

**IMPLEMENTATION TENSIONS AND
CHALLENGES IN DONOR FUNDED
CURRICULUM PROJECTS:
A CASE ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND
POPULATION EDUCATION PROJECTS
IN LESOTHO**

Half thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree
of

**MASTER OF EDUCATION
(Environmental Education)**

of

RHODES UNIVERSITY

By

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December 2007

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DEDICATION

To my late husband, Seutloali, who is present in my memories.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the Almighty God goes my utmost gratitude for making everything possible and providing me with strength to finish this work. I am grateful to the government of Lesotho for granting me the opportunity to attend the blocks in order to pursue this programme, the Rhodes University Environmental Education unit and McArthur Foundation for arranging and providing financial support.

I am equally indebted to Professor Heila Lotz-Sisitka for her supervision of this study. Her faith in me was the basis for my strength and power to move on in spite of the problems I encountered. I also wish to thank Education Department staff: Professor Pat Irwin, Professor O'Donoghue, and Ingrid Schudel for helping me shape my ideas concerning environmental learning and sustainable development issues through lectures, discussions and seminars. I also appreciate the invaluable inputs of the PhD students.

To the many others who contributed to the realization of this study, I thank you. Special thanks go to my fellow M.Ed students and colleagues for their support both academically and socially. I am also highly indebted to the respondents for agreeing to share their experience and views that shaped this study despite their busy schedules.

Last, but not least my family in Grahamstown and my many friends especially Motena, Phiny and 'Me Mary for their continuous prayers and support. My girls, Tsitsi, Liemo and Naleli, many thanks for your support and inspiring me to live.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to capture the challenges and tensions that arise in donor funded curriculum projects in Lesotho. Through an interpretive case study research design I investigated these challenges and tensions in two projects relevant to Education for Sustainable Development, namely the Lesotho Environmental Support Project (LEESP) and the Population/Family Education (POP/FLE) projects which are donor funded curriculum projects funded by DANIDA and UNFPA respectively.

A review of donor funded curriculum projects in the field of environmental education/Education for Sustainable Development was undertaken to provide background and a theoretical context for the study. It highlighted different challenges and implementation tensions experienced by other similar projects in other countries. At the heart of such projects lies a particular political economy, which is based on development assistance to poor countries. Such development assistance is constructed around concepts of need, participation and innovation, and donor-recipient relationships. It is structured around a system of governance and management that normally uses logical framework planning as its main methodology. This political economy has shaped the two donor funded projects that were considered in this study, and has shaped many of the tensions and challenges identified in the study.

To investigate the two projects, data for this study was generated through in-depth interviews, document analysis and focus group interviews, with people who had been involved with the projects at the national level. The data generation process did not involve the schools where the projects were ultimately implemented, as it was seeking to identify how local institutions such as the National Curriculum Development Centre could support better synergies between donor funded initiatives and the local context.

The findings of the study revealed the ambivalent nature of donor initiatives, and identified that the political economy and donor-recipient relations influence the projects. Aspects such as the design and management of projects, the processes associated with introducing innovation in educational ideas and paradigms,

pedagogical issues, and staff contributions and ownership were identified as some of the key tensions that existed in the projects. Other factors such as poor capacity levels of local staff, non-alignment with existing structures, inadequate sustainability mechanisms and the difficulty of the envisaged integration of new paradigm thinking (methods and approaches) into the existing curriculum framework were also significant tensions, given the positivist history of the Lesotho curriculum.

The study recommends the need to establish mechanisms for working with donors to tackle the tensions that arise in such projects within longer-term donor assistance. It proposes that government should expedite the development of policy on donor coordination. Both donors and the NCDC need to put mechanisms in place to allow for debate and discussions on innovations brought in by the donors in relation to local needs. The study further recommends that in cases where more than one donor exists, the NCDC and the donors should work towards developing synergies between the different initiatives to avoid duplication and overlap. Finally, there is a need for projects to use bottom-up approaches for the design and formulation of projects to ensure ownership.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANC	Antenatal Care
BOS	Bureau of Statistics
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCL	Christian Council of Lesotho
COSC	Cambridge School Leaving Certificate
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DANCED	Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DPMP	Department of Population and Manpower Planning
ECOL	Examination Council of Lesotho
EE	Environmental Education
ESPD II	Education Sector Development Project (World Bank)
GNP	Gross National Product
GOL	Government of Lesotho
IBMIN	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
JC	Junior Certificate
LDTTC	Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre
LCE	Lesotho College of Education
LEESP	Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project
LHWP	Lesotho Highlands Water Project
LPPA	Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
NCC	National Curriculum Committee
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NEEP-GET	National Environmental Education Programme – General Education and Training
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NTTC	National Teacher Training College

NUL	National University of Lesotho
POP/FLE	Population/Family Life Education
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PSIRP	Public Sector Improvement and Reform Programme
PSLE	Primary School Leaving Examination
ST2EEP	Secondary Teacher Training Environmental Education Programme
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study. It begins by describing the context in which the research took place. The organization and the donor funded curriculum projects under study, namely Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project (LEESP)¹ and Population/Family Life Education (POP/FLE), are introduced. I also explain the rationale for selecting these projects as the focus for this study. My role within the projects is articulated providing the reader with a perspective of my position and engagement with the projects. The chapter also introduces the research orientation and the research goals. It further defines the motivation for undertaking this study. Finally, I outline the contents of each chapter in order to provide a broad overview of the study.

1.2 THE CONTEXT

The study focuses on the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) in the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho. This centre is a government department charged with a national curriculum development and dissemination mandate. Its primary aim is to develop curricula for both primary and secondary school levels. The centre also provides in-service training for curriculum implementers (school teachers) due to its experience in curriculum development issues. It is also responsible for ensuring that emerging issues such as environmental degradation, population, HIV and AIDS and human rights are integrated into the national curriculum. The centre is staffed by various subject specialists for each subject taught in Lesotho schools (see section 2.2). Donors have played a significant role in supporting curriculum initiatives. Such institutions include the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), World Bank, United States Agency for International Development through the Basic Non-formal Education System (BANFES) project

¹ LEESP was planned and initiated under the auspices of the Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development (DANCED), and was later transferred to the Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA).

which ran from 1985 to 1990. At the time of this study assistance was being obtained from the World Bank, Global Fund, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Scientific, Education and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA) addressing curriculum and assessment policy, HIV and AIDS education, Human Right Education, Population Education and Environmental Education respectively. The focus of the study will be on Population Education and Environmental Education due to time constraints and my main curriculum interests. My interest in these two projects is their interrelatedness and their goals of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in Lesotho. A brief outline of the projects and their activities is provided in the next section.

1.3 POPULATION/FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (POP/FLE)

Population/Family Life Education (POP/FLE) is a component project of the Reproductive Health Project under the Government of Lesotho and United Nations Population Fund (GOL/UNFPA) country programme. The project was conceived in 1989 as part of UNFPA's assistance to Lesotho to achieve selected goals for sustainable development and improved quality of life. The project was not immediately implemented following its formulation due to logistical problems which included the government internalizing and conceptualizing the project as well as delays in disbursements of funds (NCDC:1999). It is implemented by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) through seven institutions, namely National University of Lesotho (NUL), Lesotho College of Education (LCE), Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC), Early Childhood and Development (ECCD), Technical and Vocational Department (TVD), Special Education and the NCDC. The above institutions work in collaboration with other stakeholders interested in population education for the youth such as the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW), Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association (LPPA) and the Christian Health Association of Lesotho (CHAL) and other non-governmental organizations working closely with communities. This is done to reinforce a synergistic effect. It is coordinated and based at the NCDC while the overall coordination of the GOL/UNFPA country programme remains the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning through the Department of Population and Manpower Planning (DPMP). The project was funded by UNFPA and executed by

the Academy for Educational Development through the Population Communication Services. Since the country programmes are designed with four-year cycles, the study will focus on the third country programme which ran from 1999 to 2002.

1.3.1 Duration and objectives

The country programme agreement was signed in May 1999. But due to logistical problems, which included finalization of the project document and disbursements of funds, the project activities only actually commenced in January 2000. This meant the lifespan of the project was reduced by almost two years. However, after a summative evaluation in 2001 it was extended for one year to end in 2002. The project was conceived with the primary aim of supporting the government's plans to strengthen and institutionalise the teaching of population family life education in the formal school system with the objective of educating future adults in population issues so that they can make responsible decisions about parenthood (UNFPA, 1993). Specifically for the third country programme, the goal of UNFPA support was to contribute to the government of Lesotho's efforts towards achieving sustainable development. The aim was to enhance quality of life through improving population trends and reducing gender disparities, and the following outputs were identified:

Output one

- Institutionalization of POP/FLE into the school curricula at 50 primary, 20 secondary, and two tertiary institutions and one non-formal institution, with the aim of providing POP/FLE for the education of future adults in population, gender, family life, responsible parenthood and personal decision making.

Output two

- Strengthening of inter-sectoral coordination in reproductive and sexual health issues between the sub-programmes of the Lesotho National population programme and enhanced programmatic approach to population issues (see section 4.2- UNFPA, 1999, p.3).

1.4 THE LESOTHO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROJECT (LEESP)

The Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project (LEESP) is a DANIDA funded initiative hosted and implemented by the NCDC within the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) which is the executing agency. Implementation of the project on a daily basis has been the responsibility of a team of designated national officers. International technical assistance was provided by Carl Bro management consultants, overseen by a steering committee, members of which were drawn from key stakeholders. It started its operations in August 2001. The stakeholders of the project were all key institutions involved in curriculum development, management and implementation processes in Lesotho. This included the National Curriculum Development Centre, Teacher Education Institutions, Examination Council of Lesotho, Education Inspectorate and the primary and secondary schools (see section 2.4).

1.4.1 Duration and objectives

The project had a lifespan of three years, from 2001 to 2004 and was expected to assist the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) in its endeavour to integrate Environmental Education (EE) into the curriculum, and in the long run respond to the country's environmental issues and risks. It was realised that the original plan did not cover the teacher training institutions. This culminated in an extension of a further eight months to 31 March 2005 to cooperate with the two major teacher education providers (Lesotho College of Education [LCE] and the National University of Lesotho [NUL]) in order to ensure that environmental concerns are reflected in their curricula and that there is an adequate match between teacher education and the school curricula.

LEESP aimed to contribute to the implementation of EE in all aspects of formal education through:

- curriculum amendments,
- professional development,
- materials development,
- whole school management, and

- school based implementation.

Given the available human and financial resources, LEESP was expected to engage in the practical implementation of an integrated EE curriculum through model schools. The model schools were in turn expected to disseminate their gained experience to neighbouring schools. By the time of its completion, the project had worked with 20 model schools, each of which was expected to work with a further two to five schools which were expected to work with other neighbouring schools until all schools are reached.

The project sought to ensure that each learner develops the necessary competencies to manage the environment and to support sustainable development in Lesotho through the following outputs:

- A concept of environmental education appropriate to the Lesotho context, developed and accepted by all relevant stakeholders.
- Mechanisms and strategies for improving the coordination between institutions in the curriculum management cycle established.
- Capacity in resource-based approach to the design, implementation and monitoring of environmental education developed.
- Strategies developed to promote cross-curricular environmental education at primary and secondary level via model schools.
- Project impact and sustainability increased through monitoring and research.
- Cooperation between LEESP and the Regional Environmental Education Support Project (REES) and other regional environmental and national environmental initiatives developed.

As is the norm for most donor funded initiatives both projects used the logical framework system for their programme implementation. The logical framework system was used to organise the ongoing planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all project activities.

1.5 AIM AND FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The focus of the study is donor funded curriculum projects. As such, the study examines the role played by donors in implementing educational responses to sustainable development issues at a national government level. The donor funded projects under study are government initiatives implemented with support from cooperating partners (donors) in response to socio-ecological issues and risks in Lesotho. Beck (1992) notes that environmental and population issues are complex and not easy to resolve due to their embeddedness in socio-political and socio-cultural contexts. It is important to view POP/FLE and EE as responses to socio-ecological issues. This requires careful consideration in an educational set-up such as the one in this study (see chapter 2).

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION AND GOALS

The main aim of the study is to explore tensions and challenges that arise in the implementation of donor funded curriculum projects. The associated research question is:

What are the implementation tensions and challenges arising in donor funded curriculum projects?

In order to deliberate or engage with the research question in more depth the following research goals were set:

- To identify and review implementation strategies of the POP/FLE and LEESP projects,
- To explore how the NCDC structures interfaced with the projects, and
- To identify tensions and challenges associated with the project implementation strategies and NCDC responses.

The study aims to provide recommendations that will inform the development of strategies for working with donors on curriculum projects that aim to enhance sustainable development in a national context. It will also provide perspectives on the process of institutionalising emerging social and environmental concerns into the national curriculum. This process forms part of the UN Decade for Sustainable

Development goals, which includes re-orientation of education towards sustainable development (UNESCO, 2005).

1.7 MY ROLE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

I work as a Chief Economic Planner in the Department of Population and Manpower Planning of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The department I work for is responsible for coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of population related projects. It also coordinates external resources, their mobilisation, and management in the population field. The section also ensures that population and development issues are integrated into national and sectoral plans. Specifically, I am responsible for information, communication, and education (IEC) activities, which include advocacy and social mobilization. My role is inter alia to ensure that population and environmental concerns are integrated into the national curriculum. In this role, I served in the steering committees of the two projects that form the focus of this study.

My interest this study grew out of a research project I undertook for my Postgraduate Diploma in Population and Sustainable Development, which investigated challenges in streamlining POP/FLE into Lesotho's curriculum (Monaheng, 2000). A number of issues emerged in this research which pointed to the need for a more in-depth understanding of challenges spurred by technical and financial assistance allocated to countries for curriculum initiatives. It is worth noting that attending the above-mentioned course and the SADC/Rhodes International Certificate Course in Environmental Education in 1999 provided me with deeper understanding of the sustainable development discourse. In addition, having been intimately involved with the implementation of the two projects under study I have developed some understanding of the processes in donor funded initiatives.

Through my experience as an economic planner, I realized that our work is to negotiate and mobilize external resources. Sometimes this work is done with various donors with similar objectives, who work towards implementing these objectives. Through an analysis of the two projects (see chapter 4 and 5), a review of donor relationships in the developing country context (see chapter 2), an examination of other donor funded projects and political economy discourse (see chapter 2) for this

study, I was struck by how much I had not noticed or took for granted at the time of implementation of the projects. These issues appeared to have needed more attention and in-depth understanding (see chapter 5 and 6). This study has, I feel, enhanced my capacity to fulfil my role and to understand better the process of working with donor funded projects in the future (see chapter 6).

1.8 STRUCTURE AND ORIENTATION OF THE THESIS

In order to come up with tangible findings, I found it prudent to solicit the perceptions and views on tensions associated with donor funded initiatives from those directly involved with the initiatives. To get their views three data generation techniques were used. These were interviews, focus group interviews, and document analysis. Generation and analysis of this data has allowed me to structure the thesis as follows.

The first chapter provides the general introduction and context of the study.

In chapter two, I present a literature review which was conducted from a critical perspective. My intention was to gain insights into diverse political economy theories and curriculum transformation processes, particularly as they relate to donor funded projects and curriculum development initiatives. In addition, the chapter provides a context for the research.

Chapter three describes the research methodology, highlighting data generation and analysis processes. It also discusses ethical and validity issues.

Chapter four presents the findings of the research highlighting views of the participants in relation to design, alignment with official mandate, implementation process, and impact and outcomes of the project.

Chapter five provides a discussion of policy and change in education and the political economy of donor funded projects. It reviews the data presented in chapter four to provide a more in-depth discussion of the findings of the study.

Chapter six provides a summary of the study and presents recommendations including recommendations for further research. It also includes a critical reflection on the study, how it was conducted, its potential value and limitations.

1.9 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

This chapter has provided an introduction to the research context. A rationale for choosing the two projects within the landscape of five projects was provided, with a brief description of the two projects. A detailed account of the projects will be provided in the next chapter. The aims and goals of the research were outlined. I also provided perspectives on my role in relation to the two projects to place myself within the research.

In the next chapter, I consider the sustainable development issues to which the two projects are responding. The context (NCDC), where the projects are hosted, is also described. A detailed account of the two projects and other donor funded curriculum initiatives is provided. I also discuss development aid discourse from the perspective of political economy as this is central to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the contextual issues that influenced this study on implementation tensions and challenges in donor funded curriculum projects. It begins by examining sustainable development issues in Lesotho, and the international, regional and local policy narratives that respond to the issues. The chapter also examines the education system of which the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) is part, as it is host to the projects under study. It looks at the NCDC's history, mandate, its strategies and partnerships as well as donor funding for the NCDC. It will also touch on curriculum development approaches in the country, curriculum integration and change and the 'weaving in' of environment and population issues into the curriculum, which includes their pedagogical discourse. Technical and financial assistance for curriculum innovation is considered from international, regional, and local perspectives. In conclusion, I will review studies focusing on implementation challenges in donor funded projects in diverse settings. The presentation of this chapter will take a critical approach, providing deeper insights into different schools of thought.

2.2 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES IN LESOTHO

The chapter opens with scoping a series of key and critical environment and development issues facing Lesotho to which LEESP and POP/FLE are responding. Lesotho is a mountainous country and is geographically surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. It has a population of 1.98 million according to the 1996 census and is included amongst the 42 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) (Phororo et al., 2000). Like all the LDCs, Lesotho is particularly ill equipped to develop its domestic economy and to ensure an adequate standard of living for its populace.

Lesotho is characterised by numerous environment and development issues. For a long time, agriculture, livestock production, manufacturing and remittances from migrant labourers employed in South Africa have been the mainstay of Lesotho's

economy (United Nations (UN), 2004). Since the late nineties the above scenario has changed. The number of miners has been cut due to closure of some of the South African mines. The Lesotho Highlands Water Project Construction has ended and the expansion of the garment sector has tapered off affecting the national economy. These issues have affected domestic job opportunities increasing unemployment to 40 percent (Government of Lesotho. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning [MOFDP], 2004, p. 5). The result is increasing chronic poverty, which is now the biggest development challenge for Lesotho. According to the Bureau of Statistics (BOS) (2006) 2002/2003 and 1994/95 Household Budget Survey 56.6 percent of the population is poor.

The mountainous topography presents difficult terrain whereby only 9 percent of the land is currently cultivatable. Agricultural performance has been poor due to inadequate policy implementation frameworks and land tenure constraints. Coupled with the above are adverse natural factors such as erratic rainfall, snowfalls and drought. Increasing land degradation results in soil erosion and range resource depletion. The population is increasing at an annual growth of 2.1 percent (Phororo et al., 2000; UN 2004).

Lesotho is also experiencing declining food security, due to the increases in human settlements, soil erosion and mono-cropping of maize and sorghum which depletes soil fertility. The food security situation is further exacerbated by depletion of shrubs and crop residue which are utilized as fuel for cooking and heating. Malnutrition has increased and the prevalence rate of underweight under-five children is estimated at 22.8 percent.

Lesotho is currently experiencing internal migration from rural to urban areas and from less developed mountain areas to major urban centres in the lowlands. This has been caused by unemployment and population issues in the rural areas.

According to the United Nations Common Assessment of Lesotho (United Nations (UN), 2004:11) Lesotho, like many African countries, experienced political instability during the first few decades after independence. The most remarkable political unrest occurred during the aftermath of the disputed 1998 elections. (Government of

Lesotho, MOFDP, 2006, p.xvi) states that this unrest resulted in “substantial damage to the country’s economy and credibility”. This is noted as a threat to the achievement of sustainable development. The country is not expected to make economic progress or be able to address the spectrum of poverty issues. The multi-party elections of 2002 have set the country on a new course which holds the promise of stability and progress while reinstating the fundamental principles of governance (ibid., p. 58). As part of deepening democracy the government has embarked on a process of decentralization, which will bring greater powers to the regional and local levels in accordance with the Local Government Act of 1997 (United Nations, 2004, p. 78)

Lesotho is classified as a least developed country and is ranked by the UNDP Human Development Report 2005 at 149 of 177 member countries on the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI has dropped from 0.520 in 2000 to 0.497 in 2003. The government’s Poverty strategy paper indicates that the country has experienced a decline in HDI in the areas of health, education and life expectancy. The paper further indicates that if the impact of HIV and AIDS is taken into account it is expected that the HDI will decline further.

As far as literacy is concerned the available data shows that Lesotho’s literacy rate is 82% (United Nations, 2002a) and is regarded as higher than most African countries. This is expected to increase with the introduction of free primary education. Lesotho’s female population enjoys higher education attainment and literacy than the male population (Government of Lesotho (GOL), 2004, p.ix). Girls have benefited more from education than boys who are often kept out of school to herd livestock and later on join the migrant labour system. However, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET, 2005, p.106) notes that despite the impressive advances made by women in educational attainment, unequal gender relations are still a dominant feature in the country. This is attributed to the society’s patrilineal and patriarchal system which subordinates women to men. The customary law classifies women as minors that are perpetually subjected to the guardianship of their male counterparts. The MOET further (ibid., p.106) asserts that the above results in women’s rights being marginalized and their educational advantage over men does not translate into economic, political and social empowerment.

Another development challenge facing the country is its youthful population. About 36 percent of the household population is less than 15 years old; 58 percent is aged 15-64 years, while 6 percent is 65 years old and older (UN, 2004, p.ix). The challenges for the youthful population include access to education, employment, risky sexual behaviour, exposure to HIV and AIDS, high incidence of teenage pregnancies and substance abuse (ibid., p.11).

The most threatening developmental issue is the impact and high prevalence of HIV and AIDS. This is estimated at 23.3 percent of the adult population aged 15 – 49 (National Aids Commission (NAC, 2006, p.1). This threatens to reverse socio-development and leaves many children orphaned. According to the UN (2004, p.74), the development of youth and adolescents poses a major challenge in a country with significantly high HIV and AIDS prevalence rate as the youth are the ones who offer a ‘window of hope for the future’. The youth present opportunities for creating a new generation of leaders, a well-trained labour force and a generation imbued with positive values of tolerance and respect for the reproductive and sexual rights of other people (ibid., p. 11).

Lesotho is also experiencing declining health standards. There is increasing infant mortality estimated at 81 per 1,000 live births and child mortality rate of 113 per 1,000 live births. Maternal mortality is estimated at 419 per 100 000 live birth (The Bureau of Statistics Lesotho (BOS), 2001). The incidence of tuberculosis, respiratory illness and diarrhoea diseases is still of major concern in the country. In the context of the youthful population, Lesotho has embarked on increasing school enrolments. According to the Poverty Reduction Strategy the primary school enrolments were in decline falling from 71 percent in 1996 to 61 percent in 1999(Government of Lesotho.MOFDP, 2006, p.73). The introduction of Free Primary Education in 2000 reversed the above trends. Enrolment was raised to 85 percent in 2002.

The foregoing overview presents only a brief synopsis of some perspectives on the socio ecological and socio economic issues in Lesotho. Significant to this is the way in which the country is responding to these issues. As a solution the country needed to develop educational programmes that could critically explore these critical issues, and thus help to sustain societies and livelihoods. Policy development has been a key

response emanating from international/global initiatives, to which Lesotho is a party. In the next section, I will deliberate on the responses to the issues from international, regional and national perspectives.

2.3 POLICY FRAMEWORK THAT RESPONDS TO THE ISSUES

2.3.1 International Responses

Lesotho is a signatory to a number of international and regional conventions and treaties, which have policy implications as they establish global guidelines for the achievement of sustainable development. Considering the scope and subject matter of this study, the focus will be on those frameworks which have relevance to the study.

