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Working Group on the Teaching Profession

School Self-Evaluation: The Path to a Better School

A report on the implementation of the process of self-evaluation into schools in Swaziland: Lessons learned

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
NGO	Non Governmental Organizational
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SSE	School Self Evaluation
TMS	Teacher Management and Support
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WGTP	Working Group on the Teaching Profession

ABSTRACT

The idea of schools undertaking a systematic process of self-evaluation seems at first sight a simple means of assessing the effectiveness of a school and finding ways of making it better and indeed, there is growing evidence that the process provides a valuable tool for teachers and schools to assess for themselves how well they are doing.

Over the last four years, workshops, supported by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and the Commonwealth Secretariat have been undertaken in The Gambia, Swaziland and Kenya. These have provided training for key personnel in the process of school self-evaluation, regarded as a fundamental element for sustainable improvements in the quality of basic education and the standards achieved in schools in sub-Saharan Africa.

This report provides a background to the issues raised during the training workshops. It then analyses evidence on the progress made on the implementation and impact of SSE in schools in Swaziland gathered from key Ministry of Education personnel, the inspectorate, education advisors and school principals in Swaziland during a case study 22nd – 29th March 2003.

The findings address key policy and process issues that the Ministry of Education and the National Steering Committee in Swaziland have addressed in their efforts to raise the quality of basic education in Swaziland through the adoption of school self-evaluation in primary and secondary schools. The lesson learned, so far, have important implications for action at country and regional level for other ministries in the region.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Initiation of and motivation for the evaluation**: ADEA has established a taskforce to address the challenge of providing quality basic education in African countries. The aim of the task force is to bring together new knowledge on promising strategies and policy options that can serve as a framework for discussion and engagement and the support of new policy and practice interventions. The longer-term goal is to help member countries develop their capacity to design and implement strategies for quality improvement and to assist African countries develop action strategies based on lessons learned, shared practice of successful interventions and the identification and analysis of successful or promising national experiences.

2. Since 1993 Working Group on the Teaching Profession of ADEA has undertaken a number of initiatives to improve quality in the education sector. This study was commissioned to provide a critical analysis of the impact that one of these initiatives (School self-evaluation) has had or can have on improving the quality of education across sub-Saharan Africa.

3. Specific objectives for the study were:

- to summarize evidence on the contribution that inputs and processes in the area of School Self-Evaluation can make or have made to the improvement of the quality of basic education in Africa,
- to identify key policy issues that need to be addressed for successful national action and
- to summarize the lessons for experience and implications for action at the country and regional level.

4. Swaziland was selected by the Working Group on the Teaching Profession (WGTP) to be the focus of this case study evaluation. The findings from the study will be shared with other African countries with a particular focus on lessons learned and their implication for further action by ministries of education and their partners. The exercise was carried out by a consultant from the University of Reading (UK) together with members of the National Steering Committee for the Implementation of School self-evaluation in Swaziland.

5. **Methodology**: The following approaches informed the review and data collection. A desk study reviewed current research on improving the quality of education and on school self-evaluation. This is listed in the reference section and the National Steering Committee prepared a Report on School Evaluation in Swaziland 2002-2003. In-country interviews with officials from the Swazi Ministry of Education, principals from primary and secondary education institutions and members of the Steering Committee at national and regional level set up by the Ministry of Education, provided information on the process adopted by the ministry to facilitate the adoption of school-self-evaluation in Swazi schools. Additional information was acquired as a result of interaction with a variety of stakeholders during site visits to four schools in different regions of the country.

6. Three semi-structured interview schedules were devised in order to address critical issues and to try as far as possible to validate the findings.

7. **Section A** related to issues at National Level. Key Informants included: the Principal Secretary, Mr. G. Kunene, the Acting Director and Chief Inspector Secondary, Mr. B.S. Ndlovu, the three chief inspectors, senior inspectors and six members of the National Steering Committee. Interview questions in this section were directed towards

issues of policy, planning and implementation. *Issues addressed included*: The focus and rationale of school self- evaluation; perceived beneficiaries; detail of plans to introduce school self-evaluation into schools, to link it with other, possible on-going improvement initiatives and the existing external inspection process; the role of inspectors and education advisors in the implementation process; where 'ownership' would lie; the extent of the Swaziland education data base to support the evaluation process in schools; the resources that would be required and the value of the existing module in supporting the training process.

8. **Section B** attempted to address perceptions of the impact that the process of school-self-evaluation would have on the schools or to the quality of education and was addressed to groups at both national and school level. The first set of questions was based on perceptions of 'Expected Change in Schools'. Including issues relating to changes in the culture of the school; professional development; organisational change; 'ownership' and community or other stakeholder involvement.

9. **Section C** posed questions to school principals and tried as far as possible to verify information received at national level. Issues addressed included: knowledge of plans for the implementations of school self-evaluation into schools; the training they had received; progress made so far; the involvement of stakeholders in the process; any special difficulties of challenges they could foresee or had encountered; levels of motivation of staff; levels of access to education statistics; the level of resources they can or will be required to contribute in order to carry out the Program effectively.

10. **Interpretation of findings**: Although the Ministry of Education and the National Steering Committee have not been able to progress as far as they would have liked during the first year due to a lack of funds, there is ample evidence of the commitment of the Ministry both with regard to funding and support, the dedication and careful planning of the National Steering Committee and the enthusiasm of principals who have been involved so far. Full details of the findings are provided in Section 6.

- **Lessons Learned**

11. The main purpose of this exercise was to identify lessons learned by all those involved in the implementation of SSE in Swaziland and the implication of these lessons for action by ministries of education and their partners elsewhere on the continent.

12. The need for a clear policy framework :

- that provides a locus within the ministry of education that facilitates implementation of the process of SSE at both national and regional levels.
- that gives a clear budgetary mandate not only for initial training workshops but also for on-going facilitation of regular meetings at cluster level.
- that clearly defines an understanding of SSE as a support mechanism for other school improvement initiatives that may already be in place such as whole school improvement, whole school management or continuous assessment initiatives.

13. The need to sensitize personnel from key sectors within the ministry e.g. the inspectorate, finance and planning and in-service education and training.

14. The need for a clear understanding of the process of involvement: In Swaziland principals are expected to provide leadership but they will also need to gain the support of their Deputies and School Management Committee Chairpersons.

15. The need to identify dynamic principals at zonal level who can provide leadership and support for smaller cluster groups of 6-8 schools in their area.

16. The importance of 'selling the idea' of SSE to relevant stakeholders. SSE is not a 'new' concept. The SSE process simply tries to extend the concept and frame it in a more systematic way that will lead to sustainable improvement in the context of the school.

17. The need for strong teams at both national and regional level :

- Membership of the Swazi National Steering Committee is balanced across the ministry of education and is able to reflect a cross section of views and interests from different sectors.
- The Committee shows a strong team spirit with frank open discussion of issues and a shared workload.

- **Perceived challenges**

18. Although SSE has not as yet been implemented at school level, a number of areas were identified that might need further support and/or training as the Program develops:

- Increased workloads : This will affect not only the trainers themselves but will also affect principals and teachers.
- The evaluation/decision-making skills of principals and teachers : Staff in schools and even some trainers have not been involved in this kind of evaluation before. Even in developed countries research has shown that staff found it difficult initially to:
  - Reflect on their own practice
  - Collect and analyse data
  - Collectively make the 'right decisions' for improvement based on the evidence
  - To institute sustainable improvements, particularly if proposed changes conflict with existing attitudes.

- **Recommendations**

19. The following recommendations were made by the National Steering Committee for the consideration of other countries in sub-Saharan Africa who are engaged or would like to engage in a similar process:

For Ministries of Education/Education Departments

- Ensure that the central purpose of school self- evaluation is clearly understood and integrated into policy and planning.
- Negotiate the best way for schools to undertake SSE with regard to the implementation structure and the 'package of tools' to be used.
- Encourage 'ownership' of the process by the schools and within schools the involvement of all stakeholders
- Ensure schools are provided with regular on-going support not only from education advisors but also from principals of 'successful' schools in their local area.

- Ensure that SSE is embedded in the development of action plans for improvement and is clearly linked to other improvement initiatives
- Ensure that there is budgetary provision to support both training and support for implementation.

For school principals

- be clear about the purpose and provide a rationale and direction for all stakeholders
- ensure that first evaluation exercises are practical and achievable in a relatively short period (e.g. one term)
- Evaluate activities that will have an immediate impact on teaching and learning and use these to inform future planning and areas for improvement. (This will also help to motivate staff and parents)
- Think about the way to deal with possible areas of tension or conflict: time, relationships – between staff o between different stakeholders or even between the school and the local education office
- 'Sell the benefits' of SSE and encourage participation by all stakeholders as soon as possible
- enlist the support of a 'critical friend' (an academic, education advisor or another principal in your area). Think about forming principal support groups.
- Make sure that you and you staff sufficient time to carry out all these activities without causing too much pressure on workloads.

