questions is used to guide and focus discussion. Participants are expected to demonstrate that they have understood, tried and evaluated theory and methods introduced through the action research project.

13. **Integration of new understanding and skills**

Participants complete a questionnaire at the end of the project. The questions are designed to test understanding and implementation of key concepts and strategies used in the action research project.

14. **Skill in making teaching aids**

Participants make a set of flash cards to explain what is meant by "action research".

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS TWO:

Document A

Four fictitious organisations describe their system of assessment for teacher development

Document B

Three examples of assignments and tasks

Document C

Three examples of examinations, tests and interviews

Document D

Five examples of forms used to assess implementation or teaching practice

ORGANISATION ONE is a college offering three-year PRESET courses for lower primary and senior primary teachers. The admission and course requirements are guided by the Norms and Standards for Teacher Education which replaced the Criteria for the Evaluation of South African Qualifications for Employment in Education in June 1995.

Three main categories of assessment are used:

- theoretical and subject knowledge
- practical and teaching skills
- integrating theory and practice

Theoretical and subject knowledge

Various course structures stipulate the number of tests, examinations and assignments to be written per subject or course offered. However it must be clearly stated that these tests and assignments are merely used to collect raw data. After each application of a test or assignment in any subject, the lecturer concerned is duty bound to pass judgement by making use of some of the following statistical techniques: calculating the mean, median, mode, range and distribution. Remedial work is done with the whole class when the need is identified.

Practical and teaching skills

Students' teaching skills are always assessed by teaching science specialists. For example, chalkboard writing is assessed by giving students a chance to write on chalkboards after practising under the watchful eye of a teaching science specialist. During micro-teaching lessons students are given a chance to demonstrate their mastery of teaching skills, like introducing or concluding a lesson. Students' skills in making teaching aids are also assessed.

Integrating theory and practice

The teaching practice exercise offers a wonderful opportunity to assess the students' progress. In their first year of study, students are expected to observe at their home schools and record everything they observe in a designed journal. This journal must include required data, such as the school policy and time-tables. It should also include reports about observations of lessons presented by the teachers at that school. What is of utmost importance here is that this journal must be signed by the teachers who have been observed. This control measure is intended to guarantee that students did observe lessons. The principal of the school is also given an opportunity to make a confidential assessment. In his report he ought to give the assessment of the student in a holistic way, by indicating whether the student-teacher was punctual, co-operative, etc. The principal can also make suggestions for remedial work. This observation exercise is also done with second and third year students when they do their home teaching practice.

In addition to these home school observation exercises, the critic lesson session is another opportunity used to assess students' work. During this period students are transported to the nearby schools to teach certain subjects under the supervision of a lecturer. A prescribed form is used to evaluate their teaching.

After every assessment done during teaching practice, a panel of moderators from the education department visit the college, to moderate the work done, and the final marks go to the education department.

ORGANISATION TWO offers a one year INSET course for educare workers, childminders, crèche teachers, pre-school teachers and play-group teachers. Eighty percent attendance at the 24 one-day weekly workshop sessions is required. All homework assignments and tasks must be completed. After every session an assessment form about that session is given to the student to assess her own progress in implementation.

Assessment of trainees is divided into three categories:

- feedback or evaluation by the participants after each session
- practical, written and verbal tasks and assignment
- field visits and assessment by the trainers

Feedback and evaluation by the trainee after the sessions

After every session trainees are asked to give feedback about the session. This is done verbally or in written form. They explain what they have learnt, liked and enjoyed. Trainees are also encouraged to criticise the trainer's presentation. This allows the trainer to check understanding and evaluate if this was a general or individual problem. If most of the group didn't understand, the session will have to be repeated. If it is an individual problem, the trainer will arrange a time to revise the session with the trainee.

Practical, written and verbal tasks and assignment

After every session the group is given time for a practical session where they are encouraged to make prescribed toys from waste materials. Tasks are also given after most sessions. Trainees report on the implementation of what they have learnt in the previous session in written or verbal form. The trainer assesses trainees on their progress and understanding demonstrated in the completion of these tasks or assignments.