The first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment which was held in Stockholm in 1972 focussed on close inter-linkages between humans and the environment and stressed the need to protect and improve the environment for the present and future generations (Lotz-Sisitka, 2004a). Another significant UN Conference in Tbilisi in Russia followed this in October 1977. This Conference provided a framework and guidelines for the practices of environmental education on a global, regional and national scale (Irwin and Lotz-Sisitka, 2000). It was further recognised “environmental education should be continuous lifelong process beginning at preschool level and through all formal and non formal stages.” This statement is applicable to this study where the focus is on integrating environmental education in Lesotho’s curriculum. In 1989 the Report of the World Commission on Environment was published. The report proposed new development thinking based on the concept of sustainable development. In 1992 environmental concerns were once again at the forefront of international discussions with the convening of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). This was popularly known as the Rio Earth Summit, as it was held in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. The Summit concluded with the adoption of a detailed global programme of action for sustainable development, known as Agenda 21 which countries were to use as a blue print to define for themselves measures that were required to achieve sustainable development (Chakela, 1999). It emphasized the role of environmental education as an educational response to the environmental crises (Irwin & Lotz-Sisitka 2000). In Agenda 21, Chapter 36 describes environmental education as those processes that involve teachers

and learners in promoting sustainable development and improving capacity of people to address environmental and developmental issues (UN, 1995a). This had great significance in the policy framework of Lesotho.

Following the Rio Summit, four years later the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) was convened in Cairo, Egypt. This conference articulated a comprehensive approach to population and development. It addressed some of the most fundamental challenges affecting humanity which include poverty alleviation, and provision of health care, education and preservation of the environment (UNFPA, 1999). The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) programme of action explicitly stated that “integrating population into economic and development strategies will both speed up the pace of sustainable development and poverty alleviation and contribute to achievement of population objectives and improved quality of life” (UN, 1995b, p. 12). The programme of action further underscored the importance of political commitment for strengthening integration and development strategies through public education and programmes (ibid., p. 13).

In 1997, the educators working with UNESCO noted that mainstream education had not responded well to the environmental crisis. They published a document entitled “Education for a Sustainable Future: A Trans-disciplinary Vision for a Concerted Action”. The aim was to take further the international debates on Environmental Education, and mobilise action to highlight the importance of Environmental Education and public awareness for sustainability. The document called for a fundamental reorientation of education and training systems worldwide (UNESCO, 1997).

Following ICPD and the Rio Summit, the UN General Assembly convened the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The WSSD Implementation Plan recognises that countries should integrate sustainable development at all levels of the education system and promote education as a key agent of change (United Nations, 2002b, p.45).

The international community realised that not enough progress was being made to secure sustainability. The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established in 2000 and consisted of time-bound targets for achieving sustainable development. The declaration is also seen as an overarching framework for development cooperation. It provides targets for overcoming poverty, improving child, maternal and sexual health, redressing gender inequalities expanding education and developing strategies for sustainable development (UN, 2000, p.11). Countries were further required to operationalise the MDGs in their local contexts. Lesotho's case will be discussed in the next section.

The international community adopted the Millennium Development declaration with its eight goals for poverty alleviation and development. African countries committed themselves to achieve the Millennium Development Goals under a framework called the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) (Lotz-Sisitka, 2004a). The NEPAD Action Plan recognises that there is need to adopt an interdisciplinary response to address development issues in Africa. NEPAD also focuses on addressing environmental problems at national and regional government levels. In the SADC region the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan reaffirms approaches outlined in the WSSD Plan of Action and NEPAD. Environmental education in the region has focused on “sociological justice and participation which includes a focus on history, context, reflexivity, criticality and open processes of learning and change” (Lotz-Sisitka, 2004a, p.51). The above international and regional frameworks have influenced the development of policies and education at a national level which I will discuss in the section that follows.

2.3.2 National responses

The Government of Lesotho has formulated various policies and developed strategic frameworks to respond to developmental problems. Among these are the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, National Vision 2020, the National Population Policy and a National Action Plan to implement Agenda 21, to name a few. These are discussed in more detail below:

- **Poverty Reduction Strategy and National Vision 2020**

There has been a concerted effort by the Lesotho government to encourage sustainable development through the development of the national Vision 2020 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) for Lesotho covering the period 2004/2005-2006/2007 outlines national priorities and strategies to reduce poverty and promote equity-based economic growth. Its overall objective is *“to provide a broad based improvement in the standard of welfare for the current generation of Basotho without compromising opportunities for future generations”* (Government of Lesotho, Ministry of Finance and Development [MOFDP], 2006, p. xxi). The longer term goal is to ensure that Lesotho breaks out of the ranks of the Least Developed Countries as has been articulated in the national Vision 2020 document: *“By 2020, Lesotho shall be a stable democracy, united, prosperous nation at peace with itself and its neighbours. It shall have a healthy and a well-developed human resource base. Its economy will be strong, its environment well managed and its technology well established.”*(Government of Lesotho (GOL), 2004, p.x). Vision 2020 reflects long-term development goals while the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) is a three year medium-term framework which outlines national priorities and strategies for promoting economic growth and reducing poverty. These two documents recognize the need to integrate Environmental Education at all levels of schooling (Government of Lesotho, MOFDP, 2006; GOL, 2004). However they do not explicitly say how the integration should be done. According to UNDP (2000), the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Paper (PRSP) is the government’s effort to mobilize external funding as it presents a poverty reduction programme in a coherent framework.

- **National Population Policy (NPP)**

The National Population Policy (NPP) was adopted in 1994 and states that Population/Family Life Education should be taught in schools from grade 4 to 12.

- **Constitution of Lesotho**

The Lesotho government’s commitment towards environmental and developmental concerns is clearly stipulated in the constitution, section 36 which states:

“Lesotho shall adopt policies designed to protect and enhance the natural and cultural environment of Lesotho for the benefit of both present and future generations and shall endeavour to assure all citizens a sound and safe environment for health and well being.”

Chakela (1999) argues that by enshrining this environmental provision in the constitution, Lesotho has elevated environmental considerations to the highest legislative level (p.190).

- **Environmental Policies and Legal Frameworks**

A number of specific policies and legal frameworks to protect the environment have been made over the years. Lesotho was influenced by the report on World Commission on Environment to such an extent that it hosted an international conference on Environment and Development in April 1988. This conference was supported by the World Bank and the African Development Bank. The conference put Lesotho’s development strategy in line with sustainable development objectives and laid down the foundation for a National Action Plan in 1989. According to Chakela (1999), Lesotho was considered one of the pioneering countries in environmental planning. The conference culminated in the development of the National Environmental Plan (NEAP). The overall objective of the NEAP was to provide a framework for incorporating environmental considerations into the nation’s economic development and to facilitate the coordination of the nation’s endeavours.

Following the Rio Summit, two years later Lesotho developed a National Action Plan to implement Agenda 21. The plan addressed strategies to be undertaken by various sectors to integrate environmental concerns in their policies (LEESP, 2000; Government of Lesotho (GOL), 1994, p.2). Inclusion of EE at all levels was a priority area for attention.

In addition to the NEAP, the Lesotho Agenda National investment programme (GOL, 1995) was established to look more closely into environmental education, training and public awareness, water resource management, integrated land management, and managing energy resources. It stated that the present and the future generations should receive a sound foundation in environmental education as these are the basic

ingredients for successful environmental protection. The Lesotho Agenda 21 National Investment Programme document of 1995 (ibid.) recommended the incorporation of formal environmental subjects into the school curriculum as these were seen to be of the utmost importance in a society wanting to achieve sustainable development. It also encouraged the Ministry of Education and Training to improve curriculum and instructional materials to incorporate environmentally related issues.

Furthermore, Section 4.26 of the Lesotho National environmental policy of 1997 contained, among its strategies, one that related to the inclusion of environmental education in public awareness within both the formal and non-formal education system. Explicitly the aim was to “introduce environmental education in all formal and non-formal education institutions, strengthen the National Curriculum Development Centre and Lesotho Distance Training Centre [sic] to coordinate the implementation of this programme” (Government of Lesotho(GOL), 1997, p.36).

Section 97 of the Lesotho Environmental Bill of 2000 states that: “The Authority shall, in consultation with the relevant line ministries take appropriate measures for the integration of education on environment in the school and university curriculum.” Another important milestone in the field of environment was that the government, with the assistance of UNDP, established the National Environmental Secretariat in 1994 under the prime minister’s office. It has since been able to set the direction of environment management towards more sustainable development. It has undergone various administrative changes and is presently a department under the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture.

The country passed an Environmental Act in 2001. However, the administrative requirements of implementing the act have not been established and it has not been implemented. As a result an environmental bill of 2006 was developed to include emerging issues not addressed in the previous act.

- **Education Sector Policies**

There has been a growing call for education to play a role in addressing the problems related to environment and development in Lesotho. The education system responded to the challenge through a number of policy frameworks. In 1992 a Basic Education Clarification Seminar was held to review the primary school curriculum. It stated that curriculum should aim to help learners understand, appreciate and conserve their local and national environment as well as to be aware of environmental interactions (Ministry of Education, 1994). In 1995 a national seminar on clarification policy and localization of the Cambridge school certificate was held and its report in section 3.3.2. stated:

“recognising the importance of the environment and the dangers attached to environmental degradation, the effects of these to human population, animals and plants the seminar recommended that secondary education must instil and promote awareness, knowledge and understanding on environment, its importance to mankind, interaction with environment, care, protection and conservation of the environment”.

(Government of Lesotho, Ministry of Education, 1995, p.22)

- **Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Report**

The Millennium Declaration commits Lesotho to implement and monitor its development with the context of the Vision 2020 and the PRSP processes (Government of Lesotho, 2002). It is further indicated that the MDG goals and their indicators should form a special core of government’s effort to design and implement policies to effectively reduce poverty and promote human development for Basotho (ibid., 2002, p.1). The main theme of the country MDG report was the war against HIV and AIDS. The main message is that the single greatest obstacle to development and achievement of the MDGs is the HIV scourge. It is hoped that the goal of developing global partnerships for development will promote more donor support than before.

- **Common Country Assessment of Lesotho Document**

This document was prepared in response to the need to harmonise UN agencies’ activities in Lesotho. An important element of the CCA is: “coherence of programmes in coordination of development efforts by various UN agencies to take advantage of

synergies and complementarities that exist in many of the programme interventions” (UN, 2004, p.i). It also provides improved coordinated follow-up to UN conferences and conventions and supports their implementation. Development challenges on which to provide support are clearly articulated. These include the fight against HIV and AIDS, poverty reduction, environmental and natural resources conservation (including food security and sustaining good governance (ibid., p.xii). The importance of environmental education is highlighted and it is proposed that it should be integrated into the formal education system

In response to the above mentioned national policy frameworks various sectors have formulated strategic frameworks. Examples are the national gender and development policy, reproductive health policy and the youth policy. These further prompted the government to integrate population and environmental concerns into their policies and strategies. The policy documents emphasized the need to integrate population, health and environmental issues in education particularly in the curriculum. The aim is to equip youth with knowledge, skills and attitudes to respond to issues of environment and sustainable development. The Ministry of Education through the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) was tasked to integrate population and environmental educational concerns into the curriculum. The next section looks at education system and the NCDC as they are central to this case study

2.4 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF LESOTHO

This section provides a brief synopsis of the education system in Lesotho which may have an influence on the activities of the two projects under study. Lesotho has a unique education system. According to the World Bank Report on Lesotho Poverty Assessment (1995, p.235), Lesotho differs from the situation in many Sub-Saharan African countries where education is the direct responsibility of the state. Lesotho’s education system remains largely a joint venture between the government and the churches mainly Anglican, Evangelical and Roman Catholic church. The latter owns and operates 97 percent of primary and 85 percent of secondary schools. The 2001 statistics showed that there are 1,295 primary schools in the country which belong to the Roman Catholic Church with the remainder owned by either the Lesotho Evangelical church, the Anglican Church or in a few cases, the communities themselves, while government owned 59 primary schools (Government of

Lesotho.MOFDP, 2006, p.73). However, the government has the administrative, financial and academic control. This includes the responsibility of training and payment of teachers, formal approval of teachers' appointments and dismissal, administration of examinations, authorisation of curricula, school inspection and regulation of opening of schools (World Bank, 1995, p.236). After the introduction of Free Primary Education in 2000, the government also absorbed the cost of textbooks and school feeding (Government of Lesotho. MOFDP, 2006, p. 73). The World Bank (1995, p.236) further asserts that there are variations with respect to education management in the three main churches. They do however, have a common line of organization comprising an executive body at the top, an education secretary in the middle and parish-appointed managers at the bottom (ibid., p.236). The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET, 2005) notes that the above scenario raises legitimate questions regarding the real meaning of "ownership" of the school system in Lesotho. It then suggests that the relationship between the state and the churches with respect to schools operations has to be defined. This raises tensions especially pertaining to curriculum innovations or change.

In the debate on the education system it is pertinent to look at curriculum issues. The Lesotho Education Sector Strategic Plan: 2005-2015 (Government of Lesotho. MOET, 2005, p.101) indicates that the primary school curriculum is overloaded with ten compulsory subjects namely Sesotho, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Agriculture, Home Economics, Health & Physical Education and Arts (fine arts and music). However, only five (Sesotho, English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies) are examined in the primary school leaving examination (PSLE). The curriculum in secondary schools is guided by the government policy of diversification. This requires that in addition to the core subjects like Sesotho, English, Mathematics and Science, there is a selection of practical subjects comprising Agriculture, Basic Handicrafts, Woodwork, Metal Work, Technical Drawing, Home Economics and Business Education. In taking these subjects, students are prepared for the world of work. Other subjects offered at this level include Geography, History, Development Studies and Religious Education. It is argued that the liberty that schools have in selection of additional subjects often leads to an overloaded curriculum in some schools (ibid., p.101). In realising the challenges of a high unemployment rate, slow economic growth, extreme poverty, HIV and AIDS

and other diseases, environmental degradation, gender equality and equity, human rights and democracy, there is an urgent need to reform the curriculum. It is documented that traditional school subjects within the school curriculum do not adequately address most of these challenges. Hence they have to be refocused by placing them within the social context (NCDC, 2006, p.11). However students are encouraged to take six subjects. All the above create tensions when it comes to the introduction of emerging issues. According to the Government of Lesotho.MOET, 2005, p.128 Strategic Plan, the Ministry intends to focus more on curriculum reform to forge strong linkages between life skills and the world of work. Psychosocial life skills such as assertiveness, gender equality, human rights and governance shall be included together with cross-cutting issues such as HIV and AIDS, nutrition and environmental education. The teacher education curriculum shall integrate the above areas. Consequently changes in teaching styles especially with life skills will have to be affected.

The next section provides a detailed analysis of the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), the government department charged with curriculum design mandate. This is intended to draw a broader picture of how the two projects under study are located in the curriculum landscape.

2.5 THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The section will focus on the fundamental reasons for establishing the centre, its structure and functions, curriculum strategies and partnerships in the curriculum design and management cycle.

2.5.1 History, Mandate and Structure of the Centre

The National Curriculum Development Centre was established in 1980 by the government of Lesotho to facilitate the development of curriculum that responds to the needs of the country as well as the needs of learners at both primary and secondary levels (Nketekete and Mpetla, 2003; MOET, 2005). The establishment of the centre was spurred on by the recognition that curriculum development is a specialised activity to be done by professionals trained in the field and that there was need for regular curriculum review to ensure relevance, flexibility and affordability of the school curricula (ibid.).

Nketekete and Mpeta (2003) identify factors that necessitated the establishment of the centre:

- At independence, provision of education was not geared towards meeting the socio-economic and human resource needs;
- The content of education/ subjects was too academic with no bearing on life and needs of Basotho children; and
- The curriculum reforms were often frantic and uncoordinated.

The centre was then entrusted to deal with the abovementioned problems in a more systematic way. Its specific functions are as follows and are summarized in the diagram below:

- To design and develop the syllabus in different subject areas at primary and secondary levels.
- To prepare instructional materials of various types used in primary and secondary levels to carry out pilot testing of curriculum materials in selected schools.
- To carry out dissemination and in-service activities related to the revised and new curriculum as well as curriculum materials.
- To design an inbuilt evaluation achievement at both school and national levels.
- To undertake educational research in order to establish the effectiveness of curriculum in school.

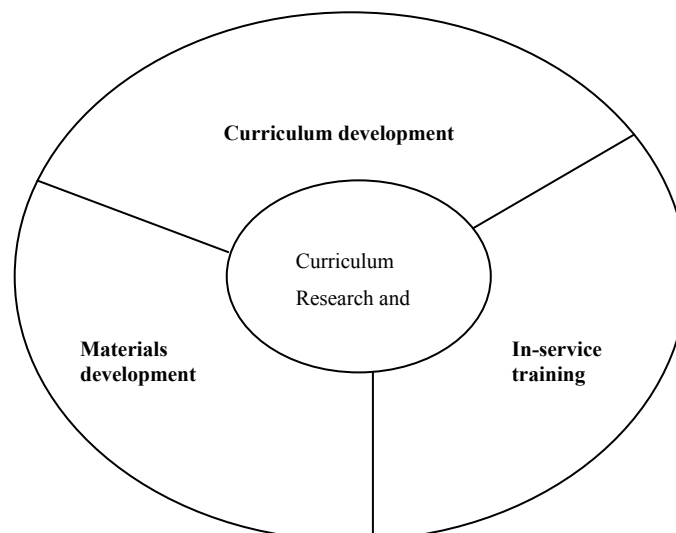


Figure 2: Summary of NCDC functions

The structure of the NCDC consists of the following levels: a Director who oversees the management of the centre; the Deputy Director; the subject specialists in English Sesotho, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences, Geography, History, Development and Social Studies Home Economics, Technical subject, Agriculture, Business and Commercial subjects, Religious Education, Arts (fine arts, drama and music), Guidance and Counselling.

In addition to the above staff there are those who perform supportive roles to the subject specialists and management. These include a production unit which produces teaching and learning support materials prescribed by subject specialists, research and evaluation section, and editors.

2.5.2 Curriculum Strategies

NCDC has adopted a curriculum development strategy based on recommendations made by Hugh Hawes, a consultant who developed a comprehensive plan that guided the NCDC to carry out its functions effectively and efficiently (Nketekete, 2002, p.13). Nketekete further (*ibid.*, p.13) indicated that the consultant proposed that curriculum developments should be simple and flexible: modifications need to be made easily to allow an ongoing revision process as curriculum development is always an unfinished business. In elaborating the key elements such as situational analysis, Nketekete (2002) indicated that there is a need to analyse the administrative, financial and human context in which the reform will take place, and analyze educational goals and parental expectations in relation to education. There is also a need to analyse teachers' reactions to the curriculum being reformed. It is important to understand the views of teachers, to determine the timetabling constraints and the curriculum coverage and the current examination system in terms of what skills they test and what they ought to test (*ibid.*, p.21).

In relation to aims and goals Nketekete (2002, p.21), citing Hawes, indicated that they should be considered at two levels, that is an educational and subject level. At the educational level the following strategies were suggested: to reconsider, re-emphasise and publicise national aims and spell out the broad implications of these aims for the

curriculum; to further refine the aims to spell out in clear terms what a Mosotho child should know and do at the end of each level; and identify issues important or vital to national development which cut across the curriculum.

At the subject level this means developing general and specific objectives from each subject maintaining alignment between subjects. Regarding policy decisions, he pointed out that in any curriculum development process a number of policy decisions have to be taken. For example, the stakeholders need to be identified along with coordination mechanisms and trialling systems and procedures. Currently the NCDC uses 20 secondary schools and 30 primary schools for trial testing.

Curriculum revision based on the findings from the trialling process needs to be publicized and plans need to be made for the in-service training of teachers and inspectors (*ibid.*, p.15). He further notes that the curricula for teacher training institutions would also need to be revised to include the relevant changes, and examinations would be designed on the basis of the revised curriculum.

The final stage involves evaluation of the curriculum. This would be to evaluate whether the objectives and all other processes have been achieved, explore the reasons for non-achievement and review accordingly. This raises the question as to how the two projects interfaced with the curriculum development process outlined above, given their short time frame. This study will consider the relationship between the projects and the curriculum development process (section 1.2 goals).

The curriculum development processes are very participatory and allow space for the involvement of a number of stakeholders in both curriculum design and implementation. An effective strategy employed by NCDC is the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the curriculum development process. Nketekete and Mpetta (2003) argue that the work of curriculum development is a joint effort among NCDC, NTTC and the inspectorate, the NUL and parents. The report by Nketekete (2002) further asserts that to respond to this policy, subject panels were formed. According to him these are special committees constituting members from NCDC subject specialists, representatives from related ministries, teachers' associations, teacher training institutions and the University, Inspectorate, subject/resource advisors, six

schools in the three regions of the country North, Central and South, and the Examination Council of Lesotho (ECOL). He further notes that the functions of these panels are to recommend curriculum policy to the Ministry of Education and Training in the respective subject areas through the NCDC and National Curriculum Committee (NCC). The panels must also review and finalise plans on curriculum activities designed by the responsible NCDC section and develop curriculum materials under the guidance of NCDC. Each stakeholder has a role to play. For example, the teacher training institutions provide expertise in teacher training and research, the inspectorate provides school experiences and the ECOL ensures that examinations are aligned with the curriculum changes.

At the policy making level the National Curriculum Committee (NCC) has been established. It constitutes Senior Education Officer's (SEO) from the Ministry of Education and Training, directors from other educational institutions, members of teachers' associations, Education secretaries (from the main churches, e.g. Roman Catholic, Lesotho Evangelical Church and Anglican), Chief Inspection officer and the Registrar of ECOL. The function of the NCC is to advise the Minister on policy issues to ensure a high quality of education, and to ensure that national policy and national expectations are aligned. It also means that all curriculum materials intended for use in schools must be approved by government on the advice of the NCC. These mechanisms in the curriculum development process are an indication of the participatory nature of the process and time-consuming processes associated with curriculum reform. The next section analyses the leading stakeholders/partners in the implementation of both POP/FLE and LEESP and their roles.

2.5.3 Partnerships

The reference note or policy Document for Environmental Education in Lesotho (NCDC, 2001) states: it is important that stakeholder institutions in education should coordinate and clarify their functions, in order to have sustained educational reforms with sustained educational changes. The report indicates that NCDC works in partnership with other institutions involved in curriculum development and implementation. These partnerships include:

Lesotho College of Education (LCE)

The mission of the Lesotho College of Education is to train teachers for the Primary, Junior Secondary and Vocational/Technical Schools. It also provides in-service training for practising teachers.

National University of Lesotho (NUL)

It provides pre-service training for future Senior Secondary teachers. It also offers in-service training for existing teachers through the School of Education which offers courses in Educational Foundation and Science Education.

Examination Council of Lesotho (ECOL)

The council has the responsibility for overall monitoring and quality control of the education system, through administering external examinations at the end of Standard Seven, Junior Certificate (JC) and Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC).

The Inspectorate

This office's responsibility is to ensure that education delivery in schools is effectively carried out. They do this by visiting schools. In the remote areas inspection is done by District Resource Teachers (DRTs) who are part of the Inspectorate.

The Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC)

The role of the centre is to promote basic literacy amongst the disadvantaged youth including herd-boys and to offer distant learning programmes for junior certificate (JC) and Cambridge Overseas School Leaving Certificate (COSC) students in selected subjects.

The National Environment Secretariat (NES)

The National Environment Secretariat is charged with overseeing all matters of the environment and coordinating the National Action Plan to Implement Agenda 21 in Lesotho. In the LEESP it will play an advisory function, monitoring and guiding the implementation of the project. It is also a member of the steering committee.

The issue of partnerships was viewed carefully to assess the extent to which these institutions are involved in the project under study.

2.5.4 Donor Funding

Lesotho had indicated a commitment to developing its education system and given it a high political priority. As a result donors are also interested in supporting the education sector. This is confirmed by Nieuwenhuis (1996, p.112) when he argues that the country realized that its natural resources were limited and it therefore had to emphasise the development of its human resources as this was key to sustainable development and long term economic growth. This is also affirmed by Nketekete and Mpeta (2003) who argue further that the Ministry of Education and Training of which NCDC is part, is dependent on donor funding to achieve their intended goals. This donor funding comes through “programmes loosely referred to as projects”. On the same point Nieuwehuis (1996, p.111) asserts that the country has always depended on donor assistance for the development of its education system due to factors such as political instability and escalating trade deficit. He further indicates that at that time, 90 percent of Lesotho’s education budget for capital costs (buildings, vehicles, and furniture) was financed through donor funding. Currently a number of other donors besides DANIDA and UNFPA are supporting the education sector (see section 1.2). DANCED (2000, p.16) indicates that among the major contributors are World Bank, GTZ and IRISH AID. The funding from these donors is mainly dedicated to policy development, classroom construction and school fees support for secondary education to disadvantaged parents. At the time of this study the office was being funded by DANIDA, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF, and EPSI projects (see section 1.2).

