

REPORT
on the
NATIONAL ECD PILOT PROJECT

May 2001

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
	ACRONYMS	9
	TERMINOLOGY	10
	PREFACE	11
1	INTRODUCTION	13
2	OVERVIEW OF THE ECD PILOT PROJECT	15
2.1	OBJECTIVES	15
2.2	MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF PILOT SITES.....	16
2.3	MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF PRACTITIONER.....	16
2.4	MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF NGO TRAINING CONTRACTORS	17
2.5	ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE.....	17
3	REPORT METHODOLOGY	19
3.1	CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	19
3.2	RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS.....	20
3.3	SITE CHANGES	21
3.4	FIELDWORK.....	23
4	PROVINCIAL DELIVERY MODELS	25
4.1	EASTERN CAPE.....	29
4.2	FREE STATE	30
4.3	GAUTENG.....	30
4.4	KWAZULU-NATAL.....	31
4.5	MPUMALANGA	33
4.6	NORTH WEST.....	34
4.7	NORTHERN CAPE	35
4.8	NORTHERN PROVINCE	36
4.9	WESTERN CAPE.....	37
4.10	CASE STUDIES	38
4.11	THE PROVINCES AND PILOT PROJECT DELIVERY.....	45
5	NORMS AND STANDARDS	49
5.1	FACILITATING ACTIVE LEARNING	49
5.2	FACILITATING HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT	60
5.3	MANAGING THE LEARNING PROGRAMME	70
5.4	CONCLUSION	80

6	ACCREDITATION	81
6.1	THE ACCREDITATION OF RTOs	81
6.2	THE ACCREDITATION OF PRACTITIONERS	86
7	QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS	97
7.1	INTRODUCTION.....	97
7.2	SITE CONDITIONS/INFRASTRUCTURE	97
7.3	QUALITY OF PRACTITIONER PERFORMANCE.....	97
7.4	EFFECTIVENESS OF PRACTITIONER PERFORMANCE	100
7.5	LEARNER ATTAINMENT	104
7.6	IMPACT OF PRACTITIONER PERFORMANCE ON LEARNER ATTAINMENT ...	106
7.7	CONCLUSION	107
8	FINANACE AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS	109
8.1	FINANCES OF COMMUNITY-BASED SITES.....	109
8.2	FINANCES OF PRIMARY/RECEPTION SITES	119
8.3	COMPARISONS BETWEEN COMMUNITY SITES AND PRIMARY/ RECEPTIONS SITES	121
8.4	COST-EFFECTIVENESS	121
9	RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	125
9.1	QUALITY, EQUITY AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS	125
9.2	NORMS AND STANDARDS	127
9.3	SUBSIDIES	128
9.4	PROVINCIAL DELIVERY MODELS.....	129
9.5	ACCREDITATION	130
10	POLICY IMPLICATIONS	133
10.1	SHOULD THE RECEPTION YEAR BE COMPULSORY?	133
10.2	WILL THE NEW ADMISSIONS POLICY ELIMINATE UNDER-AGE LEARNERS?	134
10.3	WHERE SHOULD THE RECEPTION YEAR BE LOCATED?	136
10.4	SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT FUND THE RECEPTION YEAR?.....	137
10.5	HOW CAN GRADE R LEARNER ATTAINMENT BE IMPROVED?.....	138
10.6	WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO DELIVER QUALITY SERVICES AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES?	142
10.7	HOW SHOULD ECD BE MADE "CORE" BUSINESS IN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS?.....	143
10.8	WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE GRADE R IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES?	144
APPENDIX A		
	INTERIM ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESEARCH REPORT	145
APPENDIX B		
	SITE INFORMATION.....	161
APPENDIX C		
	THE CALCULATION OF THE CHANGE SCORES FOR PRACTITIONER PERFORMANCE	175

FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURE 1	PROVINCIAL PERFORMANCE BASED ON LEVEL 1 REQUIREMENTS (N=110)	46
FIGURE 2	NQF LEVELS AT WHICH PRACTITIONERS ARE CURRENTLY BEING TRAINED	91
FIGURE 3	TYPE OF SUPPORT BY TRAINER	91
FIGURE 4	FAMILIARITY WITH THE UNIT STANDARD BOOKLET	93
FIGURE 5	PRACTITIONER PERFORMANCE MEASURES (SAME PRACTITIONER)	98
FIGURE 6	TOTAL PRACTITIONER PERFORMANCE SCORE IN 1999 BY PROVINCE	99
FIGURE 7	DIFFERENCE IN PRACTITIONER PERFORMANCE FROM 1997 TO 1999 BY PROVINCE.....	102
FIGURE 8	MEAN LITERACY SCORES FOR 1999.....	106
FIGURE 9	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCES AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES?	110
FIGURE 10	BREAKDOWN OF MOST COMMON ONE-TIME EXPENDITURES	113
FIGURE 11	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCES AT PRIMARY AND RECEPTION SITES?	119
FIGURE 12	CHANGES IN AVERAGE PARENT'S FEES	121
FIGURE 13	TRENDS: SUBSIDY - EDUCATOR PERFORMANCE	123
FIGURE 14	TRENDS: TRAINING - EDUCATOR PERFORMANCE.....	123
FIGURE 15	TRENDS: LEARNER NUMERACY - LEARNER PERFORMANCE SUBSIDIES.....	124
FIGURE 16	TRENDS: LEARNER NUMERACY - LEARNER PERFORMANCE SUBSIDIES.....	124
FIGURE 17	SITE LOCATION BY SITE TYPE	161
FIGURE 18	DISTANCE TO NEAREST PRIMARY SCHOOL: COMMUNITY-BASED SITES.....	162
FIGURE 19	DISTANCE TO NEAREST PRIMARY SCHOOL: GRADE R SITES	162
FIGURE 20	HAND-WASHING FACILITIES: CHANGE OVER YEARS	164
FIGURE 21	LIGHTING AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES: CHANGE OVER YEARS	165
FIGURE 22	SECURITY IN 1999.....	166
FIGURE 23	SECURITY AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES OVER 3 YEARS	167
FIGURE 24	LANGUAGE CONSISTENCY AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES BY PROVINCE	170
FIGURE 25	ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES (N=110)	172
TABLE 1	METHODOLOGY.....	20
TABLE 2	SAMPLE SITES: BY SITE TYPE AND PROVINCE.....	21
TABLE 3	SUMMARY OF NUMBER OF SITES, NUMBER OF LEARNERS AND NUMBER OF PRACTITIONERS	26
TABLE 4	SUMMARY OF SUBSIDIES.....	27
TABLE 5	SUMMARY OF RTO TENDERS.....	28
TABLE 6	PROVINCIAL PERFORMANCE BASED ON LEVEL 1 REQUIREMENTS	46
TABLE 7	ACTIVITIES DURING SITE VISITS.....	92
TABLE 8	GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF PLANNING AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES	95
TABLE 9	FREQUENCY OF GOVERNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES	95
TABLE 10	SELECTED ITEMS FROM THE CORE UNIT STANDARDS	98
TABLE 11	DIFFERENCES IN 1997 AND 1999 LITERACY AND NUMERACY SCORES BY PROVINCE AND SITE TYPE.....	105
TABLE 12	AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES (IN RANDES) REPORTED AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES	111
TABLE 13	DIFFERENCE IN SALARY PAYMENTS BETWEEN SUBSIDISED AND NON-SUBSIDISED SITES	111

TABLE 14	DIFFERENCE IN RENT PAYMENTS BETWEEN SUBSIDISED AND NON-SUBSIDISED SITES	112
TABLE 15	DIFFERENCE IN MONTHLY FOOD PURCHASES BETWEEN SUBSIDISED AND NON-SUBSIDISED SITES	112
TABLE 16	DIFFERENCE IN MONTHLY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURES BETWEEN SUBSIDISED AND NON-SUBSIDISED SITES	113
TABLE 17	ESTIMATED AMOUNT (IN RANDS) SPENT ANNUALLY BY SUBSIDISED AND NON-SUBSIDISED COMMUNITY-BASED SITES	114
TABLE 18	AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME (IN RANDS) REPORTED AT NON-SUBSIDISED COMMUNITY-BASED SITES	115
TABLE 19	DIFFERENCE IN PAYMENT RATES OF PARENT'S FEES AND AMOUNT CHARGED BETWEEN SUBSIDISED AND NON-SUBSIDISED SITES	116
TABLE 20	SITES THAT REPORTED A DOE PILOT PROJECT SUBSIDY	116
TABLE 21	SITES THAT REPORTED A DOH/W SUBSIDY	117
TABLE 22	MONTHLY INCOME FOR COMMUNITY-BASED SITES THAT RECEIVE A SUBSIDY ..	118
TABLE 23	MONTHLY INCOME FOR COMMUNITY-BASED SITES THAT DO NOT RECEIVE A SUBSIDY	118
TABLE 24	DOE SUBSIDIES FOR PRE-PRIMARY LEARNERS	120
TABLE 25	SUPPORT FROM DOH/W TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND RECEPTION SITES	120
TABLE 26	GENERAL VALUE OF TRAINING AND SUBSIDY PROVIDED PER SITE PER PROVINCE	122
TABLE 27	COSTS OF COMMUNITY-BASED SITES AS COMPARED WITH PRIMARY AND RECEPTION SITES	127
TABLE 28	NATURE AND DURATION OF READING TASKS; PARTICIPATION OF LEARNERS AND MEDIATION AND ASSESSMENT BY TEACHERS	141
TABLE 29	BALANCE BETWEEN ADVANTAGED AND DISADVANTAGED AREAS IN THE SAMPLE	161
TABLE 30	BUILDING MATERIAL AT COMMUNITY-BASED SITES: CHANGE OVER YEARS	163
TABLE 31	SANITATION: CHANGE OVER YEARS	164
TABLE 32	WATER: CHANGE OVER YEARS	166
TABLE 33	AVERAGE NUMBER OF FIVE- AND SIX-YEAR-OLD LEARNERS PER SITE	168
TABLE 34	PRACTITIONER HOME LANGUAGE	169
TABLE 35	THE MOST COMMON HOME LANGUAGE OF LEARNERS	169
TABLE 36	MOST COMMONLY USED LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION	171
TABLE 37	PRACTITIONERS' KNOWLEDGE OF HIV/AIDS TRANSMISSION: COMMUNITY-BASED SITES	173
TABLE 38	FACILITATING ACTIVE LEARNING	178
TABLE 39	FACILITATING HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT	178
TABLE 40	MANAGING THE LEARNING PROGRAMME	179

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Early Childhood Development (ECD) Pilot Project was launched in 1997 by the Department of Education. The overall pilot was designed to test the interim ECD policy, particularly related to the Reception Year (referred to as Grade R). The Pilot's main objectives include the following, among others:

- Making and testing innovations in the ECD field related to interim accreditation, interim policy and subsidy systems.
- Promoting outcomes-based education and assessment in ECD in line with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- Building capacity, particularly at provincial department level, in conjunction with Research and Training Organisations (RTOs).
- Assuring quality community-based efforts in ECD through subsidies and training.
- Ensuring children receive quality reception year education.
- Researching the most effective means of delivering the reception year.

Under the National ECD Pilot Project, provinces were provided pro-rata funds (totalling R40 million) to initially support subsidies of community-based sites, contract RTOs to provide training towards the achievement of accreditation of practitioners and provincial monitoring subsistence and travel costs. The provinces committed to utilising the funds in accordance with the National ECD Pilot Project Design and to provide provincial funds for years two and three of the Pilot Project. Altogether, 2,730 sites and practitioners were selected by the provinces to participate, reaching approximately 66,000 learners.

Other actors in the National ECD Pilot included:

- The Interim Accreditation Committee (IAC) appointed by the Minister of Education to provide, in accordance with the NQF, the norms and standards for ECD and to set up systems for accrediting both RTOs and practitioners.
- The Information Campaign lasting the first six months of the project to inform practitioners and ECD stakeholders about the project.
- Khulisa Management Services (Khulisa) contracted by the Department of Education (DoE) to provide research and monitoring services.

As part of the research effort, Khulisa was requested to compare community-based sites quality, equity and cost-effectiveness with those of school-based Grade R classes and with Grade 1 classes with a substantial number of under-age learners. In addition, the research brief included examining the appropriateness and realisability of the norms and standards, assessing the adequacy of the subsidies, considering the strengths and weaknesses of the provincial delivery models, and examining the effectiveness of the accreditation system set up by the IAC. Finally, the research team was asked to review other ECD documentation and, combined with three years of its reports, to outline the policy implications for the Minister.

Quality, Equity and Cost-effectiveness

Are community-based reception year programmes providing high quality, equitable and cost-effective education?

How do community-based reception year programmes compare to the quality, equity and cost-effectiveness of reception classes offered at state schools?