Fieldvisits by the trainer

There are two kinds of fieldvisit. The visits during the course are intended to monitor progress and assist the trainee in solving implementation problems. The final visit is to check whether the trainee meets the standards for certification.
Fieldvisits help the trainer to understand the individual and common needs. The trainer visits each trainee not less than three times during the training course. The trainer observes the trainee and they discuss the observation and what is expected. The aim of the fieldvisit is not to inspect but to help the trainees implement what they are learning. The trainer also helps to solve problems, which are blocking implementation.

After completing the course the trainees assess themselves. When they think that they are implementing successfully what they have learnt and that they are meeting the required standard, they invite the trainer to do the final assessment. After checking that the attendance and task requirements have been met, the trainer and centre co-ordinator or two trainers will go together to do the final assessment. If the trainee meets the standard she will be given a certificate of competence but if the standard is not met she will be given an attendance letter. The trainee will be given support until she can implement successfully and be certificated.

ORGANISATION THREE offers a PRESET course consisting of one year full-time and another year in an apprenticeship, if the trainee has not had previous teaching experience. Teachers are trained at the ECD, primary and secondary school level. The course includes child development from birth to twenty-one years; arts and crafts (including toy-making); drama; social skills; basic management; and, practicals. Trainees are visited three or four times during their apprenticeship year. Trainees in their first year work in established projects during these field trip visits. The admission requirements for primary school training is usually matric. For pre-school the ability to communicate in English is the primarily requirement.

This assessment system is in the process of being developed. Assessment is viewed as an on-going process, starting with the admission test and interview. Trainees write very few tests and no exams at this stage. Criteria are: work ethic; ability to study and assimilate written content (primary school); relationships to children; collegiality and social skills; hand and artistic skills; relationships to the realities of the world around us; ability to observe and so on. Main question: "Is this person a teacher by vocation, or should he or she try to find a different path in life?" We try to assist those where we come to a (hopefully) mutual conclusion that another way is more suitable.

The following four forms of assessment are used:

- personal interviews
- written assignments
- projects
- practicals

Personal interviews
These are done on initial acceptance after a basic skills test in Maths and English. The interview usually counts for more than the test results. Thereafter, interviews are done about twice a year to monitor the trainee's development. The trainee's self-assessment normally counts as much as the trainer's, if not more, and we try to achieve mutual agreement.

Written assignments
These are done in the normal course of teaching.

Projects
At regular intervals, trainees select a project that they wish to research, starting with simple themes and progressing to more complicated and job-related themes. They study relevant literature, write and illustrate a book summarising content and giving their own opinions and feelings and end off with a short speech or lecture to the assembled trainees and trainers.

Practicals
These count a lot especially in the apprenticeship year. The commitment of trainees, preparation and relationship to the children is monitored and discussed with them.

ORGANISATION FOUR offers a level two INSET course for teachers of children in a group setting. The course consists of an initial three weeks of intensive training and a one-day workshop each month for 11 months. There is an additional one-week of training during the course of the year. Each trainee is visited in her workplace once every two months.

Assessment of trainees is seen as an integrated part of the process of teaching and learning. All assessment should help the trainee to develop her full potential. The main aim of assessment is not to weed out failures but to identify and solve problems. The emphasis is on formative rather than summative assessment. This means that on-going evaluation and assessment is conducted, rather than one big test at the end. Trainees are always given a chance to improve as the principle of positive achievement is followed. When the trainer identifies a problem, it is discussed thoroughly with the trainee and a target date for improved implementation is negotiated.

In addition to the assessment done by the trainer, a combination of the following additional strategies of assessment are used:

- self-evaluation
- peer-evaluation
- assessment of team work
- evaluation of the course

Self-evaluation
Trainees are expected to take an active part in the learning process. This includes learning to evaluate themselves and set goals for improvement. Learning is viewed as an on-going process that should continue beyond the course itself.