2.6 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

2.6.1 Curriculum Structure in Lesotho

There are a number of debates surrounding the structure of Lesotho’s curriculum. The diverse views will be discussed to contextualize this study and elucidate how tensions could arise in the curriculum cycles. Mokuku et al. (2005) argue that Lesotho’s education system has been influenced by colonial education and reflects modernist features. They state that it is characterised by constructs such as the subject system, the examination system and an attachment to pre-ordained abstract knowledge. One

curriculum specialist (Nketekete, 2000) in his paper “The re-examination of approaches of Tyler, Walker and Eisner within the curriculum context of Lesotho” provides insights into the model of curriculum the country is using. In a quest to find a more relevant model that is more context-based, Lesotho has adopted three models which include Tyler’s rationale, Walker’s deliberative approach and Eisner’s ideas on action. Nketekete further explains that Tyler’s approach is visible in the identification and formulation of goals, subject matter, learning experience and curriculum evaluation. Walker’s approach is visible in interaction and discussions of curriculum planners during the curriculum development process. Eisner’s concepts are discernible at the subject panel level in determining subject aims. However he goes on to say “Eisner’s approach has not been clearly apparent at NCDC stage.....but at the subject panel level” (ibid., p.21). He concludes his paper by stating that “Tyler’s approach has to a greater extent been officially and broadly legitimized.....group dynamics and professional judgments have well been understood with the context of curriculum development, hence there are no prescriptions of how subject panels should conduct their business”(ibid., p.23). From the foregoing explanation it is clear that the Tylerian rationale has had a profound influence on how curriculum is planned. The NCDC curriculum orientation draws on Tyler’s objectives model in that it emphasises the use of objectives in the teaching and learning process. This has influenced the style and content of the curriculum documents the centre produces.

The objective-based nature of the Lesotho curriculum makes it subject-centred and expert-driven and structured with very few opportunities for deliberative processes. According to Kachilonda (2004) an objectives-driven curricula does not foster critical thinking or praxis. Other critical curriculum scholars such as Shirley Grundy (1987) and Catherine Cornbleth (1991) have formulated critiques of Tyler’s rationalist instrumental model of curriculum for assuming that objectives-driven curricula will lead to behaviour change. They present curriculum as a contextualized social process and emphasise the cultural and historical dimensions of curricula, rather than objectives. The flexibility explained by Nketekete (2000) and the insights provided by Mokuku et al. (2005) during the EE conceptualization workshops, highlight contradictions and tensions in interrogating a predominantly positivist education system in the context of introducing EE and population into the school curriculum.

Further to the Tylerian model the NCDC also draws its assessment of curriculum from Bloom's Taxonomy. Bloom, a psychologist, constructed a taxonomy of objectives which he used to propose that tests used to measure school achievement could be made more effective and accurate if they were based on a school curriculum derived from a systematic list of objectives. Biehler and Snowman (1993) indicate that the taxonomy consists of hierarchically ordered levels of outcomes, described as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. They believe that it should be hierarchical because comprehension relies on prior mastery of knowledge and facts and application depends on comprehension of relevant ideas. These ideas have been influential in structuring the Lesotho curriculum.

Earlier on in Section 2.5.1 it was noted that the curriculum was overloaded. In the light of this, in the next section I discuss possible approaches of locating environmental and population concerns into the curriculum.

2.6.2 Integration and Curriculum Change

Integration and curriculum change have been discussed and written about for years. The debate is dynamic and various writers have held different views on integration. Martin-Kniep et al. (1995, p.288) in their article *Curriculum Integration: An expanded view of an abused idea* note that the concept is not new - it dates back to Plato and has been advocated by educators from the 1920s to the 1990s. They further cite Hopkins who described curriculum integration as a means of fostering unity between the learning process and the learner. They also assert that integration helps teachers to deal with the inherent complexity of the world and helps to promote greater curriculum pedagogical efficiency.

Diverse reasons have been advanced on why curriculum integration is used. Martin-Kniep et al. (1995) further note that some authors use integration as an effective means of fostering relationships between different subject matters. Sikes (1995) argues that countries have used integration as strategy for including Population Education in the school curriculum due to the fact that the curriculum is crowded with too many subjects. He further explains the demerits of the approach in that population topics are spread over five subjects and thus the content is diluted and coherence and focus are lost. Kondo (1995) argues that integration and including too much in

curricula has led to counter-productive results with the effect of watering down important population issues. Supporting the ideas of Sikes (1995) he argues that the integration approach has been widely adopted and perpetuated by the belief held by educators that the school curriculum is too full. He argues that “the issue of overloaded curriculum is a myth” because there is much in the school curriculum that can be shortened, combined or dropped altogether (Kondo, 1995, p.6). He further supports Sikes that the important population message will be diluted or interspersed in general subject content and hence “lost in the shuffle” (ibid., p. 7).

Kondo (1995) further argues that integration may also mean that the teaching approaches in the parent subject, which are didactic, would be used; the participatory and innovative methodologies for influencing attitudes, values and decision-making may not be used. He then proposed that Population Education should be given the importance it deserves by making it a stand-alone subject in the school curriculum.

Though Sikes (1995) did not advocate for integration he argues that despite its weakness it is the most feasible strategy for most countries because it takes advantage of existing structures. He then proposes that, for it to be more effective, adequate training should be provided for the curriculum developers and textbook writers.

The NCDC, in introducing the two subject areas EE and POP/FLE, was faced with the challenge of finding an approach to position them in an already full curriculum. LEESP (2003) notes that NCDC had two options of incorporating EE in the formal education: namely, to have it as a separate subject or to integrate and infuse it into existing subjects. Lesotho opted for integration as the country’s curriculum is already overloaded with 11 subjects at primary and fourteen at secondary levels. This also applied to POP/FLE.

According to Mokuku et al. (2005) who conducted LEESP monitoring and evaluation activities, integration and infusion were introduced to beneficiaries in various professional development workshops. They found that the use of the two concepts created inconsistency and ambiguities. They stated that “the nomenclature of infusion and integration as used in the literature in the present project is not only conceptually inconsistent but also reflects a dualistic distinction between biophysical and non-

biophysical disciplines, which could reinforce limited disciplinary worldviews in tackling complex environmental issues” (ibid., p.167). They recommended that the two concepts should be further clarified and deliberated on the in subsequent school-based project activities in collaboration with the teachers. The above engagement with the introduction of the two concepts presents some tensions, challenges, and a paradigm shift in the education system. The study will now explore further the extent to which these tensions are articulated.

As noted above it had been useful to scope some of the current thinking about integration. In the next section, I consider insights gained from diverse projects, that have attempted to use an integration approach. Integration across curriculum approaches was tried in Britain and Wales in the 1970s (Parsons, 1987). Empirical data was provided on a school-based curriculum development project called Geography for Young School Leavers (GYSL). The study revealed that the project experienced a number of paradigm tensions and challenges. South Africa has also engaged with this approach through firstly integrating environmental concerns across the learning areas (subjects) and then integrating an environmental focus into each learning area. Experiences from the NEEP-GET project in South Africa (Lotz-Sisitka & Raven, 2001; NEEP-GET, 2005; Lotz-Sisitka, 2002) have highlighted some problems of educators viewing environmental education as an ‘add-on’ to the mainstream curriculum. In a review of the environmental education curriculum, misinterpreting the environmental focus in the learning areas when working on issues or themes can result in activities without substance. Again drawing on the experiences of the NEEP-GET, it was found out that integrating environmental learning into the three learning areas for foundation phase was problematic because teachers drew on their old knowledge when developing their lesson plans (NEEP-GET, 2005).

2.6.3 Environment and Population Issues in the Curriculum

Following the ratification of international frameworks (see section 2.1), and formulation of local ones, the government began a process of ensuring that the education system responded to developmental and environmental risks and issues. Education has been seen as a strategy to address the growing environmental and social problems and unsustainable development in Lesotho. A number of seminars and

policies stressed the need to incorporate population and environmental concerns into the curriculum. These include the Basic Education Clarification Seminar (1992), the National Action Plan to implement Agenda 21 of 1994, and the National Seminar on clarification of policy in secondary and vocational and Cambridge school certificate (COSC) in 1995. The government's commitment was also reflected in the Five Year Development Plan (1991/1992 – 1995/1996) where it is explicitly stated as part of the population programme strategies that “population education will be introduced in the formal school system from grades 4–12.” The Ministry of Education was given the mandate to undertake that task.

The comprehensive National Environmental Policy for Lesotho of 1998 emphasized the need to integrate environmental dimensions into educational programmes to enhance knowledge of environmental issues. The Lesotho Agenda 21 National Investment Programme document of 1995 clearly indicated that there were efforts in the education system to incorporate environmental education in the school curriculum, although those were not comprehensive. The document outlined a programme entitled “Promoting education and training in environment and sustainable development”. This was also executed by the NCDC in collaboration with NTTC, NUL, the inspectorate, LDTC and NES. The programme was funded by UNDP but it never took off. In addition, the DANCED project document for LEESP (2000) stated that “the review of the curriculum showed that the elements of EE were mainly based on isolated environmental degradation, but that environment should be viewed from a holistic point of view including social, economic and political not limiting itself to science content only”. This is indicative of efforts of the government of Lesotho to integrate environment and development issues into the school curriculum.

A review of reports and studies for Lesotho shows that there is a need to strengthen further the integration of POP/FLE in the curriculum (Morojele, 1994; Motlomelo and Sebatane, 1999; Kimane et al., 1999), as it is not yet fully institutionalized into the curriculum despite many efforts. Up till now the challenges contributing to the failure to institutionalise the projects into the education system are under explored.

2.6.4 Pedagogical Approaches of POP/FLE and LEESP

This section provides a critical review of pedagogical paradigms underpinning the conceptualisation of the two projects under study as they are central to this study.

The over-arching concepts for the POP/FLE and LEESP projects are to develop in learners desirable behaviour and action competency respectively. On the one hand, authors such as Sikes (1995) advocate for behaviour change and argue that in POP/FLE learners learn positive attitudes and judgment skills necessary for life-protecting behaviour. He further argues that children are equipped with analytical and problem solving skills to deal with life situations. On the other hand, the proponents of action competence oppose the behaviour modification approach (Jensen & Schnack, 1997). They argue that behaviour modification rarely leads to intended behaviour changes and they have focused their attention on democratic processes associated with the competence for action rather than specific skills for behaviour change.

In the case of Lesotho, Mokuku et al. (2005) argue that since the national syllabi are constructed on the principles of Bloom's taxonomy which places little emphasis on action knowledge, the attempt to initiate and promote action competence based on action knowledge in schools may lead to problems and tensions. These tensions may affect the institutionalization of the two projects under study into the structures of NCDC.

Defining the two paradigms could also lead to confusion and affect the effectiveness of integrating of EE and POP/FLE into the curriculum. Furthermore the two paradigms both promote participatory learner-centred approaches in teaching and apply theories of constructivism for their justification (LEESP progress Report (PR) No. 4). According to Mokuku (1999) a real dimension of paradigm shift within the education system of Lesotho would involve transformation of curriculum models which guide the development and nature of content in teaching and learning. This indicates that the issue of integration may only be a 'surface' strategy for dealing effectively with POP/FLE and EE in formal education.

In the next section, I will provide an overview of development aid issues from an historical perspective and discuss how development aid is structured in order to contextualize the two projects under study, as they are both donor funded (see section 1.3 and 1.4).

2.7 FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN CURRICULUM INITIATIVES

2.7.1 History of Development Aid

This section will review various approaches that have shaped development assistance from the 1950s. The idea that the wealthy nations could assist poorer ones developed originally at the end of the Second World War (Kingsbury et al., 2004). Rist, (2002: 88) notes that article 55 of the United Nations Charter indicated that the United Nations should promote higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development to the poorer nations. At this time the General Assembly of the United Nations was interested in development. Rist (ibid.) describes how President Truman of the United States presented a four-point policy plan. Point four of his statement was to finance the sending of technical experts, the granting of scholarships to the world citizens and the training of management personnel (Rist, 1999, p.88). Contributions to this programme were made by members on a voluntary basis.

In 1953 an attempt was made to establish a special United Nations fund for economic development but this failed. This culminated in the World Bank creating an International Finance Corporation (IFC) in 1956 and in 1960, an International Development Association (IDA) tasked to “make loans at better market rates to the poorest countries”(ibid., p.89). Later, in 1965 a special fund was created to collect voluntary contributions from members to finance projects in the most impoverished countries and this was merged to form the United Nations Development Programme. The terminology of development has changed and is continuing to change, for example, the use of terms such as ‘donor aid’ and ‘cooperating partner’. Development is concerned with how developing countries can improve their living standards and eliminate poverty, and change towards something better (Kingsbury, 2004). There is general consensus on the purpose of development aid. Ward (2002) asserts that

international aid is intended to speed up economic growth leading to an improvement in well-being of poorer strata of the recipients' societies. According to Wright (2005) international donor funded programmes aimed primarily at supporting southern developing countries emanate from powerful northern countries.

2.7.2 Politics and Operations of Aid

The broader political economy influences the rate of and the manner in which aid flows. Significant to the subject of aid is how it is operated. It is often said that aid comes with strings attached. In this section I will deliberate on how aid operates in various settings to provide a vantage point for identifying the systems of ideas that shape curriculum and other development projects. This conceptual background will serve as guiding principle for data analysis and critical comment in chapter 5.

Two widely published authors (Berg, 1993 and Lancaster, 2004) on foreign aid and African development provide an expert examination of the performance of aid agencies and an inside look at the way bureaucratic politics and public opinion interact to shape aid policies. This discussion will dwell on their insightful writings. Lancaster (2004) defined foreign aid as a transfer of concessional resources from one government to another or from a government to international agencies, which in turn transfer those resources to poor countries. She further indicates that foreign aid can come in various forms, for example in cash as a grant or loan.

Berg (1993) argues that in donor funded projects, priority is given to capacity building which is enhancement of skills and strengthening of institutions. He also states that in most projects there is lack of involvement of the beneficiaries in the identification and design of projects. He sees this contributing to lack of local participation which leads to a low degree of recipient government ownership, hence low commitment to many projects. Lancaster (2004) argues that aid programmes are donor-driven, in that they are tied to donor government diplomatic and geopolitical objectives in Africa and the programme designs are tightly controlled by the donor. Politics and governance were seen as obstacles and development aid was also used as an incentive to persuade governments to adopt political free market economic reforms and as a source of financing for particular aspects (Lancaster, 2004, p.44). According to Kingsbury et al. (2004) many donors provide aid not only for humanitarian reasons but to enhance

their own economic and political interests through encouraging their own exports, or shaping the economic policies or political persuasion of recipient countries. As far as aid distribution is concerned, the focus has turned to assisting those countries where poverty is significant but where “good governance” policies are in place. Shifts have also occurred in sectoral distribution funding which used to be for economic infrastructure. This has now shifted to social infrastructure which includes health, education and environment (ibid., p.76)

Berg (1993) and Lancaster (2004) argue that donors offer technical assistance as part of their projects, whether or not the African country needs it, and place their own nationals in technical positions. Berg (1993, p.95) further argues that donors see expatriate technical staff as helpful with sensitive aspects of the project management and control of project budgets. They are also knowledgeable about home office reporting requirements. This is supported by Lancaster (2004, p.14) when she states that donor agencies rely on expatriate staff in the field even when they could benefit from engaging Africans. Berg (1993) also points out that if counterparts are identified, payments from donors create a dual salary structure within the public service and create animosity among the local staff.

As far as aid flows are concerned Berg (1993, p.132) indicates that Sub-Saharan Africa is the most heavily aided region in the world. He further notes some of the problems encountered by heavily aided countries. These countries fall in the category of ‘least developed’ and are characterized by weak administrative structures. The countries have difficulty in managing the aid as the aid flows involve a number of separately negotiated and implemented projects sponsored by different donors who each have their own set of rules and regulations. He further notes that the recipient countries carry out most of the activities to the satisfaction of the donor and have to report regularly. He states “they generate a blizzard of progress reports on a monthly basis in the format laid out by each donor”.

Describing the efforts undertaken to coordinate donor efforts through formal roundtable and consultative meetings organized by the World Bank and UNDP, Berg (1993) further indicates that through his own observations, the above forums are not

as effective as expected. Time is spent on airing donor grievances and on their procedures. Little time is given to real issues of improved co-operation.

In order to achieve proper coordination, Berg (1993) and Lancaster (2004) suggest that, firstly, donors should discuss coordination as separate agenda item in the Round Table Conferences (RTCs); and secondly, they should strengthen their resident missions at the country level and harmonise their procedural requirements especially for projects that are co-funded.

2.7.3 Aid in Lesotho

Lesotho as a developing country is endowed with many donor funded projects. This is because Lesotho is classified as a Least Developed Country (LDC) and is also a World Bank classified low-income country which allows it to obtain certain “preferential arrangements through special concessions in the World Bank’s IDA lending operations to finance identified financing gaps” (UNDP, 1997, p.5). According to Ferguson (1999) in the past two decades the country has received assistance from twenty-six different countries and seventy-two international agencies and non-governmental agencies. This statement is supported by Berg (1993, p.132): “one of the smallest countries in Africa Lesotho had 321 projects from 61 donors” Currently there are 30 donors in the country (Government of Lesotho, 2006a, 9th Donor conference report). This was also expressed by the Ministry of Development Planning Mission Report (1997) which observed that donor support averaged 75% of the country’s Public Sector Investment Programme. The top multilateral donors comprise the following: European Union (EU), World Food Programme (WFP) World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the African Development Bank (ADB). However, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the major actor in the development of national population policy and support population initiatives in Lesotho (UNFPA, 1996, p.17).

This has created a proliferation of projects which are often uncoordinated. Various writers on development aid argue that the uncoordinated and piecemeal approach to donor assistance places an overwhelming functional stress on the country’s budget for counterpart funds and the overstretched government bureaucracy (MOET, 2005; GOL

Lesotho, 2006b; Phororo et al., 1995; Lancaster, 2004). Uncoordinated approaches to donor support produce duplication of efforts and wasteful use of public capacity (Government of Lesotho. Ministry of Development Planning, 1997). In practice all negotiations and agreements on development assistance should be conducted through the Ministry of Development Planning in the Department of Economic Cooperation, as it is mandated to coordinate and monitor development assistance. This has not been achieved as the UNDP (1997, p.9) document states that aid coordination is weak. According to the Government of Lesotho. Ministry of Development Planning (1997), some donors initiate aid proposals and talk to concerned department/ministry without going through the Department of Economic Cooperation. They argue that this leads to donor-driven aid programmes that are unrelated to national development priorities. The recommendations of the consultancy report for the Ministry of Development Planning were that the Ministry of Development Planning should prepare guidelines of procedures to be followed by all donors for operating in Lesotho (ibid.).

As there is so much donor assistance in Lesotho, it is pertinent to discuss how this aid is implemented so as to understand the procedures followed by the projects in this case study. This will also illuminate how these projects came into being. According to UNDP (1997), the country's LDC status enabled it to get aid mainly on a grant basis. The document (ibid, p.11) further indicates that the aid was delivered in the form of "standing technical cooperation, investment project assistance and food aid". The document indicates that in 1994, distribution of aid was focused more on human resource development (capacity building), energy and transport. This was in line with the national development objectives and priorities. Currently the national priorities are poverty alleviation, HIV and AIDS, gender equality and environmental conservation.

In order to obtain the necessary aid, Lesotho uses Donor Roundtable Conferences (RTCs) for aid coordination and resource mobilization (UNDP, 1997; Phororo et al., 2000). UNDP provides support in the form of technical assistance in organizing the RTCs. The RTCs "provide a forum for recipient countries to present their development goals, policies, and strategies as well as to make their case for external assistance. They also promote dialogue between development partners and countries to understand each other" (UNDP, 2005b, p.1; Phororo et al., 2000). The UNDP (2005b) documents indicate that Lesotho has had 9 RTCs (the most of all countries

benefiting from this process). According to Phororo et al. (2000) the first generations of the RTCs were to be held in Maseru but the venue was changed to Geneva in 1994. In 2006 the roundtable was held in Maseru. There were several reasons for this shift: it would ensure broader participation by grassroots organizations including those from the districts. It would increase national ownership and enable donors unfamiliar with the situation on the ground to better understand the developmental needs through field trips (UNDP, 2005b).

Lesotho, like other developing countries was affected by the Structural Adjustment programme (SAP) instituted by the IMF. These adjustments were made to correct “macro-economic imbalances” (UNDP, 1997). SAP also touched on structural reforms involving improvement of incentives for parastatal reforms, privatization, institutional and capacity building within the civil service (ibid., p.5). The document further indicated that there was improvement in overall performance of the economy but poverty, high levels of unemployment and population growth persisted.

Of significance to this study are the procedures that are used in implementing the donor-assisted initiatives. This is done to situate the projects under study in the development landscape in Lesotho. The UNDP 2005a country programme action plan (2005-2007, p.8) indicated that, though their projects were meant for capacity building, they approached it from traditional perspective of training and exposure visits, rather than using the projects as instruments for learning by doing. So this means that UNDP-supported projects operated through parallel structures, with managers and staff operating as islands in government ministries. The Government of Lesotho (GOL, 2006b) indicates project management units also require local management. They normally acquire the best staff in the ministries and this reduces the capacity available for government programmes. It further notes that there are donor-driven events that offer high per diems or other benefits to ensure participation and this discourages government staff from doing their proper jobs. As indicated earlier, projects run parallel programmes and government staff have to work in order to meet the donor reporting requirements according to donor timetables. Reporting duties are performed as one-offs and so the government does not gain capacity for better reporting when the project is finished (ibid., p. 6). LEESP (2004) notes that Lesotho has a history of projects in the education sector which are usually

accompanied by their own dissemination processes. Projects also come with their own agendas and as such are sometimes not well instituted into the existing structures and integrated into their core functions.

Commenting on the procedures of donor assistance, the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, in his 2005/2006 budget speech, noted that cooperating partners have complained of the country's limited capacity to use external assistance. (Government of Lesotho, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning [MOFDP], 2005). The minister further pointed out that the assistance is usually in the form of project aid which has "a multiplicity of conditions, reporting requirements and numerous supervision missions" (ibid.).

After the adoption of the sixth National Development Plan in 2000, it was found to be imperative that support should be within the development objectives and policy framework of the country. According to Phororo et al. (2000), the poverty strategy paper should provide a policy framework to guide allocation of resources and is a prerequisite for access to lending facilities at the Breton Woods institutions such as the World Bank. With regard to the policy frameworks discussed earlier, the two projects examined in this case study both fall within the national frameworks.

Development aid is also affected by political climate. This is evident for Lesotho: when its neighbour, the Republic of South Africa elected its first democratic government in 1994, most of the development partners relocated to Pretoria, leaving a handful of resident missions in the country. This created constant consultations outside the country affecting implementation of activities (UNDP, 2005a). This also contributed to the decline in the rate of external resources in that traditional bilateral donors redirected their resources to other regional priorities. For instance aid flows from Sweden and Germany had previously contributed a significant share of aid in Lesotho. Their relocation to South Africa adversely affected their contribution to external aid. Donors like USAID phased out their programmes in Lesotho to concentrate on regional programmes. The increased political and social instability in Lesotho itself also contributed to the slow implementation of programmes (UNDP, 1997, p.11).

The United Nations plays a major role in donor assistance and, taking cognisance of the various bilateral cooperation between individual donors and government, has embarked on an extensive initiative which is intended to bring cohesion in development assistance. This initiative should enhance aid effectiveness through the establishment of a development partners' consultative forum co-facilitated by UNDP and World Bank (UNDP, 2005a, p.12). This should also strengthen harmonizing donor practices and effective aid delivery for programmatic initiatives. UNDP has also developed a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to provide a common strategy for the intervention of all agencies of the United Nations system. This should create a harmonisation of United Nations activities and should respond more coherently to Lesotho's national development priorities.