For the WGTP

20. There is great potential, as demonstrated by Swaziland, for school self-evaluation to have a lasting impact on improvements in the quality of basic education.

21. School evaluation is a systematic process that can provide both quantitative and qualitative information that helps to provide a basis from which valid judgements to improve the quality of education can be made. There are, however, issues relating to the extent to which interpretation of the data and subsequent decision-making can be both realistic and achievable in the context of many schools in Africa without training and support.

22. The notion of Program evaluation is still quite new to many schools in Africa and school evaluation is generally undertaken by a team or teams of 'amateur' evaluators for whom evaluation is only part of their job description. Tools must therefore be simple to operate. There are however, ways in which the WGTP could provide further assistance.

- The development of a module that clearly defines the rationale and process of school self- evaluation and that can, through activities and case studies based on local successful practice, be shared with countries initiating similar improvements.
- Support for the development of a systematic process that integrates quality improvement initiatives across all sectors of ministries of education. At present initiatives are frequently undertaken on an ad hoc basis. There may be several initiatives undertaken by a variety of supporting agencies all

focusing on improvements in quality: for example: head teacher training, improvement of inspection services, the development of teachers resource centers, school self-evaluation and continuous assessment. It is not always clear how these different initiatives are related to national priorities.

- The need to address the possible impact of HIV/AIDS on the implementation of school self-evaluation across the region. In some areas the ability out carry out a detailed self-evaluation may be severely limited by the number of teachers available in the schools.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. The quality of education: concepts and practice

23. There have always been differing views among educators not only about what constitutes 'a good quality education' but also the precise steps that need to be taken in order to achieve it. A report on the 'Quality of Basic Education' by the Commonwealth Secretariat in November 1989 suggested these difficulties arise because the concept is 'multi-dimensional, with a range of definitions and with different weight given to its various components by different actors in the educational process' (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1989:1).

2.2. The search for educational quality in sub-Saharan Africa

24. A brief review of the literature shows how the focus of quality concerns has shifted over the last twenty years.

2.2.1. Quality and equity

25. For more than two decades, in much of sub-Saharan Africa, quality concerns have been directed towards equal access that it was initially conceived, would be achieved through the attainment of two initiatives, Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Education for All (EFA). To many governments this is still a priority concern.

2.2.2. Quality in terms of inputs

26. The 1988 World Bank policy statement on education in sub-Saharan Africa, stressed that ensuring the availability of essential inputs is a prerequisite both for quality and expansion (World Bank, 1988:4). This opinion resulted from the findings of more than fifty studies carried out in the seventies and eighties. These concentrated on a narrow range of input-output variables such as expenditure per pupil, textbooks per student or teacher qualifications and focused on the effect of these single-factor variables in enhancing the quality of student achievement.

27. In many cases, evidence in support of the assumption that the achievement of quality depends on the correct mix of inputs to produce improved outcomes has proved either inconclusive or difficult to substantiate. It has not always been clear what type of achievement was being measured: pass-rates in examinations, improved personal income, the total achievement of an age group, the average achievement of the whole school population or of the best 10-20%.

28. Despite considerable differences in levels of resources, measurement of educational standards often focused on how the performance of students in sub-Saharan Africa compared with those prevailing in developed countries. Today the focus is rather more realistic and is concerned with ensuring that as many enrolled students as possible complete a minimum period in school. In addition, to this schools are increasingly expected to provide students with sufficient cognitive, practical and social skills to enable them to compete on the labour market or benefit from further training.

29. Improving quality in this sense can be related more closely to the organization and process of teaching and learning in schools. As a consequence attention has turned to one important dimension that had been neglected in earlier studies, namely issues of quality in terms of the management of schools and the improvement of teaching and learning processes.

2.3. Improving quality: recent trends

30. Two strands of the quality debate have had a profound impact on the perceptions of education. The first is linked to the School Effectiveness/School Improvement movements and the second to Quality Management.

31. There is growing recognition that if the challenges of the future are to be met successfully, then the education system should produce creative, resourceful and adaptable people; educational reform should focus on the goal of creating a 'Learning Society'. This is central to the provision of quality education but in order to understand this concept fully inputs, processes and outcomes, need to be viewed within the framework of a whole school approach. The management of qualitative changes needs to be more thoroughly analysed within the contextual framework of the local operational setting. However, reform initiatives should not only to reflect the local context but also develop from it; a view that must place more emphasis on Programs that focus on improvements initiated at the school level.

32. World Bank documents, for example, since 1993 have emphasised that the improvement of school quality is dependent on approaches to educational change that focus on the school as a unit of change. The document 'Research into Practice: Guidelines for Planning and Monitoring the Quality of Primary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa' points out that:

> *it is the central role of the individual school, in all its messy complexity, that has been ignored in the planning and evaluation of educational quality in Sub-Saharan Africa*
>
> (Heneveld, 1993:6).

33. Quality initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa are already beginning to reflect this change of emphasis and a number of improvement Programs have a stronger school-based dimension, examining management of the processes of teaching and learning and the quality and culture of school and classroom life. Three important initiatives undertaken by ADEA since 1993 have focused attention on improving quality at the school level; these are the head teacher training initiative begun in 1993 that provided management and leadership training for school principals, the manuals developed to support the work of inspectors, and most recently, the school self-evaluation initiative.

2.3.1. Quality management

34. Navaratnam and O'Connor (1993) define Quality Management as:

> *'a set of concepts, strategies, tools, beliefs and practices that are aimed at improving the quality of products and services, reducing waste and saving costs'.*

35. Navaratnam suggests six complimentary phases in what he calls a 'quality journey'. This journey, mirrored in the process of self-evaluation, involves data collection, analysis and decision-making. The six phases, include:

- Awareness and self-assessment
- Training and team building
- Quality planning
- Implementation process
- Comprehensive evaluation
- Continuous improvement

36. Implementing quality must concentrate on the total process; it must set up benchmarks and involve as many stakeholders as possible in developing successful practices. Ideally there should be both internal self-evaluation and external quality assessment that helps institutions assess their quality management. The links between the implementation of quality management and the processes of school self-evaluation are self-evident.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE ADEA WORKING GROUP ON THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND TEACHER MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Global Objective of the ADEA Working Group on the Teaching Profession: To work with African ministries of education, local communities, development partners, NGOs and the private sector to develop and sustain the quality of basic education by creating an enabling environment for teacher training, continuous professional development, improved school and educational management and rapid access to information and knowledge for all teachers and pupils

Strategy: To provide opportunities and a variety of participatory and consultative mechanisms for reviewing teacher training, professional development, management and access to information and knowledge issues and the development of sustainable remedial interventions, including policies and practices

37. The ADEA Working Group on the Teaching Profession (WGTP) launched the Teacher Management and Support in Africa (TMS) in 1993. It's global objective was to assist African ministries of education develop quality basic education by creating an enabling teacher management and support system and an improved teaching and learning environment for all teachers and pupils.

3.1. Capacity building

38. A major criticism of education in the sub-region is its weak capacity to meet the challenges of education development. This has been identified in several areas within education systems, both at the institutional level and among professionals serving in different roles. A key task of the WGTP has, therefore, been to build capacity in different areas in response to management and professional training needs identified by ministries of education in the sub-region.

39. The WGTP approached capacity building from a position that defined the concept very broadly. It was initially interpreted to mean any measure taken to increase the ability of teachers and their managers to respond to or deal with identified local needs. Therefore capacity building included, as a first step, training in resource materials development, provision of training materials as key tools in professional development and actual training. This aspect of the WGTP has been successful because it was targeted particular training and other professional needs identified by ministries of education. Another contributing factor was the participation of African educators both as learners and subsequently as trainers themselves. It was a unique approach and much appreciated by ministries of education who saw it as a means of developing critical skills that would benefit not only their own country but also others in the region as well.

40. Since 1993 teams of writers from participating countries have developed a number of training manuals and modules including all directed towards improving the quality of education in schools across the region:

- The eight head-teacher Training Modules (1993)
- The eight head-teacher training modules (Portuguese translation) for school heads in Mozambique (1996)
- The adaptation of the eight head-teacher training modules to meet the specific needs of heads in Lesotho (2000)
- The development of four Manuals for Schools Inspectors (1998)
- The development of four Manuals for Schools Inspectors (1998) (Portuguese translation)
- School-Self Evaluation: The Path to a Better School (1998).

41. The module, '*School self-evaluation: the path to a better school'* (1998) of relevance to this study was first used in the workshops held in the Gambia, Swaziland and Kenya was initially developed by Joe Hogan with inputs from specialists from several countries. It is based largely on resource materials developed and piloted in Scotland by the Strathclyde Region's Education Department.