In the absolute sense, the majority of community-based sites are not providing high quality education. However, the comparison with primary schools shows that education quality and equity at community-based sites are comparable to those at primary/reception sites. In the area of cost-effectiveness, community-based sites differ dramatically from the other two types of sites. Community-based Grade R provision can be regarded as highly cost-effective for the state, while primary-based Grade R provision (whether in a Grade R or enrolling under-age learners in Grade 1) is more cost-effective for parents.

The education quality at community-based sites has definitely improved over the three-year process, which can be attributable to Pilot Project training, Curriculum 2005 training, and the internalisation of Outcomes-based Education (OBE) methods. At the end of the national Pilot Project, the variation in quality seems to be more apparent across provinces rather than among different site types. When looking at both practitioner performance and the learner assessment results in early literacy and numeracy, about a quarter of community-based sites are offering "high" quality education. One of the areas of grave concern raised during the research is the decline in the early literacy and early numeracy assessment results over the three-year period for the Grade 1 and Grade R classes. One potential explanation of this decline lies in the myths reproduced by teachers that Curriculum 2005 means that they do not need to teach reading¹.

The research team has also seen a distinct improvement in equity over the duration of the Pilot Project. Measured by looking at attitudes, practices and facilities regarding disabilities, gender, ethnic diversity and HIV/Aids, equity indicators again show the closing of the gap between community-based and Grade 1/reception sites. In fact, a higher percentage of community-based sites are accommodating learners with disabilities, working against gender stereotypes, and reflecting ethnic diversity than reception classes, although the percentage is lower than Grade 1 classes.

In terms of the cost-effectiveness of ECD provision by site, answers differ depending on the perspective one takes. From the government's perspective, the provision of Grade R at community-based sites is substantially cheaper for the DoE than providing similar education at schools. The average practitioner's salary is only R688 per month for subsidised community-based sites, but an average full-time teacher earns approximately R6700 per month. The parent/community member bears the cost of food, building/rent and educational equipment at the community-based sites. In contrast, the government covers food (through the Primary School Nutrition Programme), classroom infrastructure and educational equipment. Moreover, the monthly parents' fees at community-based sites are R38/month, nearly three times of the average R12.90/month paid at primary/reception sites. Conversely, it is much more cost-effective for parents to send their children to primary schools (even if the learner is an underage admission into Grade 1) funded by the government.

¹ Minister Kader Asmal, Press Release on the Announcement of the Curriculum 2005 Review Commission, February, 2000.

Norms and Standards

Are the interim norms and standards, outlined under the Interim Policy for ECD adopted in 1996 and developed by the IAC under the Pilot Project, appropriate and realisable?

The report presents some evidence that the current set of norms and standards are appropriate for practitioners, but for greater performance, they need to be refined to eliminate vagueness and ambiguities. Practitioners demonstrated that they were capable of meeting almost all the specific outcomes and the respective assessment criteria at NQF Level 1 for Facilitating Active Learning (FAL), Managing the Learning Programme (MLP) and Facilitating Healthy Development (FHD).

However, the unit standards remain somewhat vague and ambiguous rather than explicit. All specific outcomes were not met at Level 1 particularly practitioners experienced problems with outcomes-based methodologies and discipline (still evidence of corporal punishment). RTOs and practitioners found it difficult to internalise the unit standards. There is increasing evidence from the international literature that non-specific norms and standards do not promote equity in educational delivery because the child's opportunities for learning and development are left to the whim and commitment of the practitioner. Therefore, it is critical that clearer outcomes than those that presently exist in the Norms and Standards document are developed and instituted.

Subsidies

Are the community-based ECD subsidies of R2 per five- and six-year old learner over 200 days adequate and appropriate?

This R2 per five- and six-year old learner over 200 days subsidy scheme is neither adequate nor appropriate. No relationship has been found between the presence of subsidy and the sites' ability to cover costs, indicating that the amount of subsidy is insufficient to help community-based ECD sites to become self-sustainable. However, the presence of subsidy has a positive impact on improving access to resources (rent, food, equipment and capital purchases) and contributed to poverty alleviation.

From a moral perspective, the disparity between the subsidy of community-based sites and primary schools is not fair for either practitioners or parents. As argued above, practitioners at community-based sites are paid much less than those at primary schools by the government, while parents who send their kids to community-based sites pay three times more than those whose children go to state-funded schools. All in all, the subsidy amount is inadequate to provide equitable services at community-based sites.

The subsidy scheme is also difficult or even impossible to implement from the provincial point of view. Due to poor documentation on learner age and absenteeism, it is difficult to determine the number of learners at a site accurately. In fact, this policy might have tempted some sites to report learner numbers falsely, since we found the attendance rate at community-based sites substantially lower than that at primary and reception sites.

Provincial Delivery Models

Which provincial ECD delivery models have been most successful?

There is no simple, straightforward response to this question as each of the provinces has their strengths and weaknesses in implementing the national ECD Pilot Project. The Northern Cape and the Western Cape adhered most closely to the Pilot Project implementation plan. KwaZulu-Natal administered the subsidies in an innovative way by subsidising practitioner salaries and educational equipment rather than individual learners. Gauteng's adaptive model was the most integrative of other government departments' (e.g. Health, Welfare, Local Government, etc.) involvement, but did not follow the national Pilot Project's training model. On the other hand, Mpumalanga, Free State, Eastern Cape, Northern Province and the North West experienced serious problems in project implementation.

Nevertheless, many lessons are learnt from this implementation process:

- Strong political will in provinces is crucial for government intervention projects such as the national ECD Pilot Project.
- Funding for national projects should be ring-fenced, as some provinces used the funding for other education-related expenditure.
- Setting up a separate subsidy system for this project was extremely labour intensive, and too difficult for some provinces.
- Using the number of five- and six-year old learners as the determining factor for the issuing of subsidies is very difficult due to poor documentation of learner ages.
- Some provinces mastered the tendering process, whereas others found this very difficult, and need additional capacity building.
- The link between ECD personnel and the Foundation Phase provincial personnel was effective in only half of the provinces, in the remaining half work needs to be done in this area.
- RTO performance in the provinces was also variable, with few able to accurately implement recognition of prior learning (RPL), some actually assessing practitioners through follow-up visits and few informing their participants of how their training fits into the National Qualifications Framework.
- Provincial human, financial and infrastructural resources to support ECD provincial work are variable and, in most cases, inadequate for the provinces to carry out appropriate monitoring of ECD sites. These include: not enough personnel; personnel with many other duties besides ECD; lack of funding for transport and materials; and lack of transport and communications facilities.

Accreditation

Is the IAC/provincial interim accreditation system developed under the Pilot Project effective?

In the research team's opinion, should this accreditation system become a permanent structure?

The accreditation process was operationalised during the last six months of the life of the national ECD Pilot Project, which makes a true assessment of the effectiveness somewhat problematic. Nonetheless, the RTO and practitioner accreditation processes appear to already have had an impact and therefore appear to be an effective spur to transformation. It has the potential to be effective and should definitely evolve into a permanent structure, provided that the following recommendations are considered:

- The processes need more transparency (practitioners being informed of the elements involved) and feedback (all parties being provided the results and comments of moderation visits).
- An accreditation structure for elective unit standards and referrals for fundamental unit standards should be developed.
- More training is required for RTOs to internalise the accreditation requirements and processes.
- The processes in general need to be strengthened and made more rigorous (more than one moderation visits and at least two moderators working independently, more time spent for each visit, emphasis on training practice and practitioner performance in a real setting, etc.).
- The accreditation of RTOs should be linked with their summative assessment of practitioners.
- Practitioner assessment of learners, moderated by RTOs and ultimately by the Quality Assurance Body that replaces the IAC, should be added to practitioner accreditation.
- Strong moderation by the ETQA of practitioner accreditation process is recommended for several years before provinces in co-operation with accredited RTOs take over the responsibility.

Policy Implications

Given the emphasis of the national ECD Pilot Project, the research team focuses the discussion on the Grade R provision, rather than on ECD as a whole (defined as birth to nine years old). Key concerns include the best way to:

- Ensure Grade R (and, ultimately, ECD) is a core activity of the DoE.
- Identify the most cost-effective means of providing Grade R.
- Ensure quality provision of Grade R classes, and ultimately of classes addressing younger learners.
- Discourage the acceptance of underage learners into Grade 1.
- Shift the burden of providing Grade R education from poverty-stricken families to the state.

- Support long-term poverty alleviation and social development through the promotion of sustainable Grade R provision.

The policy implications discussion draws upon the Khulisa research findings, IAC contributions, Co-ordinating Committee for Early Childhood Development (CCECD) and provincial reports, University of Cape Town (UCT) entitled "Learner Progress and Achievement Study" (June 1999) and the UNICEF-sponsored workshop for the provinces on the future of Grade R and ECD (October 1999).

Grade R should become compulsory.

The DoE's promise in the White Paper on Education that ten years of compulsory education will be provided should be fulfilled with making Grade R compulsory according to Provincial representatives at the UNICEF 1999 workshop. It was also generally agreed that the provision of Grade R should be phased in over a five-year period, since it is unrealistic for all provinces to reach 100% provision overnight.

The new Admission Policy will not eliminate underage learners.

There are strong incentives for both schools and parents to enrol underage learners in Grade 1 classes. For schools, the principal's salary, the allowable staff complement and other resources all increase with the size of the learner population. For parents, it is clear that the cost (including fees and access to food) of sending children to state-funded schools is much lower than that of sending them to community-based ECD sites. Parents believe that their children are more secure attending primary school and some parents believe that their children can avoid social problems affecting adolescents if they complete their schooling early. Finally, the school administrator typically empathises with the parents' desire to have their children in the school. Even if the admissions policy were more firmly policed, the evidence shows that the current collusion between parents and schools to enrol underage learners would continue.

The location of Grade R classes should be determined by provincial DoE's financial capacity and the ability to monitor quality and build accountability.

The research findings show that quality of teaching and learning varies for all site types. The research team thus proposes a combination of Grade R classes offered at primary schools and community-based sites (given the provisos below).

Schools should be strongly encouraged to start Grade R classes by adapting the norms and standards for school funding, which allows them to include Grade R as a legitimate expense for the school and to count Grade R learners as part of the school's learner population. By doing so, the school-based incentives to enrol underage learners in Grade 1 classes are transformed into incentives to set up separate Grade R classes for six year olds at the school (although there may still be enrolment of underage learners in Grade R).

Community-based Grade R classes need to be structured in one of the following two ways:

- Follow the KwaZulu-Natal model of subsidising community-based schools as long as they link formally with a primary school. The principal and the School Governing Body of the primary school should then be wholly accountable for the quality of the provision and the funds. The community site should have representation on this School Governing Body. Funding would be provided through the school; or
- amend the South African Schools Act (SASA) so that community-based sites offering Grade R can register as independent schools. Such registration can encourage improved regulation of all sites and promote more rational and equitable funding norms. Based on the SASA funding norms and standards, impoverished communities are entitled to more funding, which is an incentive for most community-based

ECD sites to register. The quality control measures stipulated in SASA would then also apply to ECD sites. Rather than come up with another subsidy system, ECD sites would be integrated into the subsidy system for independent schools.

Use of either of these options should be dependent upon the provincial structure in place to monitor performance and ensure quality: the primary school and their district authority would have to monitor the community-based site; and those community-based sites would be assessed on the same basis as independent schools under SASA.

The government is able to fund Grade R.

Luis Crouch, a prominent educational economist working with the national DoE, states that the lower the level of education the higher should be the ratio of public to private funding. The main reason is that the lower the level of education, the more the public spillover effect. The tighter age-Grade norms are not meant to save money for the government, but to spend the money more wisely.

Not only should the government fund Grade R provision, it also already has some of the resources required to do so. At the UNICEF workshop, provincial representatives estimated that between 20% and 40% of Grade 1 learners are underage, therefore the government is already catering to a large percentage of Grade R learners (albeit inappropriately). These resources can be redirected towards Grade R. Another potential source of funding is the non-compulsory Further Education and Training (FET) band. Finally, increasing educational efficiency will free up resources.

Grade R Quality needs to be improved.

While the primary and community based sites are now offering similar quality, this overall quality is still too low. All the sites participating in the research are historically disadvantaged and generally, impoverished. Therefore, poverty alleviation requires that the educational institutions provide these learners with the skills they are not able to obtain at home. The low early literacy and somewhat higher early numeracy assessment results show that educators are not spending enough time on literacy and numeracy tasks and, even more importantly, have not mastered the methodologies for passing these skills to the learners.

Quality Grade R service requires the following:

- Training in key methodological attitudes, skills and knowledge that is quality controlled through rigorous practitioner and RTO accreditation processes.
- Regular and systematic monitoring of practitioners through observation and feedback by education officials.
- Ensure that practitioners can demonstrate understanding of the expected outcomes or expected levels of performance (ELP).
- Provide more books (the presence of accessible books is highly correlated with improved early literacy assessment results) and educational equipment.
- Utilise registration requirements to ensure that sites provide safe accommodation and educationally enriching environment for learners.
- Professionalise ECD practitioners, e.g. through registration with the South African Council for Educators

(SACE) and encouraging practitioner representation at the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC).