The government of Lesotho currently does not have a very clear policy on running donor funded projects. Realising this, the Government is in the process of developing an aid policy. The Government of Lesotho (2006b) indicates that the policy will be an agreement between the government and donors and will lay the framework for a more effective aid partnership. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has developed a development framework for Lesotho which aims at harmonizing the agency's different programmes at a country level (UNDP, 2005a). This does not, however, apply to donors outside the United Nations System. One of the goals of the government of Lesotho is to encourage donor coordination to enable pooling of resources for large projects and facilitate exchange of information to avoid duplication of efforts (Government of Lesotho, 1994, p.5). This does, however, seem to be difficult to achieve in practice. Writers on development aid in Lesotho have a similar plea that donors should harmonise their aid procedures reporting requirements. They also propose that donors provide assistance in the form of a single budget system and adopt the Sector Wide Approach (Swaps). With this approach donors fund sectors directly so that projects can have coherence within sector plans (Government of Lesotho, 2006b; Government of Lesotho, MOET, 2005). An officer in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in the Aid Coordination section indicated that there is a move towards increasing efforts in harmonization, alignment and managing aid. This was endorsed at a high level forum in Paris on 2 March 2005 called the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (M. Koto, personal communication, January 25, 2006). The Government of Lesotho (2006b) further states that donors should use

more local consultants to supervise or review their projects. This section has provided insights on the historical perspectives of donor initiatives and their procedures in Lesotho where the case is located. In the next section I will explore the experiences of other donor funded curriculum projects in the region.

2.7.4 Trends in the Region

Since the conception of sustainable development discourse and the implementation of Agenda 21, interest grew from the developed countries to fund environmental education initiatives in the region. A brief account of these projects will be given and their implementation challenges will be dealt with in depth in the next section. There have recently been a number of curriculum projects financed by donor funds. In the region DANIDA has funded several projects in Southern Africa aimed at assisting countries to institutionalise environmental learning processes in formal schooling: South Africa's National Environmental Education Project for General Education and Training (NEEP-GET), Supporting Environmental Education in Namibia (SEEN) and Lesotho Environmental Support Project (LEESP). The SADC Regional Environment Education Programme (SADC REEP) developed to enhance EE processes in the SADC region is run under the auspices of SADC FNAR and is supported by Swedish International Cooperation Agency (Sida) (Ward, 2004). WWF International established the WWF Zambian Education project. The initial aim of the project was the provision of educational materials for lower basic primary school level and the project shifted with donor demands to poverty alleviation in selected communities (Lupele, 2002).

As indicated above, donor funding usually comes with strings attached. Lupele (2002) argues that the projects all have indicators, objectives and assumptions that are not usually shared with the people they are meant for. Lupele (2002) and Lotz-Sisitka (2004a) indicate that projects have programmes that often do not reflect people's needs, and are shaped by ideologies (e.g. learner-centred education) that dominate in the donor countries.

In Zimbabwe, environmental education initiatives are run through the Secondary Teacher Training Environmental Education Programme (St2eep) which is a partnership between the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education and a Belgian

semi-governmental organization called the Flemish Office for Development and Technical Assistance (VVOB). The aim of the project is “to achieve sustainable utilization of natural resources and effective protection of the environment” through integrating environmental education into the curriculum (Van Ongevalle, 2004). The project is currently working in three teacher training colleges in Harare, Mutare and Bulawayo.

The POP/FLE projects are operational in Lesotho, Zambia, Kenya, Botswana and Mozambique (see section 2:7). These are all sponsored by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

It is widely acknowledged that many educational initiatives in Africa are donor funded. Lotz-Sisitka (2004a, p.37) citing Samoff noted that foreign aid has become ‘a way of life’ in educational reforms in Africa and that it offers both advice and finance. Lotz-Sisitka notes that projects of this nature are “log frame based interventions with predefined development goals” (2004a, p.2). Drawing on Samoff she points out that those projects are often not sustained. Then she poses a question as to whether the systemic efforts put in place by DANIDA-funded projects in terms of funds and advice provided ensure sustainability. The current study attempts to explore this in the case of Lesotho.

The next section discusses some of the implementation challenges in these curriculum projects.

2.8 IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN CURRICULUM PROJECTS

The implementation of donor funded curriculum projects involves many tensions and challenges, which have been documented (Oluti-Leigh, 1995; Monaheng, 2000; NEEPGET, 2005). Monaheng (2000) notes the challenges in mainstreaming POP/FLE in curriculum in Lesotho, which included policy issues, high staff turnover, the education system, institutional setup, and socio-cultural factors. Oluti-Leigh (1995) highlights the following constraints: frequent changes in programme strategy in the UNFPA system, conflicts in national funding executing agencies on management issues, rapid staff turnover, lack of trained manpower in the new content.

As far as staff turnover was concerned, he gave examples of Zambia and Mozambique where project staff opted out of projects after receiving training in Population Education or POP/FLE. This adversely affected institutional action of the projects. He further cited inappropriate institutional location of the projects and institutional set-up within curriculum development centres. He asserts that in Mauritius the project was located in the Ministry of Education headquarters: the director and coordinator were both senior with heavy workloads in their normal duties and thus devoted little time to the project. In Zambia project staff members were recruited from outside the Curriculum Development Centre. In addition, institutional setup with the Curriculum Development Centre was problematic in that the project director reported directly to the Chief Inspector of schools and the Director of the Centre had no control over project activities. This means that the project was not integrated with the professional and administrative structures of the Centre (Oluti-Leigh, 1995, p.6). The project was seen as something imposed from outside and was left out of other mainstream activities of the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) such as the Child to Child project funded by UNICEF. He further notes the problem of content in POP/FLE, in that it includes some elements of sexuality. He cites the case of Kenya where there was concern surrounding the Family Life Education (FLE) project after a successful pilot phase, as the issue of how sexuality/sex education would be taught in schools was not resolved. This major concern is prevalent in most countries in Africa where POP/FLE has to be introduced in schools as it contains elements of sexuality. This creates tensions, contradictions and fears among policy makers, opinion leaders and parents that this type of education will lead to sexual activity by students (Kimane et al., 2000; Kondo, 1995).

In the summative profile of the National Environmental Education Project for General Education and Training (NEEP-GET), Lotz-Sisitka (2004b) argued that the project experienced a number of challenges and tensions during its implementation. These include the institutional set-up where there was uncertainty about the location of the project. In some areas the staff were placed in professional development directorates. In other cases, the provincial level coordinators struggled to access funds for project activities and ended up being financed from partner or national project funding. Staff working in the project had differing salaries and working frameworks, and staff joined the project at different times. This created numerous management and relational

differences. Since then project coordinators have been moved to other positions within the department defeating the sustainability intentions. She also explained how the lifespan of the project was cut short due to changes in the donor funding framework resulting from a change of government in Denmark. Tensions were also experienced in the formative monitoring and evaluation (FM&E) process despite its good intentions of monitoring outputs and providing developmental feedback. These included management of the scope and complexity of the process and the relationships between the FM&E team and the project, relating to communication, response to critique and differences in the interpretation of data.

Tensions were also experienced in the LEESP at the initial workshops aimed at introducing and conceptualizing environmental education with curriculum development stakeholders prior to engagement with schools. These are documented by Mokuku et al. (2005) who state that the participants indicated that the facilitators hurried through their presentations due to time constraints (dense programme). Thus the authors stated that “in the first phase of the project the quality of the process of clarifying EE was compromised in the haste to achieve the goals of the workshops.” They also highlighted that when one initiates change in the limited time frame the process can become more prescriptive than open ended and participatory” (ibid., p.161).

A review of the Population Information programme (1982, cited in Monaheng, 2000) reveals challenges experienced in the implementation of POP/FLE in some countries. The Philippines, South Korea, India, Thailand and Sierra-Leone were all reported to have experienced slow implementation. This was attributed to insufficient training, lack of confidence of teachers in relevant content and the overcrowded curriculum and complexity of the content. The innovations in these countries were implemented through financial assistance from UNFPA, World Bank and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

There have been few studies conducted in Lesotho that have investigated tensions and challenges in donor funded projects. Those who have documented such issues have done it superficially (Nketekete et al., 2003; Monaheng, 2000) and have not provided deeper insights into the issues. The present study is institution-based, exploring

challenges in the institutionalization of population and environmental concerns in the curriculum. In examining this, a contribution to ontology, knowledge, literature and sustainable development discourse will be made.

2.9 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

This chapter has reflected on the contextual influences surrounding this study. It included a look at how global agreements and conventions have influenced local policies and practice. It has provided an historical exploration of the curriculum development processes and the structure of the National Curriculum Centre (NCDC). The issues surrounding curriculum change and integration of population and environmental concerns into the curriculum have also been reviewed. The political economy of donor funding was examined as being central to the study. I also drew on experiences of diverse donor funded projects working with curriculum, and reported some of the tensions and challenges they faced. Understanding of the above issues has helped to put the study into perspective.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research process followed to conduct this study. The research question as outlined in Chapter 1 (section 1.3) is: *What are implementation tensions and challenges arising in donor funded curriculum projects?* As indicated earlier, the research is focused on two donor funded projects in the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), which is mandated to deal with curriculum issues (see section 2.4). This chapter describes the research design decisions that guided the research process. A rationale of why I chose an interpretative orientation to the research is provided. I discuss why the use of a case study approach is appropriate to address the research question. The techniques used for generation of data and why they were preferred are documented in some detail. I also discuss the process of undertaking data analysis and interpretation. I finally describe how I dealt with ethical issues, validity and trustworthiness of the findings.

3.2 RESEARCH ORIENTATION

An interpretive case study employing a qualitative research approach was selected to frame and guide the research design in this study. Merriam (2001, p.15) describes an interpretive orientation to research as an umbrella concept covering a number of research approaches that aid understanding and explanation of the meaning of social phenomena in their natural setting. Emphasising the same point, Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) assert that interpretive research strives to make sense of feelings, experiences, and social settings. This study is aimed at drawing on the knowledge and experiences of the main actors involved in the two curriculum projects to highlight possible tensions and challenges in implementing donor funded projects. In applying an interpretive orientation to the study, I recognise that reality and meanings are socially constructed.

Cohen and Manion (1994, p.36) comment that central to the interpretative paradigm is as effort to understand the subjective world of human experience. In addition, Henning et al. (2004) indicate that knowledge is constructed not only by the things we observe but also by the description of people's intentions, values, beliefs, reasons, meaning making and self-understandings. In considering the knowledge and experiences that subject specialists and curriculum developers have gained over the years in the field of curriculum, I felt that there is a need to draw on their subjective knowledge, skills and experiences as way of reflecting on their practice. I worked with subject specialists in various subjects who have been tasked with integrating population and environmental concerns into the subjects for which they are responsible. Terre Blanche and Kelly explain that interpretive research is "a method that describes and interprets people's feelings and experiences in human terms rather than through quantification or measurement" (1999, p.123). Having chosen the interpretive paradigm, I realized that I should focus on unpacking the possible tensions and challenges in the said projects and present them as they are. As Janse Van Rensburg (2001) indicates, interpretive researchers are not that interested in taking action through or even after their research: their focus is to unravel the complexities of the social life as they and the research subjects experience it (p.16) (see chapters 4 –6).

3.3 CASE STUDY

As indicated earlier this interpretive study applies a case study approach. The case study analyzes two donor funded projects: LEESP and POP/FLE (see section 1.3). Currently there are three other projects, focusing on HIV/AIDS, Life Skills and Human Rights in the NCDC, but I elected to focus on the two projects only, due to the scope of this study, and due to an interest in probing these two projects in some depth (see section 1.2). In this study, a case study was employed to provide a detailed understanding of the case concerning the NCDC and the two projects as a single event. The aims was to give deeper insight into donor funded projects. According to Patton (1990) case studies are useful when one needs to understand a particular group of people, a particular problem, or unique situation in depth. In the same sense Bassey (1999) and Merriam (2001) assert that what makes a case study different from other qualitative research methods is intensive description and analysis of a single unit or system.

I undertook a detailed examination of actors and their perspectives associated with the case and supplemented this with document analysis. Yin (2003) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p.13). My study reflects Yin’s definition by considering actions that are evident in a real life situation where multiple data sources are used. The process of enquiry with actors (subject specialist and coordinators) provided rich data and recommendations to inform better strategies for working with donor funded projects (see chapters 5 and 6).

Yin (1993) argues that there are three types of case studies, namely exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory (p.5). Considering the knowledge interest of this case study and the quest for an insight into the challenges of institutionalising the projects in the NCDC, I have designed this as a descriptive and explanatory case study. The aim is to provide thick description and insights into the phenomena being studied (see chapter 4).

To generate data for this case study, I used a variety of data generation techniques, which are discussed in the next section.

3.4 DATA GENERATION

To generate data for this research I used a number of techniques. I chose techniques that would assist in achieving the aim and goals of the research without too much expense, bearing in mind time constraints. In accordance with the interpretive orientation I had to look for rich detailed information of a qualitative nature. I used in-depth interviews and interpretation of documents as proposed by Janse Van Rensburg (2001). Therefore, data generation techniques included document analysis, focus group interviews, and face-to-face semi-structured in-depth interviews.

3.4.1 Document analysis

The first research process started with an analysis of existing documents in the form of project documents, mid-term reviews, project inception reports, and evaluation and completion reports. The following documents were reviewed:

- Project Document for Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project developed by DANCED (DPD): this contains objectives, outputs and activities, a guiding framework for implementation, the logical framework and budgets.
- Project Document for Population/Family Life Education in Schools (PDPOP/FLE): this outlines the rationale for the project, goals and outputs, strategies, project activities and the logical framework.
- Report on Programme Monitoring of UNFPA funded projects (RPM): this document was used to track progress in programme performance and helped to establish that inputs, activities and outputs have occurred. It also served to identify possible problem areas that may require more in-depth evaluation.
- Mid-term review brief (MTRB) and Mid-term review (MTR) reports produced by the government and UNFPA (2001): to track progress mid-way before the summative evaluation.
- LEESP progress reports (PR)-1-4: to track progress.
- UNFPA Third Country Programme Evaluation Report (CPEER): summative evaluation done at the end of the project. To ascertain whether outputs have been achieved.
- LEESP project completion report (2001-2004) (PCR): presented the achievements of the project up to the end of 2004.
- In-house NCDC Professional Development Workshop for Planning (IPD): an internal document used to track the centre's performance in relation to projects operating in the centre.
- NCDC report on performance improvement and a plan for 2004–2007: an internal document for improving performance of the centre and plans for 2004–2007.

According to Patton (1990) records and documents serve two purposes: 1) they provide a basic source of information about a particular programme's decisions and background, and 2) they provide a means of evaluating the ideas about important questions to pursue through observations and interviewing. In this study documents were used in four different ways: firstly, to provide an in-depth understanding of the implementation strategies of the two projects under study; secondly, to identify the

various players and their relationships; thirdly, as a way of triangulating the data generated from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews; and fourthly, to assist in informing the development of data generation tools. Patton (2002) further suggests that documents can be a stimulus for paths of inquiry that cannot be pursued only through direct observation and interviewing (p.239).

The insights derived from the document analysis were summarized in a matrix (appendix B). This also helped in the development of the analytical memos and in establishing thematic categories for the analysis process.

3.4.2 In-depth Interviews

Based on the assumption that there are multiple realities with individuals having their own unique interpretations (Merriam, 2001), in-depth interviews were conducted with a number of people. I interviewed the Director of NCDC, four institution-based coordinators (two for NCDC (POP/FLE and LEESP) projects, one for Lesotho College of Education and another one for NUL, both in LEESP), and one subject specialist to obtain their views, descriptions and interpretations of the two projects (Stake, 1995, p.64). I ended up with six in-depth interviews (see appendix A). The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule. This was to allow for in-depth probing for further information when necessary. According to Saunders et al. (2003) the interviewee should be given the opportunity to talk freely about events, behaviour and beliefs in relation to the topic (p.247). Cohen and Manion (2000) explain that interviews are an interchange of views of two people constituting a centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and social situatedness of data. Wellington (2000) comments that interviews allow a researcher to investigate and probe things that cannot be observed. Through interviews we can probe an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views feelings and perspectives (ibid.).

The use of semi-structured interview guides in this study increased the comprehensiveness of the data collection and allowed for the data to be systematically generated through the interactions with each respondent (see appendix Dc). However, logical gaps in data can be anticipated as interviews remain fairly conversational and situational (Patton, 2002, p.349). This notion is supported by May (2001) when he

notes that with semi-structured interviews, the interviewer can probe beyond the answers and thus enter into a dialogue with the interviewee. I chose those people working directly with the projects. The interviews were recorded on a tape recorder to make sure that I captured all relevant data. I also took notes as a backup (see section 3.4.5). Interviews were transcribed (see appendix F).

The nature of my study allowed me to purposively select my respondents. Neuman (2000) describes purposive sampling as sampling for special situations using the judgment of an expert in a special case or selecting cases with a specific purpose in mind (p.198). This view is also reflected by Patton (2002) who notes that purposeful/purposive sampling focuses on selecting information from rich cases which will illuminate questions under study (p.230). In this study I applied the above perspectives by interviewing subject specialists and institution-based coordinators familiar with the two projects in the hope that they would provide rich insights. When I explained the purpose of my study, staff would direct me to people they knew were involved with the projects, while, in fact I was looking for anybody in the centre engaged in curriculum development. To quote them: “So you are looking for ‘maPOP’ (those working in POP/FLE) and ‘maEE’ (those working in EE)” (my translation). This seems to illustrate the process Neuman (2000) describes of purposive sampling which occurs when a researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation.

3.4.3 Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews were also used to generate data. Krueger and Casey (2000) describe these as a “carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions, on a defined area of interest in a permissive and non threatening environment” (p.8). They further note that selection of participants is based on people who have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic. I worked with subject specialists responsible for ensuring integration of environmental and population concerns into their respective subjects. The rationale for using this technique was guided by the need to elicit a range of ideas that participants had on the issue (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Focus groups also enable interactions and self-understanding among the participants.

Two focus group interviews were held, one with six and the other with four subject specialists. The latter group was smaller because one respondent decided to be interviewed as others were not available during the time we had arranged. I developed guiding questions, drawing on the issues that emerged from the interviews and document analysis (see appendix Db). In preparation for the process I negotiated access with participants by briefing them on the aims and goals of my research and its benefit to the centre. Some initially showed some reluctance but later they agreed to participate in the research. We scheduled dates, times and a venue. NCDC subject specialists divided themselves into two groups of about six so that the groups would be small enough for everyone to have an opportunity to share insights and diversity of perceptions (Krueger and Casey, 2000).

The data generated from the focus groups was recorded on a tape recorder to complement my note-taking and transcribed. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) argue that “recording allows the interviewer to keep a full record of the interview without being distracted by note-taking” (p.129). Although I decided to take a few notes, I was also aiming at capturing the exact words of the respondents through the tape recording. Stake (1998) holds a different view from mine as he states that exact words of the respondents are not important, what is important is what they mean. May (2001) clarifies and supports my stance when he notes that tape recording guards against interviewers substituting their own words for those of the person being interviewed (p.38). He cautions that sometimes the analyst may become complacent and believe that once data was collected most of the work was done. Permission to use the tape recorder was obtained from the participants and I also explained the purpose and ethics around its use to them. In some cases during the conversation participants preferred to use pseudo-names for confidentiality and anonymity. In some cases the tape recorder did not work as well as was intended. It turned out that some of the participants’ voices were not audible during the transcriptions. I went back to participants to clarify any information that was not clear. The data was then transcribed verbatim to capture the rich insights provided by the respondents.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In analysis of the data, I applied Stake’s view that “most qualitative researchers believe that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered. The world is a

particularly human construction” (1995, p.99). This was evident during data generation, and data analysis. I also applied the arguments of Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999), Neuman (2000) and Cohen et al. (2000) that in an interpretive paradigm it is difficult to define when data generation stops and data analysis starts. They further argue that in qualitative research, analysis starts during the data collection process. Emphasizing the same point Saunders et al. (2003) comment that analysis of qualitative data should occur at the same time as one collects data and afterwards. To begin with, I read my data many times to get a sense of what it was saying. I transcribed the data obtained from document analysis into a matrix (appendix B) to inform the formulation of questions for the focus group interviews and in-depth interviews. I listened to the tapes and transcribed the data verbatim (translating where necessary) bearing in mind my research question. I then brought together data generated from the various sources and started to disaggregate it into meaningful and related parts (Saunders et al., 2003). By doing this the researcher rearranges the data systematically and rigorously.

As I started integrating related data, I also began to identify key themes and categories that emerged from the data. I then coded the data in the process of reducing it. According to Cohen and Manion (2000) codes define categories, pulling the data into some order and structure (see appendix E for an example of how I coded the data). I used the codes INT for interviews, FG for focus group interviews and a document’s titles for document analysis. I then developed analytical memos using categories and I further developed subcategories, mapping out tensions and challenges emerging from the data and started to construct explanations and summaries of the main features. Below is table 3.1 showing the main categories:

Table 3.1: Data Categories and Sub-Categories

CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES
Project design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor ideology/top down approach • Staff involvement
Project goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with the official mandate • Integration of environment and population concerns in curriculum • Syllabus amendments • Clarity of project objectives

Introduction of projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative process • Staff involvement • Identification of project coordinators
Structures and structural alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural integration • Curriculum alignment • Pedagogical alignment • Relational tensions • Conception of change in educational process • Short term interventions/unrealistic timeframes
Projects strategies and approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predetermined outputs • Log framed interventions • Internal support • Political will • Lack of support from parent ministry • Rapid change process • Model schools vs trial schools • Engagement of international consultants
Interaction between projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor in-house interaction • Liaise with other cooperating partners • Overlaps in content
Impact and outcomes of the projects	<p>Positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced stakeholder collaboration • New paradigms effective • Enhanced learner-centred approach • Professional development • Better understanding of environment and population issues • Acquired project equipment • Development of teaching /learning materials <p>Negative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too early to judge • Sustainability questioned • Confusion and divisiveness • Aloofness and rigidity of project design

Finally I merged the data from all my data generation tools and referred to my research question to ascertain if it is fully answered (see chapter 5). I used Bassey's (1999) idea of developing analytical statements to frame the main findings of the study. These analytical statements are:

Analytical statement 1:

Social and environmental policies create new challenges for curriculum change in education which appear to require donor assistance.

Analytical statement 2:

The political economy guiding donors' work and national imperatives for change creates tensions with existing curriculum change goals and processes.

Analytical statement 3:

Diverse donor funded projects have diverse approaches and strategies that are not easily aligned with existing approaches and structures.

Analytical statement 4:

Local responsiveness and integration of donor funded initiatives is inadequately conceptualized and supported.

3.6 ETHICS

In order to ensure an ethically sound research process I considered the following: access and acceptance, informed consent, and confidentiality. For access and acceptance the directorate and the two project coordinators were informed about my intended study at the proposal development stage and permission was sought to proceed. We agreed that when my proposal was accepted by the Higher Degrees committee and I start the data gathering I should write a formal letter to the director to request access to staff and documents. A formal letter was written and a copy given to my director (see appendix C) as Cohen and Manion (1996) emphasize the importance of gaining official permission to undertake research.

Wellington (2000) and Cohen and Manion (2000) argue that participants in a research process should be informed of the purpose and findings of the research and their potential consequences. In this case I discussed the purpose and benefits of my research with the participants and requested their participation. I also explored other ethical issues. Bassey (1999) notes that these issues include ethical values of respect for truth, and respect for democratic values. With respect for truth I used different methods to authenticate my findings (see section 3.6 below). With regard to democratic values, respondents were granted freedom to receive and give information and make suggestions when necessary. I also provided participants with regular feedback so that they were able to follow the research process and the information

given. According to Lather (1986) research that goes back to the subjects for refinement of the data and interpretations in the light of the subjects' reaction ensures respect for the persons involved.

Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity and their names and identities have not been disclosed in the research. However, anonymity may not be possible in this case. Cohen et al. (2000) argue that anonymity is used when the outcomes are used for generalizations and it is not advisable to apply anonymity in a case study. This is further supported by Bassey (1999:78) where he argues that anonymity is not necessarily the best approach in case study research. In this research I have tried to conceal the names of participants but due to their work context I may not have been able to achieve anonymity.

3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS

The use of multiple sources of information such as document analysis, focus group interviews, and in-depth interviews provided a means of triangulation to ensure that my findings were trustworthy. Stake (2000) points out that triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (p.443). He further argues that in a case study "acknowledging that no observation or interpretations are perfectly repeatable, triangulation serves to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen". Stake (1995) notes that, in a case study even when cases are the ones being studied, they regularly provide critical observations and interpretations and make suggestions, this helps in triangulation (p.115). He further explains the concept of member checking which he says is the situation where the actor is given rough drafts to review the material for accuracy and palatability. Lather (1986) asserts that "Techniques of triangulation, reflexivity and member checks should be used for assessing trustworthiness" (p.270). I used the technique of member checking in my research to establish data trustworthiness. I sent transcripts to some participants to read and make comments where necessary. Although not all respondents sent comments, those comments received assisted in enriching the research. _

3.8 REFLECTION ON THE METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

The data generation techniques employed yielded much insight as participants highlighted issues I had not considered. The techniques also allowed for open discussions as participants took the opportunity to express their opinions and views. However there was an inherent power relationship that existed between my department as coordinators of donor assistance and the project implementers. There was also a feeling of insecurity among some participants as they regarded some issues as sensitive. This reflects other power relations such as those created by the donor-recipient relations (see chapter 2) and the power of the donor-based political economy in developing countries. To address this I assured them of confidentiality and anonymity. I also attempted to build trust between them and myself.

In conducting this research it was not easy to access some documents which would have yielded more insight into the study as they were reported to be unavailable. I also found that transcribing was very time-consuming. In addition, I had to translate as in some interviews respondents preferred to express themselves in their mother tongue, Sesotho, during the interviews. For instance, a respondent would say: “*li projects tse ling ha lina litsiane*” which when translated into English means that some projects do not have incentive packages. A more in-depth reflexive review of the research process is provided in chapter 6.

3.9 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

This chapter focused on the research design decisions that informed the research process. I have also described how I reached the research decisions and the rationale for adopting an interpretive case study approach. I provided a description of the data generation techniques and reasons why they were relevant for this research. I further explained how I analyzed data from the data generation techniques, from data coding to the actual data analysis, adapting the themes that emerged from the raw data. Research ethics were also considered as suggested by Bassey (1999) for case studies, namely respect for persons, respect for truth and democratic values.

To ensure trustworthiness I outlined a number of techniques suggested by Lather (1986) and Stake (1995) which included triangulation, reflexivity and member checking. Finally, I reflected on the methods used in the research.

In the next chapter I provide findings of the research by giving a detailed account of the project processes and tensions associated with their implementation, as reported by respondents who are involved in implementation, and from official project documents.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPLEMENTATION TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines findings generated from an examination of the POP/FLE and LEESP projects and their implementation and institutionalisation into the Lesotho curriculum. It starts with a brief description of each project, and then goes on to discuss the design, goals and introduction of the projects by the NCDC and other stakeholders. It further narrates the implementation process which highlights tensions associated with structures and structural alignment, implementation strategies and approaches used by projects, interaction between projects as well as responsiveness and change within the projects. The chapter finally outlines both the positive and negative impact and outcome of the projects and includes recommendations that were made by respondents for smooth implementation of the projects.

4.2 POPULATION FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROJECT

POP/FLE project was conceptualised and initiated in 1989 as part of UNFPA's assistance to Lesotho to achieve selected goals for sustainable development and improved quality of life. This study is focusing on the third cycle of the UNFPA assistance known as Government of Lesotho and United Nations Population Fund Third Country Programme (CP). POP/FLE is a component project within the Reproductive Health Sub-programme under the abovementioned CP. The main goal of the third country programme was to improve quality of life and promote sustainable development. Although approved in 1998, the project was not implemented immediately due to logistical problems which included the government internalising and conceptualising the project, as well as delays in disbursements of funds. It was only in 1999 under the third cycle of the country programme run collaboratively by UNFPA and Lesotho Government that activities of the project commenced. This was after the Programme Review and Strategy Development mission undertaken in 1991 which established that POP/FLE was not systematically integrated in the formal school curricula and that there was sporadic integration of

population concepts in some subjects (United Nations Population Fund, 1993, p.12). POP/FLE is a comprehensive initiative taking on board all population related issues. In addition the project was initiated to respond to several population related issues such as teenage pregnancy, gender equality, equity and empowerment, substance abuse, STD's including HIV/AIDS and environmental degradation. Its main aim was to raise the level of awareness and knowledge among adolescents on reproductive health, family health and sexual health issues and understanding of the environment, its importance to mankind, interaction with environment and its protection. The comprehensive nature of POP/FLE is illustrated by Obol et al. (2004) when they note "in Lesotho a move is underway towards integrating Environmental Education (EE) into schools through a focus on Population and Family Life which covers all issues including HIV/AIDS" (p.23). This is indicative of the close relationship between EE and POP/FLE; hence this could bring about tensions within the education system which is the focus of this study. During the life of the project sensitisation workshops were held for stakeholder institutions and teachers in selected schools in selected pilot schools.

4.2.1 Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project (LEESP)

LEESP was conceptualized in line with the county's policy frameworks such as the national Environment Policy of 1997 and the Plan to implement Agenda 21 which implicitly emphasized the crucial role of education in leading towards sustainable solutions to environmental issues and risks (DANCED, 2000). The project was originally designed in 1997 but due to discussions between the donor and the NCDC and political unrest of 1998 preparatory work was suspended.

The main goal of LEESP was to support integration of environmental concerns into the formal education system. LEESP came into being in 2001 for three years, with the intention that it would end in August 2004. When it was realized that pre-service training of teachers had not been considered, the project was extended for eight months to end in March 2005, in order to address the pre-service teacher training needs at the teacher training college and the university. The project was implemented through the concept of model schools (10 primary and 10 secondary schools) which were selected from NCDC trial schools. The aim was for the model schools to disseminate EE to neighbouring schools. The LEESP implementation strategy was

guided by the concept of action competence emphasizing responsible citizenship and conscious action based upon reflection. It also used the whole school development approach.

LEESP was a Danish-sponsored project through (DANIDA). The project document further documents the rationale for engaging DANCED to support EE processes. Denmark had successfully integrated environmental issues in the curriculum over several years and could therefore support similar efforts in developing countries. DANCED/DANIDA was also implementing similar projects in neighbouring countries, for example, Republic of South Africa and Namibia, so it had established itself as a leader in EE issues.

The project was executed by the Ministry of Education and Training and implemented and coordinated by the National Curriculum Development Centre. DANCED/DANIDA² provided technical assistance and funding and placed long-term consultants through Carl Bros management. The management group comprised NCDC director, project director and a project coordinator selected from subject specialists. The project was monitored by a project steering committee which acted as a board, met half yearly and reported formally to DANCED in Copenhagen. There was also a reference group to keep stakeholders informed about the project progress and discuss and make inputs/critics of the project (DANCED, 2000, p.40).

An inception report contained guidelines for various matters related to the project implementation which included financial management, project monitoring quality assurance and general management. In order to introduce and for locals to own the project, a number of activities were undertaken. These involved much preparatory work before the inception of the project:

- In January 1997 a DANCED Programme Identification Mission (PIM) was fielded, where an aide memoir on possible areas of cooperation was signed with the government of Lesotho.
- In February 1997 a programme formulation mission visited the country.

² DANCED initially planned and designed LEESP. Responsibility was later transferred to DANIDA.

- In July 1997 a draft project on Environmental Education and Training was drawn up.
- In November 1997 a Design mission was fielded and presented to DANCED a report entitled Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project. However, this report did not incorporate all comments from Lesotho regarding the project document.
- On 15 May 1998 DANCED had a meeting with the director and project officer of the National Curriculum Development Centre. At this meeting, NCDC expressed that their comments had not adequately been addressed and in 1999, DANCED fielded an Appraisal mission to finalize the project document and project preparations (DANCED 2000 Project document).

4.3 DESIGN GOALS AND INTRODUCTION

For the research to make meaning I started looking at how the projects were designed and introduced to the implementers. Understanding the participants' views of the above could provide perspectives on other issues and that emerged throughout the research process. This would also elucidate how the perceived tensions and challenges emerged.

During the focus group discussions respondents (FG1, FG2) indicated that they were not aware of how, when or where the projects were designed or endorsed (signed). They appeared to be more involved in implementation than project design and approval. They also mentioned that the decision to implement came as a directive to them. One respondent (INT5) indicated that sometimes these issues are rooted in political economies of aid where the country cannot refuse aid. However one respondent (INT2) indicated that in the case of LEESP, the NCDC had participated in its design and that the government, through the National Environment Secretariat, saw this as a way of responding to the implementation of Agenda 21. The call was that all sectors participate in addressing environmental issues in the country. They then wrote a proposal requesting support to integrate environmental concerns into the curriculum. The proposal attracted the Danish government's interest. The Danish government worked with the centre to refine the proposal. This process is clearly stipulated in the LEESP project document which says that a Danish review mission was sent to refine

the documents to accommodate the country's concerns (DPD, p.7). Though the documents and one respondent (INT2) indicated that there were consultations during the formulation of LEESP, there was a general feeling that consultation with staff of the centre was minimal. One respondent (INT5) indicated that he did not know where the projects were designed. He further indicated that the projects have been imposed on them without much consultation. Participants in one focus group (FG2) indicated they were simply implementing the projects because it was a directive from their supervisors. A respondent (INT5) and a response from the focus groups (FG1 and FG2) noted that if the centre staff were not involved in the planning process they would resist participation in the initiatives. This approach resulted in a lack of ownership and commitment on the part of the implementers. The above respondents explained that this was "top-down planning".

Commenting on the issue of lack of consultation of staff in the design of projects, respondents in all focus groups (FG1, FG2) and interviews (INT1, INT2, INT5) suggested that before the project documents are signed, the implementing agency (NCDC) should critically appraise the said documents. They further indicated that assessment of the resource base should be done to take stock of the existing experiences of the institution. The strategies of implementing projects should be explored, as there is a tendency for donors to want to implement things that are in use in their own countries (e.g. concept of action competency).

Another issue of significance is the involvement of government in donor funded initiatives. The point emerged in one interview (INT5) and focus group (FG1) that government and senior officials should have a thorough understanding of the projects and their implications. It was also said that policy makers should understand what these projects are all about. The interviewee gave an example of life skills and said that that some top-ranking officials don't really know what life skills are. He further suggested that "political will from the top guys was also needed". He also noted that their centre is responsible for curriculum and that they are there to advise the parent ministry (Ministry of Education and Training) on all matters pertaining to curriculum development.

What emerged from the focus groups (FG1 and FG2) and the interviews (INT1, INT2, INT5) was that “government should learn to say “No to projects if necessary”. However in the NRPI document, it is stated that the NCDC does not have the authority to refuse to host projects, but it can adapt them to fit in their system (p.15). The NCDC should check whether the ideas brought in can be aligned with other existing projects and assess the feasibility of the envisaged projects. They further suggested that projects should be implemented according to the experience of the centre by reviewing past activities in the centre. Commenting on suggestions on smooth running of projects, it was noted that there is a need to identify critical needs that should be addressed (INT5). The same respondent suggested that the centre should have a blue print document or a master plan where the centre has identified and compiled their activities and the donor should fund those they are interested in. The NCDC should thus be more pro-active about setting an agenda for donor funded projects.

On support they receive from Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), respondents in all the groups (FG1 and FG2) reported that it was very minimal on monitoring their activities: “They never come or visit to see what we are doing”. Respondents unanimously recommended that the NCDC should get more support from MOET.

4.3.1 Introduction of the Projects

On the issue of how the projects were introduced to members of staff, one interviewee (INT2) indicated that after the project staff (Chief Technical Assistant (CTA) and teacher trainers) arrived, a one-week workshop was held for staff to explain the project expectations, expected outputs and how they were to be involved to achieve the set outputs. She further mentioned that staff committed themselves to various tasks to achieve the outputs and task forces were formed. The tasks for the task forces included the production of a newsletter, running workshops at the model schools and compiling a reference note. While at the National University of Lesotho, the CTA wrote a letter to the Vice Chancellor about the project and the need to have a coordinator at that level. The Dean of the faculty was informed and introduced the project to other staff members. Information obtained from the focus groups and one interview indicated that the project would only be introduced to the relevant subjects

or carrier subjects and staff whose subjects were not relevant to environmental education would not be involved. One respondent (INT5) mentioned that he knew about the projects from reading documents at the NCDC. Respondents in FGI and FG2, INT1, INT2 and INT5) mentioned that a coordinator would be identified from the relevant subjects. It is also documented in NRPI that the NCDC administration should appoint a focal person to be responsible for the projects (p.15).

4.3.2 Goals of the Projects

Information on the goals of the projects was sought from the respondents. Responses from the focus groups (FG1 and FG2) and some interviews (INT 1, INT2 and INT5) were that the goals of the two projects under study were very noble and aimed to integrate environmental and population concerns across curriculum. They aimed at providing learners with skills and quality education for a better future. One respondent (INT 5) added that that POP/FLE is very comprehensive as it touches on family life, life skills, and sexuality and gender issues and referred to it as a “mother of all projects in the centre”. On the issue of whether the goals assisted the centre to achieve its official mandate respondents unanimously indicated that in essence the mandate of the centre is to develop curriculum that is responsive to the needs of society, which is currently striving to achieve sustainable development. On the same point one interviewee (INT6) commented that the goals of LEESP were to introduce environmental education into the formal education system by augmenting integration efforts already being implemented within the existing syllabus. POP/FLE goals were to integrate or infuse population and health into the curriculum, in the formal and non-formal sectors.

The respondents both in the interviews and focus groups commented that in essence the projects were supposed to help the centre achieve its mandate, in reality this was not so easily achieved. This is attributed to the fact that the projects were ‘mismanaged’ in that they had their own agendas and the management of the centre was not able to monitor their activities. One interviewee (INT6) however, commented that the goals of the projects helped the NCDC to achieve its functions in that LEESP is particularly piloting integration of emerging issues into the curriculum. He further said that LEESP also promoted institutionalisation of experimentation and rolling out of curriculum planning. He further indicated that the project had contributed to staff

capacity development in environmental education content, curriculum organisation and management. As far as POP/FLE was concerned, the interviewee said that the project synchronised emerging issues with the NCDC curriculum functions. The project also enhanced capacity for coordination and institutionalisation of POP/FLE into schools.

For the teacher training institutions (National University of Lesotho and Lesotho College of Education) the goals of the projects were to enhance capacity of teacher trainers to amend their curriculum to align it with what is taught in schools. Respondents (INT3 and INT4) noted that the projects are there to enhance the capacity of the lecturers on emerging issues.

4.4 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

This section touches on the implementation process highlighting some tensions and challenges that have emerged in terms of the existing structures and structural alignment of projects, their implementation strategies, how they operate, interaction between the two projects under study and how the centre has responded to the challenges.

4.4.1 Structures and Structural Alignment

As the projects were placed within existing structures they had to fit into those structures. This appears to have been less than ideal in the case of both the LEESP and POP/FLE as was expressed unanimously by respondents in the interviews and focus groups. They indicated that the centre has an organisational structure which was not able to accommodate the projects. The management of the centre identified subject specialists to coordinate the projects who were still engaged in their normal duties. In other words, the coordinators had to undertake project activities alongside their regular schedule of full-time work. As a result they were unable to work as expected. The coordinators had to work with the director of the centre, chief technical advisor and teacher trainer and the latter two were employed by the donor agency. This set-up created numerous relational tensions in the project.

Information obtained from one respondent (INT1) indicated that there were also problems associated with deployment of coordinators in the POP/FLE. Staffing in the project was not stable. The respondent reported that the project had three coordinators

in its four-year cycle. This issue was also emphasised by respondents in focus groups (FG2) when they indicated that when the first coordinator left, staff volunteered to take up the coordination role. There was no proper handing over and the new coordinator did not know where to start. This was also been documented in a number of documents reviewed (RPM, CPER, MTRB, MTR and NRPI, see appendix B). Information elicited from one document (RPM) indicated reluctance on the part of management of the centre to appoint a full-time coordinator: “if a full-time coordinator is identified when the project terminates she/he would be redundant.” This has been attributed to staff attrition and it has created difficulties for the project management. The respondent (INT1) reported that the whole set-up created a lot of confusion associated with decision-making powers.

In most cases the coordinators seemed to be reporting to too many managers. In one of the documents (RPM) it is stated that “the project was run by three agencies: UNFPA as a funding agency, Lesotho government through NCDC as implementing agency and the Academy for Educational Development (AED) as an executing agency”. This required the coordinator to report to the three agencies. One respondent (INT5) commented that all the problems pertaining to structural alignment and staffing are associated with a lack of proper management and leadership skills within the centre.

One respondent (INT 5) further described the projects as “units or kingdom or government within a government” indicating a lack of integration into existing systems and structures. This point has also been highlighted in the documents (IPD, p.8) where it is said that experience with various projects is that organisations fail to see them as assisting in fulfilling their tasks and as a result projects fail to be fully institutionalised. The reasons given by the Danish in the LEESP was that due to a lack of clearly articulated comprehensive policy on educational initiatives, DANIDA was forced to adopt a “project approach” to implementation (PCR, p.12). The document further notes that though the project was regarded as a government initiative, a lack of an appropriate policy framework on educational developments limited the extent to which the project could be located within the plans of government (ibid., p.11).

Another implication associated with the lack of integration of projects was an uncertainty regarding the staff's role in the projects. This issue was reflected in both interviews and focus groups, when respondents stated that members of staff did not understand how the projects related to their core functions. Staff perceived projects as an "add on" to their work especially for those subjects which were directly affected.

For the teacher training institutions a solid structural integration of the project was promising. One respondent (INT4) indicated that at Lesotho College of Education (LCE) plans are under way to have a Department of Life Studies which encompasses environmental education, population, life skills and HIV and AIDS. This she said would be a move towards integrating emerging issues in the curriculum as stipulated in the national policies. The respondent further reported that at the time of the interview EE was based at the Environmental Studies in the faculty of Science and she did not know where POP/FLE was hosted. The data obtained from respondents (INT3 and INT4) revealed that there are structures formed in the teacher training institutions to work with the emerging issues. At the LCE there is an environmental group consisting of fifteen lecturers drawn from Faculties of Science, Social Sciences and Distance Education. An environmental education committee constituted by five members has also been formed to guide the planning of activities. At the National University of Lesotho (NUL) a committee consisting of staff from departments of Science Education, Language and Social Education, and Educational Foundation has been established. Respondents indicated that they thought these structures would help to sustain EE activities in their institutions.

Respondents also deliberated on the issue of approaches in the context of pedagogical alignment. One respondent (INT5) noted that donors came up with their own ideologies and pedagogy and introduced them in a system which has its own pedagogy. He further indicated that since donors have power and the upper political hand they criticise the way things are done locally. Here, he was referring to model of professional development promoted through the cascade model. He argued that the model that the donors were promoting was once used in Lesotho but had been dropped. Since they were not involved in the design of the project they were again not consulted when these apparently new ideologies were designed. He concluded by saying that projects are not as educational as they are said to be. The projects claim

they are there to support educational initiatives but concentrate on outputs, which are time-bound. Information from the focus groups indicated that the centre does not have a clear direction on how the projects or emerging issues should appear in the syllabus, which indicates a lack of clarity in aligning different pedagogical and ideological approaches.

4.4.2 Project Strategies and Approaches

On the issue of the project strategies and approaches, the majority of respondents noted that projects have their own ways of doing things, which are sometimes different from theirs. On this issue, diverse views have been reported that are worth noting. The respondents in focus groups (FG1, FG2) indicated that projects use their own implementation strategies, which are stipulated in project documents guided by logical frameworks. They also indicated that the projects are short-term interventions and sometimes cut through bureaucracy, as a result activities are sometimes rushed through, in order to meet the predetermined outputs. They also reported that the NCDC normally pilot tests its curriculum using trial schools and LEESP used model schools. This was confirmed by a respondent (INT5) when he commented that the centre uses trial schools (see section 2.2.2) while the LEESP has changed this approach to use model schools. He further indicated that the concepts are more or less the same, in that both trial schools and model schools are used to test whether new concepts and innovations will work. The focus groups and interviews (INT1, INT2, INT5) indicated that the POP/FLE has initially been in the country for a long time, but has not gone into schools (is not yet taught in schools). According to them the project did not have a clear strategy of how they should implement POP/FLE in schools. They reported that a consultant was engaged to assess POP/FLE content in the existing curriculum and he said it was “thinly sprinkled” and that it ideally ought to be a stand-alone subject. When that was not possible they opted for integration. Information elicited from the documents (RPM, NRIP, MTR and CPER) revealed that the project seemed to have been plagued by many challenges which could have affected its operations. I will cite a few salient issues from the documents. They include the following:

- The ten-year lifespan of the curriculum at the varying levels where POP/FLE has to be infused further complicated the design rendering it inadequate (CPER, p.40);

- Installing a technical advisor also involved bureaucratic delays (ibid., p.22);
- The AED term of execution was terminated after 18 months for being expensive and when the AED resident advisor (technical advisor) left implementation of activities slowed down; and
- The lack of a full-time coordinator to oversee the project (MTRB, p.13).

Data from documents (CPER, p.63) reflected that at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) POP/FLE activities were constrained by the institutional transformation that was going on at the time of the evaluation. The Lesotho College of Education (LCE) experienced high staff turnover and lost skilled staff who could have effected infusion of POP/FLE into the college curriculum (MTTRR, p.23 and CPERR, p.63).

One interviewee (INT6) commented that the POP/FLE initiative was behind schedule due to a lack of internal support (support from the centre). This was confirmed by the statement expressed by respondents in one focus group (FG2) in which it was stated that some members of staff “hated POP/FLE”. It also became evident that respondents thought that environmental education had been implemented too rapidly. One respondent in one focus group (FG1) pointed out that it was not very clear whether the teachers were doing the right thing and that there was no guarantee change was being effected. They further indicated that the quality of the expected change might be compromised in the haste to achieve set goals in a limited time frame. Participants in one focus group (FGD1) commented that since the present teaching and learning processes in the country are examination oriented, teachers in schools will do away with teaching EE since it is not examinable and concentrate on teaching in line with examinations and finishing the set syllabus. Another interviewee (INT6) commented that LEESP has been graded as being on schedule mainly due to “generous external technical and financial support”. One respondent in the focus group (FG2) commented that LEESP was on schedule due to the physical presence of the donors in the centre. The locals implement POP/FLE with minimal guidance by the funding agency with a view to encourage sustainability.

Another challenge is related to the nature of the projects. FGD1 indicated that projects are short-lived, and that projects end even before they are fully understood within the

system. They also indicated that the drivers (donors) introduce many new things and tend to change them quickly before those in the system have time to grasp them. Here, they gave an example of the terminology used in Environmental Education where by the project started with “Environmental Education” and later on changed to “Education for Sustainability.” They would just pick what they thought they understood better.

Another tension experienced concerned the timing of projects. Respondents (FG1 and INT2) indicated that projects were introduced when they had already drawn up their work plans. The staff then had to alter their work plans to suit the project activities. Sometimes they were not able to complete some activities in their own work plans. Some respondents in the focus groups indicated that projects took most of their time which they could have used for other activities.