42. In the preface, Dr Cream Wright, then Deputy Director of Human Resource Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat, provided a rationale for school self-evaluation:

> *The importance of schools as the place in which education is ultimately determined has steadily increased over the years. Influenced by the decentralisation of education systems and a resulting growth of autonomy, schools are now expected to be accountable to a wide range of stakeholders.*
>
> *…School accountability implies that clear academic, pedagogic and developmental goals have been set, against which progress of the institution can be assessed. In turn such progress is dependent on the existence of plans and strategies that guide the operation and management of the school. In the African context, these are novel demands that can be overwhelming for schools used to receiving directives and guidance from ministries of education or for those schools preoccupied with a more fundamental struggle against a lack of basic resources, a high proportion of untrained teachers and low staff morale. Yet all schools need to move along this path if they are to be truly accountable for the quality of education in their country.*

4. SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. A review of the literature

43. What is school self-evaluation? In simple terms it is about schools asking themselves: **How are we doing?** It involves taking a broad view of performance in key areas such as the culture and ethos of the school, its organization and management, delivery of the curriculum, teaching and learning, pupil attainment, support for pupils and community relations and a much closer, more detailed look at specific areas in which the school is successful and at others that might be causing concern.

44. There is also a comparative dimension: **How good is our school?** This is the perspective taken in the UK by the DfEE in its pamphlet '*School Evaluation Matters'* London OfSTED 1998, and by the Scottish Education and Industry Department in their pamphlet '*How good is our school? Self-evaluation using performance indicators'* published in 1998.

45. Indeed in both countries the context of SSE is very closely linked with using performance indicators, target setting and making comparisons with other schools. In their book *Schools must speak for themselves: The case for school self-evaluation* MacBeath et al. suggest:

> *One of the strongest features of school self-evaluation is that it allows the school to reflect critically on external criteria, to set these against internally derived criteria and to consider the relative merits and appropriateness of both.*
>
> MacBeath et al. (1996) p.11.

46. There are a number of issues, in an African context that makes this particular feature difficult to achieve.

4.2. The case for self-evaluation

- For what purpose is self-evaluation being used?
- What are the potential benefits?
- What are the issues of concern?

4.2.1. Purpose

47. The preface to the module used in the workshops stresses accountability and improvement as the main purpose for self-evaluation. However, as Ernest House (1973) *School Evaluation: The Politics and Process*. San Francisco, McCutchan Publishing Co. (in McBeath 1999 p.5) points out that we must be alert to political agendas both on the large international stage and in the micro-context of school and classroom.

48. At an international level, the political purpose for SSE is part of the process of educational decentralization that is on-going in many countries within the SADC region and elsewhere. It is genuinely seen as an attempt to serve local needs but it is also a reflection of the limited success achieved by central authorities in achieving sustainable

improvements in teaching and learning without the support of both the schools and local stakeholders.

49. Within that context, accountability, relates not only to the concern of ministries of education to show that the money invested in education is being spent wisely (Hon. Senator Carmichael, Minister of Education, Swaziland, 2002) but also, in the micro context, to the fact that schools are now increasingly held accountable for the delivery of quality education for all pupils.

50. In this respect schools must involve themselves in a continuous assessment of their achievements particularly in their management of teaching and learning, the professional development of teaching and non-teaching staff and organisational development.

51. In most countries, within the region, inspectors, traditionally responsible for external evaluation and the maintenance of standards, are overworked and in many cases, under-trained particularly in relation to current trends in school management. Their ability to provide the impetus for school improvement is therefore limited. There is also some controversy over their ability to 'wear two hats' – and function effectively in both the role of critical external evaluator and supportive advisor/facilitator. As a result, it is increasingly felt that individual schools would be more sensitive to the needs of their students and those of the local community than central authorities and therefore more suited to find ways to help them.

4.2.2. Potential benefits of school self-evaluation

52. Research by Davies and Rudd (2001), McBeath (1999) and Nevo (1995) suggests that:

- School self-evaluation can bring about a **change in the culture of a school** providing a forum for greater participation for all stakeholders concerned with the quality and improvement of the school.
- Self-evaluating schools can develop their own agenda, enabling staff to focus on areas for improvement of relevance to their own context. This helps to promote **ownership** of the process. In the African context, the initial impetus for self-evaluation might need to be generated by the principal, or other trainers, however, it should be possible (again with support and training opportunities) to encourage the 'school community', governors/school management committees, teachers, pupils and parents to become more involved in the strategic planning of self-evaluation Programs and activities.
- Teachers' **professional development** can benefit from a school's commitment to self-evaluation, particularly in an institution where staff are encouraged to share expertise with colleagues and to initiate development opportunities within their own school.
- School self-evaluation can provide a mechanism with which the principal and management committees or school boards can to learn about their school and initiate **organisational change.**
- School self-evaluation can be used to encourage **community involvement.** Community and business leaders can provide useful feedback; inform classroom practice and help set the agenda for change.

53. In many countries principals have said that they have benefited from having the support of a **critical friend** whether a local education officer/advisor or a fellow

practitioner. A knowledgeable critical friend, who is external to the school, can help to identify areas for development and where necessary ask challenging questions.

54. Commercially available self-evaluation packages, or those developed by local/national education authorities can provide information on a range of '**tools and techniques**' for implementing evaluation activities. These may take the form of questionnaires, observation checklists, forms for recording data or some other format. They are useful in that they avoid the need for a school to 'reinvent the wheel', however, it is important to remember that almost all Programs and activities will need to be adapted to meet the specific needs of individual schools.

4.2.3. Potential issues and challenges

55. Inevitably the tensions that attended the initial implementation of school self-evaluation in the UK and other countries, regarding the purpose of school-self-evaluation and issues relating to accountability and quality control will affect implementation of the process in the countries that attended the workshops.

56. The lack of reliable and extensive educational data within ministries of education or experience within schools of target setting and the identification of performance indicators are other issues that will need to be addressed in some way.

57. There are also concerns relating to the level of support that will be required in order to provide staff with the capacity to undertake a systematic evaluation process and develop feasible action plans. David Nevo (1995) points out in the initial stages of implementation school self-evaluation is usually undertaken by 'amateurs', teachers and in many cases, principals who lack experience and training in the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.

5. THE ADEA/TEACHER MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION INITIATIVE

5.1. Background

58. Between 1999 and 2002 three training workshops, supported by ADEA and the Commonwealth Secretariat have been held in Africa. The first, in Banjul, The Gambia (June 1999) was for 30 Gambian school inspectors and head-teachers and 2 Ghanaian education officers. The second, in Mbabane, Swaziland (February 2002) was for 35 Education officers from eight SADC countries, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The most recent, held in April 2002, was at the request of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) participants included the entire teaching staff (50 teachers) from three schools - 'Centres of Excellence' supported by FAWE in Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda.

59. Participants in the first two workshops were a mix of ministry of education officials, inspectors, education officers and school principals who would become trainers at regional and district level and help initiate a process of self-evaluation in schools. The workshops consisted of six days (approximately 50 hours) of basic training in school self-evaluation: the techniques and tools for data collection and analysis; decision-making and the development of an action plan for improvement, based on a simulated case study of a school. Towards the end of the Program participants were given time to reflect on issues of concern including for example, the role and responsibilities of education officers/inspectors in training Programs and the implementation of school-self-evaluation in schools or the impact of SSE on the school culture and workloads. They were also able to discuss other areas relevant to their own situation. Final activities included participation in a simulated school evaluation based on a case study developed by the facilitator and the preparation of draft national training plans that participants expected to present to their respective ministries of education (a sample of the basic Program is in Appendix 1).

60. The third workshop, for the first time, took training to the school level. In 1999, FAWE launched its 'Centres of Excellence Program'. The goal was to demonstrate how concerns in girls' education might be addressed holistically through the application of a package of effective strategies, with a special focus given to the unique circumstances facing the girls in a particular country or region. The Nairobi workshop was organised to familiarise principals and staff of three of the FAWE 'Centres of Excellence' in Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda with the process of school self-evaluation in order to support and ensure continuous progress and development in the schools. Fifty-one participants attended, almost the entire staff, from three of the schools supported as Centres of Excellence by FAWE: twenty-three from AIC Girls School, Kajiado, Kajiado District, Rift Valley Province, Kenya (in the Masai area): twenty-one from Kacyiru Secondary School, Kigali, Rwanda and seven from Mgugu, Secondary School, Kilosa District, Morogoro Region, Tanzania. The first four days of the Program was essentially similar to the first three workshops, then, on days 5 and 6 each school carried out a mini-evaluation of their own school and prepared an action plan that they would try to implement on their return.

5.2. Outcomes

61. A limited number of outcomes were immediately evident as a result of discussion and activities during the workshops. There were two in particular that relate to WGTP objectives.

5.2.1. Capacity building

62. Over the period of the three workshops held in Africa more than 110 inspectors, education officers, school principals, and teachers received training in the process and techniques of school self-evaluation. All confirmed that they were able to develop new skills.