ECD needs to become "core" educational business.

Currently, due to its position and lack of funds, provincial departments regard ECD as peripheral to their core business of schooling. This should change (or rather their concept of schooling should expand to include ECD), but will only change if resources and authority is vested by creating ECD Directorates in the province. The current structure is dysfunctional and *ad hoc*.

A new co-ordinating body should be established to replace the current CCECD that has not been effective in joint decision-making due to its broad representation and loose organisation as a forum. For the new body to be effective, the different stakeholder groups should first meet separately at a sub-committee level and then take the recommendations of the group to the larger forum for discussion or ratification.

The IAC process should be continued and expanded. As suggested in the answer to the research question on the accreditation process, it needs to become more rigorous and extensive for the first several years until the norms and standards are internalised by all training organisations and practitioners.

Possible Grade R implementation issues include the following:

- If ECD stays on the periphery, instead of the core, of DoE's business, the budget for ECD will always be abused. Thus ring-fencing the ECD budget should be one of the key foci of the DoE.
- If the government subsidises ECD salaries, the issue of who is the employer of ECD practitioners has to be clarified. If it is determined that the DoE is the employer, it is important to comply with the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, which requires that employers provide their staff with contracts and comply with minimum wage (presently at R1,000 per month).
- If the DoE becomes the employer of ECD practitioners, possibly they should register with SACE and negotiate at the ELRC.
- The structure to accredit practitioners still needs more work (particularly the area of elective credits) and should be linked to a career path for non-formally trained practitioners.

ACRONYMS

C2005	Curriculum 2005
CCD	Centre for Cognitive Development
CCECD	Co-ordinating Committee for Early Childhood Development
CDP	Child Development Programme
CECE	Community Early Childhood Education
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DoW	Department of Welfare
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EEA	Educators Employment Act
ELC	Early Learning Centre
ELRU	Early Learning Resource Unit
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FAL	Facilitating Active Learning
FCW	Foundation for Community Work
FETC	Further Education and Training Certificate
FHD	Facilitating Healthy Development
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
HEDCOM	Heads of Education Departments Committee
HoA	House of Assembly
HoD	House of Delegates
HoR	House of Representatives
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IAC	Interim Accreditation Committee
ISASA	Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa
MERTOF	Mpumalanga Education and Training Organisation Forum
MLP	Managing the Learning Programme
NEF	National Educare Forum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NTT	Northern Training Trust
PSNP	Primary School Nutrition Programme
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Resource and Training Organisation
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SAPPI	South African Pulp and Paper Industries
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	Standard Generating Body
SO	Specific Outcome
TREE	Association for Training and Resources in Early Education
UCT	University of Cape Town
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

TERMINOLOGY

In this report, the terms learner and practitioner are used rather than pupil/student and teacher/educator, respectively.

The word "significant" is used throughout the report in lieu of specifying the exact p-value for that finding, and indicates that the findings are statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level (p-value <0.05).

PREFACE

This study on the National Early Childhood Development (ECD) Pilot Project was conducted by Khulisa Management Services (Khulisa). It is the last in a series of three reports to research the effect of the Pilot Project and to prepare policy for the Minister of Education. Previous reports, in year one and two, have provided the baseline and interim information on the Pilot Project status. This final report is to compare the findings in year three with those in year one and two and thus provide information to the Minister of Education in order to finalise ECD policy from the Pilot Project. The report fulfils, in part, a requirement of the Department of Education (DoE) Tender No RT 9928 SP.

Data for this impact study was collected through provincial field research, encompassing interviews with principals and practitioners, classroom observation and assessment of five- and six-year-old learners. Khulisa would like to acknowledge the national and provincial departments of education and their staff for their co-operation and contribution.

The research team and the DoE ECD Directorate jointly took into account all comments on the draft report that were available when finalising it.

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the research and monitoring team and not of the national and provincial departments of education. Similarly, errors in this report are the responsibility of the authors alone and should not be attributed to the national and provincial departments of education.

1 INTRODUCTION

Khulisa Management Services (Khulisa) was contracted by the Department of Education (DoE) to provide research and monitoring services for the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Pilot Project in 1997. The ECD Pilot Project business plan, approved by the Minister of Education and the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM), specifies that the research should examine how reception services are provided at the pilot sites and, for purposes of comparison, at state-funded schools. The purpose of the research, which is not evaluative, is to provide information to the Minister of Education in order to finalise ECD policy. Neither the Pilot Project nor the research is intended to question the constitutional right of children to access a reception year, but instead examines how best to offer reception year services. As the final study, this report compares the research findings in all three years of the Pilot Project to answer the following research questions:

QUALITY, EQUITY AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS

- Are community-based reception year programmes providing high quality, equitable and cost-effective education?
- How do community-based reception year programmes compare to the quality, equity and cost-effectiveness of reception classes offered at state schools?

NORMS AND STANDARDS

- Are the interim norms and standards, outlined under the Interim Policy for ECD adopted in 1996 and developed by the IAC under the Pilot Project, appropriate and realisable?

SUBSIDIES

- Are the community-based ECD subsidies of R2 per five- and six-year old learner over 200 days adequate and appropriate?

PROVINCIAL DELIVERY MODELS

- Which provincial ECD delivery models have been most successful?

ACCREDITATION

- Is the IAC/provincial interim accreditation system developed under the Pilot Project effective?
- In the research team's opinion, should this accreditation system become a permanent structure?

These seven research questions were developed in response to the DoE tender requirements and subsequently "workshopped" with the Interim Accreditation Committee (IAC) technical secretariat and the DoE.

This report is structured in the following way to ensure that answers to the research questions are solidly based on facts and data found during the three-year monitoring process. It opens with a description of provincial models delivering the ECD Pilot Project (Chapter 4), and continues with a

discussion on the interim norms and standards (Chapter 5) followed by an examination of the interim accreditation process (Chapter 6). The report then analyses the quality and effectiveness (Chapter 7) and the cost (Chapter 8) of the Pilot Project, from which the cost-effectiveness of the Project could be determined (in Chapter 8). In Chapter 9, the report focuses on answering the research questions, based on the data that have been examined in previous chapters. The report offers a more in-depth discussion of the key issues that have emerged from the three-year implementation of the Pilot Project in the last chapter (Chapter 10). This chapter also explores policy implications of the main research findings and makes policy recommendations. Attached to the report are the following appendices:

- Appendix A: IAC Contribution to the Research Report.
- Appendix B: Site Information.
- Appendix C: The Calculation of the Change Scores for the Practitioner Performance.

The National ECD Pilot Project will end in March 2000, however, many of the provinces have committed to continuing the pilot into the future (particularly those that started the pilot later in the project time line). The efforts to improve the ECD quality, however, will go on. It is the hope of the research team that this report will assist policy making in the ECD field and contribute to the improvement of ECD provision throughout the country.

2 OVERVIEW OF THE ECD PILOT PROJECT

In early 1996, the DoE completed an implementation plan for a national ECD programme to establish a Pilot Project for supporting community-based ECD. This implementation plan was accepted by the provinces through the HEDCOM. The purpose of the Pilot Project was to develop systems and models for new policy implementation to ensure that children eligible for the reception year had improved access to quality education.

2.1 Objectives

This Pilot Project provided the framework for:

- Making and testing innovations in the ECD field related to interim accreditation, interim policy and subsidy systems.
- Promoting outcomes-based education and assessment in early childhood in line with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- Building capacity, particularly at provincial department level, in conjunction with non-governmental organisations (NGOs).
- Assuring quality community-based efforts in ECD through subsidies and training.
- Ensuring children are receiving quality reception year education.
- Researching the most effective means of delivering the reception year.

Other objectives mentioned in provincial business plans included:

- Development of ECD programmes and policies to achieve the proposed 10 years of compulsory education.
- Contribute to the development of the National Qualifications Framework and standards for practitioners.
- Provide a career path for ECD practitioners.
- Establish a set of accreditation criteria.
- Create a sustainable subsidy system.
- Engage the private sector in funding ECD programmes.
- Develop the capacity of the provinces and of individual communities.

2.2 Minimum Criteria for Selection of Pilot Sites

The national implementation plan stated that the minimum criteria for selection of pilot sites were:

- Subsidy funding would only be available to community-based ECD sites since school-based ECD sites are already subsidised out of the provincial budgets.
- Only sites not receiving a state subsidy would be eligible.
- The programme served the most disadvantaged families and learners.
- Sites should have been in existence for a minimum of three years.
- The maximum practitioner-to-child ratio was to be 1:40 and at least half of these children must be younger than five years old.
- Families must contribute to the ECD programme either in kind or through financial fees.
- The site must have an adequate financial system to account for funds, including:
 - A bank account.
 - Two signatories on every cheque.

The following criteria were not mandatory, but were to be met during the three-year implementation period:

- Sanitation.
- Clean water.
- Nutrition.
- Safety.
- An environment that promotes learning.
- Access to literate and numerate adults.

2.3 Minimum Criteria for Selection of Practitioner

The ECD practitioner should:

- Have completed Std. 8 and ECD experience.
- Agree to further specialised ECD training.
- Collect and give data about the programme for research purposes.
- Complete work assignments and be monitored and evaluated.

2.4 Minimum Criteria for Selection of NGO Training Contractors

NGOs must:

- Provide their curriculum and demonstrate its relevance to the level of training and the context of sites via IAC approval.
- Show that the organisation is capable and has expertise in the ECD field.
- Demonstrate a commitment to building community-based ECD sites.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the NQF and the Interim Accreditation Guidelines for ECD practitioners.
- Submit quarterly reports on expenditure to the Pilot Project manager.
- Have a well-established financial operational system through at least two years of recorded financial reports.

2.5 Organisational Structure

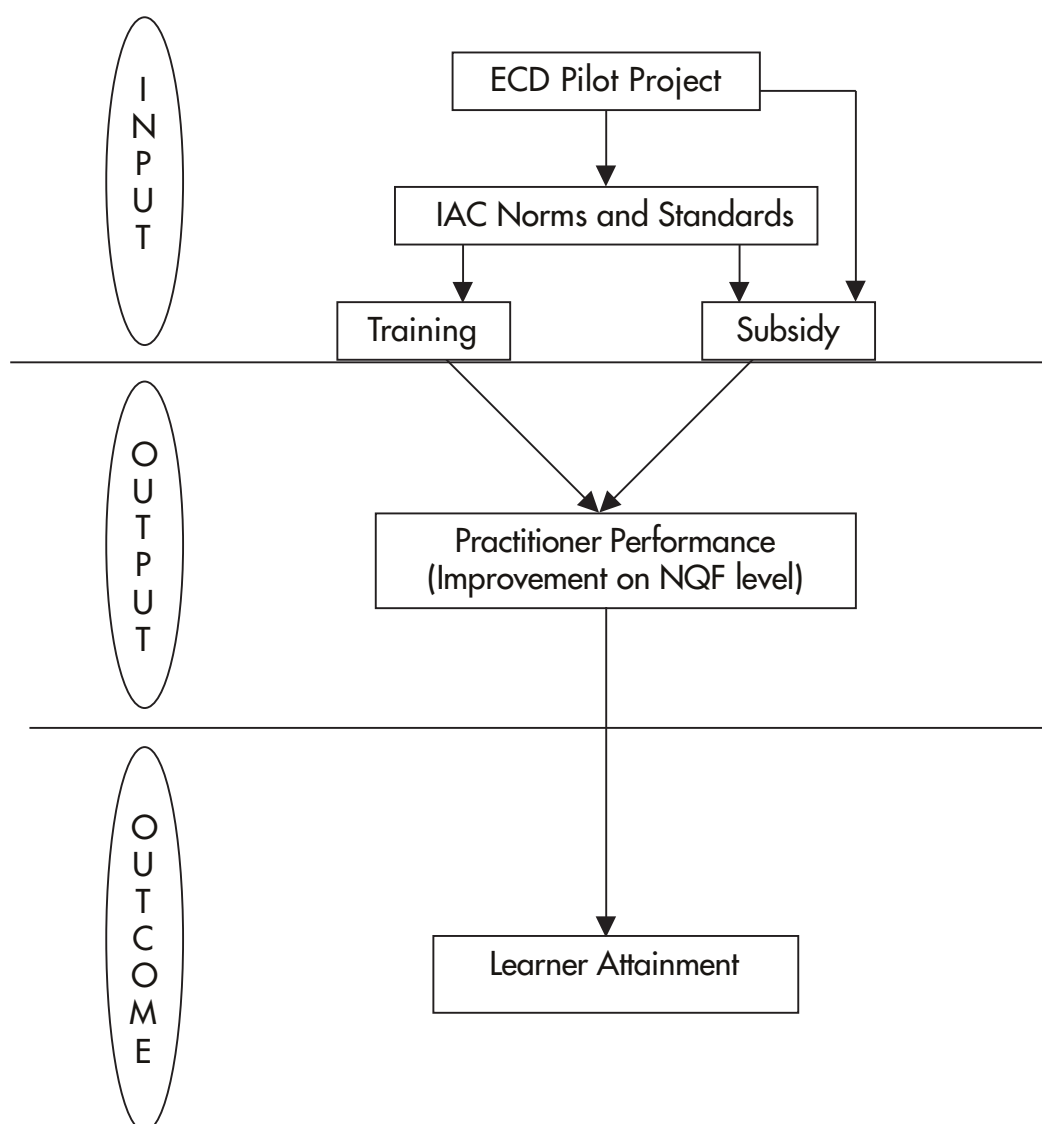
2.5.1 Clustering and Training

- Community-based reception sites will as far as possible be clustered within the districts.
- Clusters will meet with district ECD officials for training and support and select representatives of both the service providers and parental bodies to represent ECD at the district and provincial levels.
- Training should take place as close to the point of delivery of the ECD service as possible in order to reduce transportation costs.
- The provincial ECD will distribute information on the ECD Pilot Project to all primary and secondary schools in order to link the reception site to further education.
- District ECD officials will be involved in all NGO-sponsored training.