Of significance to this study is the sustainability which is the key issue in donor funded initiatives. The respondents in the focus group (FG1) indicated that most projects end within the pilot phase and beyond the pilot, there is no support. Even where there are people with the capacity to continue implementation they are often not utilised. FG1 participants commented that there was a general belief or feeling that projects die. The Government should make a commitment at the inception of the projects and work out strategies of how it is going to sustain them. There was a concern that general coordination of projects was weak in the institution. They also felt that the institution should have a projects’ coordinator to oversee the activities of all projects in the centre. The coordinator should work closely with the ministry’s project officer for the day to day running of projects to get support on running projects. In the case of the National University of Lesotho (NUL) one respondent (INT3) indicated that their big challenge was making the projects valuable and sustainable. He stated that lecturers now have skills and capacity to develop proposals to sustain the projects and present them to other donors. According to him the LEESP has laid great foundations for other donors in the field of environmental education.

Another challenge identified was related to the ideology of projects in terms of their control framework and their assumptions associated with development. He (INT3) further commented that projects should be more flexible in terms of status, objectives

and outputs and allow those entrusted with the responsibility of implementing the projects to achieve the broader goal of the project without necessarily achieving very specific objectives as set. He (INT3) further went on to say that another problem was how people perceived projects, what projects are and their functions. According to him there is an orientation that projects are introduced with an implicit view that there is deficit in knowledge among the locals and they lack viable ideas of how things should be. So the role of projects is to introduce ideas from experts which will work out for a particular country. He further commented: “Most projects are extending top down ideology of development, which is in essence imposition of ideas”. The respondent recommended that he would like to see the change in orientation from the top down transfer of ideas. He would like to see LEESP adopt a local approach of generation of ideas.

Another challenge identified relates to conception of change and change processes in the education system. This issue was raised by one respondent (INT5) who stated that they are not sure whether they are successfully integrating the introduced concepts into the existing subjects. He further indicated that he cannot see the system at the centre coping with the day to day running of the projects. In projects the focus is on achieving time bound outputs without considering the type of change envisaged. He commented that: “this is education, not an industry. We are dealing with people who have needs which have to be addressed. How do we address needs of people while at the same time running after completion of outputs?”

INT5 further reiterated the point that time frames for projects are too short especially if one is working with human beings as attitudes do not change in a period of six months. He further pointed out the two projects were advocating for behaviour change and action competence and this means that for these to sink in needs ample time. He also said that there was a need to strike a balance between outputs with the nature of change expected. He further commented: “In Education all over the World you go to Europe, Germany, change cannot happen over night. There is need for evolutionary planning”. One interviewee (INT3), also a member of the monitoring and evaluation committee, said that he realised or had seen how time frames create pressures on project implementation resulting in hasty project processes.

Of significance to this case study is the use of consultants in initiating change. Interviewees (INT1) and focus groups indicated that the two projects used external consultants that were not familiar with the institutional or national needs. Sometimes their work was not very professional and their qualifications were not always known by the staff. The information obtained from the documents (DANCED 2000 project document) indicated good intentions on the part of the donor as it states that “the purpose is to provide with consultancy services to assist the local institution to sustain the outcome of the project....project activities should not be taken by the consultants but their purpose is to train and guide local authorities to make improvement.” The document further argues that though the country has shown commitment to developing this area of education (EE), it lacks sufficient human and material resources to implement environmental education. Sustainability issues should be clarified or be clear from the inception of the projects. The institution should have somebody to understudy consultants. Here they suggested that local consultants should be engaged.

Regarding funding it became clear from the responses that projects have different financial procedures and disbursement processes for funds. Respondents in both the focus groups and interviews reported that projects come with diverse funding procedures and incentive packages. Another problem was the delay in disbursement of funds for implementation of project activities due to long procedures that had to be followed to access funds. For instance, for LEESP financial requests were sent to Danish Embassy in Pretoria.

Another major challenge which the respondents did not mention but which is documented is governance issues. Governance issues are very important in donor-funded initiatives as they can affect aid flows and implementation of projects. The country programme evaluation reports (CPEP) indicated that the implementation of the POP/FLE was adversely affected by the political unrest following the 1998 elections, while for LEESP preparatory work on the project was suspended for some time (DPD, p.7).

4.5 INTERACTION BETWEEN PROJECTS

Information was sought on how the two projects under study collaborated. During the focus group discussions (FG1, FG2) it was established that the projects shared similar concepts: environmental issues were found in POP/FLE and vice versa. Participants also highlighted that even though there is that similarity it is not easy for the two to work together as their demands, strategies and agendas are different. One respondent (INT1) claimed that there was a lot of duplication. Information from documents (NRPI) supports the above view by suggesting that a review of POP/FLE framework should be done to ensure that there are no duplication of issues contained in other projects such as Human Rights, Gender and Environmental Education. It further indicates that analysis of the projects to check similarities and differences and to plan how to incorporate them in the curriculum is necessary (*ibid.*, p.8). One respondent (INT5) indicated that there was a move towards encouraging the two projects to work together especially when undertaking activities. This is also reflected in document (PR no 2) under output 12 where it is indicated that cooperation is established with the UNFPA-funded POP/FLE and UNEP-funded projects of Environment and Poverty Reduction and Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho. However, further reports do not provide information on the outcomes of the synergy developed.

Respondents (INT1 and INT2) noted that initiative failed due to the fact that each project had its own implementation strategies. This was echoed by INT5 who reiterated the fact that each project has its own approaches though they carry the same content and as a result collaboration is not easy to achieve. He indicated that the LEESP international staff tried to work together with the POP/FLE but failed. He put it in simple terms: “they (POP/FLE) never liked them (LEESP)”. He thought maybe it would be difficult for the two projects to share resources, especially finances. He further expressed a concern that as long as the projects had their own principles and agendas it would be difficult to harmonise them. In this regard many resources are wasted. He indicated that if the staff of the centre were involved at the conception of the projects, things would be very easy and they would have control over them. Information obtained from other respondents (INT3 and INT4) indicated that they had little knowledge of POP/FLE in that they said there was no link between LEESP and POP/FLE and the other respondent seemed to think that POP/FLE was just starting

operations as she had been invited to their workshop at the Lesotho College of Education. On this issue of interaction between POP/FLE and LEESP information elicited from the documents (Completion Report, p.12) indicated that there was none as the document explicitly states “LEESP has liaised with other cooperating partners in Lesotho - the World Bank, DFID, Irish aid and the European Union - to assess the potential of pooling efforts to support the MOET in its development of a national education framework.” There was no mention of UNFPA at this point.

4.6 IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECTS

Investigation into the impacts of the projects was aimed at finding out what their merits and demerits were and how these could present tensions and challenges. All the respondents interviewed indicated that the projects had both positive and negative impacts, which had to be reflected. The positive impacts highlighted included projects bringing in ideas which enhanced what existed in the curriculum which has led to subjects having to critically review their existing content and methods (syllabuses) and capacity-building for most of the staff especially in the development of learning support materials. Respondents (INT1, INT2) reflected that the staff of the centre had developed critical minds, and that they conduct their tasks with open reflexive minds. The whole school development approach was seen to be of benefit to teachers as they encountered new things at the same time. As communities are involved it also enhances their understanding of what curriculum is all about.

Focus group and interview data also indicated that the two projects under study had contributed to professional development in terms of content and skills transfer. There is a significant improvement in the understanding of complex environmental issues and issues in context. One interviewee (INT5) pointed out that the projects, especially the LEESP has helped them see what goes on in schools. It has illuminated some of the issues they had neglected. One respondent in the focus group (FDG 1) commented that the concept of action competence introduced through the LEESP has enhanced the learner-centred approach and revealed that there had been a lot of lip service paid to the concept of learner-centred education without implementation. The project had also enhanced understanding of teaching and learning by promoting a social constructivist learning/teaching approach. It was further reported in the focus groups

(FG1 and FG2) that the approach of model schools working with neighbouring schools was effective and the centre could adopt this.

As far as the teacher training institutions were concerned, respondents (INT3 and INT4) reported that awareness of environmental education issues had been created and they now recognised the importance of the subject. They further indicated that the two institutions have amended their courses to incorporate environmental education.

Another area noted was that collaboration between NCDC and other stakeholders such as Lesotho College of Education (LCE) and the National University (NUL) has increased significantly. Although the respondents in the focus groups do not mention anything about the weak collaboration with the Examination Council of Lesotho (ECOL) the documents (LEESP Completion Report) revealed that collaboration between the NCDC and ECOL was very minimal. Respondents in the focus group (FGD1) indicated that since the curriculum projects are implemented in an examination-driven system it should be clear how these would fit into the system. Respondents in both focus groups suggested that there was a need for close collaboration between NCDC and the Examination Council of Lesotho in order to align the examination with the new curriculum developments. The issue of examination posing a problem in model schools was articulated in the LEESP project document (DPD) as follows: “Model schools may find their situation different from other schools and consequently put pressure on the Examination Council of Lesotho (ECOL) for different examination” and the project was to provide support to ECOL in developing examination protocols (DPD, p.23).

Information elicited from interviews (INT3 and INT4) indicated that there was significant progress on collaboration between the teacher training institutions (NUL and LCE) in that they planned activities regarding environmental education together and implemented them separately. As far as professional development was concerned the two institutions work together. Here examples are collaborative excursions to Tsehlanyane (an environmental conservation site) and a materials development workshop. One respondent (INT4) had the following comment to show the level of collaboration: “If you can see how people discuss together in these workshops. Its amazing, people are beginning to see that they can learn from each other.” The

respondents (INT3 and INT4) further reported that the teacher training institutions have formed a networking group called Lesotho Teacher Educators Network for Environment and were in the process of registering it.

As far as negative impacts were concerned, a concern was raised in the focus groups that it was too soon to judge and that the direction the projects were taking was not clear. Some respondents (FG1, FG2, and INT5) indicated that impact may not be realised currently but may only be seen in the longer term when the next cycle of curriculum review takes place.

Respondents in the focus groups (FG1, FG2) also indicated that they are not sure of how to fit the new concepts/content into their own subjects. They expressed that when the projects phase out they will simply have to go back to their old functions. This is also expressed in the documents where it was noted that “projects appear to be islands within organisations and upon expiration of projects organisations go back to their old functions” (IPD, p.8). The majority of respondents indicated that the projects cannot fit into their operations. Information from both interviews and focus groups indicate that the projects created confusion among staff and become divisive. One interviewee (INT6) raised concern about the aloofness of the designs and the rigidity of proposed integration as well as curriculum overload.

Another negative impact cited in the focus groups (FG1, FG2) was associated with poor communication and knowledge sharing between staff of the centre. This problem is experienced due to the fact that certain projects had designated people who would do things on their own. As a result other staff were not adequately informed about what was happening in the projects. The respondents also reported that staff assigned to projects did not appear to know what happens in other projects (i.e. right hand does not know what the left hand is doing). They further indicated that the identification of model schools brought a lot of confusion within an existing system of trial schools.

When discussing the outcomes of the projects respondents in all the groups indicated some achievements such as:

- Outputs of LEESP have been achieved;

- A general reference note or framework for environmental education in Lesotho was developed and translated into the local language;
- Newsletters were compiled;
- Training of trainers in POP/FLE was held and the staff of the centre benefited from it;
- Curriculum framework document for POP/FLE has been developed.
- Environmental Education teachers' handbook was developed and distributed to the model schools; and
- Syllabus attachments for EE have been developed.

4.7 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

This chapter has explored findings drawing on the data generated from document analysis, interviews and focus group interviews. The data suggests that tensions and challenges in social transformation involving donor support are unavoidable. The data indicates that the process of project identification was not consultative enough. Sometimes people were not keen to learn what happens around them. Complexities in reporting, structural alignment, decision-making powers and structural positioning of the projects were experienced.

The chapter further focused on the implementation process which identified tensions associated with structures, structural alignment, strategies and approaches used by LEESP and POP/FLE and how NCDC responded.

The next chapter will provide a more in-depth discussion of the research findings drawing on the theoretical framework and contextual discussions as presented in chapter 2.

CHAPTER 5

TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES IN DONOR FUNDED CURRICULUM PROJECTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, I reported on the interpretations and perceptions of tensions and challenges associated with donor funded curriculum projects as presented by respondents who have been involved in the projects. In this chapter the discussion draws on theoretical perspectives presented in chapter 2 and findings presented in chapter 4. The discussion will focus on implementation challenges and tensions arising in donor funded projects, as this is the research question that has guided this study. The chapter therefore addresses this question with reference to theory and data. To frame the discussion, I use a set of analytical statements which provide a way of critically synthesising the data. As introduced in section 3.5, the analytical statements used to frame the discussion in this chapter are:

- **Analytical Statement 1:** Social and environmental policies create new challenges for curriculum change in education which appear to require donor assistance.
- **Analytical Statement 2:** The political economy guiding donors work, and national imperatives for change, create tensions with existing curriculum change goals and processes.
- **Analytical Statement 3:** Diverse donor funded projects have diverse approaches and strategies that are not easily aligned with existing approaches and structures.
- **Analytical Statement 4:** Local responsiveness and integration of donor funded initiatives is inadequately conceptualized and supported.

Each of these is outlined further in the sections that follow.

5.2 Analytical statement 1: Social and environmental policies create new challenges for curriculum change in education which appear to require donor assistance.

As mentioned in chapter 2, in the late 20th century concerns about the relationship between nature and human development emerged globally. This led to the sustainable development discourse gaining global credibility. As indicated in section 2.2, numerous international meetings were held, which culminated in a number of policy frameworks. The initiatives included the 1972 United Nations World conference in Stockholm, 1992 United Nations conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Education for All and 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development held in South Africa. These international forums have increasingly placed a strong emphasis on sustainable development as a strategy to guide future human development, and consequently education for sustainable living or Education for Sustainable Development has gained credence. This discourse recognises that environmental issues cannot be isolated from social and economic development, and that education has a key role to play in re-orienting society towards more sustainable practices and lifestyles.

Global concern for using education as a social process of change towards sustainability was recently given further impetus when the UN declared 2005 to 2014 a Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. As indicated in chapter 2, the theme is included in the design of the two projects under study, which place emphasis on education and training for environment and sustainable development. Data from the Ministry of Education Strategic Plan 2005-2015 indicated that the international initiatives noted above have made a significant impression on the manner in which the country has designed its policies and strategies, which reflect key discourses and priorities contained in the international policy frameworks mentioned above. The country, by enshrining environmental provision in its constitution, shows that environmental considerations have reached the highest legislative level. National Vision 2020 is set up in a manner that acknowledges the important role the educational sector can play in achieving this vision. Similarly the Poverty Reduction Strategy reiterates the government's strategy to develop the human resource base and introduce environmental education in all levels of education and training (see section

2.2). The MDGs have also set important targets to which the education sector has had to respond.

The influence of these global policy responses to human-environment concerns and subsequent educational policy frameworks (e.g. the UNDESD) indicates that the education system needs to be responsive to global policy changes. The data in section 4.2 shows that the two projects under study were conceived in order to respond to the environment and development issues in Lesotho, and in response to global policy changes which Lesotho endorsed. The project documents indicate that government through the National Environment Secretariat saw projects as a way to respond to the implementation of Agenda 21, and invited all concerned with the state of the country's environment to come together to address the environmental problems, which led to LEESP, and similarly those concerned with population were to contribute to the POP/FLE project. Data reveals that all the policy frameworks contribute to what Nieuwenhuis (1996) refers to as the globalization of education, which sets educational agendas. These in turn determine the direction of the education system in a country.

Data also revealed that Lesotho has identified education as a priority and as a result has increased its political and financial commitment to it (Nieuwenhuis, 1996, DANCED, 2000;). However, many educational initiatives have been financed by donor agencies. It is also evident from the documents (see section 2.6.) that the government of Lesotho is trying to uplift its education system to address Lesotho's problems. In doing so the Ministry of Education has largely relied on donor agencies for support, to the extent that in 1996 approximately 90% of the education budget for capital costs was financed through donor funding as indicated in chapters 1 and 4. It is not surprising therefore that the two projects focussing on environment and population were financed by donor funding and therefore form part of the government's strategy to use donor support to improve education in Lesotho. The argument is put forward by Nieuwenhuis (1996) that donor support implies that education programmes must be developed in collaboration and consultation with donor and agencies. Nieuwenhuis further indicates that for some time Lesotho will remain dependent on donor funding to support the education system. Based on the findings in chapter 4, which illustrates the lack of authority to refuse projects, it would

seem that it is not possible to refuse donor funding, and that it is a key mechanism for educational change in Lesotho. This reliance of the education system on donor funding to achieve their intended goals has been alluded to by Mokuku (1999), Nieuwenhuis (1996) and Nketekete and Mpeta (2003), who all point to the way that this creates a system which is more open to the influence of international narratives in shaping the development of the educational system. With environmental and population concerns however, there are local dynamics and dimensions that influence the way that international narratives play out. Deliberations and documents designed to address issues of environment and population (i.e. sustainable development), are therefore often developed in a context that is shaped by various influences: the international narratives, local priorities and the dominant political economy of the time.

An implication is that in its current political economy, Lesotho will have to continue relying on donor assistance for the implementation of its educational plans and policies, particularly to introduce new foci and initiatives such as those under study in the two projects. This donor dependency has implications for the extent to which Lesotho is able to set her own education agenda and the extent to which the programmes and the activities of the Ministry of Education and training are sustainable beyond the donor funding phase.

Perspectives from other environmental education donor funded projects indicate that environmental education has, until now, been poorly integrated into formal education systems, and is generally given a low priority when it comes to funding such innovations, and instead countries look to donors for support (as described by Ward, 2000) (see also section 2.7). This would also appear to have been the case with the two projects as they focus on sustainable development issues which may not be a priority for direct government funding, when compared to infrastructural development.

5.3 Analytical Statement 2: The political economy of donors' work, and national imperatives for change creates tensions with existing curriculum change goals and processes.

Donor funded projects such as the two under study, are framed within the political economy of development assistance and innovation towards a broadly pre-defined end

shaped by international policy (e.g. to assist poor countries to change their systems and practices towards lower population numbers or improved environmental management etc). There is therefore often a 'built in' assumption about development and change within the donor funded political economy. The intention is therefore to change what exists through working with local people to bring about this change, which is often agreed upon, or sought out by national governments who require financial support (as discussed above).

In the context of this study, it is evident from the literature review, and the data reported in chapter 4 that the existing education system in Lesotho reflects modernist and colonial features (as described by Mokuku et al., 2005 and Nketekete and Mpetla, 2003) which include approaches to education which are rational, linear and based on the subject system which is examination oriented. As indicated in chapter 2, Lesotho's national syllabi are constructed on the principles of Bloom's taxonomy which places little emphasis on action competency. Data from the study further indicates that the overarching concept of the projects is to attain progressive educational practices which reflect action competency, lifelong learning, reflective thinking and which are based on principles of constructivism. This is because donor funded projects would not be funded unless they were focused on innovation and unless they were supporting social change and transformation in the countries in which they operate.

In the case of the two projects therefore, their mechanism for such change was introduced through progressive pedagogies such as action competence and reflective thinking. This is in line with international educational trends in Europe and elsewhere, where reflexivity and action competence are emphasised in environmental education. Ulrich Beck (1992), for example, in his thesis of a Risk Society, addresses the issue of rapidly changing knowledge and the need for reflexive learning which changes educational practices from a focus on remembering facts to seeking to understand and be critically aware of the issues being studied. Reflective learning has become much more prevalent because of changes in contemporary society. Literature has also shown that action competency (as a pedagogical framework) is rooted in critical and democratic perspectives to build responsible citizenship. As indicated here, the political economy of donor funded projects is intimately linked to innovation and change, and the introduction of new ideas into existing educational systems. As

shown in chapter 4, this brings about tensions when ‘new paradigm’ thinking, is introduced into systems which are still structured by older practices and thinking about education. This leads to complex processes of resistance and/or acceptance.

The results of the study described in chapter 4 shows that DANIDA and UNFPA bring their own approaches and implementation strategies, which may be different from those being used by the beneficiaries. Evidence from the data indicates the noble intentions of the two projects, which were to strengthen and support the introduction of and development of environmental education and population within the formal school system (see section 2.8.) Data further reveals that these were hosted by the Ministry of Education and Training through the National Curriculum Development Centre, which is charged with national curriculum development and dissemination mandate (see chapters 1 and 2), and had the blessing of the Education Ministry. However, due to the independently managed and constituted implementation procedures of the projects, they were only introduced after the curriculum review process (see section 2.2.8) which led to the design of the projects being inadequate in relation to the curriculum review cycle, which further complicated the issues of alignment. The data reported in chapter 4 shows an even more complex picture, in that the country had already embarked on curriculum review but lacked expertise in the emerging issues and the projects were therefore sought out and instituted to assist the relevant stakeholders to cope with the challenges of curriculum change. This complexity reveals that it is not always the political economy of the donor funded project that creates the tensions with local curriculum approaches and work, but also issues of timing, and the role of the government in soliciting the donor funded projects to ensure maximum efficacy that could be a problem.

Another case that raises the question about how new initiatives are introduced by the government and donor project liaison is related to the government’s realization of the daunting socio-economic challenges that are facing the country and that the traditional school subjects are not adequately addressing them. In this regard, they decided that ‘emerging issues’ such as environmental education, POP/FLE, life skills, HIV and AIDS and human rights education should be integrated into the existing subjects.

As indicated in chapter 4, however, these ‘emerging issues’ all appear to require a more radical change than simply ‘integrating’ them into existing subjects, as they require new curriculum, learning approaches and assessment techniques. This is made more problematic by the fact that the present curriculum is overloaded. The strategy of either integrating or infusing the emerging issues into the existing subjects was adopted without adequate consideration of the pedagogical issues associated with the integration of these emerging issues. Data reported in chapter 4 reveals further that these two concepts (infusion and integration) are not very clear to a number of people. As a result they do not know how to apply the integration model. Mokuku et al. (2005) commented that the use of the two concepts created confusion, inconsistencies and ambiguities, and that if people who are entrusted with curriculum development and dissemination experience problems it will have a negative effect at school level. This reflects the hastiness in implementing change in order to meet predetermined goals. This led to the projects having to adopt ‘piloting’ approaches to implementation to help clarify the concepts and to integrate the emerging issues into the curriculum. Donors were therefore faced with the challenge to link their approaches to the national curriculum ensuring that it is relevant rather than adding to an already overloaded system. Such complexities add to the emergence of tensions between donor funded projects and existing curriculum processes and practices.

This highlights the need for the NCDC to develop a more in-depth understanding of what is required to ‘infuse’ or ‘integrate’ emerging issues into the curriculum, and how to accommodate this in the curriculum revision processes. In my own observation and experience it is obvious that the Ministry of Education and Training and the NCDC is under immense pressure from local needs, and from donors to integrate a number of emerging issues into the curriculum in procedures that are not always well known in advance. The contextual review of Lesotho (see sections 2.5.4 and 2.6.3) indicated that there is indeed a general consensus that EE and POP/FLE should be taught in schools given the high scourge of HIV and AIDS among adolescents and youth and the environmental degradation experienced in the country. What seems to be the case, however, is that there is not much consensus as to how this should be done, and how the NCDC should manage the role of donors in relation to the expressed national priorities and their own existing practices to ensure productive outcomes.

A further tension that arose was one related to key stakeholders in the education sector, and the priorities of DANIDA and UNFPA (as expressed in their project foci). As indicated in section 2.4, the education system in Lesotho is a joint venture between government, churches and parents. This tripartite arrangement means that any curriculum innovation has to be agreed on by the partners and this would raise tensions between the government and the church if the innovation is variance with the teaching of the church. For example, it is well known that the Catholic faith does not support all suggested population control strategies supported by liberal democratic views (often supported by donors), which could lead to an ideological or ethical tension about what should be taught to children in a population education programme (see Kimane et al., 1999; Monaheng, 2002; Monaheng, 2004). Similarly, environmental issues are not apolitical or uncontested and could lead to tensions between what should be dealt with under the banner of environmental issues.

This context of tension between donor political economies and associated change oriented objectives, national government priorities and the existing system, indicates a complex change environment. As indicated above, Lesotho's education system is bound by a history of positivism with linear rational and objective-driven assumptions about learning and change. In contrast, the curriculum initiatives requested by the ministry, and introduced by DANIDA, are influenced and shaped by the ideologies and epistemological context of the home country. For example the LEESP advocates for learner-centred action competence which is premised on democratic grounds which emerges from a philosophy of *bildung* (learning for life) as described in the Department of EE at University of Rhodes interactive text (2005). Mokuku (1999) describes how these in-built tensions lead to Lesotho's educators adopting models and theories that are viable in other contexts, but which fail to appropriately integrate the imported knowledge and approaches into the local context.