Peer-evaluation
Children and adults learn from each other as well as from the person whose job it is to teach. Peer evaluation means that trainees assess each other and learn from each other.

Assessment of team work
When people work as a team we call this "collaboration". Working in an educare centre involves teamwork. The educare workers need to work as a team, with each other and with the parents. Sometimes it is not possible to evaluate an individual without evaluating the work of a team. When assessing trainees, it is necessary to understand each individual's role and contribution in the team. Whenever possible, parent or committee representatives are invited to participate in the assessment visits. This provides an opportunity to develop assessment skills in the community. Parents and committee members need the capacity to monitor and support the teachers in an on-going way.

Evaluation of the course
If the trainer does not do her job properly, then she cannot expect the trainees to learn well. The trainee's ability to evaluate the course is an important part of the system of assessment.

Demonstration of competence

Trainees are expected to display competence in two main areas:

- in the school setting working with children
- in the community working with parents and caregivers

The trainees are assessed during their year-long course by doing practical and written assignments. This includes making equipment, weekly preparation of work for the ECD centre, and work with children. Feedback, assistance and suggested improvement are given on the spot while the teacher works with the children. Trainees who do not meet the required level of competence redo the work until they achieve the required level. Thus, there is no sense of "failure". The trainee has simply "not yet reached the required level", and will continue to improve throughout the year to achieve the level required.

Trainees are monitored in their own ECD centres at least three times through the year-long course. The trainees must demonstrate their competence by working with the children in their centre while the trainer observes using a prescribed observation schedule to focus and record observations. Trainees are expected to run parent and caregiver workshops on a regular basis. This is assessed by trainers attending at least one workshop for each trainee; thereafter written reports are submitted which are assessed by the trainers.

Where written preparation of work for the ECD centre or written reports are required of a trainee who is illiterate, she may do the assignment or report orally. All written and oral assessment work is done in the trainee's home language.

The grading system

There are three grades:

- improvement is needed
- competence achieved
- excellence achieved

The principle of positive achievement is followed. This means that trainees will always be given a chance to improve. If at the first evaluation your work is graded as needing improvement, your trainer will explain what needs to be improved and set a date for a second check. If by the end of the year, the improvement has not been made, the certificate will show that specific modules have not been successfully completed. As soon as the improvement has been made, the certificate is updated. Any trainee who is not satisfied with the final grading can lodge a complaint. All complaints need to be in writing and will need to give a detailed motivation.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS TWO: Document B
Tasks and assignments

EXAMPLE ONE: An assignment to check theoretical understanding

Education 3 **Assignment one** **MARKS: 100**
Write as many facts as possible.

Compare the education system of south Africa with that of the USA and USSR under the following attributes and sub-attributes:

1. Ideology: political; religious; and philosophical
2. Demographics: growth rate; racial / ethnic mix; mobility; drop-out rate
3. Financial / Economic aspects: level of wealth; level of employment; level of taxation; % of taxation; relative contribution (central, regional, local private sector); equal opportunity for all; equal access
4. Compulsory education: duration; duration of free education; motivation for free education
5. Teacher training: range of institutions; types of courses; duration of training; admission criteria; recognition of certificates; continuing education; evaluation on basis of appropriateness
6. Governance: central (structures and functions); regional (structures and functions); local (structures and functions)

EXAMPLE TWO: An assignment to check implementation after a language development workshop

1. Plan a way of getting more books for your pre-school or educare centre.
2. After reading a book to a child or group of children, ask them to tell you the story of what happens on each page. Choose a book with pictures that children understand. It's OK if children make up their own story.

EXAMPLE THREE: An assignment to check the skill in making teaching aids at the end of an ECD level one course

Make three activities from waste. Each one should be designed to hold the attention of a child at a different stage of development. Try to be as original as possible. Extend or adapt an activity you have seen or better still, make something completely new and different.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS TWO: Document C

Examinations, tests and interviews

EXAMPLE ONE: Questions to guide an interview to check understanding of the first two modules of an ECD level one course

Introduction

1. What problems and successes have you had in your educare centre this month?
   How would you explain the ground rules to a parent?
   Why should an adult avoid disturbing a child who is concentrating?
   Why is it better to show children the correct behaviour rather than always telling them not to do the wrong thing?
   How can we help children to learn the ground rules?