63. During the FAWE workshop, I worked as lead facilitator with two other trainers, one from Botswana, the principal of a secondary school and one from Malawi, a school inspector. Both of these trainers had first received training in the process of school self-evaluation at the SADC regional training workshop held in Mbabane, Swaziland in February 2002. Both were trainers at their own national level, but neither had worked in an international capacity, or with me before. Their contribution and different style of presentation added a great deal to our Program. My colleagues greatly appreciated the enthusiasm and commitment of the FAWE participants. They were particularly pleased to note that staff from the schools were able to work so well together right from the beginning of the Program – it was obvious that the common vision and ideals that the FAWE schools share meant that the group genuinely felt part of a 'family'.

5.2.2. Networking: sharing knowledge and understanding

64. The workshops brought together a variety of educationalists not only from different sectors of ministries of education but also from other countries within the region. During discussion and activities they were able to share knowledge and exchange ideas. In this respect I would like to quote one evaluator:

> *'This has been a great opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with educators from not only from different sections of ministries of education but also from other countries. It has broadened our perspective and given us new incentives to try to improve our schools.*

65. Teachers from the FAWE schools agreed:

> *This workshop has been an excellent way of motivating us to really think about where the school is going and make us realise that we are **all** responsible for this'.*

5.2.3. Identified issues of concern

66. Participants made particular mention of three important needs identified as critical to the successful implementation of school-self-evaluation:

- **The need for a clear policy framework**
- **The need to clarify the role of inspectors/education officers**
- **The need for sufficient resources to support training and implementation**

67. The extent to which these concerns have been addressed at the national level will be discussed in the following section that provides a progress report on the process of implementing of school self-evaluation into schools in Swaziland since the SADC workshop (February 2002).

6. IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION IN SCHOOLS IN SWAZILAND

6.1. Introduction

68. ADEA has established a taskforce to address the challenge of providing quality basic education in African countries. The aim of the task force is to bring together new knowledge on promising strategies and policy options that can serve as a framework for discussion and engagement and the support of new policy and practice interventions. The longer-term goal is to help member countries develop their capacity to design and implement strategies for quality improvement. ADEA wants to assist African countries develop action strategies based on lessons learned, shared practice of successful interventions and the identification and analysis of successful or promising national experiences.

69. After the SADC training workshop in February 2002, it was learned that the Ministry of Education in Swaziland provided immediate support for the implementation of the National Framework for School self-evaluation developed during the workshop by the twelve Swazi participants. As a result of this, the Working Group on the Teaching Profession (WGTP) selected Swaziland to carry out a case study evaluation of the process they had initiated and, as far as possible, an analysis of the impact of their initiative. The findings from the evaluation exercise will be shared with other African countries with a particular focus on lessons learned and their implication for further action by ministries of education and their partners.

6.2. Specific objectives for the study

70. These were to:

- Summarize evidence on the contribution that inputs and processes in the area of interest (School Self-Evaluation) of the WG can make and have made to the improvement of the quality of basic education in Africa
- Identify key policy issues that need to be addressed for successful national action
- Summarize the lessons for experience and implications for action at the country and regional level.

6.3. Design of the study

71. The study is designed to be both a desk study based on the analysis of documentation currently available to the Working Group, a review of the theoretical framework for and current thinking on the implementation of School self-evaluation (Chapter 11 provides a list of references consulted) and site visits to selected schools in one country (Swaziland) that has participated in a School Self-Evaluation training Program

72. In country it was arranged that the consultant would liase with members of the Ministry of Education Officials, the National Steering Committee for the implementation of SSE, Chief inspectors, senior inspectors, inspectors of schools at regional level, education advisors, and school principals to help bring out the insights from that country's experiences on school-self evaluation and their contribution to raising quality (see Appendix 2 The Program of visits).

73. The consultant developed a semi-structure interview schedule in three sections: Sections A for Ministry officials and the National Steering Committee and Section C for school principals. Questions in Section B addressed the potential and, as far as possible, actual impact of the intervention on quality and was given to both ministry officials and school principals (Appendix 3 provides the Interview Schedule). In a limited way, it was possible, using this schedule to validate opinions expressed and to see how far issues of concern were perceived in the same way by both the ministry and the schools. Appendix 4 contains the list of informants consulted.

7. FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

7.1. At national level

Key Informants: Ministry of Education personnel and the National Steering Committee

A1 ***What do you see as the main focus of school self-evaluation? (Accountability or Development/School Improvement)***

74. Informants see school self-evaluation in a very positive light as a means of improving schools, indeed as a critical component in the process of Whole School Development Planning (WSDP) and Whole School Management (WSM). The Program has the full support of the Ministry (confirmed by Mr. B. S. Ndovlu, Acting Director of Education and Mr G Kunene Principal Secretary, Ministry of Education).

A2 What is the rationale for self-evaluation?

75. At national level, SSE is part of the process of educational decentralisation that is on-going in Swaziland. It is genuinely seen as an attempt to serve local needs but it is also a reflection of the limited success achieved by central authorities in achieving sustainable improvements in teaching and learning.

76. Within that context, 'accountability', relates not only to the concern of ministries of education to show that the money invested in education is being spent wisely (Hon. Senator Carmichael Minister of Education, Swaziland, 2002) but also, in the micro context, to the fact that schools are now increasingly held accountable for the delivery of quality education for all pupils.

77. Schools must involve themselves in a continuous assessment of their achievements particularly in their management of teaching and learning. School self-evaluation provides the rationale for this.

A3 Who do you see as the main beneficiaries?

78. All key informants at both ministry and school level saw this as being of benefit to the whole system. Of immediate benefit to the schools themselves but also as an important element in improving the quality education in Swaziland and ensuring that resources are used in the most effective manner through clear leadership and management.

A4 Is there a plan to introduce SSE into all schools at primary and secondary level in Swaziland? To what extent this been put into action?

79. Immediately after the workshop sponsored by ADEA for participants from nine SADC countries held in Swaziland (February 2002), a National School Self-Evaluation Steering Committee was formed that included all twelve of the Swazi participants to the workshop. An important feature of this committee was that it included key personnel from different sectors of the ministry of education:

▪ Chairperson	Mr Peter Inampasa	Senior Inspector
▪ Vice Chairperson	Ms A.N. Dlamini	REO Manzini
▪ Secretary	Dlamini B.L	Inspector of Schools
▪ Vice Secretary	Dlamini F.S Zaba	School Principal

Committee membersRegion

▪ Dlamini B.H	Mbabane	School Principal
▪ Dlamini C.T	Lubombo	Inspector of Schools
▪ Dlamini E.B	ManziniCollege	Lecturer
▪ Fakudze J.G	ManziniEducation	Advisor
▪ Hlope M	Manzini	Inspector of Schools
▪ Mavuso A	Shiselweni	Inspector of Schools
▪ Mciza T.T	MbabaneSenior	Inspector
▪ Ngamphalala	WLubombo	Education Advisor

80. The committee was organised to function at both national and regional levels and one committee member was designated to co-ordinate activities at regional level. (See the structure Appendix 5).

81. With the support of the Ministry of Education a number of meetings were held to plan a nation-wide Program. This started with a sensitisation campaign for key ministry personnel that explained the main objectives of the Program. This was done in order to avoid rejection of the Program by those who might have otherwise seen it as a 'top-down' initiative. A plan of action to conduct in-country workshops was put in place by the committee. The committee members shared various assignments such as adapting the case studies to the local context, organising workshop venues and logistics and invitations to participants.

82. A Senior Management Workshop was held in the Conference room of the Ministry of Education on 7th May 2002. Thirty participants, including the Director of Education, the three Chief Inspectors of schools, 4 Regional Education Officers/representatives, 5 College Principals, the Teaching Service Executive Secretary, the Director of the National Curriculum Centre, the Director of In-service Teacher Training and the 12 presenters attended this workshop.

83. This workshop was aimed at sensitising the senior cadre of the Ministry of Education and Regional Education Officers for the purpose of seeking support for the School Self-Evaluation Program. A total of E800.00 (U$1000.00) was spent on this workshop.

84. A second workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Education and opened by the then Acting Director of Education Mr B. S. Ndlovu was held at Tokhoza Christian Youth Centre from 27th to 31st May at the cost of E39, 650.00 (approx. U$5000.00). It brought together a total of 60 participants; 11 Senior Inspectors, 17 Regional Inspectors, 6 In-Service Education and Training Advisors, 5 Teacher Leaders, 2 Teachers' College Lecturers, 3 Head Teachers and the 12 already trained members of the National Steering Committee who were the presenters. This more practical workshop one was officially opened by the

85. This second workshop was more practical and aimed to train regional cadres that would train principals of both secondary/high schools and primary schools and their deputies in order to sustain and support the process of school self-evaluation in their regions. The end product of the workshop was to enable representatives to develop in-country Programs for School Self-Evaluation that would involve:

- identifying the driving force behind school self-evaluation.
- identifying the main benefits for schools through SSE
- identifying factors that promote or inhibit effective strategies in implementing SSE
- establishing ownership of SSE

86. The first of these Training of School principals at Regional and Zonal level will take place gradually over the next year. Funds are limited however, and training will be dependent on the availability of funds and to some extent on the availability of Core Trainers to train and provide support.