Mokuku (1999) argues that if new aspects of curriculum are introduced there is need for an alternative strategy for effecting the curriculum reform that allow for deliberation of newly introduced ideas, and time for these ideas to be 'made sense of' and locally owned, if they are seen to be appropriate and useful. Mokuku (1999) indicates that there is, indeed, a need for a complete paradigm shift within the education system to accommodate the emerging issues, and new approaches to

teaching and learning that are also locally conceptualized and deliberated. This points to an important *mediating role* for the NCDC between the introduction of new ideas and pedagogies, and existing practice and experience in the education system. The NCDC, it seems, would need to put appropriate processes in place where tensions such as those described here are discussed and deliberated upon within the curriculum change cycle. This would seem especially important given a) the serious nature of the emerging issues in Lesotho, and b) Lesotho's high level of reliance on donor support to introduce innovations and new approaches to deal with these issues.

5.4 Analytical Statement 3: Diverse donor funded projects have diverse approaches and strategies that are not easily aligned with existing approaches and structures.

According to the results of the study, DANIDA and UNFPA have their own strategies and approaches, which often clash with existing approaches in the local context (as reported on to some extent above). To make matters more complicated, these donors often follow different approaches. This makes it more difficult for local institutions such as the NCDC to interact with donor funded projects, as each one requires a separate and different response due to their individual operating practices and procedures. A number of documents (Berg, 1996; Nieuwenhuis, 1996; Ward, 2000; Lupele, 2002; Lotz-Sisitka, 2004a; Wright, 2005.) show that projects implemented by donors have their own set of rules and regulations with predetermined development assistance priorities (see chapter 2). Projects are also often implemented by consultancy companies in the donor countries (as was the case with LEESP), and tenders for the projects are won on donor adherence to the procedures and priorities defined in the donor country. This puts implementing agencies in a position of having to adhere to the sets of rules and regulations which govern their particular project (see Wright, 2005).

The situation is made more complex by the fact that international development agencies (e.g. DANCED, USAID etc.) rely on technical assistance, normally from the donor country employed by the consulting companies, especially at management level. In the case of LEESP, the expatriate staff contingent was 95 percent, and in the case of POL/FLE the expatriate staff contingent was 60 percent. The situation is therefore that it is normally expatriate staff who have the responsibility for project

implementation, and who perform the sensitive aspects of projects and are knowledgeable about home office reporting requirements. In many cases this structural arrangement establishes power-knowledge relations that exclude local staff in sensitive implementation and management processes, which perpetuate power-knowledge relations (Wright, 2005). According to Wright (2005) the political economy created by donors supports the use of consultancies and experts.

As indicated in chapter 4, and in the paragraph above, the two projects under study relied heavily on the use of technical assistance obtained from Denmark and UNFPA Country Support Team missions. Local respondents recommended engaging local consultants who are familiar with the local context. The argument was that this would have reduced tensions and would have established practices that were more familiar and located in local context. According to (Mokuku et al., 2005) tensions were discernable in the first phase workshops which were held for NCDC staff and relevant stakeholders to introduce and conceptualise EE prior to their engagement with schools. The problems experienced were that the process of clarifying EE was rushed in the haste to achieve the goals of the workshop. The data from chapter 4 indicates that many activities and concepts were introduced too rapidly before they could be properly understood. Given these tensions and challenges with approaches introduced by the donors it goes without saying that the curriculum developers who are expected to disseminate the new ideas to schools will not be able to do so. They commented that they would do what they think they had grasped or were comfortable handling. This is indicative of cognitive tensions in the positivist paradigm underpinning education.

Some of the reasons for pursuing their own procedures identified in the case of the LEESP were that, due to the absence of comprehensive policy on education LEESP adopted a project approach to implementation. There was also a lack of guidance as to how the project's activities were to be located. The LEESP project document also indicated that while Lesotho had good intentions to implement EE, it lacked sufficient human and material resources for implementation (see chapters 2 and 4). This left more responsibility with the donor organization than if there were clearer guidelines and adequate capacity for implementation of the project.

As reported in chapter 2, each of the two projects selected a dissemination model that would be suitable to their project objectives and funding. UNFPA used the NCDC's idea of pilot schools and used local staff to run the project with the UNFPA country office providing backstopping. On the other hand DANIDA introduced the model school concept, whereby 20 model schools were selected to be pilot schools. This was linked to the time that they were allocated for project implementation, and available resources. In this sense new tensions were experienced as model schools found their situation different to other schools and they put pressure on the Examination Council of Lesotho for a different kind of examination. It also caused confusion within the NCDC as model schools were seen to be different to the pilot schools used by the NCDC.

As mentioned above, the POP/FLE and LEESP are both donor funded, and are governed by logical frameworks and reporting procedures to DANIDA and UNFPA (the donor organisations), via steering committees at the NCDC. Their financial and administrative procedures are aligned to the donor organisation, and not necessarily to the existing system in the NCDC. This is indicative of non-alignment with the existing administration structures.

In addition to these complexities, the two projects under study had their own agendas and different targets, which did not make it easy for them to collaborate (see 4.6). Nieuwenhuis (1996) argues that there is a risk that clashing interests may lead to donors unintentionally working against each other, thereby fragmenting the education system and causing uneven development. In the two projects under study LEESP moved faster than the POP/FLE resulting in the former getting to schools, while the latter was reported to have an unclear implementation strategy.

In chapter 1 it was indicated that the two projects were both implemented on the basis of log frame procedures. Lotz-Sisitka (2004a) explains the kind of planning that donors follow. In drawing on the work of Popkewitz, she indicates that this kind of planning is predominantly linear and rationalist, and is based on assumptions of epistemological certainty - portrayed in political economy language such as targets, strategies, outputs and indicators. This language has particular power relations embedded in it, and has the effect of imposing these power dynamics on the project

implementation process (see also Wright, 2005). Experience from other projects is that donor funded initiatives normally have very short time frames of three to five years (described by Wright 2005; Nieuwenhuis 1996). LEESP and POP/FLE were of three and four years' duration respectively. The projects were planned according to logical frameworks, and had well defined outputs to achieve. Given the relationship with the government, the curriculum developers at the NCDC also had to ensure that the outputs were achieved. The result is a "means ends" approach to project implementation described by (Lupele, 2002) which focuses mainly on indicators, objectives and assumptions associated with the achievement of outputs. Lupele (2002) further noted that because of their short-term nature, and the logical framework approach to planning, projects seldom engage with the changing socio-historical issues in the project milieu, and the projects both expected immediate results based on their planning. This is despite the knowledge that results in education become discernable over a longer time frame, and that projects with a short duration may not show the results expected (Nieuwenhuis, 1996; NEEP-GET, 2005). As reported in chapter 4, interviewed respondents commented on the problem of short time frames for projects, and the unrealistic expectations of effecting permanent change in the education system in such a short time frame. Respondents argued that if the projects are to bring about behaviour change and action competency they need to be of longer duration to ensure that those goals are achieved. LEESP is reported to have been introduced to schools too rapidly. It is doubtful whether teachers in the model schools have grasped the concepts, as those at the NCDC were not sure whether teachers were successfully integrating population and environmental issues

A further dilemma arises when the emphasis is on time-bound outputs and expectations of initiating change in limited time frames, the process can become prescriptive as there is inadequate time for participation, as indicated by the earlier concerns with the LEESP introductory workshops where concepts were introduced too quickly(see section 2.8 and 4.3). As indicated in the discussions above, dealing with complex socio-economic and developmental issues in the curriculum requires a steady re-orientation of the education system towards sustainable development, a process that needs much time, effort and patience to implement. Both the curriculum development respondents and DANIDA shared the concern that if change is to be

discernable in educational settings, there is need for reforming curriculum and teaching methodologies within a substantive, longer term framework.

Chapter 4 provides evidence that Lesotho, its education sector and the NCDC did not have effective policies and procedures for management of donor funded initiatives in place. This is documented by the Ministry of Education and Training (Government of Lesotho, MOET, 2005) where it states that most sectors, including the education sector, operates projects on an ad hoc basis without robust sectoral policies and strategies making it difficult for the donors to channel their resources properly through a synchronized approach to implementation (p.147). The MOET further observed that due to the absence of policies, project budget allocations were dealt with on a project by project basis, and since most were donor-driven, different donor policies, management, operational issues, and reporting systems had to be followed and the government had to respond to the business cycles of different donors. The MOET has plans in place to address the above-mentioned complexities through an Education Sector Strategic plan. The strategic plan advocates that the MOET will facilitate the development of a statement of intent between the government and the sector's donors that would state the areas of cooperation or assistance, providing a more synergistic policy environment. However, it is also necessary for this to become operationalised at the implementation level, in the NCDC, where different projects and their priorities and strategies are implemented.

5.5 Analytical Statement 4: Local responsiveness and integration of donor funded initiatives is inadequately conceptualized and supported.

As indicated in the discussions above and from the data in chapter 4, there are many things that the Lesotho government and the NCDC could have done to facilitate a smoother, more co-ordinated approach to donor project implementation. These include:

- Establishing a stronger policy environment that governs donor funded projects (as is proposed by the Education Sector Plan in section 2.7.3);
- Establishing a generic framework / approach and protocol to guide management and administration of donor funded projects, which donors need to take into account in the establishment of their projects;

- Playing a stronger mediation role between donor innovations and the existing realities on the ground within a framework of agreed-upon curriculum reform and change; and
- Building capacity of the NCDC staff to engage critically and pro-actively with donor funded projects in relation to the government's priorities for curriculum renewal and accommodation of emerging issues in the curriculum.(see section 4.3)

There are, however, a further set of issues that have been identified which could enhance local responsiveness and more effective use of the donor funded project opportunities. These have to do with ownership, and participation in project design. Data in chapter 4 reveals that since the rationale for curriculum change and introduction of Environmental Education and Population Family Life Education did not emanate from the majority of the subject specialists they did not take the projects seriously.

This apparent lack of ownership and interest is related to the way that the projects were designed and implemented. Data indicates that the manner the projects were introduced to the implementers was somewhat non-consultative and did not follow fully democratic procedures of deliberation and debate, because the projects were pre-designed through another process in which people were consulted, but only for short periods of time (see section 4.3:1). Thus, participation in the project design is not comprehensive enough to ensure full ownership. This was also identified as a problem in other donor funded projects (see Wright, 2005), as few donors allow the host countries to design the projects according to their own frames of reference and needs. As a result, local implementers often end up perceiving donor initiatives as being imposed on them, and they see donors promoting their own agendas and priorities but not theirs as was the case (to some extent) in the two projects under study. This leads to a situation where donor funded initiatives are not well supported, and staff are unable to relate them to their core functions. The data also indicates that the POP/FLE initiative lacked internal support while they perceived the LEESP as having been too rapidly introduced (see section 4.4.2). One of the major obstacles to the introduction of POP/FLE is the simple fact that it has elements of sexuality in its content and opinion leaders and parents are not aware of its benefits in dealing with problems of

teenage pregnancy, HIV and AIDS etc. They see it as something that will lead to more sexual activity by the students. These views may also have been held by the subject specialists in the NCDC as it is documented that the POP/FLE has been in the country for a long time, and despite this, there was no clear way of how it should be implemented in schools (Monaheng, 2004). With more deliberation, this cultural issue could have been discussed in more depth, which might have influenced the implementation process of the project more positively. This indicates that the NCDC needs to develop processes that allow for more in-depth participation in the design of projects and their objectives and strategies.

Another issue that needs to be considered with the implementation of projects, which was revealed by the data in chapter 4, is a process of taking local contextual factors into account. The data in the study revealed that the projects, due to their operational strategies and constraints, did not adequately take some contextual factors affecting the implementers into account. These included the timing of the initiative, short time frames, the complex nature of curriculum work and the existing workload of staff. This led to discontent on the part of implementers which further contributed to a lack of commitment and enthusiasm, and negatively affected the local responsiveness to the projects (see section 4.3).

Another key factor influencing local responsiveness to the projects is their short-term nature, and permanent staff saw them as temporary interventions that would not stay long. This is exacerbated by the expectations of the projects that all the innovations introduced during their operational period will simply be absorbed by existing staff with already full workloads. Inadequate provision is therefore made for the extension of the initiatives beyond their life span, and consequently staff tend to return to their old functions once the projects have gone (see section 4:3). In a way the staff of the institution failed to see projects as assisting in fulfilling their mandate. This was also reflected amongst NCDC management, given the frequent changes of coordinator which seemed to be supported by a notion that when the project expires the person will be redundant (appendix 2). The frequent change of project coordinators has affected the implementation for the projects negatively, as plans that are carefully laid by one coordinator, need to be reworked or abandoned.

From this discussion, it would seem that the NCDC could improve local responsiveness to donor funded initiatives by:

- Creating structures that allow for meaningful participation in project design processes and that foster local ownership of the projects;
- Creating management systems and structures that allow adequate time for new project-based concepts and practices to be integrated into existing job loads and job descriptions; and
- Ensuring management continuity of donor funded projects and longer term integration of positive aspects of donor funded projects into the normal functioning of the NCDC and its work.

5.6 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have analysed the implementation tensions and challenges associated with the two donor projects LEESP and POP/FLE in more depth. As indicated the tensions that surface in such donor funded projects are multi-faceted and involve a range of issues such as non-alignment with existing structures, inadequate structures and management systems that can absorb and engage with donor funded projects, the political economy of donor funded projects; project design and participation opportunities, and the NCDC's capacity to strengthen local responsiveness to donor funded projects. From the discussion it is clear that the Lesotho government, the NCDC and donors can all contribute more pro-actively to a more synergistic project design and implementation process. This could address at least some of the tension and challenges outlined above, as indicated by the MOET's current plans to develop a more synergistic Education Sector Plan to guide donors. In the next chapter, I summarise the study and make specific recommendations based on the arguments in this chapter.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the study and the recommendations arising from the research. The chapter opens by addressing the research question and the goals. As indicated in the previous chapter the analysis provided a picture of the tensions and challenges associated with donor funded curriculum projects as articulated by those who worked with them. These are summarized in this chapter, which then makes recommendations within the case and also indicates areas that require further research. The recommendations will be discussed in the context of the analytical statements that were articulated in chapter 5. The chapter will also review the research process providing a reflexive narrative at the end of the study.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study focused on two donor funded curriculum projects located in the NCDC in Lesotho, looking at some implementation tensions and challenges that arose in their implementation. The two projects, the Lesotho Environmental Education Project (funded by the Danish government through DANIDA) and the Population and Family Life Education Project (funded by the United Nations Population Fund) are both based in the National Curriculum Development Centre of the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho. Both addressed aspects of sustainable development, namely environmental education and population education. Both projects introduced new pedagogical processes, and both needed to pilot their work in schools. The two projects were also of a relatively short duration (three to five years), and used technical assistance for their implementation, and were governed by logical frameworks and management procedures of the donor organizations.

The research question was “what are the implementation tensions and challenges that arise in donor funded curriculum projects?” This study was influenced by the realisation that most environmental education/sustainable development education

programmes in Lesotho are donor funded and this implies that the Lesotho government and the NCDC need to be able to make the best possible use of this support, and that donor agencies are likely to continue to have an influence on how these initiatives are conceptualized and implemented.. The intentions of the study were to highlight the tensions that arise in such projects, as well as the opportunities that can be taken up to ensure that such projects are effectively designed, situated within the national framework and priorities and that they are effectively implemented in the context of Education for Sustainable Development.

In trying to answer the research question I used an interpretive case study methodology (see chapter 3). This was done to obtain in-depth insights into the nature of donor funding and its influence on the praxis of people working in the two projects and in the NCDC, where I was directly working with the projects under study. To document the process I employed a range of data generation techniques which included document analysis, in-depth interviews and focus group interviews, which were conducted with due regard for ethical procedures in research of this nature.

The study has highlighted many insights and issues associated with the political economy of donors, and how this influences project design and implementation. It also articulated the poor structural integration of the two donor funded projects into national priorities, and highlighted a number of issues that can be attended to by the MOET and the NCDC to ensure stronger synergies and more effective use of donor funding to address national priorities, especially emerging issues that need to be integrated into the national curriculum of Lesotho. The study revealed that donor funded initiatives such as PO/FLE and LEESP are often of an ambivalent nature. The ambivalence is shown up by the influence of political economy on the design and management of the projects, and their influence on educational ideas, pedagogical and epistemological issues which while being valued, are not always owned and situated appropriately in the Lesotho context. This ambivalence is indicative in that the results of the projects are both negative and positive. A further dimension of ambivalence is related to the role of the national government which leads the country's process of implementing international and regional and local policy narratives but also fails to fully accept, enforce, manage, support and sustain the initiatives. The projects were

well articulated and were aligned with international and national calls/frameworks for integration of environment, and development issues in the curriculum, were on national development agenda, but not yet incorporated into the agenda of government education officials and stakeholders. Despite their short duration, the projects were generally well conceived. They, however, lacked a comprehensive policy framework in which they could locate effectively. They were limited by the extent to which the projects were efficiently integrated into the plans and structures of the Ministry of Education and Training and specifically to the NCDC at an operational level. This led to poor levels of participation by local staff, and inadequate sustainability mechanisms for the projects. Most of these were *operational tensions* that could be addressed by improved policies, management and structures on the part of the MOET, NCDC and the donors themselves.

A key *educational* tension was, however, identified which may be more complex to address. This is the tension related to the envisaged integration of new paradigm thinking (methods and approaches) into the curriculum, which proved difficult as the education system in Lesotho is still based on positivist elements. Though the two projects tried to bring about their new paradigm thinking through integration, using existing content and learning outcomes and by forging cross-curricular linkages, it is evident that the introduction of ESD approaches, philosophies and methodologies will require radical changes to existing teaching and learning methodologies. Such a process requires a longer time frame than was possible given the stringent predetermined log framed objectives to be achieved in the projects. It would also require a more fundamental process of re-thinking the purpose of philosophy of education in Lesotho to fully address this (i.e. a major curriculum reform initiative).

The research has also revealed that projects do not operate in isolation but that they are shaped by the context in which they play out. They are also shaped by the histories, policy environments and cultures of the society in which they locate themselves. This has been shown by the issues arising around population teaching resulting from the tripartite arrangement of school ownership between churches, government and parents. This presented complexities on how to implement new ideologies and epistemologies which may conflict with church doctrines, cultural practices or policies.

Despite the tensions highlighted in this study, the projects had value in that they were responding to key developmental and environment issues in Lesotho. They also addressed a broader global concern of sustainable development. As such, they generated useful insight for further implementation of project development and implementation in the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development and beyond.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are based on the analytical statements discussed in chapter 4.

6.3.1 Addressing social and economic issues in curriculum development through donor funded projects should be integrated into the development plans of the country and the MOET, and the functioning of the NCDC.

The data has revealed that the education sector in Lesotho receives more donor support compared to other sectors, and that most of their innovations are funded by donor support. Given the socio-ecological and developmental problems as described in chapter 2, this study recommends that Lesotho needs to effectively and judiciously utilise donor assistance in addressing the two inextricably linked challenges of socio-economic development and environmental management. The aid given should be integrated into the plans of the recipient country. It should support the realisation of the developmental goals through creating enabling structures and mechanisms in the NCDC. This would allow for local conceptualization and full integration and sustainability of these projects. It would seem that a mechanism for working with donor funded projects in NCDC needs to be established. This would tackle the tensions that arise in such projects within a longer term donor assistance framework and policy.

As such, the study recommends that government should expedite the development of policy on donor coordination. Donors should also be provided with guidelines of what is expected of them and be part of consultative forums facilitated by World Bank and UNDP. Donors should be encouraged to provide assistance in the form of budget support and could adopt the Sector Wide Approach whereby donors fund projects which are in line with sectoral plans and national development priorities.

6.3.2 The political economy of donors needs to be more sensitive to, and aligned with, local curriculum change structures and goals.

Donor aid political economies, dictate the that donors under study approach things in particular ways that address their priorities and management systems. These are not always aligned with the curriculum structures and cycles in Lesotho. The study recommends that donors work closely with the local institutions and look at the countries' needs and priorities in more depth, through substantial consultative processes, before deciding how they plan to work. At the same time, the NCDC should develop the capacity to co-define the priorities and approaches with donors, so that the programmes are not donor-driven, but are better aligned with the curriculum priorities and approaches in the NCDC, with due recognition for the need for innovation and change.

6.3.3 Donor supported projects should be aligned with existing approaches and structures, while enabling innovation.

It is evident that projects come with diverse approaches and strategies which are not always aligned theoretically or practically with those that exist in the host organization. To reduce tensions that arise, it is recommended that donors should study the existing structures and strategies that exist in the organisation and work out modalities of how best to fit into the structure before they design their project strategies. At the same time, the NCDC should put in place the mechanisms to allow for debate and discussion on innovations brought in by donors, in relation to local needs, so that these can be appropriately adapted to the local context, or changed to be better aligned with existing structures and practices where necessary.

In cases where more than one project is in place at the same time, the NCDC and donors should work towards developing synergies between the different educational initiatives being implemented to avoid duplication and overlap. Each should work on issues in which they have comparative advantage.

6.3.4 Local responsiveness and integration of donor initiatives should be adequately conceptualised and supported.

The study has revealed that the donor funded projects under study were inadequately conceptualised and supported. The implementers perceived the projects as having been introduced with their minimal involvement. The study therefore recommends that the recipients of the aid should be well informed about the existing development policies of the country and their priorities. They should also be informed of the political economy of aid so that they are conversant and knowledgeable on the principles of foreign aid. Also there is need for project to use bottom-up approaches to design and formulate the projects to ensure ownership and sustainability.

As indicated in chapter 5 there are various changes that can be made to ensure better local responsiveness to donor initiatives by the MOET and the NCDC. These are summarized here:

- Establish a stronger policy environment that governs donor funded projects (as is proposed by the Education Sector Plan);
- Establish a generic framework / approach and protocol to guide management and administration of donor funded projects in the NCDC, which donors need to take into account in the establishment of their projects;
- Play a stronger mediation role between donor innovations and the existing realities on the ground within a framework of agreed-upon curriculum reform and change;
- Build capacity of the NCDC staff to engage critically and pro-actively with donor funded projects in relation to the government's priorities for curriculum renewal and accommodation of emerging issues in the curriculum;
- Create structures that allow for meaningful participation in project design processes and that foster local ownership of the projects;
- Create management systems and structures that allow adequate time for new project-based concepts and practices to be integrated into existing job loads and job descriptions in the NCDC; and
- Ensure management continuity of donor funded projects and longer term integration of positive aspects of donor funded projects into the normal functioning of the NCDC.

6.4 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As this study has been limited by the scope and time frame limitations of a half thesis, it is not exhaustive as it only focused on the NCDC. It did not engage with the model school practitioners for more insights into the implementation process. This could be taken further in further studies.

The study also focused on a small number of respondents to elicit their interpretation of their perceptions and understanding of the subject specialists involved in implementation of the projects. This was with a view to informing an understanding of implementation tensions at the institution which coordinates and hosts the projects at a national level (NCDC), before extending the initiatives to schools. It should also be taken into consideration that the views of the small numbers interviewed may not represent the views of the institution. The information generated has, however, provided insightful issues pertaining to the research question and the case study. It has provided a foundation for further research into tensions and challenges associated with donor funded projects.

This study provides a starting point for developing a deeper understanding of some emergent tensions and challenges in donor funded projects. Each of the analytical statements in chapter 5 for example, could be reframed as research questions to be further researched, for example:

- Why is donor funding required to institutionalize new social and environmental policies in the education sector in Lesotho?
- Why are donor political economies in tension with local curriculum goals and processes?
- How can donor-led approaches and strategies be more effectively aligned with existing approaches and strategies?
- How can local responsiveness and integration of donor projects be enhanced?

Each of these questions can be researched in much more depth in one or more projects.