3 REPORT METHODOLOGY

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The diagram below demonstrates the conceptual framework underlying the Pilot Project. The national ECD policy has specified that norms and standards be drawn to guide the training of practitioners. On the other hand, community-based ECD sites are supposed to be subsidised to improve the quality of ECD service. If the ECD Pilot Project has been implemented appropriately, practitioners should move up from one level on the NQF to another and should perform better in classrooms. Learners, as a result, would learn better and thus perform better during assessments as compared to previous years. The research, therefore, looks at the input of the ECD Pilot Project — norms and standards, training and subsidies — on the one hand, and the output of it — practitioner progress and learner attainment — on the other. In order to respond to the research questions, it is important to assess whether improvements have been made with practitioner and learner performance and whether such improvements are a direct result of the ECD Pilot Project.



3.2 Research and Data Collection Instruments

Table 1 below links each research question with the particular section in the instrument used in this study that operationalises the question, the technique used to collect data, and the section in this report that discusses the research results.

Table 1: Methodology

Research Questions	Instrument Section	Data Collection Technique	Report Section
Quality, Equity and Cost-effectiveness	Section 1: Site Information	- Interview with principal	Chapter 7: Quality/
	Section 2: Practitioner Information		Effectiveness
	Section 3: NGO Training	- Fieldworker observation	Chapter 8:
	Section 4: Financial Information	and verification	Finance and Cost-
	Section 5: Fieldworker Observation Learner Assessment	- Interactive exercise for learners	Effectiveness
Norms and Standards (FAL, FHD and MLP) ²	Section 1: Site Information (mainly on FHD and MLP)	- Interview with principal and practitioner	Chapter 5: Norms and Standards
	Section 2: Practitioner Information		
	Section 5: Fieldworker Observations	- Fieldworker observation and verification	
Subsidies	Section 4: Financial Information	- Interview with person responsible for finance - Fieldworker verification	Chapter 8: Finance and Cost-Effectiveness
Provincial Delivery Models	Section 4: Financial Information (Main information comes from Annual Provincial Reports)	- Interview with person responsible for finance	Chapter 4 Provincial Delivery Models
Accreditation	Section 3: NGO Training (Main input comes from the IAC)	- Interview with practitioner	Chapter 6: Accreditation

In order to maintain the comparability of the data over three years, the year-three instrument includes all the questions asked in previous years' instruments. On the other hand, we improved and expanded the previous years' questions to capture practitioners' advancement from one level on the NQF to another in year three. A large section of fieldwork observation was designed to obtain qualitative data on how the practitioner utilises the norms and standards to work with learners. By looking at what is

2 FAL: Facilitating Active Learning; FHD: Facilitating Healthy Development; MLP: Managing the Learning Programme.

happening in a classroom against the specific outcomes specified in the Norms and Standards document, we are able to tell whether practitioners are making progress in delivering the ECD service.

The interactive learner assessment exercise was the same as that used in baseline research, except for a few changes in wording to avoid confusing learners. The assessment was developed in such a way that it was non-threatening and enjoyable for the learners, as well as not having a negative impact on the learners. The assessment methodology specified that:

- The fieldworkers score the responses with a "0" or a "1" rather than with an "X" or a "tick", thus ensuring that, if a learner accidentally saw the scoring, they would not interpret it as right or wrong.
- The fieldworkers be trained to provide a positive aura around every learner response, even when the learner provided the wrong response.
- Each section of the assessment (numeracy, literacy and life skills) started with very easy questions to ensure that the learner was at ease and comfortable with the assessment exercise.
- A general assessment is taken to measure how comfortable the learners were with the assessment exercise.

3.3 Site Changes

To make the data comparable over all three years, the team visited 209 sites in year three: this is the same number of sites visited in year two but one less than in year one. The reason that one site had to be dropped, was that two fieldworkers mistakenly visited the same site in 1998, and this site was consequently registered as two separate sites in the database. Table 2 below shows the number and type of sites visited in year three by province.

Table 2: Sample Sites: by Site Type and Province

	Community-based Sites	Grade 1 Sites	Grade R Sites	Total
Eastern Cape	13	6	6	25
Free State	12	6	6	24
Gauteng	12	0	0	12
KwaZulu-Natal	12	6	6	24
Mpumalanga	12	7	8	27
North West	12	7	6	25
Northern Province	13	6	5	24
Northern Cape	12	6	6	24
Western Cape	12	0	12	24
Total	110	44	55	209

The research and monitoring team originally envisaged fieldwork at 12 community-based and 12 school-based reception year sites in each province (totalling 216 sites). However, in a letter from the Director General of Gauteng, dated 25 September 1997, the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) explained why the province could only participate in the baseline study fieldwork at

community-based sites, and not at school-based sites. The letter stated that:

- The GDE admission policy excluded learners under compulsory school age.
- The GDE had decided not to establish reception year classes as part of compulsory schooling unless it was possible to make this available to all learners.

Fieldwork in Gauteng was consequently completed only at community-based reception year sites.

The research team intended to maintain the same sample of sites as those used in previous years to ensure comparability across years. However, due to factors beyond the research team's control, six sites visited in 1998 had to be replaced in 1999 as explained below. All the new sites are consistent, in terms of site type, province and community demographics, with the sites that they replaced, so the representativeness of the sample and the comparability of the data have not been compromised.

Among the six sites that were replaced, five are community-based sites (two in Western Cape, one in Eastern Cape and two in Mpumalanga) and one is a Grade-R site in Eastern Cape. Fieldworkers found that five out of the six sites closed down, while the Grade-R site did not have the class any longer.

Unless otherwise indicated, the following findings are based on data gathered at 110 community-based sites, 44 Grade 1 sites, and 55 Grade R sites.

A principle of the fieldwork was to interview the same practitioners that the team visited in previous years. In year-three fieldwork, 80.9% of practitioners at community-based sites were the same as those interviewed in 1998, while only 69.1% of the interviewees were constant over the three years of research. In other words, 76 out of the 110 practitioners at community-based sites have been interviewed three times for this study and 89 have been interviewed in 1998 and 1999. Obviously, out of the 21 practitioners who were new to the research team in year three, five were due to site replacement. The reasons given to the remaining 16 "new" practitioners are as follows (in descending order in terms of frequency): "Has left the site" (8), "Is still at the site but is no longer responsible for this [reception year] class" (3), "on study leave" (2), "on maternity leave" (1), "was expelled/retrrenched" (1), and "at a meeting" (1).

At Grade 1 sites, 34 out of 44 practitioners (77.3%) whom we interviewed in 1998 were still there in 1999. Only at 26 of the 44 sites (59.1%), the team was able to interview the same practitioner in all three years. The situation at Grade R sites was slightly better. Thirty-eight of the 55 practitioners (69.1%) we interviewed in 1999 were the same as in 1998. A total of 36 practitioners (65.5%) have been interviewed in all three years. Combining Grade 1 and Grade R sites as the control group, "Is still at the site but is no longer responsible for this class" is the most frequently mentioned reason that practitioners in 1999 differed from 1998 (15). "Has left the site" is the next frequently recorded (4), followed by "on maternity leave" (3). There was one practitioner each who "went to study further," "on pension" and "is absent without leave." Two practitioners did not know whether they were interviewed in 1998.

3.4 Fieldwork

Fieldwork was conducted annually between August and November 1999. The fieldworkers spent one full day at each site, starting with observing the practitioner and the five- and six-year-old learners for one hour, interviewing the principal, the practitioner and the person responsible for finances. At many community-based sites, the same person fills all these roles. Four five- or six-year-old learners were assessed at each site. At some sites, such as Grade 1 and small-scale community-based sites, there were no or not enough five- or six-year-old learners. Fewer than four learners, therefore, were assessed at these sites.

4 PROVINCIAL DELIVERY MODELS

This chapter responds to the research question: *Which provincial ECD delivery models have been most successful?* The first section begins with a summary of the number of beneficiaries to the National ECD Pilot Project (sites, learners and practitioners), and continues with the amount spent over the three-year period on subsidies and training by each province. Then, provincial summaries of the Pilot Project are provided. These summaries pay particular attention to the number of sites in each region, the subsidy amounts, the provision of training and the provinces' plans for the future provision of Grade R.

The next section of this chapter includes qualitative case studies, which provide a detailed picture of practitioner quality – strong, average, weak and unacceptable. After this qualitative picture of a typical site, we summarise the sites visited by the fieldworkers by quality and discuss the implications by province.

Table 3: Summary of Number of Sites, Number of Learners and Number of Practitioners

Province	Total No. Sites		Total No. Sites 1998	Total No. Sites 1999	Total No. Learners		Total No. Learners 1998	Total No. Learners 1999	Practitioners		Practitioners 1998	Practitioners 1999
	Business Plan 1997	1998			Business Plan 1997	1998			Business Plan 1997	1998		
Eastern Cape	266	234	234	232	10,645	5,832	7,973	266	234	232	232	
Free State	145	145	145	100	5,000	450	450	145	100	100	100	
Mpumalanga	300	203	203	190	5,868	?	?	300	203	190	190	
Northern Province	468	468	468	450	9,349	?	?	468	468	450	450	
Gauteng	540	998	998	935	7,779	42,871	40,723	540	899	815	815	
KwaZulu-Natal	275	248	248	248	10,000	4,980	5,082	275	248	250	250	
Western Cape	200	216	216	220	5,870	5,870	6,293	200	199	192	192	
North West	152	191	191	181	6,141	?	5,325	152	?	300	300	
Northern Cape	384	149	149	149	5,118	?	?	384	168	168	168	
Total	2730	2852	2852	2705	65,770	60,003	65,846	2730	2519	2519	2697	

"?" indicates that the province has not provided the research team with the relevant data.

As is evident from Table 3, two-thirds of the provinces have fewer sites in 1999 than they had anticipated in their 1998 business plans. Unfortunately, only five of the nine provinces were able to provide the number of learners in both 1998 and 1999. Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape increased the number of learners, while Gauteng decreased. The data about the number of practitioners was more complete, with only North West province not providing the number of practitioners in 1998. Five provinces have fewer practitioners in 1999 than they did in 1998. The number of practitioners increased slightly in KwaZulu-Natal, while it remained the same in Free State and Western Cape. There are some areas of potential concern. The Free State learner numbers are particularly low – an average of four or five learners per site. Most provinces have average learner-to-practitioner ratios well within the limit of 40 (34.37 for Eastern Cape and 32.78 for Western Cape) and thus may be simply increasing the efficiency and viability of their centres. However, this is a trend that must be carefully monitored. Much more disturbing is Gauteng, where the decrease in learners has been outpaced by the decrease in sites and practitioners; the average learner-to-practitioner ratio is 49.97. The other provinces that provided information about learners and practitioners in 1999 all have low learner-to-practitioner ratios.