87. [Funding is an issue – but I suspect that other job commitments may also have an effect as the scheme is introduced. The national team consists of only 12 people. Regional teams may consist of 3 or even fewer trainers with approximately 1000 schools principals to train].

Is there a plan to link SSE with existing school improvement initiatives?

- Yes – workshop presentations have linked SSE to Whole School Development Planning and Whole School Management. Projects already started by other supporting agencies.

Is there a plan to link SSE to external inspection processes already in place?

- Informants from the ministry of education and school principals interviewed all see School self-evaluation as a process that will inform external evaluation. In all the schools visited the principals looked to their local inspector of schools or education advisor at the regional level to support the implementation of SSE and the development of Action Plans for improvement.

A5 What role do you expect inspectors/education officers to play in the training and implementation of SSE? (leader, facilitator, or critical friend)

88. Regional training teams are composed of Inspectors, Education Advisors and School Principals. The regional teams are expected in the first instance to provide principals in their region with training in the process and then to support SSE as a facilitator and critical friend'

A6 Where will 'ownership' lie within the schools ? *Who do you feel should predominantly control the process in the schools? Should it be from the 'top' – the head and senior management team? or more widely dispersed involving the whole school and perhaps even the local community?*

89. The process of introducing SSE to schools is still in the introductory phase. The Swazi National Steering Committee feels that the most appropriate way to introduce the process to schools will be to train school principals first. There are two reasons for this:

- the numbers involved; there are approximately 800 primary and 200 secondary/high schools nation-wide, on average 250 schools in each region
- the traditional role of principals – they are expected to 'lead' implementation of the innovation into the schools.

90. Pilot evaluations being planned in schools that were visited have involved the whole staff in the SWOT analysis and subsequent decision-making and action planning. So far pupils and parents have not been involved. All of the principals interviewed saw the benefit of involving pupils in the evaluation of some areas.

91. Contributions from parents was seen as a valuable in-put, but one principal in particular felt that it might be more difficult to involve parents in the initial implementation phase.

- There are some areas of controversy, for example, the role of PTAs and the role of School Management Committees that need to be clarified at regional or national level.

- In some cases it is difficult to get parents to take an active interest in the school: most have work commitments and would only be able to spare time at weekends: some parents [particularly at secondary level] feel that their children are independent and therefore they would see no reason for giving that kind of in-put. As one principal put it:

  "we need to really sell the idea, so that parents understand the benefit not only for the school but also for improving the quality of education given to their children"

A7 Does the ministry of education have access to an extensive educational data-base (statistics) that can help schools evaluate their performance?

- National Examination results are available although as yet do not give as much detail as principal would like e.g. specific areas of weakness in particular subjects in particular schools.

- Data regarding teacher qualifications and pupils enrolment and drop-out are also available at a national level.

92. Most trainers and principals feel that statistical information will need supplementing and that data collection and analysis, target setting and the development of evaluation criteria are areas where principals and their staff will need extra training or support if they are to develop reliable and useful action plans.

A8 What resources have been (will be) given to schools in order to carry out systematic SSE?

- **Training**: training workshops are planned for the coming year at both regional and school levels. The ministry has guaranteed financial and material support for these workshops.

- **follow-up support**: there is every indication that both the National Steering Committee and the regional coordinators are ready to provide support for SSE in the schools. There are however, some issues regarding the workload of inspectors; the number of schools in their region/zone and the distance they have to travel. At present there are only 12 core trainers (three per region) and approximately 1000 school principals to train. All of the core trainers have other work commitments (inspection advisory support, running schools). A plan needs to be put in place to reduce their training commitments at the school level. (This is addressed in question (iv) below and in Sections 6 and 7 - Lessons Learned and Recommendations)

- **financial support**: will be available in the current year 2003-2004 for workshops and training at regional and zonal level. Further important issues were however raised at both school and regional level in this respect:

  - One REO indicated the need for a clear budgetary framework within which principals and local trainers involved in SSE could make legitimate claims for expenses e.g. for regional or zonal meetings, for light refreshments during meetings or for materials development

- **material support**: the ministry would like to see the development of a manual/handbook for all school principals. This would provide principals

with a step-by-step guide to implementing SSE in their schools and provide case studies and activities that would help principals to develop an effective and sustainable process of SSE. The core trainers are using the tools we developed during the SADC meeting and have already adapted the case study to the Swazi context but these need to be organised into a manual that will give SSE a kick-start in the schools.

A9 Were you able to use the manual as published for training purposes?

93. The manual was not used in training. It does not provide sufficient guidance of procedures. The national team used the tools developed during the SADC workshop and adapted the case study and some of the exercises to the Swazi context. All of the principals found this material interesting and useful and fairly easy to follow. There are however, some gaps in understanding – but this is only to be expected. Principals will need time and practice to internalise and develop their understanding and skills. All suggested that a handbook would be very helpful and is needed in order to support training of all principals and their deputies in the next stage of implementation.

7.2. Expected change in schools

Perceptions of informants

- *a useful link between local education office/officers and schools* (there already seems to be a very cordial relationship between schools and inspectors. Some areas of controversy are inevitable – but in my limited visit I saw evidence of a supportive relationship between inspectors, education advisors and their schools at national and regional levels
- *an overview of the performance of individual schools*. When the Program is in place – yes this does seem to be an important outcome and both inspectors and principals felt this would provide a more complete picture of strengths and areas for development in each school.
- *collects valuable data that can be used by the school and supplement data at regional/national level*: Data collection, analysis at school level, target setting and the development of valid evaluation criteria would seem to require further training.
- *can change the culture of school*: This is impossible to verify until the process of evaluation and the development of action plans to improve identified areas of weakness have been implemented over the first year.
- *benefits professional development of staff*: Principals do see the possibility of improving professional development at the school level as part of an action plan – e.g. providing mentoring or demonstration lessons. They also see this as coming not only from their own staff but also perhaps through sharing successful practice with other local schools.
- *provides a mechanism for organisational change* (increased levels of understanding, involvement, job satisfaction) as yet impossible to determine
- *develops 'ownership'* – Again principals could see the values of this but it remains to be seen as the process develops.
- *can promote community involvement*: increased involvement of all stakeholders – in some areas this may not be entirely possible in the initial stages of implementation. Most trainers and schools would like to pilot the process in a small way – perhaps initially involving only staff and pupils.

7.3. At the school level

Informants: School Principals

94. Information in this section came almost entirely from the four school principals visited. These were:

- Mr. Joseph Sondlo (School Principal) Usuthu Mission Primary School; Manzini Region
- Mr P. Dlamini, P. (School Principal) Nhlangano Central High School; Shilselweni Region
- Mrs. L.M.Dlamini, (School Principal) Duze High School; Lubombo Region:
- Mr. M. Simelani (School Principal) Londunduma High School; Hhohho Region

95. Some comments are also included from the two school principals who are members of the National Steering Committee.

- Mrs Zaba Dlamini and Mrs Hope Dlamini.

C1 What was the plan for implementing SSE into the schools?

96. Selected principals attended the workshop that took place in Tokhoza Christian Youth Centre from 27th to 31st May 2002. They found the training interesting and relevant and on their return to their schools held workshops to inform staff. Two of the principals said that they found the Program particularly helpful as they were asked to review positive achievements and successes and not concentrate only on problems.

C2 What training did you receive? What training will your staff need?

- the concept
- particular techniques and tools
- generating performance indicators
- data analysis
- development of action plans

97. Principals who attended the workshop were given some training in all areas. Most felt that the length of time given was not adequate for them to fully internalise the process and procedures. Nevertheless they were all very enthusiastic about the concept. Unfortunately lack of funds (2002) meant that workshops at the school level had to be curtailed until the current financial year.

C3 How far have you been able to progress?

98. Only selected principals from a few schools have received training so far. The main thrust of regional training is scheduled for this year. All four principals visited, however, held mini-workshops with their staff to explain the process. The primary principal at Usuthu Mission had involved staff in a SWOT analysis and they had developed a mini improvement plan.

C4 Have you been able to involve all stakeholders in the evaluation process right from the beginning?

99. Not yet. Teachers have been involved and two heads thought they would like to involve pupils in an evaluation of behaviour in school. There are incidents of bullying

in some schools and principals were willing to involve pupils in an evaluation of possible causes and a search for solutions that would work in their context.

C5 What specific difficulties have you found or do you feel you may need to face?