2. What do we mean by self-confidence? How do you build self-confidence in young children?

3. Why should adults treat children with respect?

4. Should we teach children that one culture group is better than another culture group? Give a reason for your answer.

5. Is it necessary to have separate activities for girls and boys in the educare centre? Why?

6. How could you help children who cry a lot when they first join the educare centre?

7. Have you observed children who do not have enough energy to play? What have you done about this problem?

8. What possible effect are there of using violence to discipline young children?

Language

1. What problems and successes have you had in developing the language of children in your educare centre?

2. Describe all the activities you have made to help children develop language.

3. How do you persuade parents to talk and listen to young children?

4. Do you encourage parents to tell stories to their young children? Why?

5. Give as many reasons as you can for encouraging young children to use books.

EXAMPLE TWO: A test and marking scheme used to check the understanding of marking and measurement as a strategy for assessing senior primary children

TEST 01 SUBJECT: Education 3 MARKS: 50 Time: 1 hour

SECTION A. MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
Answer all questions

QUESTION 1
Write down **only** the letter representing the correct alternative next to the corresponding question number.

1.1 Objective tests can be scored.....
A. quickly, easily and objectively.
B. objectively, subjectively and easily.
C. easily, subjectively and intellectually.
D. intellectually, easily and subjectively.

1.2 If the median and the average of a test are approximately the same, the test is then regarded as ...
A. bad.
B. reasonable.
C. good.
D. none of the above.

1.3 Planning a balanced examination paper involves the following:
A. reliability, themes and purpose of the test.
B. themes, purpose of the test and length of the test.
C. validity, themes and purpose of the test.
D. validity, reliability and purpose of the test.

1.4 When the test is too difficult or the pupils have not learned or have not followed the teacher's instructions, the bulk of the scores would be low. This statement fits the...
A. negatively skewed curve.
B. bell shaped or normal curve.
C. leptocurtic curve.
D. positively skewed curve.

1.5 Which one of the following is not a method of scoring an essay type question?
A. Global marking.
B. Detailed marking.
C. Halo-effect marking.
D. Component marking. 2 x 5 =/10/

QUESTION 2.

Indicate, against the question number, whether the statements belo: re ***True*** *or* ***False***

2.1 Reliability of a test has to do with the dependability and consistency of what it measures more than once.

2.2 Validity involves the extent to which a test measures accurately what it is supposed to measure. 2 x 5= 10

QUESTION 3

The marks obtained by ten different pupils in three different tests are respectively shown as follows:

Maths :	23	27	34	42	57	58	65	69	73
Science:	67	45	87	56	54	31	29	45	57
English:	31	35	39	45	47	55	57	64	88

(a) Calculate the mean for each subject. (9)
(b) Calculate the median for each subject. (6)
(c) Calculate the range for each subject. (6)
(d) Represent the sets of marks graphically. Use the same horizontal line for all the sets of marks. (5)
(e) Comment briefly on the distribution of each set of marks in terms of teaching effectiveness. (3) /30/

MARKING SCHEME

TEST 01 SUBJECT: Education 3 MARKS: 50 Time: 1h

SECTION A. MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

QUESTION 1

1.1 A
1.2 C
1.3 B
1.4 D
1.5 D (2x5=10)

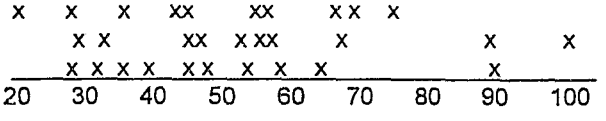
QUESTION 2

2.1 True
2.2 True (5 x 2 = 10)

QUESTION 3

Maths: (a) Mean = 49,4 (494/10) (b) Median = 51,5 (c) Range = 50/51
Science: (a) Mean = 56,8 (b) Median = 55 (c) Range = 68/69
English: (a) Mean = 48,9 (b) Median = 46 (c) Range = 60/61
[3 = 2 = 2 = 7 x 3 (21)]