Table 4: Summary of Subsidies

Province	Business Plan FY97	Budget FY97 (April 97-Mar 98)	Expended to date FY97	Budget FY98 (April 98-Mar 99)	Expended to date FY98	Budget FY99 (April 99-Mar 00)	Expended to date FY99	Total Budgeted	Total Expended
Eastern Cape	4,258,021.00	1,548,100.00	515,160.00	3,936,000.00	2,281,220.00	3,936,000.00	0.00	9,420,100.00	2,796,380.00
Free State	2,320,071.00	?	?	?	?	1,592,000.00	?	1,592,000.00	?
Mpumalanga	2,347,366.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Northern Province	3,739,408.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,305,000.00	1,305,000.00	1,305,000.00	1,305,000.00
Gauteng	3,111,624.00	4,500,000.00	?	4,365,000.00	?	4,382,000.00	?	13,247,000.00	?
KwaZulu-Natal	4,400,000.00	?	3,946,406.00	3,000,000.00	2,955,177.00	3,400,000.00	1,561,123.00	6,400,000.00	8,462,706.00
Western Cape	2,347,366.00	2,500,000.00	2,500,000.00	2,500,000.00	2,500,000.00	2,500,000.00	2,500,000.00	7,500,000.00	7,500,000.00
North West	2,456,545.00	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Northern Cape	2,047,121.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,600,000.00	1,122,800.00	1,600,000.00	1,122,800.00
Total	27,027,522.00	8,548,100.00	6,961,566.00	13,801,000.00	7,736,397.00	18,715,000.00	6,488,923.00	41,064,100.00	21,186,886.00

"?" indicates that the province has not provided the research team with the relevant data.

Looking at Table 4, there are indications that figures for subsidy budgeting and expenditure in 1999 were not given by most of the provinces, making comparisons between the provinces and across years impractical. Three of the provinces neither budgeted nor spent any funds on subsidies in 1998. Of those who did, only three provinces provided information on both budgeting and expenditure. Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal spent less than they had budgeted and Western Cape spent its exact budget. Information for 1999 was somewhat better. Provinces ranged from spending none (Eastern Cape) to all (Northern Province, Western Cape) of their budgets at the time their reports were written. North West Province provided no information for any of the years. The inconsistency of the data presented, i.e. some provinces did not present figures for budgeting and/or expenditure for certain years, makes it quite difficult to meaningfully compare the total amounts budgeted and expended for 1997-1999 and between provinces. Of the five provinces that submitted all of the requested data, two (Eastern Cape and Northern Province) expended less than their budgets, two (Northern Province and Western Cape) expended their exact budgets, and one (Mpumalanga) reported neither budgeting nor expending any money for subsidies between 1997-1999.

Table 5: Summary of RTO Tenders

Province	Business Plan FY97	Budget FY97 (April 97- Mar 98)	Expended to date FY97	Budget FY98 (April 98- Mar 99)	Expended to date FY98	Budget FY99 (April 99- Mar 00)	Expended to date FY99	Total Budgeted (Excluding Business Plan)	Total Expended
Eastern Cape	1,600,000.00	675,501.00	675,501.00	1,013,251.80	401,233.24	1,016,000.00	158,494.00	2,704,752.80	1,235,228.24
Free State	900,000.00	?	?	?	?	900,000.00	228,000.00	900,000.00	228,000.00
Mpumalanga	900,000.00	900,000.00	-	-	-	?	?	900,000.00	?
Northern Province	1,400,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,325,000.00	1,400,000.00	1,325,000.00	1,400,000.00
Gauteng	1,200,000.00	1,860,044.00	?	1,860,044.00	?	1,860,044.00	5,460,105.00	5,580,132.00	5,460,105.00
KwaZulu-Natal	1,600,000.00	?	329,545.00	900,000.00	757,046.00	1,250,000.00	464,462.00	2,150,000.00	1,551,053.00
Western Cape	900,000.00	not awarded	not awarded	900,000.00	900,000.00	900,000.00	675,000.00	1,800,000.00	1,575,000.00
North West	900,000.00	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Northern Cape	800,000.00	800,000.00	800,000.00	800,000.00	800,000.00	800,000.00	306,413.01	2,400,000.00	1,906,413.01
Total	10,200,000.00	4,235,545.00	1,805,046.00	5,473,295.80	2,858,279.24	8,051,044.00	8,692,474.01	17,759,884.80	13,355,799.25

"?" indicates that the province has not provided the research team with the relevant data.

Only four of the nine provinces (Eastern Cape, Northern Province, Western Cape, and Northern Cape) mentioned in Table 5 provided all of the requested data on Resource and Training Organisation (RTO) Tenders. As with the lack of information on subsidies, this makes a comparison between provinces and across years quite difficult. All of the provinces that provided budgetary information for 1998 and 1999 showed maintenance of or increase in their budgets. Expenditure on RTOs to date fell between 1999 and 1998 for Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape, and Northern Province, while it increased for Northern Province. Five of the provinces had expended less than their 1999 budgets at the time when they wrote their reports. Northern Province and Gauteng both overspent their budgets, with the difference being quite large in the case of Gauteng. Overall, Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape spent less than they had allocated for RTO Tenders between 1997-1999, while Northern Province spent more.

4.1 Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape Province has a well-designed structure for the implementation of the Pilot Project. However, owing to funding not being available for several months, many aspects of the Pilot Project were suspended. When funding did become available, great effort was made to regain lost ground and restore participant commitment to the Pilot Project.

The Eastern Cape Province is characterised by rural and farming communities. Of its six million inhabitants, approximately one million are children under six years old, and only 14.4% of these children are provided for by the state in ECD programmes. During the selection process for the Pilot Project, the Eastern Cape selected particularly for highly disadvantaged sites.

As part of the Pilot Project, all ECD pilot sites had to open bank accounts. District officials informed ECD pilot sites that they would not receive subsidies until they had been trained in financial management and developed a financial plan.

In the Eastern Cape, there was a decline in the number of ECD pilot sites from 242 to 234. Three reasons were given for this decline:

- Sites were closed because subsidies had not been paid.
- Sites opted for the Department of Welfare subsidy which was larger than the Pilot Project subsidy.
- Sites closed because there was no practitioner at the site.

Local reception sites were to be clustered in groups of three or four within each district. Each cluster was also to be linked to feeder schools for support, and to provide continuity in education. In addition, the targeted reception sites were to be tied to other reception classes already subsidised by the provincial education department.

Five different service providers were contracted to undertake the practitioner training in the Eastern Cape. Four of these providers were each allocated a region and one provider was awarded two regions. A two-day workshop was firstly offered by the Technical Secretariat on the DQF and unit standards for ECD. The lack of transport was identified in the Eastern Cape Department of Education as a major problem in the implementation and monitoring of the Pilot Project, and a serious threat to the delivery of quality education at the school base. Furthermore, no telephones, faxes or photocopy machines were available to staff in the eastern and south-eastern regions, and some districts did not even have electricity, or telecommunication infrastructures.

In summary, by the end of 1999, Pilot Project training and subsidies were implemented intermittently in the Eastern Cape resulting in the delay in the completion of the Pilot Project in this province. The Eastern Cape representative reported in November 1999 that she expected the Pilot Project to be completed in 2000, enabling the process of interim accreditation of practitioners to begin at this point in time. Finally, the Eastern Cape representative commented at the UNICEF 1999 workshop that as formally trained pre-school practitioners leave government service they will be replaced by non-formally trained practitioners to reduce cost.

4.2 Free State

The Free State slowly began implementing the Pilot Project in late 1999. The Free State Department of Education acknowledged the urgent need to establish Grade R classes at all schools in the Free State. Earlier implementation of the ECD Pilot Project was hampered due to financial constraints. The DoE absorbed all the funds originally set aside for the ECD Pilot Project. Consequently, the number of sites in the Pilot Project had to be reduced from 145 to 100 sites, excluding many disadvantaged centres from the project. The Free State is only able to pay a learner subsidy of 50c per child³, which places the Free State out of line with other provinces where payments of R2 per child have been made. To date, no subsidies have been paid.

The slow start of the Pilot Project can further be attributed to the lack of staff on the Pilot Project. In fact, no formal reporting on the monitoring of the ECD Pilot Project has taken place in the Free State because no officials have been dedicated to the project. However, recently there has been sudden and rapid progress in the Pilot Project, which can be attributed to the co-operation of stakeholders in the province and the newly appointed full-time dedicated project co-ordinator. Having a person dedicated to the Pilot Project is essential as the project is a huge responsibility and cannot be managed on a part-time basis.

Kopanang consortium has voluntarily entered into an agreement with the Free State Department of Education for the training of ECD practitioners. Prior to the training, an assessment of the sites and of practitioners' prior learning took place, and RTO trainers attended two IAC workshops on Interim Unit Standards.

Although the Free State has only begun implementation in 1999, the provincial representatives indicated in November 1999 that the province is committed to supporting the Pilot Project for three years. This would indicate the completion of the Pilot Project in 2002.

4.3 Gauteng

Gauteng adapted the Pilot Project and linked it to other funding, to start its own hybrid project called the Impilo Project. Impilo is a series of linked pilot activities designed to develop and test new multi-service approaches to ECD, through cycles of action and reflection, for young children from birth to at least nine years of age. Impilo forms an integral part of the DoE policy development process. Fundamental to the new policy and programmes is the understanding that they be appropriate for the particular needs and circumstances of South African children and their families.

The key assumption of Impilo is that a partnership is essential to meet the basic needs of young children. According to Impilo, it is each and every citizen's responsibility to support the development of children in a holistic way. Since this cannot be done in isolation, all government departments, including health, welfare, education, arts and culture, safety and security, labour and agriculture, need to participate as partners to help build a safety net that will protect the rights of all children. Ultimately, families are the primary caregivers and educators of children. Therefore, Impilo does not prescribe to parents, families and communities how to raise a child, but rather enables and supports

3 Subsequent to the completion of the draft report, the Free State reported during the CCECD meeting that they changed the plan and raised the subsidy amount to R1 per child per day and reduced the number of sites to 87 due to one of their service providers closing down.

them in meeting the needs of their children and to improve their own and their children's circumstances. This has led to a strong focus on community development and income gathering activities.

Meeting children's needs and protecting their rights are clearly central to this new approach. Children's needs should be viewed in different ways, and the following issues are therefore being refined and publicised through Impilo:

- A safe environment, including proper shelter and sanitation.
- Enough good nutritious food to help their bodies grow and fight disease.
- Clean water.
- To feel loved and secure.
- Activities that hold their interest, build concentration and encourage curiosity, independence, perseverance, creativity and co-operation.
- Opportunities to move, to explore and interact with the world around them through play.
- To talk about their experiences with peers, older family members and adults.

The first three major activities in Gauteng are the Impilo District Pilot, the Joubert Park ECD Project and the Kathorus ECD Project. The Impilo District Pilot is the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) adaptation of the national ECD implementation plan. This project provides financial support and training, provided by contracted RTOs, to 1000 ECD sites, enabling them to improve their infrastructure and resources.

Through Impilo, an important and significant step has been taken towards building new ECD policy, whereby the importance of good quality ECD provisioning and the urgent need for a new integrated intersectoral framework that enables partnerships in meeting the basic needs of all young children has been acknowledged.

Some site subsidies have been paid in Gauteng, however, they did not follow the ECD Pilot Project formula of R2 per child per day. It is not clear when the Gauteng practitioners will be prepared for the interim accreditation process although it is expected to take place during 2000.

4.4 KwaZulu-Natal

KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) remains at the forefront of national ECD developments despite an enormous lack of resources. This can be attributed to the dedication of many people, both departmental officials and those from communities who contribute on a voluntary basis to ensure that the young children in the province receive the best foundation for education. KZN has implemented a hybrid of the Pilot Project. Instead of providing subsidy per child, they provide R1,000/month salary and a quarterly subsidy for educational equipment. KZN has completed the Pilot Project with the accreditation process taking place in February 2000.

While the primary focus of the KZN Department of Education and Culture (DEC) is the provision of schools for learners in the compulsory school-going phase (Grades 1-9), KZN highly values the benefits offered by ECD and recognises the importance of Reception Classes (Grade R) for all learners. Consequently, KZN supports the retention of all currently employed Reception Class/Grade R departmental practitioners and is committed to the process of correcting past imbalances regarding provisions of reception classes. According to the KZN DEC policy, the term Grade R (Reception Year) is used uniformly in place of Grade 0, Pre-Primary Class and School Readiness Class, and denotes the year before a learner enters Grade 1.

The Year 2000 KZN DEC's policy⁴ regarding the provision of reception classes states that a primary school may offer reception education only if KZN gives permission for the establishment of a reception class at the school. Furthermore, permission will be granted only to schools after all learners of compulsory school-going age have been admitted, and classrooms are still available. Classroom space at an existing pre-primary school may also be considered a suitable facility for reception classes if the owner of the land, on which the school is based, indicates a willingness to contract in terms SASA (section 14), thereby ensuring the effective use of all available facilities. Such a reception class thus becomes a *satellite* to a primary school, and the practitioner responsible for the reception class reports directly to the principal of the primary school, not the pre-primary school. In such a situation, consultation and negotiation between the primary school and the pre-primary school is important and an agreement must be reached on the provision of Grade R education within the community. A pre-primary school may elect against offering reception year classes. However, if a pre-primary school does offer reception classes for learners, the pre-primary school will have to register with the KZN DEC as an independent school and comply with the requirements of SASA (section 1), which defines a school as "*a public or independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade zero to grade twelve*".