100. Principals have not really begun systematic evaluation of specific areas. However, from discussion with principals it would seem that staff and probably many principals as well would need training and support in most of the following areas.

- target setting and identification of clear performance indicators
- data collection and analysis
- decision-making / prioritising
- formulating action plans (success criteria and tasks need tightening up - plans tend to be a little vague at present)

C6 What level of motivation has there been for the process?

101. *'just one more job for the ministry of education'* I was not given this impression though in the very limited time I was only able to talk to principals and trainers

102. *'a means of improving the teaching and learning in our own school'*. Definitely

103. *what has been the impact of SSE on work-loads?* No data on this as yet, though there are signs that there could be issues here see note on the attitude of HODs

104. Too little has been done as yet to determine the answer to questions 7 and 8.

C7 How far do you feel that you will be able to generate your own criteria for evaluation and performance indicators?

C8 What resources have you been able to devote to SSE?

- time for questionnaires or classroom observation
- in-school training
- material support

7.4. Issues of concern

7.4.1. At national and regional level

- **The need for a clear policy framework**

105. The Swazi Ministry of Education has given a clear mandate to the National Steering Committee to develop a national framework for the implementation of SSE in Swaziland and as noted in A4 both national and regional teams have been trained and are in place.

106. It became evident from discussions however, that although school principals will be trained in regional workshops they will require a considerable level of support during the initial implementation phase. Within the education structure, the four main regions are sub-divided into zones. Even at this level some zones contain as many as 40 schools. This will require more support from the training teams than they can reasonably manage in view of their other commitments.

- **Suggested amendments to the policy framework.**

107. I therefore, suggested that within each zone, schools should be regrouped into smaller 'clusters' of perhaps six-eight schools, depending on their distance apart. During the principal training workshops, a number of dynamic schools principals should be identified who could facilitate the implementation of SSE in their own local area. The core trainers could then take on the role of 'critical friend' and monitor and support progress within the cluster, as and when required.

- **The need to clarify the role of inspectors and education officers**

108. Upon closer investigation, this appears at present to be less of an issue in Swaziland than is perhaps the case in other countries where school self-evaluation has been implemented by the inspectorate. The Swazi team is well balanced and consists of a regional education officer, senior inspectors, inspectors of schools at regional level and school principals. There is however the issue of increasing workloads. SSE is only one part of the job specification of team members. This is a further reason for regrouping support for the implementation of SSE at the local level into smaller cluster groups led by the principal from the local area.

- **Levels of resources**

109. There will be a need for consistent levels of financial resources once the Program gets underway. The team has foreseen this and implementation of SSE has therefore to come under the Director of INSET who has greater access to funds for workshops. [This also stresses the developmental focus of SSE in Swaziland rather than the accountability focus that may have gained prominence if implementation had been the remit of the inspectorate]. Budgets for reimbursement of legitimate claims can also be accessed more effectively directly through the ministry.

7.4.2. At school level

- **The capacity of schools in different socio-economic/geographical environments to respond to SSE.** There is a danger that schools in remote areas or those very poor areas may not have the internal resources to implement school self-evaluation and thereby raise the quality of education in their schools.

- **Levels of support in the regions**

110. Schools in some regions may be less well supported by trainers and education advisors. (too few/possible less dynamic trainers/too many schools).

111. Clustering at the zonal level should minimise this effect of both of these concerns as clusters would contain a range of schools and would be led, at least initially, by more dynamic/better trained principals. One principal suggested that an element of competition might cause tensions within the group. This could be minimised by rotating the meeting place for the cluster group and by rotating the lead school after the first trial evaluation period.

- **Possible areas of tension or conflict**
    - Levels of enthusiasm and support may differ: within the school between the principal and or the Deputy and SCM Chairperson; between confirmed (paid) HODs and acting (unpaid) HODs; or between the School Management Committee and PTA (if it exists).
    - From the inability of management to involve ALL stakeholders: leading to the marginalisation of certain groups in the process e.g. junior/less qualified members of staff or parents.

- From increasing workloads, pressures may build up with efforts to sustain the process and carry through action plans.
- Possible areas of conflict between national and school goals and objectives, (this issue was more controversial: with opinions expressing both agreement and disagreement with this idea).

112. The national steering committee and the heads visited recognised that conflicts might develop in any one or more of these areas. However, they are confident that relationships are good among schools and education officers and certainly principals are keen to begin a process that they believe will have a sustainable impact on the quality of teaching in schools.

8. LESSONS LEARNED

8.1. Contributions from all informants

- **The need for a clear policy framework:**
    - that provides a locus within the ministry of education that facilitates implementation of the process of SSE at both national and regional levels. In Swaziland the locus has been placed within INSET – thus placing an emphasis on the developmental purpose of SSE.
    - that gives a clear budgetary mandate not only for initial training workshops but also for on-going facilitation of regular meetings at cluster level.
    - that clearly defines an understanding of SSE as a support mechanism for other school improvement initiatives that may already be in place such as whole school improvement, whole school management or continuous assessment initiatives.
- **The need to sensitise personnel from key sectors within the ministry** e.g. the inspectorate, finance and planning and in-service education and training: This will not only minimise resistance but will also develop an understanding of the dual focus of the process, development and accountability
- **The need for a clear understanding of the process of involvement:** In Swaziland principals are expected to provide leadership but they will also need to gain the support of their Deputies and School Management Committee Chairpersons. Initially it may be easier to involve teachers and pupils but as soon as possible all stakeholders, teachers, pupils, parents and the community should be given opportunities to participate in the some aspects of the evaluation process.
- **The need to identify dynamic principals at zonal level** who can provide leadership and support for smaller cluster groups of 6-8 schools in their area. This is necessary for two reasons:
    - Core national and regional trainers will have other duties in addition to their role as SSE trainers and may be unable to provide sufficient support to individual schools during the first critical year.
    - Principals at cluster level will have a more specific understanding of local issues and challenges and will be able to help refine evaluations and action plans
- **The importance of 'selling the idea' of SSE to relevant stakeholders.** SSE is not a 'new' concept. Successful principals/schools and teachers have always carried out personal evaluations of their work. The SSE process simply tries to extend the concept and frame it in a more systematic way that will lead to sustainable improvement in the context of the school.
- **The need for strong teams at both national and regional level**
    - Membership of the Swazi National Steering Committee is balanced across the ministry of education and is able to reflect a cross section of views and interests from different sectors.
    - The Committee shows a strong team spirit with frank open discussion of issues and a shared workload.

8.2. Perceived challenges

113. Although SSE has not as yet been implemented at school level, a number of areas were identified that might need further support and/or training as the Program develops:

- **Increased workloads**

114. This will affect not only the trainers themselves but will also affect principals and teachers. For this reason it is important to give training to Deputy heads and School Committee Chairpersons and to bring in other stakeholders as active participants in the Program as quickly as possible.

- **The need to strengthen the skills of principals and teachers**

115. Staff in schools and even some trainers have not been involved in this kind of evaluation before. Even in other countries, where schools have been involved in self-evaluation Programs for some time staff found it difficult initially to:

- Reflect on their own practice
- Collect and analyse data
- Collectively make the 'right decisions' for improvement based on the evidence
- To institute sustainable improvements, particularly if proposed changes conflict with attitudes

116. Further training in data collection and analysis, decision-making, conflict management and the management of change might well be necessary.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. Recommendations for Ministries of Education/Education Departments

- Ensure that the central purpose of school self- evaluation is clearly understood and integrated into policy and planning.
- Negotiate the best way for schools to undertake SSE with regard to the implementation structure and the 'package of tools to be used.
- Encourage 'ownership' of the process by the schools and within schools the involvement of all stakeholders
- Ensure schools are provided with regular on-going support not only from education advisors but also from principals of 'successful' schools in their local area.
- Ensure that SSE is embedded in the development of action plans for improvement and is clearly linked to other improvement initiatives
- Ensure that there is budgetary provision to support both training and support for implementation.

9.2. Recommendations for school principals

- be clear about the purpose and provide a rationale and direction for all stakeholders
- ensure that first evaluation exercises are practical and achievable in a relatively short period (e.g. one term).
- Evaluate activities that will have an immediate impact on teaching and learning and use these to inform future planning and areas for improvement. (This will also help to motivate staff and parents)
- Think about the way to deal with possible areas of tension or conflict: time, relationships – between staff o between different stakeholders or even between the school and the local education office
- 'Sell the benefits' of SSE and encourage participation by all stakeholders as soon as possible
- enlist the support of a 'critical friend' (an academic, education advisor or another principal in your area). Think about forming principal support groups.
- Make sure that you and your staff sufficient time to carry out all these activities without causing too much pressure on workloads.

9.3. Recommendations to the WGTP

117. There is great potential, as demonstrated by Swaziland, for school self-evaluation to have a lasting impact on improvements in the quality of basic education.