Graphical representation of sets of marks:



(2x3=6)

(d) Comment: Maths Evenly distributed around the mean 5/5 (1)
Science Six students above the mean and four below (good) (1)
English Four above the mean and six below (difficulty) (1) /30/

Document analysis two: **Document C**

EXAMPLE THREE: A test designed to check understanding of five modules of an ECD level one course

A. NUTRITION

1. How many food groups do we have for a balanced diet?
2. Name the food groups mentioned above.
3. Name the types of food in each group mentioned above.
4. Write down their functions in our bodies.
5. Draw up a one day menu of a balanced diet.
6. Name one type of food which subsidises meat.
7. Name one type of food which subsidises stiff porridge.
8. Name three diseases caused by lack of proper nutrition.
9. How can you identify a child suffering from one of those diseases?

B. FIRST AID

1. What do we mean by First Aid?
2. Name six situations where you can apply first aid.
3. Explain how you can help a child suffering from the above situations.
4. What kind of medicine are we suppose to have in a first aid kit/box?

C. HEALTH

1. Why do we have to use a Road to Health Chart?
2. How can we measure the growth and health of a child?
3. How can we see that the child is healthy?
4. Mention five things we check when examining a child.
5. Why do we have to immunise children?
6. When do we do medical check ups as teachers?
7. When do we call the Health Team for proper examination?
8. Why do we do medical check ups / examinations?

D. CHILDREN PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Give two examples of children's problems.
2. Why do you think they are the main problems? (Explain)
3. What can be the cause of the problems?
4. How can you solve these problems?

E. TRIPS

1. How were your "Trips"? (Explain)
2. Name all the trips you have undertaken, and which one was the best.
3. Are your trips useful / useless? (Motivate your answer)

Have you benefited from our trips? (Motivate)

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS TWO: Document D

Forms used to assess implementation or teaching practice

EXAMPLE ONE: NGO teacher observation schedule

EXAMPLE TWO: NGO self-evaluation and trainer assessment form

EXAMPLE THREE: College Teaching Practice: Lesson evaluation

EXAMPLE FOUR: College Evaluation of student teacher

EXAMPLE FIVE: College School Experience - Assessment profile & Evaluation

EXAMPLE ONE

TEACHER OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

NAME OF TEACHER:
SCHOOL: DATE OBSERVED:

1. What evidence is there that the teacher is following a daily routine including TWO teacher-guided activities per day? .....
.....

2. From the Weekly Preparation Sheets, is the teacher covering the following areas of development in a week:
Mental ..... Language ..... Physical .....
Senses ..... Creative .....

3. What evidence is there that the teacher is using the Perceptual Development Cards?
.....
.....

4. What evidence is there that the teacher is using the other equipment made on the course? .....
.....

5. How does the teacher interact with the children? .....
.....

6. Comment on your observation of the children?.....
.....

7. How is the teacher trying to improve the school?
.....
.....

8. Comment on the health and safety of the school:
.....
.....

9. Comment on the teacher-guided activities you observed:
.....
.....

10. Any additional comments you wish to make:
.....
.....

11. Suggestions you have given the teacher to improve:
.....
.....

SIGNATURE OF TRAINER: .....

SIGNATURE OF TEACHER: .....

Books and stories

	Trainee	Trainer	Follow-up	Final eval
Is the book area in an attractive quiet place?				
Have you made / bought enough books, and are they suitable for children of different ages?				
Are the books in good repair and do you show the children how how to use and look after them?				
Do you tell interesting and relevant stories so that the children enjoy story-time?				
Do you tell children stories using different teaching aids e.g. puppets, books, magazine pictures, etc				

Education toys and games

Have you made or bought enough equipment for the number of children in the group?				
Can some of your equipment be used by more than one child at a time?				
Do you have some toys that are easy to do and others that are more difficult?				
Are the puzzles clean and in good order?				
Do you show children how to use new games before they play them?				