KZN is able to provide only a limited number of state-funded posts for reception classes. In fact, only one state-funded reception class may be established at a primary school, be it on the school's premises or at a satellite facility. Therefore, when deciding on the post allocation for reception classes, KZN will give preference to serving practitioners employed by KZN in the establishment of reception classes, and to applications from schools serving the educational needs of learners of the most disadvantaged communities. If any primary schools have the capacity to accommodate additional reception classes at their own expenses and in accordance with departmental requirements, they may do so with the permission of KZN.

KZN intends to offer in-service training to practitioners of Grade R classes. The practitioner's qualifications should be of a Junior Primary or Pre-Primary qualification, or an ECD qualification at NQF Level 4. The Grade R practitioner is also required to be on duty for the full school day (4.5 hours) as spelt out in the Educators Employment Act (EEA).

At present, many sites and practitioners lack the knowledge of the type of equipment required in such Grade R classes. Therefore, it is expected that over a period of time, all Grade R classes will be equipped by the school/community to meet the educational requirements of a developmentally appropriate Grade R programme.

4 "Guidelines for the Implementation of Grade R in the Year 2000" – submitted to Khulisa Management Services on 10 February 2000.

KZN requires that learners only be admitted to reception classes if they turn six in the year of admission. KZN policy clearly states that under no circumstances may learners below this age be admitted to reception classes, and learners below the age of seven may be admitted to Primary schools only if they have attended reception classes prior to their admission. Any learners who were admitted to school contrary to the current age requirements and who failed Grade 1, may not remain in school unless they now meet the new age requirements. If such learners will be turning six during the current year, the learner can be admitted to a reception class. Otherwise, learners must be de-registered and be re-admitted to a reception class in the year in which they turn six.

4.5 Mpumalanga

The implementation of Mpumalanga's Pilot Project has been limited to the provision of training only. Pilot sites were not given subsidies due to lack of funds. The training provision was uneven given the uneven payment process by the Mpumalanga Department of Education, resulting in the temporary suspension of the project several times.

One of the positive aspects of the Pilot Project in Mpumalanga was the careful and systematic process of site selection, which included visits to each site by departmental officials. The provincial department workshopped the criteria for selection of the sites together with RTOs and stakeholders, and during visits to the selected ECD pilot sites, the following types of sites were identified:

- Pre-schools built and equipped and practitioners paid by DoE.
- Pre-schools attached to primary schools where practitioners are paid by DoE.
- Pre-schools attached to primary schools, but where practitioners are paid out of parental fees.
- Welfare pre-schools, established and cared for by the Department of Welfare, where practitioners are paid by the Department of Welfare and parents.
- Private pre-schools in homes, garages, and shacks.
- Community pre-schools built by the community and paid by DoE.
- Community pre-schools built by community and paid by parents.
- Pre-schools belonging to the private sector, e.g., South African Pulp and Paper Industries (SAPPI).

Site visits also identified several problems regarding buildings, water, sanitation, equipment, salaries, overcrowding, cooking and feeding facilities, fencing, and outdoor equipment.

Since the start of the Pilot Project in Mpumalanga, there have been changes to the original list of participating sites, as well as a drop in the number of learners at each of the sites. Originally, 204 sites were identified and approved for ECD provisioning. However, some of the selected sites were no longer allowed to participate in the Pilot Project because they were receiving subsidies from the Department of Welfare. In addition, some primary schools were taking five-year-olds from the sites and placing them into reception classes, resulting in some sites having to close down. At present, 190

sites are participating in the ECD Pilot Project, and no subsidies have been paid due to lack of funds. Members of the training consortium and education officials attended workshops run by IAC. The IAC workshops covered Unit Standards, Analysing Assessment Criteria and Assessment. Workshops were very informative and well planned and have assisted in the understanding of difficult concepts necessary for the successful implementation of the practitioner training.

The Head of Department gave approval for the training of 300 practitioners by Mpumalanga Education Resource and Training Organisation Forum (MERTOF), the consortium of RTOs that was awarded the tender for training. The training of practitioners has been rather uneven in the implementation of the Pilot Project in Mpumalanga, with some districts receiving as many as 20 workshops and others receiving only one. Furthermore, there has also been considerable variation in the topics presented in the workshops, and practitioners have not been attending the workshops regularly because of financial and transport problems.

Finally, low attendance rates at CCECD meetings and minimal adherence to national reporting requirements means that it is not clear when (or maybe, if) Mpumalanga intends to complete the Pilot Project in the province.

4.6 North West

There is a lack of progress in the Pilot Project in the North West province. In fact, the project has been so delayed that communities are becoming impatient.

The department, together with ECD role-players, has identified 191 potential sites with 4,931 learners and 191 practitioners in the Grade R class. The training tender was awarded in September 1998 to Kopano Training Centre, yet no contract has been signed. Neither has any subsidies been paid to any sites. All the preparation for the Pilot Project has reached a standstill.

The training of practitioners has not yet begun due to the lack of transport for personnel to visit sites and a lack of funds to start the project. Apparently, the funds allocated for the Pilot Project were paid directly to the provincial treasury that has used the money for other purposes (together with funds earmarked for about four other projects). The provincial DoE has urged the treasury to release the fund, but to no avail. There remains an issue of whether the R900,000 provided for the Training Tender and the R2,047,522 provided for subsidies by the national DoE will be utilised for ECD since they were not spent on the Pilot Project.

One reason that ECD Pilot Project may not have been implemented is the already strong emphasis on ECD in the province. An examination of the current ECD provision in North West suggests that between 13% and 15% of reception year age children are enrolled in government sponsored ECD sites (outside of the Pilot Project). In the former Bophutatswana (Bop) areas of the North West, there are 446 Early Learning Centres (ELC) with 1,252 practitioners servicing 14,649 Grade R learners. These Early Learning Centres are community-based sites initiated by the community themselves. The Department of Education, Health, Welfare and Agriculture often lends support when requested by the communities. These centres were then registered with the relevant department. Irrespective of the department running the centre, the Department of Education paid the salaries of all the practitioners on an incremental basis, i.e. the salaries of two practitioners were paid initially when a centre was registered, until all the practitioners at the centre were on the payroll of the Department of Education.

As of 1995, of the 1,600 practitioners in the ELC in former Bop, around 600 were qualified at a minimum level of M+3. The department and the practitioner unions reached an understanding in the same year that ECD practitioners would further their qualifications to M+3 before January 2001.

The Bop government imposed an annual levy of R5 per primary school learner, which went into the Community Early Childhood Education (CECE) fund, held in the provincial treasury. This fund is still largely intact at around R22 million. The fund was meant to assist communities in setting up infrastructure at ECD sites, in purchasing books and education materials, and in providing training for ECD practitioners. Another major project was the erection of ECD Resource Centres (still in progress in conjunction with the Department of Public Works). To date there are seven completed ECD Resource Centres in the province, and four more are under construction.

These Early Learning Centres are rapidly emptying, and in most cases have been forced to close down. The reason for the decreased enrolment is that primary schools are admitting five-year-olds, which is against the national admissions policy, in order to increase their learner numbers and avoid the redeployment of staff.

In the non-Bop area of the province, no government support exists for ECD sites serving historically disadvantaged communities. The responsibility of ECD provision has been borne mainly by non-governmental agencies, parents, and community-based organisations.

4.7 Northern Cape

The Northern Cape started and, indeed, was the first province to complete the Pilot Project in December 1999. This is one of the two provincial Pilot Projects where the accreditation process has commenced by the IAC and will be continued by the provincial DoE. The Northern Cape stayed in line with the guidelines of the Pilot Project with one exception: they were determined that the site should use the subsidy solely for educational equipment and materials.

Although the Northern Cape is the largest province geographically, it is the smallest in terms of population. The province is characterised by severe poverty, and it is estimated that approximately 33% of reception-year age children do not receive formal education. In addition, the province has a repetition rate of 19% in Grade 1, and around 25% of Grade 1 children are older than the prescribed age for that grade level. This condition prevails because many children in rural areas have to attend school far away from their families, and parents are often unwilling to send their seven-year-old children to school because they must walk tremendous distances to get to school or be enrolled in expensive boarding schools.

There is currently a shortage of personnel in the Northern Cape DoE's ECD Unit because posts have been frozen. However, despite this shortage of manpower and transport in the Northern Cape, the Pilot Project has made progress in the provision of education to young children. The Northern Cape Department of Education aims to establish pre-primary classes at every primary school in the Northern Cape. Currently, approximately 104 out of 450 schools have such classes, and the Northern Cape Department of Education has so far supported 146 pilot sites. Unfortunately, underdeveloped structures, financial problems in running of sites, and the lack of sanitation and running water at sites are hindering the progress of individual sites, resulting in sites being closed down. Specific assistance to the site would consequently have to involve appealing to the municipal services to provide sites with water and sanitation, and including farmers in the provision of milk or a basic meal.

The contract for training was awarded to the National Educare Forum (NEF) Consortium, who subsequently contracted two other training consortiums in the province. Training is provided to practitioners from all sites in each of the four regions, as well as to all school-based Grade R practitioners. Further support is provided to practitioners by fieldworkers, appointed by the RTO, to work with practitioners and to conduct fieldwork. The Northern Cape Department of Education holds quarterly meetings with the RTOs to ensure consistency across training and assure the quality of training programmes. In addition to training provided by the RTOs, the Northern Cape Department of Education arranges workshops to guide practitioners in the buying of educational toys and outdoor equipment.

A major problem encountered in the Northern Cape involves the misuse of subsidies by ECD practitioners. The majority of sites in the Northern Cape have therefore been forbidden to use the subsidy for a variety of other things, such as paying salaries, and buying office furniture or food for the ECD sites. The Northern Cape Department of Education has taken several steps to address the problem. ECD sites that used the subsidy for salaries have to pay the money back before further provision of subsidies will be continued. In addition, management council members have to sign undertakings that they will pay the money back within a certain time period, and all ECD sites have to open bank accounts with Governing Body signatories. Consequently, the Northern Cape Department of Education is spending considerable effort and energy explaining the guidelines for using the subsidies.

The Northern Cape intends to continue implementing a subsidy scheme for its community-based sites. The current proposal is to subsidise the impoverished sites that register with social services R4 per 5 or 6 year-old child per day. They expect the Department of Welfare to subsidise the 0 to 4 year-old children. Finally, they intend to encourage the establishment of Grade R classes in primary schools.

4.8 Northern Province

The Northern Province began implementing the Pilot Project late in 1999. To date, the Pilot Project has reached 468 community-based reception sites. No subsidies have been issued as of yet. The Northern Province DoE absorbed funds that were set aside for the Pilot Project. The tender for the training of ECD practitioners was advertised in the first quarter of 1997. There was only one application from a consortium of NGOs and this was rejected.

The tender was therefore advertised again by the Northern Province DoE. A number of applications were received and the Northern Province DoE realised that the proposed training programmes were very different. The department consequently developed a questionnaire and interviewed the RTOs about their training programmes. Departmental officials also promoted the idea of developing a single, common training framework. An ECD expert funded by the United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) facilitated the development of the framework. The tender was awarded to the Northern Training Trust (NTT) in late 1999 and training began shortly thereafter. It is expected that disbursement of subsidies will occur in the near future. The Northern Province has indicated that it will carry on with the Pilot Project for the next two years even though the NTT has to resubmit its application for interim accreditation.

4.9 Western Cape

The Western Cape closely adhered to the Pilot Project model. Twenty-two percent of children in the Western Cape grow up in households below the poverty line, and only around 18% of these historically disadvantaged communities currently have access to ECD programmes. Therefore, an inter-departmental committee, on which the Departments of Health, Social Services and Education are represented, has been established to co-ordinate the efficient and effective delivery of education to young children in the Western Cape. The ECD sub-directorate is responsible for the Pilot Project currently in progress in the Western Cape, and is supported by an Implementation Team, which consists of the Pilot Project RTO, two independent RTOs, colleges of education, technical colleges, as well as the sector's Director of Education.

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) identified approximately 560 pilot sites, the majority of which are public primary schools and the remainder being community-based primary schools. Furthermore, the WCED chose to freeze pre-primary practitioners' posts when these became vacant. In order to provide equity of provision, the WCED adopted the same policy in these institutions as in ECD Pilot Project sites; that is, the posts were replaced by a per capita subsidy to the institution (site) of R2 per day per child up to a maximum of 25 children. Some sites, which were initially included in the Pilot Project, had to be excluded, as they were either receiving subsidies from the Department of Social Welfare Services or were attached to formal schools. At the beginning of 1998, subsidies were paid. The Western Cape Pilot Project will continue for another year.