6.5 REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The whole research process was exciting and challenging. It has opened up a wide range of perspectives on the two projects under study as provided by the main actors in the projects. New insights into the arising tensions and challenges have been gained.

The whole research process has provided me with an opportunity for and experience of professional growth. It has also exposed me to different research methods used in education research and a variety of techniques of data generation as well as other research processes.

Through engagement with a large number of documents, and literature on political economy and curriculum issues, I was able to acquire additional knowledge and insights about the education system, curriculum development and donor procedures and projects. This gave me a more in-depth insight into curriculum transformation processes.

Problems were however encountered during the research process. The first problem related to acquisition of relevant documentation which was not easily available. The data was also very voluminous and it required much effort and time to tease out the relevant issues relating to my research question. It should also be noted the research participants were professionals who had busy schedules and it was difficult to find them for interviews.

There was not enough time for in-depth deliberations on the issues raised by the document analysis and perceptions of the implementers. The sample was small and their “voices” may not reflect a full picture of the projects and the results and deeper insight would no doubt have been achieved if the sample could have been larger and if I had included the schools. However, as mentioned above, the study does provide new openings for further research into this issue which is pertinent in Lesotho. As indicated, the phenomenon of donor assistance is likely to continue being influential in ESD projects and as such the study has provided useful insights to guide this process in future.

6.6 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

This chapter provided a summary of the study, and recommendations for further research. The study has shown that a number of tensions and challenges arise in the implementation of donor funded projects, which are ambivalent and often complex to resolve. The study has indicated that there are structural and managerial actions that can be taken within the NCDC to address some of the tensions (e.g. creating forums for deliberating project goals and methodologies). There are also policy related factors that need attention (e.g. creating a more synergistic policy framework). Other tensions are likely to be more complex to resolve, particularly the tensions associated with introducing new paradigm educational thinking into existing systems that are slow to change. The study argued, however, that if Lesotho is to make better use of donor funding, which is likely to remain an important strategy for educational development in the country, then it would be worth trying to address some of the tensions as revealed in the analysis of these two projects. This is because the two projects under study have addressed the broader global concern of sustainability and as such have prepared Lesotho's education for the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development. It is in this broader context that lessons learned from LEESP and POP/FLE can be taken forward to sustain the investment made by DANIDA, UNFPA and the staff of the NCDC and the MOET in Lesotho. To continue learning from this process, the study has outlined a set of research questions which can provide further insights into how to ensure that donor funded projects are most productively integrated into national education systems and structures.

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PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Koto, M. (January 25, 2006). Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.
Maseru.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

CODE	Respondents designation
INT1	Institution Based Coordination for POP/FLE – NCDC
INT2	Institution Based Coordination for LEESP – NCDC
INT3	Institution Based Coordinator NUL
INT4	Institution Based Coordinator LCE
INT5	NCDC Subject specialist Business Education
INT6	NCDC Director

APPENDIX B: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

MATRIX ON CHALLENGES AND TENSIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEESP AND POP/FLE PROJECT

Issues	POP/FLE	LEESP
GENERIC ISSUES ON PROJECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education has depended on donor funding through loans or grants to achieve its intended goals. These are implemented through programmes loosely referred to as “projects”. The great bulk of NCDC activities have been performed with little attention on the overall management tasks necessary to guide them. This has been compounded by projects with different sources, agendas and timeframes imposed on NCDC without Integrating them with main functions of the centre.(In-house professional development workshop report(IPD, p.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects are seen as “Islands” within organizations and upon their completion organizations go back to their old functions. Organizations fail to see projects as assisting in fulfilling their tasks as a result projects fail to be fully institutionalized. In essence projects should be seen to assist organizations to fulfil their tasks provided effective planning has been done.(ibid.,p.8)
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equip learners with knowledge and skills to enable them understand population and development issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equip learners with knowledge skills and attitudes to respond to issues of environment and sustainable development Integrate EE into the curriculum
DURATION	3 rd Country programme was approved on 22 nd September 1998. Agreement signed in September 1999 and activities commenced in 2000. Expected to come to an end 1 st December 2002.	3 years with eight months extension
STRATEGY	- “Behaviour change” cascade model – use of NCDC model school approach, 50 pilot schools,: 30 primary and 20 secondary schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overarching principle was “Action competency” 20 models schools. Models schools to disseminate to neighbouring school. Use of whole school development.
COORDINATION & MGT STRUCTURE (INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE)	<p>Director (project management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator part-time with 7 stakeholder institutions to coordinate. The activities of the project started a year later in 2000 not in 1999 as planned due to logistical problems, finalization of project documents and disbursements of funds. There was delay in implementation of Country Programme due to formulation by nationals took long as there were issues raised by the funding agency. (p.13 Midterm Review Brief). In 1999, UNFPA experienced funding reduction globally and as a result, the C.P. did not get the expected level of funding. (ibid., p.13) The project was run by three agencies, UNFPA, Lesotho Government Functional and Operating mechanism between government (NCDC) as implementing agency, UNFPA as a funding agency and AED as an executing agency were not clear, coordinator was reporting to all the three. Installing technical advisor was also imbued in bureaucratic delays (p.22 Evaluation report.) There was inadequate collaboration between AED resident Advisor such that there was failure to transfer skills to nationals. AED term of execution was terminated after 18 months for being expensive. Resident advisor left and implementation of activities executed by them slowed down. 	<p>Director CTA (project management) consists of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International staff, project coordinator (part time) equivalent to four months per year. Taskforce working on the project. Ministry was executing agency, NCDC implementing agency DANIDA provided funding Support for project was strong. Unfilled vacancies especially of a Director caused some coordination problems. Lack of clearly articulated comprehension policy on educational initiatives forced the team to adopt “a project approach “to implementation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of full time coordinator to oversee the project. The part-time coordinator had her own tasks and POP/FLE was overload or add on to her daily activities. - There was lack of capacity among both the part-time coordinators and the institutions which look up to NCDC for guidance (p.13 Midterm Review Brief). - If a full time is identified when the project terminates she/he would be redundant (Report on Monitoring, p.6) A full time coordinator was supposed to have been appointed but until now it has not yet been filled. The role of coordinator has been shifting from one person to another. (a) A large number of people are in POP/FLE activities and this delays the progress, (b) there is no full time coordinator (c) POP/FLE Framework document is not completed because every time a POP/FLE workshop to work on the document new people attend and new changes are made in the document. (NCDC Report on Performance Improvement and Plan for the years 2004-2007(NRPI): p.14-15. - At present ,no POP/FLE activity is taking place because UNFPA is holding the funds until Ministry of Education clarifies why there is no progress in POP/FLE activities (ibid., p.14) 	
POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCDC does not have a clear curriculum and assessment (C&A) policy on projects. - NCDC does not have authority to refuse to host the projects but it can adapt them to fit the system. So there is need for NCDC to have a clear C&A policy on projects.(NRPI, p.15) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project is regarded as government initiative, the lack of policy framework on educational development limited the extent to which the project could be located with the plans of government. - Lack of comprehensive education policy contributed to lack of effective structure to foster interaction and limited cooperation. - Education policy is fragmented as it is developed in a number of separate initiatives.
GOVERNANCE	The implementation of the Project was adversely affected by political unrest/uncertainty reigning in the country post 1998 elections (Country Programme Evaluation Report (CPEP) p. 60).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to Civil unrest in 1998 preparatory work on the project was suspended for sometime (DANCED Project Document p.7)
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	<p>The ten year lifespan of the curriculum at the varying levels where POP/FLE has to be infused further complicated the design rendering it inadequate (ibid., p. 40).</p> <p>The University has been constrained by the transformation process which is ongoing (Country Programme Evaluation Report (CEPR), p. 63)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NTTC (Now LCE) has experienced high turnover of staff and lost all trained staff to effect infusion of POP/FLE.(Mid Term Review Report (MTRR & CEPR) p.23&63 	During the appraisal study it was decided that initiating a new curriculum reform supported by LEESP in order to integrated EE, would disturb current implementation and waste considerable work already done on school level. (p.7 Project Document).
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT		To follow an alternative strategy implying a new curriculum reform at present time could create more confusion and reluctance among the teacher population who now is struggling for integrating the environmental issues of the current curriculum reform. (p.21 LEESP Project Document). EE should not be singled out as a separate

		isolated subject preference has been given to integrating EE across existing subjects (p.21 Project Document).
STRATEGY		<p>The project will introduce the concept of model schools. 20 model schools (10 primary level and 10 secondary level) will be selected from Trial Schools. (p.23 Project Document).</p> <p>Emphasis on EE in model school must not negatively affect learning of other subject and it is crucial that EE be incorporated in the subjects on an embedded theme in the subjects to avoid increased pressure on the teacher for integrating more issues into the normal learning process. (p.23 Project Document).</p> <p>Model schools may find their situation different from other schools and consequently put pressure on ECOL for different examination. (ibid.,p.23)</p> <p>Project to support ECOL in developing appropriate Examination Protocols (p.23 Project Document).</p>

The information is obtained from the following documents:

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Mission to Lesotho LES/99/P02
2. Nketekete M, and Mpeta M, (2003), In-house Professional Development = **(IPD)**
Workshop for Planning, NCDC.
3. NCDC, (2004) LEESP Project Completion Report, NCDC = **(PCR)**
4. UNFPA (2002), UNFPA 3RD Country Programme Evaluation Report, UNFPA, Maseru = **(CPEP)**
4. DANCED (2000), Project Document Lesotho Environmental Education Support Project, Lesotho, DANCED = **(DPD)**
6. UNFPA. (2001).Mid term Review Brief, Lesotho = **(MTRB)**
7. UNFPA. (2001).Mid-term Review, Maseru, Lesotho = **(MTR)**
8. NCDC. (2003). NCDC Report on performance improvement and a plan for 2004-2007. NCDC, Maseru, Lesotho = **(NRPI)**

APPENDIX C: LETTER REQUESTING AUTHORITY

P.O. Box 2558
Maseru 102

16th March 2005

Mr. Matlejane
Director
NCDC
P.O. Box 1126

Dear Mr. Matlajane.

**RE: MASTERS OF EDUCATION (SENTIMENTAL EDUCATION)
RESEARCH PROJECT**

Please be informed that I am an employee of the department of Population and Manpower Planning (DPMP) and currently pursuing part-time Masters in Education (Environmental Education) with Rhodes University. One of the requirements of the course is to write a research project. We have been advised to select research topics around work related issues to avoid extensive field work and costs. Since I am working very closely with the NCDC on POP/FLE and LEESP, I have taken interest in studying the mentioned projects. The topic of my research is **Implementation tensions and challenges in donor funded curriculum projects: - A case Analysis of Environmental and Population Education projects in Lesotho.**

The aim of the research is to understand the challenges associated with institutionalizing the two projects in the curriculum, with a view to make necessary recommendations.

Kindly, note that this is a qualitative research. The methods I am going to use include document analysis, in depth interviews with the director of NCDC and project coordinators of the two projects under study as well as focus group interviews with the subject specialists of the centre.

I therefore kindly request permission to interview you and your staff, and review the relevant documents.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

M.N. MONAHENG (Mrs)

cc: Director- D.P.M.P.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Appendix D (a): Interview Schedule for Director – NCDC

1. Name
2. How many years of experience do you have in education?
3. How long have you been in current position?
4. What are the main goals of LEESP and POP/FLE?
5. What policy framework has informed the establishment of the two projects?
6. How do the goals you mentioned help NCDC to achieve its functions or mandate?
7. What strategies and approaches do each of the project use?
8. How have the projects been operating?
9. What are your expectations of a donor funded project?
10. What is the impact of the projects on NCDC?
11. What is your relationship with project staff – both local and international?
12. Can you kindly describe achievements, problems and challenges experienced in the implementation of the projects?
13. How are you responding to them?
14. What suggestions do you have on the operations of these projects?

Appendix D (b): Interview guide for focus groups

1. Name and subject specialization.
2. How many years of experience do you have in education?
3. How long have you been in current position?
4. Briefly, describe how projects are introduced to the staff at the centre.
5. What are the main goals of LEESP and POP/FLE?
6. How do the goals you mentioned help NCDC to achieve its functions or mandate?
7. Briefly, describe how NCDC is structured and how these projects fit into the current structure.
8. What strategies and approaches do each of the project use?
9. How have the projects been operating?
10. What is the impact of the projects on NCDC?
11. How do LEESP and POP/FLE collaborate?
12. Can you kindly describe achievements, problems and challenges experienced in the implementation of the projects?
13. How are you responding to them?
14. What suggestions do you have on the operations of these projects?

Appendix D (c): Interview Schedule For Project Coordinators

NAME:

PROJECT:

1. How long have you been in the centre (NCDC)?
2. How long have you been a project coordinator?
3. Briefly, describe your duties as a project coordinator.
4. Briefly, describe how projects are introduced to the staff at the centre.
5. What are the main goals of LEESP and POP/FLE?
6. How do these goals help NCDC to achieve its official function/mandate?
7. Briefly, describe how NCDC is structured and how these projects fit into the current structure.
8. What strategies and approaches is your project using?
9. What have your project been operating?
10. What is the impact of the project on NCDC?
11. How do LEESP and POP/FLE collaborate?
12. Please describe the achievements of your project?
13. What are some problems and challenges experienced in the implementation of the project?
14. How are you responding to them?
15. What suggestions do you have on the operations of the projects?

APPENDIX E: SUMMARY OF RESPONSES AND CODES

THEME	SUB THEME	RESPONSES
Project design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor ideology/top down approach • Rooted in political economy of donors • Staff involvement and participation • Lack of knowledge of where projects are designed • Senior official knowledge on various projects • Political will • Minimal support from parent ministry 	<p>INT3,INT5 INT5,FG1,FG2 FG1,FG2 INT5 INT5, INT3,FG1,FG2 INT5 INT5, INT3,FG1,FG2 INT1,INT5,FG1,FG2 INT1, INT2, INT5, FG1, FG2, NA INT1, INT2, INT5, FG1, FG2, NA FG1, FG2FG1, FG2</p>
Project goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with the official mandate • Integration of environment and population concerns in curriculum • Syllabus amendments • Piloting the integration of emerging issues into curriculum • Enhance skills in curriculum organization and management • Enhance capacity of teacher trainers • Clarity of project objectives 	<p>INT3,INT4,INT6 FG1,FG2,INT1,INT2,INT5,INT6 INT3,INT4, INT3,INT4 INT6 INT6 INT3,INT4 INT3,INT4 FG1,FG2,INT1,INT2,INT5</p>
Introduction of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative process 	

projects	<p>through meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff involvement • Reading documents • Identification of project coordinators • Formation of taskforces 	<p>INT2,INT5,FG1,FG2,DPD INT1,INT2,FG1,FG2 INT5 INT6 INT1,INT2,FG1,FG2,NRPI INT1,INT2,FG1,FG2,NRPI INT1,INT2,INT5</p>
Structures and structural alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural integration and alignment • Curriculum alignment • Pedagogical alignment • Relational tensions and decision-making powers • Problems in deployment of project coordinators • Uncertainty of staff roles in the projects • Poor management and leadership skills(governance) • Lack of clarity on aligning pedagogical and ideological approaches • Conception of change in educational process • Short term interventions/unrealistic timeframes 	<p>INT5,IPD,PCR,FG1,FG2, INT1,INT2,FG1,FG2 INT5,FG1,FG2, RPM,INT1,FG2 INT1,INT5,FG2 INT1,FG1,FG2 INT5 INT5 INT3,INT5</p>
Projects strategies and approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predetermined outputs • Short term interventions • Log framed interventions • Internal support • Lack of clear strategy for integration • Lack of support from parent ministry • Rapid change process • Model schools versus trial schools 	<p>FG1,FG2,INT5, FG1,FG2,INT3 FG1,FG2,INT3,INT5,FG2 INT5,FG2 INT5,FG1,FG2 INT5,INT1,FG1,FG2 FG1,FG2,INT5,INT6</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of projects in education • Weak coordination of projects • Top down ideology of development • Introduction of expert ideas • Sustainability questioned • Availability of skills to develop project proposals • Physical presence of international staff • Engagement of international consultants 	<p>FG1,FG2,INT5 FG1,FD2,INT5 FG1,FG2,INT5,INT1 INT3,INT5 INT3,INT5 INT1,INT2,FG1,FG1 INT3 FG2,FG1,INT1,INT3,INT5 NT1.FG1,INT5 FG2,DEE FG1,FG2,INT1,INT5 INT1,INT2,INT3,INT5,FG1,DA</p>
Interaction between projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor in-house interaction • Liaise with other cooperating partners • Overlaps in content 	<p>INT1,INT2,INT5 INT,DA FG1,FG2,INT1,NRPI</p>
Impact and outcomes of the projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive: • Enhanced stakeholder collaboration • More collaboration between NCDC and ECOL • New paradigms effective e.g. whole school development approach • Enhanced learner centred approach • Professional development • Better understanding of environment and 	<p>INT1,INT2,INT2,INT3,INT4,FG1 FG1,DA FG1,FG2,INT2 FG1,INT5 FG1,FG2,INT1,INT2,INT3,INT4,INT5,INT6</p>

	<p>population issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills in development of teaching /learning materials • Negative; • Too early to judge the impact • Lack of confidence in the application of new concepts • Poor communication and knowledge sharing among staff • Sustainability questioned • Confusion and divisiveness • Confusion brought by identification of model schools within trial system • Aloofness of design • Rigidity of proposed integration • Projects not fit well in operations of the centre 	<p>INT1,INT2,INT3,INT4,INT5,FG1,FG2</p> <p>INT4,FG2,INT2</p> <p>FG1,FG2,INT5,DA</p> <p>FG1,FG2,DA</p> <p>FG1,FG2,INT1,INT5</p> <p>FG1</p> <p>FG1,FG2,INT1,INT2,INT5</p> <p>FG1,FG2,INT5</p> <p>INT6</p> <p>INT6,DA.</p> <p>FG1,FG2,INT1,INT2,INT5</p>
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APPENDIX F: SAMPLE INTERVIEW RESPONSE

Interviewer : How long have you been in Education and the university?

- Respondent : It's about 10 years, in Roma (NUL) I have been there for about 8 years.
- Interviewer : What is your current position, especially in EE issues?
- Respondent : My role has been mainly to Coordinate process of curriculum amendment at the University, working very closely with the Lesotho Environmental Education Support Programme, while I have also been a representative of the University in the monitoring and research team which (largely) had the responsibility of monitoring the whole process of working with model schools by the end of working with model schools by the end of three years, the monitoring and research team was (dissolved)
- Interviewer : It was it only for three years?
- Respondent : But my role has been going on, as a coordinator for the past 8 months.
- Interviewer : So you are still coordinating now? Your Coordination role ended with a project.
- Respondent : Officially it has to be 8 months, but we found it prudent to continue with that note and in fact the committee has now been established at the University, an environmental education committee which I basically coordinate I think.
- Interviewer : Who constitutes the committee?
- Respondent : Three people Myself, Mr Lira Khama and Mrs Mamolapo Moorosi
- Interviewer : Mamolapo Moorosi is still in the faculty?
- Respondent : The selection, was in some ways based on our departmental backgrounds. My own background is Science education. Lira Khama language and Social Sciences education department and 'Me' Moorosi is in the Education Foundations department.
- Respondent : Do you still want to continue? If you go by the view that EE project is ended
- Respondent : The rest is definitely going to continue. We are in the process of establishing a registered network. In collaboration with Lesotho College of Education. Which method of teaching educators which is mainly focused on

environment and as I talk to you, members of those two institutions, have embarked on constitution and will soon be producing a thorough constitution for the registration.

- Interviewer : What are you going to be calling yourselves?
- Respondent : Something like, Lesotho teacher educators network for environment.
- Interviewer : How did you introduce the project to the NUL staff, in the eight months?
How was the concept introduced?
- Respondent : The LEESP Chief Technical Advisor wrote a letter to the Vice Chancellor, proposing that I should coordinate the activities which are meant to enhance the role that we had already began, I think to some extent at the University. – That of curriculum review.
- Interviewer : What about other staff members?
- Respondent : The staff members were having been appointed, I was introduced to staff members by faculty Dean, and then we began to do prime activities together and made some plans.
- Interviewer : So what are the main goals of LEESP you are still interested in the project. What was their main goal?
- Respondent : To support a process of curriculum amendment of courses to respond to the changes that is going on in schools about environmental education. To raise awareness of the tertiary educators to enhance their capacity, to begin to do something to their courses.
- Interviewer : So how do the goals fit into your institution? Into the main functions?
- Respondent : Of course they are involved in tertiary education and so, the projects then I think obviously, with its intention to make courses more relevant. We deliver more relevance, surely that thing itself was we account for the work which we intend to do, which is to support teachers to teach in ways that are possible in schools.
- Interviewer : What are the strategies used by the project? The approaches used by LEESP at NUL?
- Respondent : What was done basically was to hold meetings where we reflected on the courses that we taught with respect to

developments that are going on in the school. I remember there was one meeting we had one member of staff from NCDC, who was very close, this activities in schools and knew exactly what was going and came to us to share. With that much that was going on in schools people were briefed about how they adjust their coursed to fit the compulsory changes. Apart from that we had three workshops, one workshop was sharing the findings of the study that I helped them to undertake in collaboration with a colleague from Lesotho College of Education (L.C.E.) and NCDC.

- Interviewer : Which one? The last one where you went around the schools?
- Respondent : No this one was a report on a study that assessed took my word auditors the courses that are offered at the two institutions to return the extend to which environmental education is already taught or included, and then the methods that are used teaching the courses and insured that with staff members from a network, for them to begin.
- Interviewer : Did you have a joint workshops?
- Respondent : All of our workshops were joint work. Then the other workshop was on materials development, we worked in collaboration with, or we invited people from Howick to come and share ideas with us on how to develop Educational materials and this was an attempt also to build the capacity of the staff to enhance the capacity to work towards achieving one to the objectives to LEESP at the University and at LCE, which was to produce environmental education materials.
- Interviewer : How did the funds flow? The thing is hosted by NCDC you have to access funds, how did it go?
- Respondent : Well the funds required for the team, we accessed those through the office of LEESP and all of that process the established link, the coordinators were the links of the institutions. We arranged and submit quotations and LISP would then pay for the costs.
- Interviewer : Because I remember, “Me” Karabo (NCDC institution project coordinator was saying that, you would make quotations and somewhere somehow whether it goes to the Danish embassy then the money is deposited or something?
- Respondent : Ah! Ah! In our case they were the ones who assisted. It never took long; none of our submissions take too long.

- Interviewer : What has been the impact of the project so far? The eight months that you have been?
- Respondent : Definitely in terms of awareness, people awareness has been raised. In terms of the work mission, the problems we are dealing with, I think the majority of people are fully aware of what has been addressed what objectives of the project have been and of course initially people were questioning and the whole status of environmental education with respect to other courses especially traditional courses and subjects that have always been taught not that I think people won't recognise the importance of environmental education. So, yes awareness has been raised, the need to collaborate and work together is recognised. In terms of the actual amendment of courses the process has begun and the people have made all to these meetings where we met to amend our courses, we asked people to make submissions, one can conclude that concrete output is already in the process but my own reflections on the amended amendments and submissions that have been made suggest that it is reasonable to sustain this process longer for people to continue to engage in the whole concept of environmental education and I think that how I can sum up how the courses respond to environmental education.
- Interviewer : So I don't know, if you have heard of this other project which is hosted by NCDC called POP/FLE, do you see any relationship between the projects?
- Respondent : No I do not see any relationship
- Interviewer : Do you know anything about the other one?
- Respondent : No very little, I have heard about it but I have never been introduced to it.
- Interviewer : One of the things that we are now looking at is what are the problems you encountered and what are the challenges? In implementing the LEESP project.
- Respondent : Well initially the motivation from the University was rather low. Eh! We first rolled in rather slow, rather struggling. People were really critical about what this environmental education was about and also I think people were probably at the early stages of this, what it was all about, but gladly the momentum picked up.

Interviewer : How did you manage that one?

Respondent : With more meetings, more discussions particularly I think more support from the Dean of the Faculty, I think that also made a huge contribution in raising awareness.