EXAMPLE THREE

7530-18-433-260
OO'ET 2K

TEACHING PRACTICE: LESSON EVALUATION

**Final mark

Student ..... Date .....

Course ..... No. of pupils .....

School ..... Standard .....

SUBJECT

TOPIC

LANGUAGE MEDIUM

* Circle the mark awarded for each particular criterion and write the total of each section opposite the relevant heading.

CRITERIA	*EVALUATION						TOT	REMARKS
1. PERSONALITY AND APPEARANCE								
1.1 Appearance: Groomed? Neat/Untidy? Flashy?		4	3	2	1	0		
1.2 Bearing: Self-confidence; movement; mannerisms; facial expression; animated/dull; spontaneous/tense		4	3	2	1	0		
1.3 Teaching style: Attitude towards pupils; enthusiasm; motivating ability; gaining pupils' attention	9	8	6	4	2	1		
1.4 Delivery and language usage: Quality of voice; articulation; clarity; fluency and correctness of language	9	8	6	4	2	1		
2. LESSON PREPARATION								
2.1 Teaching aims/objectives: Meaningful? Clear? Relevant? Adequate?		4	3	2	1	0		
2.2 Method(s): Appropriate? Correct? Original? Is it appropriate to the particular subject and topic?		4	3	2	1	0		
2.3 Lesson design: Quality of lesson scheme-notes—layout; system; sufficiency; neatness		4	3	2	1	0		
2.4 Teaching aids/materials: Suitability; relevancy; adequacy; originality; trouble taken	5	4	3	2	1	0		
2.5 Choice of subject matter: Scope/quantity; correctness; arrangement/logical sequence; relevancy to aims/topic	19	16	12	8	4	2		
3. PRESENTATION OF THE LESSON								
3.1 Introduction								
(a) Creating relationships/desirable atmosphere; effecting motivation and inclination to learning	9	8	6	4	2	1		
(b) Actualisation of pre-knowledge: Recalling relevant pre-knowledge, linking it to new matter	9	8	6	4	2	1		
(c) Posing the problem: Were pupils led to observe the problems of new matter in the context of pre-knowledge?	9	8	6	4	2	1		
3.2 Exposition of the new subject matter								
(a) Mastery of subject matter: Has student mastered content? Has it been presented logically and clearly?	14	12	9	6	3	1		
(b) Teaching strategy:								
* Questions: Clear? Well-aimed? Properly timed and spaced? Reaction to pupils' questions/answers	9	8	6	4	2	1		
* Chalkboard work: Neatness; legibility; lay-out; effectiveness; used throughout; sufficient	9	8	6	4	2	1		
* Other teaching aids: Effectivity; synchronisation; integration	5	4	3	2	1	0		
* Methods/techniques: Suitability; meaningfulness; effectiveness; success	5	4	3	2	1	0		
(c) Communication and pupil involvement: Class involvement; individualisation; activity; explanation of concepts	9	8	6	4	2	1		
3.3 Conclusion								
(a) Actualisation of content: Opportunity of gaining insight/productive thinking; schematising of insights	5	4	3	2	1	0		
(b) Gaining of objectives: Have aims/objectives been achieved?	5	4	3	2	1	0		
(c) Functionalising: Integration of pre-knowledge and new matter; application of new knowledge; mastery	9	8	6	4	2	1		
3.4 *Class control:* Quality of guidance control; spontaneous reaction encouraged? (Disregard discipline)	9	8	6	4	2	1		
3.5 *Time allocation:* Realistic for each part of lesson? Steady pace? Time spent profitably throughout?	9	8	6	4	2	1		
3.6 *Didactic flexibility:* Continuous evaluation? Accommodation of circumstances; reaction to pupils	9	8	6	4	2	1		
Adjudicator	** The final mark is obtained by dividing this total by two →							

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