The fact that 30% of practitioners in the Western Cape are enrolled in informal courses and 15% in formal courses suggests that there is a high potential in the province for training delivery as well as a high level of expertise. Subsequently, the Tender Board representatives of the WCED met with RTOs to discuss the tender for the training of practitioners. The tender for the training of ECD practitioners was awarded to the Early Learning Resource Unit (ELRU) consortium, which consists of six agencies, namely the ELRU, the Alpha Community Projects, the Centre for Early Childhood Development, Ekuhlaleni Community Pre-school Project, the Grassroots Educare Trust, and the Klein Karoo Pre-school Resource centre.

The topics covered in the training of practitioners included:

- Appraisal of practitioners.
- Learning programmes.
- Learning and resource materials.
- Classroom management.

Trainers also visited sites and conducted assessments of practitioners on a regular basis. Provincial officials are working closely with all stakeholders to ensure that progress is being monitored on the Pilot Project in the Western Cape.

For the future, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) is currently planning to amalgamate their registration requirements with those of the Departments of Health and Welfare. This should ensure less paperwork for the sites and consistent policy from the government. The WCED plans to carry on subsidising community-based sites, although they may increase the amount to R3 per child per day. Schools are allowed to start Grade R classes throughout the Western Cape if they have consulted appropriately with the community. The Western Cape reported during the 1999 UNICEF

workshop that it intends to stop funding pre-school practitioners – instead when a practitioner leaves a pre-school the site and another disadvantaged site will receive subsidies (presumably from the savings gained by not paying this salary).

4.10 Case Studies

The discussions that follow aim to work on two analytical levels: that of the province, and that of the individual site. The first part of this section explores in greater detail four case studies. Each case study described, is in order for the reader to develop a detailed understanding, of the sites in the Pilot Project.

The case studies are based on four existing sites (which remain un-named) and describe how the practitioner interacts with her learners. The strong case shows an example of a practitioner practising ECD principles particularly effectively and innovatively. The average case describes a practitioner practising some but not all of the principles of ECD practice covered in the training. Where a practitioner is practising very few, if any, of the principles covered during the training is described as a weak case. Finally, a practitioner who is in direct contravention of all those principles advocated by the ECD Pilot Project is described in an unacceptable case.

The second part of this section begins with a tabulated summary of the sites within each province, rated in terms of how congruent practitioner practices were with the standards set by the IAC for Level 1. The provinces with the highest proportion of strong cases are discussed as potential delivery models with reference to the particular contexts in which the Pilot Project has been implemented in each province.

4.10.1 A Strong Case Study

The practitioner described here works at an ECD site in a relatively poor area that is categorised as rural but is not on a farm. The practitioner's highest educational qualification is Standard 8, and she is responsible for 40 registered ECD learners.

The day begins: "The practitioner calls learners in from outside by going to them and asking them to come in. They put chairs in a semi-circle and the practitioner leads them in [singing] two songs. They sing a song in English about the days of the week...."

The theme governing today's activities is winter. The practitioner begins by discussing winter, but later links winter to the concept of fire in such a way that the learners clearly understand the relationship between them: "She introduces safety around fires into her discussion on winter...the story and songs/rhymes are about fire and winter and how these affect us."

She is apparently very capable when it comes to keeping the learners stimulated throughout the day, and this is explained by the fieldworker in terms of the following: "She asks questions. She brings items that are familiar to the learners and uses these in a real experiment [concerning fire and how this starts and which materials catch fire more easily]. She is lively and involves herself, participating in the action songs and games."

Learners are assisted with comprehension throughout by her use of the following methods: "The practitioner speaks clearly to the learners in both Zulu and English. She checks their understanding by asking questions. She keeps them moving through the programme so that

they never seem to lose concentration." She works with learners in a variety of formats, allowing learners to choose at the beginning of some of the activities whether they would like to work together as a class, in groups, or on their own. In this way she manages to integrate an element of choice as well as a variety of learning formats into the learning programme.

The practitioner's capacity to facilitate the learning programme effectively and confidently is reflected in her transparent approach to the learners, ensuring that they are always aware of what is expected of them. The fieldworker describes the practitioner as being a good facilitator "by being involved herself, [and] by being very clear about what she is expecting the learners to do." Hence because the learners are aware of behavioural parameters, they are responsive and co-operative: "The learners do not seem to give her any problems and all behave well. Near the beginning of the session they talk about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour."

A variety of educational equipment relevant to the theme is integrated into the learning programme: "leaves, sticks, paper, hand-drawn pictures, story books" to which the learners apparently respond "with great interest". The availability of stimulating educational equipment and books also help to account for the high levels of learner participation and interest observed. The above also testifies to the practitioner being well prepared for the day: "she didn't know I was coming but was very well-prepared with notes, aids, equipment, a story..."

Throughout the activities of the day, the fieldworker notes that the practitioner supervises the learners thoroughly, and is quick to recognise an opportunity to affirm learners: "She watches them when they are playing outside. She introduces safety around fires into her discussion on winter" and "When a learner does anything on her/his own the practitioner praises and asks the group to clap approval." The latter observation also indicates that the practitioner is aware of the importance of her role in the facilitation of positive self-image amongst the learners and applies this principle to her classroom practice. There is no evidence of gender discrimination in her treatment of the learners: "She does not group boys and girls separately and the learners seemed to play with everything."

In terms of her approach to beginning and ending activities and her movement from one activity to the next, again this practitioner demonstrates competence. She uses movement and song to signal the beginning of a new activity. The song that she begins singing is a one with which the learners are familiar, and consequently they join in "happily singing themselves". Each activity is clearly linked to the related themes of winter and fires. The practitioner systematically moves through the programme according to her day's plan until it is break time and the learners are asked "to get their lunch-boxes".

The fieldworker who visited this site elected to make a general comment that reads: "This practitioner has, over the three visits, shown a great deal of determination to provide good learning opportunities for her group. She has always been well prepared with a range of equipment [including] waste [equipment] and other [equipment]. The area is poor but stable."

The above discussion clearly demonstrates practices that meet the norms and standards stipulated for Level 1. In terms of the unit standard Facilitating Active Learning the

practitioner has demonstrated a capacity to "set up developmentally appropriate learning activities...covering all aspects of learning and development" and she is particularly competent in the use of "props" to further facilitate learner comprehension. By accommodating learner choice, she is also attaining the necessary "balance between child-centred (self-chosen, play) activities and adult-initiated activities..." that forms one of the assessment criteria under the aforementioned specific outcome. She also makes use of a "range of techniques for working with individuals, small groups and large groups" which constitutes specific outcome associated with the unit standard Facilitating Active Learning. Another specific outcome, namely that practitioners "interact and communicate effectively with children in a range of situations, including daily routines" and the associated assessment criteria which reads: "[m]usic, songs, rhymes and creative activities are used to help children acquire a second language" are clearly also being met in this ECD learning environment.

In terms of Facilitating Healthy Development, again she demonstrates all the necessary competencies at Level 1⁵. She supervises the learners constantly, and remains responsive to the requirements of healthy physical, emotional and social development. She uses available opportunities to educate them about fire hazards, and has cultivated a classroom environment where the individual learners are affirmed by both their practitioner and their peers whenever they make a contribution.

And finally, the practitioner shows that she is doing all that is required under the unit standard Managing the Learning Programme. The educational equipment, themes, the sequence of activities, together with the way in which she maintains continuity between activities demonstrates that she is more than competent at planning the learning programme in such a way that it is responsive to the needs and interests of the learners. This indicates that this practitioner is meeting standards and assessment criteria applicable to Level 4.

Practitioner performance has also been examined by quantifying qualitative questions in the year-three instruments that measure performance against the unit standards at Level 15. Such analyses indicate that at this particular site examined above, the practitioner obtained 91% of the maximum possible score on FAL, 42% of the maximum possible score on FHD and 68% of the maximum possible score on MLP. Overall, the practitioner's performance was at 62% of the total maximum score. Similar analyses were conducted for learner performance, indicating that the mean achievement on literacy was 20%, the mean achievement on numeracy was 48%, and the mean achievement on life skills was 69%. The percentage change for literacy between 1997 and 1999 in this site was recorded at -16%. This could be attributed to the lack of sufficient books made available to learners. The numeracy scores between 1997 and 1999 improved by 11.4%.

We can therefore conclude that the practitioner whose practices are described above is competent in Facilitating Active Learning, Facilitating Healthy Development, and in Managing the Learning Programme. This case study shows that she is practising the ECD principles covered in the Pilot Project training not only effectively, but also innovatively. Her learners are clearly benefiting from quality ECD delivery.

5 For the details of how the scores on practitioner performance are calculated, please refer to Appendix C.

4.10.2 An Average Case Study

The practitioner whose practices are described below works at an ECD site in a township. This practitioner has received tertiary education, namely a two-year diploma in education, and she is responsible for 34 registered ECD learners.

The theme governing today's activities is 'home'. During the course of the day, the practitioner integrates other concepts into this theme, such as electricity and furniture.

The practitioner begins the day by sitting together with the learners as a class (she works with the learners as a class throughout the day), and referring to a big chart that she holds up to show the learners. The chart illustrates the interior of a house. She begins by discussing the kitchen and what activities usually take place in a kitchen. Throughout this activity she uses a question and answer method to maintain learner interest and to encourage the learners to participate. At no point during the activity does she single out individual learners to answer these questions. The learners seem enthusiastic enough to volunteer responses: "...everyone wants to tell what happens to them at home." The fieldworker explains this in terms of the fact that the theme and focus of the activity constitutes something that is very familiar to the learners: "...she asks them questions [that] relate to their daily life at home...any learner can tell us what happens at their home, how furniture is structured at their homes." The fieldworker describes the activities, educational equipment ("...'my home' chart... [and an] Eskom chart for electric hazards") and vocabulary used by the practitioner is developmentally appropriate for the learners. The practitioner's use of Sesotho, the first language of most of the learners, also assists in ensuring that the activities are accessible.

It is very apparent that this practitioner is most confident facilitating learning when learners are together as a class. However, this means that no opportunity is created for learners to collaborate on activities in groups. This is also associated with the fact that creative activities are not included in the day's learning programme. In this way the practitioner relies exclusively on her capacity to stimulate the learners herself, thereby undermining the potential for the learners to engage in creating and exploring individually or in groups, thereby stimulating themselves and developing skills and a sense of capacity. Furthermore, her exclusive reliance on a question and answer approach to facilitate learner participation is not optimal, as much of the time during such sessions those learners who are not actively engaged in responding to a particular activity are sitting passively. This lack of variety in the types of activities also makes it more difficult to sustain learner interest. The concentration span of 5-6 year old learners will frequently become more limited if the format of the learning programme is not varied.

Music, movement and creative activities are sadly absent in this learning environment, as is the integration of a second language. The practitioner follows an old school approach to teaching wherein the practitioner dictates the shape and nature of the learning programme, leaving little room for learner choice or learner participation beyond the answering of questions. The practitioner facilitation takes the form of her leading all activities while either sitting or standing at the front of the class with all the learners facing her.

Nonetheless, it is apparent that this practitioner is well prepared. The fieldworker notes: "I saw her preparation." To her credit, she also demonstrates a progressive approach to

working with gender differences: "[there are] no racial, religious or cultural differences [between the learners]. Children share a common background. On gender: she discourages gender differences. This is reflected in her teaching whereby she said [that] the kitchen is not for girls only, but even boys 'own' the kitchen." She is also observed integrating issues relating to the health and safety of the learners: "...in her teaching she stresses cleanliness and the health hazards which might result from carelessness [relating to working with electricity]." Furthermore, her activities integrate both life skills and literacy, and the theme assists in providing continuity throughout the learning programme for the day. At the beginning of a new activity, the fieldworker observes her providing a clear introduction and explanation of what the class is going to do. In this way what is expected of the learners is never left unexplained. She also remains aware of when the learners are losing interest: "She ends [an activity] when she feels that it is over for them [the learners]." This means that there is some evidence of a respect for learner-paced learning.

The above case study demonstrates that this practitioner fulfils some, but not all of the requirements stipulated for the Facilitation of Active Learning. In terms of the specific outcome that states that practitioners "...set up developmentally appropriate learning activities, inside and outside, covering all aspects of learning and development" which includes achieving "a balance between child-centred (self-chosen, play) activities and adult-initiated activities" she is not doing well. However, by using charts, she does demonstrate competence in the use of "props" "to facilitate comprehension". At no point does she show any evidence in meeting the Assessment Criteria outlined in the Draft Qualifications Framework (DQF) for Level 4 (which includes the integration of creative activities; tools; imaginative play; learners planning designing and making things; the introduction of novel objects). She also fails to "[u]se a range of techniques for working with individuals, small groups and large groups" which constitutes another of the specific outcomes outlined for the unit standard: Facilitating Active Learning.

In terms of her Facilitating Healthy Development of the learners, again she meets some but far from all the criteria. By her emphasis on hygiene and how to take care when working with electricity, she assists in protecting "the safety of children and adults" which constitutes one of the specific outcomes stipulated at Level 1. However, in terms of the meeting the requirement at Level 1 of supporting the emotional and social development of each learner, she neglects altogether to meet the Assessment Criteria: "[c]hildren are encouraged to learn self-help skills and choose activities for themselves."