118. School evaluation is a systematic process that can provide both quantitative and qualitative information that helps to provide a basis from which valid judgements to improve the quality of education can be made. There are, however, issues relating to the extent to which interpretation of the data and subsequent decision-making can be both realistic and achievable in the context of many schools in Africa.

119. The notion of Program evaluation is still quite new to many schools in Africa and school evaluation is generally undertaken by a team or teams of 'amateur'

evaluators for whom evaluation is only part of their job description. Tools must therefore be simple to operate.

120. There are however, ways in which the WGTP could provide further assistance.

- **The development of a module** that clearly defines the rationale and process of school self- evaluation and that can, through activities and case studies based on local successful practice, be shared with countries initiating similar improvements.
- **Support at sector level for the development of a systematic process that integrates quality improvement initiatives across all sectors of ministries of education.**

121. At present initiatives are all too frequently undertaken on an ad hoc basis. There may be several initiatives undertaken by a variety of supporting agencies all focusing on improvements in quality: head teacher training, improvement of inspection services, the development of teachers resource centers, school self-evaluation and continuous assessment. It is not always clear how these different initiatives are related to national priorities.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Program for school self-evaluation training workshop

Appendix 2: Programme of meetings and visits

Appendix 3: Semi-structured interview schedule

Appendix 4: Report on school self evaluation in Swaziland 2002/2003

Appendix 1: Program for school self-evaluation training workshop

Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)
Working Group on the Teaching Profession
in association with the Commonwealth Secretariat

School Self-Evaluation Training Workshop

PROGRAM

Opening of the workshop – Welcome to participants

Day 1 **Introduction to the Module**

Aims of the workshop

School self-evaluation: the policy context

Unit 1 **An Approach to School Self-Evaluation**

(1) Purpose of School Self-Evaluation

- What is it?
- Why do schools need to evaluate? - Benefits

(Links with Commonwealth Secretariat Better Schools Head teacher Training Modules or other as appropriate).

(2) Aims and Objectives

What do we evaluate?

Feedback on activities

Link with 3 Better Schools Modules. Module 1 Self-Development for Educational Managers and Module 6 Monitoring School Effectiveness. The 'User's Module – outlining Training Techniques.

Day 2 **Unit 1 An Approach to School Self-Evaluation**

(3) Practical approaches to self-evaluation

(a) Sources of Data

What information do we need?

what information is available in schools?

(b) Performance Indicators

- Where are we now?
- How do we know when we have succeeded? (Success Criteria)

(c) Tools and Techniques

What techniques can be used to gather and analyse information?

Questionnaires, Checklists

SWOT analysis/ Focus Wheels

Force-Field Analysis

Prioritising

Feedback from practical activities

Days 3 and 4 Self-Evaluation in Primary and Secondary Schools

Day 3 Introduction to the units

(1) Plenary Session

(1) Introduction to the Units: Evaluation through a whole school approach.

Management Structure and Patterns of Organisation

Role of Senior Management Team

Subject Departments in Secondary Schools

(a) Areas for Evaluation

(b) Process and Procedures

(c) Stages in Action Plan

Feedback on activities

(2) Group Work on primary or secondary schools

Analysis of Appendix A, B and C

Activities concerned with issues and perceived problems

Feedback from participant group activities

Day 4 Key Aspects of Management

Staff Development; Curriculum; Resources; Teaching and Learning; Home School and Community Links.

Groups develop presentations to illustrate how they would carry out an evaluation of their chosen area.

Feedback and critique of activities prepared during the morning session.

Day 5 Progress through Self-Evaluation: the path to a better school

From evaluation to practical action plans.

Case studies of a primary school or Secondary School.

Feedback from Case Study

Plenary

Issues for discussion/presentation:

The role of education officers/inspectors in the training and implementation of school-self-evaluation in schools

Preparing a national training plan

The impact of SSE on school culture, workloads

Other areas to be identified by participants

Day 6 Developing a Training Program

Developing a personal training Program for my region/my school

Group demonstrations and feedback

Final Summary of the Workshop and Evaluation

Closure of Workshop

Appendix 2: Consultancy programme
Programme of meetings and visits

Monday 24th March

Meetings:

0930 (Inspectorate)	Courtesy call on the Director of Education; and the three Chiefs
1030	The three Chiefs (Inspectorate)
1100	Senior Inspectors
1400-1600	The Steering Committee

Schools to be visited

Tuesday 25th Visit to Manzini region: Usuthu Mission Primary School
Morning
Accompanied by Jabo Facudze, Education Advisor Manzini Committee member National School Self-Evaluation Steering Committee
Mr. Joseph Sondlo (School principal)

Wednesday 26th March Visit to Shilselweni Region: Nhlangano Central High School
Accompanied by: Mrs Lamakhosa
Mr P. Dlamini, P. (School principal)

Thursday 27th March Visit to Lubombo Region: the REO and Duze High School
Accompanied by Mr Wilson Ngamphalala and Mrs Zaba Dlamini
REO – Mr..
Principal of Duze High School Mrs. L.M.Dlamini

Friday 28th March Visit to Hhohho Region – Londunduma High School
Morning
Accompanied by Brigid Dlamini and Hope Dlamini
School Principal Mr. M. Simelani
The visit included opportunities to talk to staff and meet the pupils of schools

1400-1601 Final meeting with the Steering Committee

Appendix 3: Semi-structured interview schedule

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN AFRICA
WORKING GROUP ON THE TEACHING PROFESSION

The Challenge of learning: Improving the Quality of Basic Education in Africa
An Evaluation of the Implementation of School Self-evaluation in Swaziland
22nd - 29th March 2003

Semi- Structured Interview Schedule

SECTION A At National Level
Ministry of Education Key Informants and the National Steering Committee

A1 What do you see as the main focus of school self-evaluation? (*Accountability or Development/School Improvement)*

A2 What is the rationale for self-evaluation?

A3 Who do you see as the main beneficiaries?

A4 Is there a plan to introduce SSE into all schools at primary and secondary level in Swaziland? To what extent this been put into action?

- Is there a plan to link SSE with school improvement initiatives?
- Is there a plan to link SSE to external inspection processes already in place

A5 What role do you expect the inspectorate/education officers to play in the training and implementation of SSE? (leader, facilitator, critical friend?)

A6 Where will 'ownership' lie within the schools?
[Who do you feel should predominantly control the process in the schools? (from the 'top' - the head and senior management team? or 'bottom up' involving the whole school and perhaps even the local community?

A7 Does the ministry of education have access to an extensive educational data base (statistics) that can help schools evaluate their performance? e.g. *for setting targets performance indicators*

A8 What resources have been (will be) given to schools in order to carry out systematic SSE:
(i) training
(ii) follow-up support
(iii) financial support
(iv) material support

A9 To what extent were you able to use the manual as published? What particular adaptations did you need to make?

Section B Expected Change in Schools

B1 Positive Outcomes: evidence from in other countries:
How far do feel that these are applicable to Swaziland?

SSE Provides:

- a useful link between local education office/officers and schools
- an overview of the performance of individual schools
- collects valuable data that can be used by the school and supplement data at regional/national level (*are there any concerns relating to the collection and analysis of data?)*
- can change the culture of school: (*improve collaboration and collegiality not only in schools but also between school and local education offices)*
- benefits professional development of staff
- provides a mechanism for organisational change (*increased levels of understanding, involvement, job satisfaction)*
- develops 'ownership' *(schools work to their own agenda)*
- can promote community/stakeholder involvement

B2 Issues of concern at national and regional level
Areas for comment
(i) The need for a clear policy framework
What key policy issues have been addressed for the development of a successful and sustainable National Plan for SSE? (*The locus for implementation; budget provision etc.)*
(ii) The role of inspectors and education officers
(iii) Levels of resources required
The provision of sufficient resources (financial, human and material) to support training and implementation at regional, zonal and school level

B3 Issues of concern at school level
Areas for comment:

(i) The capacity of schools in different socio-economic/geographical environments to respond to SSE
(ii) Levels of support in the regions
(iii) Possible areas of conflict:

Section C School Principals and Regional-coordinators

C1 What was the plan for implementing SSE into the schools?

C2 What training did you receive? What training will you staff need in order to support implementation of the process?

(i) particular techniques and tools
(ii) generating performance indicators?
(iii) data analysis
(iv) formulating action plans

C3 How far have schools been able to progress in the implementation of SSE?

C4 Have you been able to involve all stakeholders in the evaluation process so far? What challenges do you foresee in this area?

C5 What specific difficulties have you found or do you feel you may need to face?

C6 In your opinion what level of motivation is there for the process?

'just one more job for the ministry of education'

'a means of improving the teaching and learning in our own school'

what impact do you think there will be on work-loads?

C7 How far do you feel that you will be able to generate your own criteria for evaluation and performance indicators?

C8 What resources have schools been able to devote to SSE.
(i) time for questionnaires or classroom observation
(iii) in-school training
(iv) material support

Appendix 4: Report on school self evaluation in Swaziland 2002/2003

Telegrams: IMFUNDVO Facsimile: (268) 404-3880 Telephone: (268) 404-1851	**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION** **Kingdom of Swaziland** **Inspectorate Division** **Modern Languages Department** **French** Email: pinampasa@africaonline.co.sz *Modern Languages Department- Senior Inspector: Inampasa Peter - Extension 2146*	P.O. Box 39 Mbabane Swaziland H100

This is a report that follows the School Self-Evaluation workshop that took place at the Ezulwini Hotel between 18th and 23rd February 2002 under the sponsorship of the ADEA – Working Group on the Teaching Profession - Commonwealth Secretariat for SADC countries.

The above-mentioned School Self Evaluation Training workshop being an initiative aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools through schools self introspection for the general improvement of the quality of education was taken seriously by Swaziland representatives who attended the workshop by immediately putting in place a National School Self-Evaluation Steering Committee elected as follows:

Chairperson	Mr Peter Inampasa	Senior Inspector
Vice Chairperson	Ms A.N. Dlamini	REO Manzini
Secretary	Dlamini B.L	Inspector of Schools
Vice Secretary	Dlamini F.S Zaba	Head teacher

Committee members	Region	
Dlamini B.H	Mbabane	Head Teacher
Dlamini C.T	Lubombo	Inspector of Schools
Dlamini E.B	Manzini	College Lecturer
Fakudze J.G	Manzini	Education Advisor
Hlope M	Manzini	Inspector of Schools
Mavuso A	Shiselweni	Inspector of Schools
Mciza T.T	Mbabane	Senior Inspector
Ngamphalala W	Lubombo	Education Advisor

(See the structure in the addendum).

With the support of the Ministry of Education of Swaziland, a number of meetings were held by the National Organising Commitee of the School Self Evaluation and the Regional SSE Committees. The meetings were being held without any budget. During the meetings it was agreed that a carefully planned nation-wide programme be put in place starting with sensitisation campaign so that the main objectives are understood by all concerned parties. This was done in order to avoid rejection of the initiative by those who may view it as a top-down programme. A plan of action was put in place by the committee to conduct in-country workshops. The committee members shared the various assignments to be carried out such as adapting the case studies to the local environment, organising workshop venues and logistics, inviting participants etc…

The planning meetings whose minutes are attached herewith culminated in holding the first two workshops namely a Senior Management Workshop that was held in the Conference room of the Ministry of Education on 7th May 2002. This workshop was attended by 30 participants that included the Director of Education, the three Chief Inspectors of schools, the 4 Regional Education Officers/representatives, 5 College Principals, the Teaching Service Executive Secretary, the Director of the National Curriculum Centre, the Director of In-service Teacher Training and the 12 presenters. This workshop was aimed at sensitising the senior cadre of the Ministry of Education and Regional Education Officers for the purpose of seeking support for the School Self-Evaluation programme. A total of E800.00 was spent on this workshop.

The second workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Education was held at Tokhoza Christian Youth Centre from 27th to 31st May at the cost of E39650.00. It brought together 11 Senior Inspectors, 17 regional inspectors, 6 In-Service Education and Training Advisors, 5 Teacher Leaders, 2 Teachers' College Lecturers, 3 Head Teachers and the 12 already trained members of the National Steering Committee who were the presenters. This meant a total of 60 participants in the second workshop.

The main aims of the second workshop were to train cadres that would in turn train head teachers of secondary/high schools and primary school and their deputies so that they could sustain and support school self-evaluation to uplift performance in the school system. The end product of the workshop was to enable representatives to develop in-country programmes for School Self-Evaluation that would involve :

- identifying the driving force behind school self evaluation.
- Identifying the main benefits for schools through SSE
- Identifying factors that promote or inhibit effective strategies in implementing SSE
- Establishing ownership of SSE

The second workshop which was a more practical one was officially opened by the then Acting Director of Education Mr B.S. Ndlovu. The two workshops were certainly a great success and all participants were ready to go forward and train the head teachers and their deputies as training plans were put in place by and for all the four regional teams.

It is also worth mentioning that all the people who have so far undergone the School-Self Evaluation training perceive it as a viable tool that can improve the quality in education in the country and are all motivated to have the programme incorporated in the school system.

Despite the Ministry of Education willingness to sponsor the regional workshops, activities for the financial year 2002/3 had already been planned. School Self Evaluation programmes were therefore shifted to the 2003/2004 financial year which start in April 2003. As a result, all presentations were put on hold until such a time when funds would be available. However, what is encouraging is the fact that the Ministry of Education through the office of the Principal Secretary has been supportive and has factored the School Self-Evaluation programmes into the 2003/4 financial year under INSET (In-service Education and Training) department. Presently, the Chief Inspectors for both Primary and Secondary/high schools have discussed with the Director of INSET to find appropriate dates for the School Self-Evaluation workshops to start so that the dates do not clash with the other workshops scheduled for head teachers and deputy head teachers in the 2003/04 financial year.

STAFF AND BUDGETARY SUPPORT BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

The Ministry of Education has pledged its support to the School Self-Evaluation Programme by availing all the trained personnel at both Ministry of Education Headquarters and Regional Education Offices to take part in the propagation of the programme through conducting workshops for head teachers and their deputies and paying claims for the officers during the implementation stages.

In addition, some amount of money for workshops has been budgeted for the financial year 2003/04. This may not be enough for infusion programmes, monitoring and sustenance of the School Self-Evaluation. As such assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat to support the efforts of the Ministry of Education would be greatly appreciated for the School Self-Evaluation programme to have a full impact.

Besides the 12 members initially trained by the Commonwealth Secretariat as listed in paragraph 2 of page 1, the following groups have so far been fully trained nation-wide:

- 3 Head teachers
  1 primary — Usuthu Primary- Manzini Region

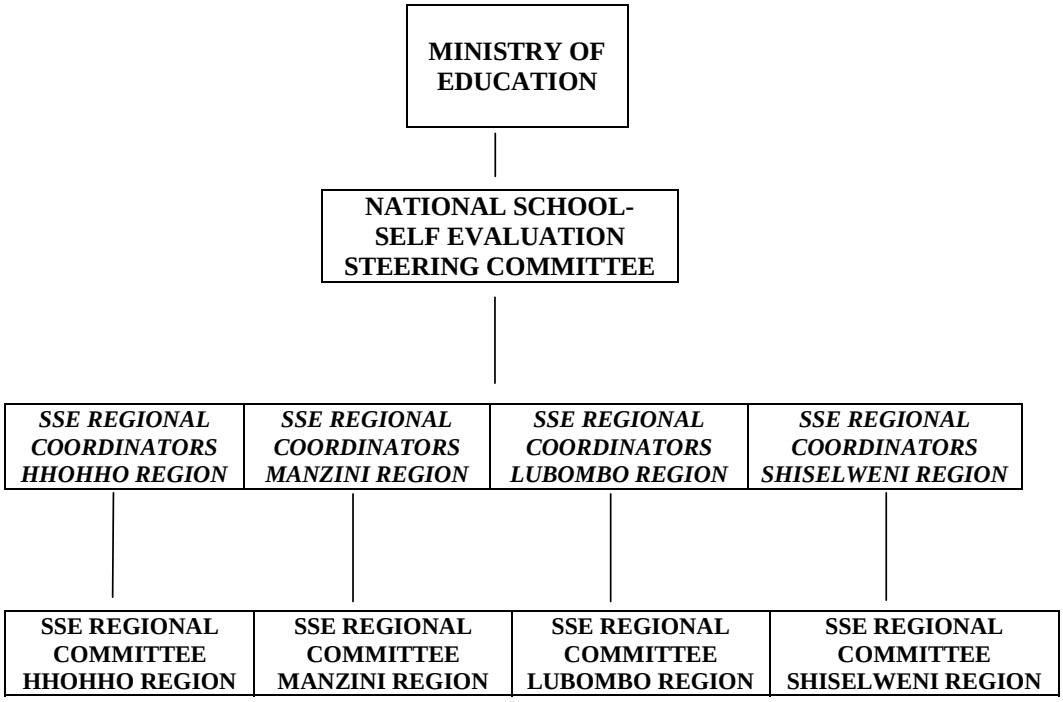
  2 high schools– — Londunduma High school, Hhohho Region
  Duze High School – Lubombo Region).

- 11 Senior Inspectors
- 17 regional Inspectors
- 6 In-Service Training Advisors
- 5 Teacher Leaders
- 2 Teacher Training College Lecturers
- Management cadre of the Ministry of Education.

With this core staff in place, it is hoped that by the end of the second term of 2003, all or most school Head Teachers would have been fully trained to start implementing the School Self-Evaluation in their schools. Deputy Head Teachers, training should be completed by the end of the third term of 2003.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

SSE STRUCTURE



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