Her apparent skills in Managing the Learning Programme are strong in certain areas (practitioner preparedness) but weak in other areas (educational equipment used is one-dimensional in the form of charts; and she over-emphasises life skills and literacy to the detriment of numeracy).

The above analysis clearly demonstrates that in this particular case study, the practitioner covers some of the principles of practice advocated in the Pilot Project training. However she does not succeed in demonstrating an adequate competence in all three of the unit standards and their assessment criteria as these are outlined in the DQF for Level 1. This means that while the learners are being stimulated and supervised to the extent that their engagement in the learning process, together with their physical health and safety are not being neglected, the practitioner is not going beyond the basics. She is not providing her

learners with opportunities to develop their own creative, social and emotional skills.

The same quantitative analysis as that in the strong case study was done for this average case. The practitioner at this site obtained 77.2% on FAL, 36% on FHD, and 56% on MLP. The overall percentage score was 52%, clearly lower than the strong site. Similar analyses were conducted for learner performance, indicating that the mean attainment on literacy was 53%, the mean attainment on numeracy was 83%, and the mean attainment on life skills was 83%. The percentage change for literacy between 1997 and 1999 in this site was recorded at 25%. This positive increase in literacy could not be attributed to the books, as very few were found in the site. The numeracy scores between 1997 and 1999 improved by 19%.

4.10.3 A Weak Case Study

The practitioner whose practices are described below works at an ECD site in an area that is categorised as rural but is not on a farm. The practitioner's highest educational qualification is Standard 9, and she is responsible for 28 registered ECD learners.

The fieldworker who visited this site begins the observations with the following paragraph: "Practitioner introduces songs/rhymes and leads learners into singing. Whilst singing she changes into English and swiftly sings but learners tend to slow down as they show signs of having problems with the English lyrics. The practitioner overlooks this and carries on singing." The remaining observations reflect this same trend: the practitioner seems to facilitate the learning programme irrespective of the needs and responses of the learners.

Picture this: the classroom is empty of educational equipment, the only activity the practitioner facilitates with her class involves the singing of songs with English lyrics that the learners are unable to follow, and the recitation of English rhymes which turns out to be similarly inappropriate: "The practitioner uses Xhosa and then translates together with the learners into English, which the learners hardly follow and [they] can't pronounce the English words." Inevitably, the learners have tried fruitlessly to participate, lose interest and end up "sitting quietly at their tables". This constitutes the practitioner's method of managing learner behaviour: keeping the learners controlled and at their tables. This practitioner adopts a very traditional role, which has the effect of undermining learner participation and choice: "Practitioner dictates and makes activities of her own...practitioner always avoids situations in which learners must have their own inputs."

The fieldworker's notes indicate that in this ECD learning environment, the practitioner rewards the submissive learner. Throughout the day the practitioner works with the whole class during activity time. The fieldworker describes this as follows: "Practitioner addresses the whole class." This statement reflects a further practice: that the learning programme relies on the learners listening to and being stimulated exclusively by the input of the practitioner. However, the potential benefit, albeit limited, of such an activity is further limited by the fact that this input is frequently offered in an inappropriate form for 5-6 year old learners. It is hereby apparent that this practitioner does not understand what constitutes appropriate vocabulary, activities and stimulation in order to facilitate the cognitive, emotional and social development of an ECD learner. And while a second language, English, is introduced, this is at a developmentally inappropriate level. Therefore, from the evident passivity of the learners, we can conclude that this learning

environment clearly does not offer the learners any opportunities to develop a positive self-image or a sense of their own capacity.

While these learners are not being harmed, so to speak, this ECD environment is one in which their learning and development processes could stagnate. This practitioner is neither dedicated, nor responsive to the needs of her learners. She is not prepared, so it is not unexpected that the fieldworker describes the day at the site as being disjointed: [referring to whether the practitioner integrates numeracy, literacy and life skills into the learning programme, and whether this is conducted in such a way that continuity is enhanced] "No bridging done and no introduction to the following activity." The practitioner "simply starts without preparing the learners first"; the learners consequently "follow orders"; and the activity is ended when "she [the practitioner] drops and abandons the activity."

The above case study demonstrates that there are learning environments being facilitated by practitioners who are trained under the auspices of the Pilot Project but who are not satisfying the standards set by the IAC for Level 1. In terms of the unit standard Facilitating Active Learning, this practitioner is neither "facilitating developmentally appropriate learning activities" nor is she using "a range of activities for working with individuals, small groups and large groups". These learners are not likely to be engaged in active learning while the learning programme is being facilitated in the manner described above. In terms of her Facilitating Healthy Development, the assessment is similarly depressing: there is no evidence that either the physical or the emotional and social needs and welfare of the learners are being met. And finally, the Management of Learning Programme is entirely absent: there is no evidence of planning, no theme of other means of facilitating a cohesive learning process for the learners. Activities are abruptly started and ended when this suits the practitioner. The fieldworker could not comment on how the practitioner deals with differences, such as gender and race and culture, as there is no substance to her input. The only activity provided for the learners takes the form of rote learning, and even in that situation learners do not remain engaged as the material forming the basis of the song/rhyme time is developmentally inappropriate. This case study constitutes a weak case as in this situation there is no evidence that learners are experiencing any of the benefits that were anticipated from practitioners who had been trained under the Pilot Project.

Measured quantitatively, the practitioner in this weak case achieved 47.6% on FAL, 18% on FHD, 39% on MLP, and 39% overall, which are all lower than those obtained in the strong and average cases. Analyses of learner performance reveal that the mean achievement on literacy was 23%, the mean achievement on numeracy was 46%, and the mean achievement on life skills was 55%. The literacy scores between 1997 and 1999 in this site declined by 11%. This decrease in literacy attainment for learners could be attributed in part to the poor learning environment and the lack of books in the site. The percentage change for numeracy between 1997 and 1999 also declined by -7%.

4.10.4 An Unacceptable Case Study

The next practitioner works at an ECD site located in a township. The practitioner at this site has a tertiary qualification, a one-year diploma, and is responsible for 32 registered learners.

The following observation sums up the situation at this site: "There is no lesson to be observed. We find the learners sleeping. We asked for the principal. A worker said that the principal went to the shop. We ask for their daily programme because at that time they are supposed to do something, but we find them asleep." This remains the situation for several hours of the morning, up until the fieldworker left the site.

The above situation constitutes the antithesis of the ECD learning environment. There is no learning programme, so to think in terms of unit standards and specific outcomes constitutes a premature exercise. The learners are simply being contained in an environment where nothing is happening except for the default physical development of their bodies.

It is apparent that at the above site, the objectives of the Pilot Project have not been attained. Clearly quality ECD practices are not being delivered to learners in this environment. To the contrary, the cognitive, social and emotional welfare of these learners is being allowed to deteriorate. This extraordinarily significant time in the development of these individuals is not only being wasted, but stagnating relative to their peers in sites that are either analysed here as average or strong case studies. It is environments like this that perpetuate educational disadvantage. Provinces with sites categorised as 'unacceptable' urgently need to investigate the factors that have obstructed the delivery of quality ECD delivery to these learners and thereby inspired this situation.

Quantitative analyses indicate that in this unacceptable case, the practitioner's achievements on FAL, FHD and MLP were 33.3%, 11% and 25% respectively. The overall percentage score was 20%. These figures are once again lower across the sites identified as strong, average and weak. Learner attainment at this site was 38% for literacy, 56% for numeracy, and 63% for life skills. The literacy scores between 1997 and 1999 in this site decreased by 17.9%. This particularly steep decrease in the literacy attainment of learners could be attributed to the poor environment, lack of teaching and lack of books in the site. Likewise the average numeracy score between 1997 and 1999 decreased by 9%.

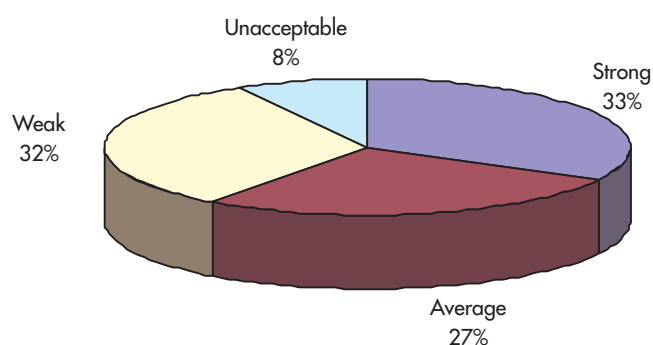
4.11 The Provinces and Pilot Project Delivery

The following table shows practitioner performance in each province measured qualitatively against Level 1 requirements. Figure 1 gives the aggregated result.

Table 6: Provincial Performance based on Level 1 Requirements

Province	Strong	Average	Weak	Unacceptable	Total
Eastern Cape	0	1	10	2	13
Free State	5	7	0	0	12
Gauteng	2	4	6	0	12
KwaZulu-Natal	4	2	6	0	12
Mpumalanga	6	4	1	1	12
North West	0	3	6	3	12
Northern Cape	8	2	1	1	12
Northern Province	5	4	4	0	13
Western Cape	6	3	1	2	12
Total	36 (32.7%)	30 (27.3%)	35 (31.8%)	9 (8.2%)	110

Figure 1: Provincial Performance based on Level 1 Requirements (n=110)



From Table 6 and Figure 1, one can see that a third (approximately 32.7%) of practitioners are practising ECD principles particularly effectively and innovatively. This was somewhat consistent across all provinces, except in the Eastern Cape and North West Province where no strong practitioner performance was found. The potential explanation for the high number of weak sites in the Eastern Cape may be due to two factors:

- This province had more rigorous selection procedures favouring highly disadvantaged sites.
- The Eastern Cape's Pilot Project has been interrupted several times due to lack of funds.

In contrast, the North West sites have not had the benefit of the Pilot Project at all.

In comparison to the other provinces, the Free State reported a particularly high number of practitioners practising some but not all of the principles of ECD practice covered in the training. This may be attributed to the relatively strong RTOs working in the Free State. Many of these RTOs have been training for years.

Since fieldwork took place before training began in the Northern Province, relatively good performance could possibly be attributed to non-Pilot Project-related RTO training (for example, Sekhekuneland Educare Project).

The quantitative measures of practitioner performance match the qualitative measures of the strong, average, weak and unacceptable sites described in the case studies above. Specifically, there is a significant relationship between these categories of practitioner performance and the research team's qualitative measures. However, the quantitative and the qualitative measures indicated that the norms and standards of practitioner performance do not necessarily impact on the learners' attainment of literacy skills, numeracy skills and life skills. A few reasons might account for the lack of a relationship between provincial delivery models and learner attainment. First of all, there are variables that beyond the research team's control that could have blurred the relationship. For example, non-Pilot Project related training has been offered in provinces where no Pilot Project training is happening, the effect of which is impossible for the research team to separate from that of Pilot Project training. Secondly, the quality of training varied across provinces yet is not measured or ranked. There might be some relationship between the quality of training and learner attainment, yet we cannot measure this at the moment. Lastly, RPL has not been implemented appropriately. Thus the level of training that practitioners received may actually replicate previous training.

5 NORMS AND STANDARDS

The Draft Qualifications Framework and Interim Standards (DQF) developed by the IAC in February 1998 under the auspices of the National ECD Pilot Project specifies the three ECD core unit standards:

- Facilitating Active Learning.
- Facilitating Healthy Development.
- Managing the Learning Programme.

Each core unit standard is broken down into specific outcomes (SO) and assessment criteria. The purpose of this framework is to break down barriers between the formal and non-formal sectors, and to enable practitioners to follow a recognised career path. The following section discusses certain findings in terms of how the norms and standards comply with the three ECD core unit standards.

This section draws on fieldworker observations from four of the nine provinces, namely the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, the Northern Cape and the Western Cape. Practitioners in the remaining five provinces (Gauteng, the North West, Mpumalanga, the Free State and the Northern Province), for various reasons discussed in the chapter on Provincial Delivery Models, have either not been trained under the Pilot Project, or for reasons related to implementation had not received the full benefit of Pilot Project training by the time of the fieldwork. The norms and standards as developed by the IAC and published in the DQF were intended to serve as a quality framework for practitioners receiving Pilot Project training. Hence, if the section which follows is to answer the research question – *Are the interim norms and standards, outlined under the Interim Policy for ECD adopted in 1996 and developed by the IAC under the Pilot Project, appropriate and realisable* – the emphasis must be placed on those practitioners who have received training and who are, therefore, in a position to demonstrate if these standards are realistic.

5.1 Facilitating Active Learning

The Facilitating Active Learning unit standard is:

"...intended for practitioners to demonstrate applied competence in managing developmentally appropriate learning activities for young children; in understanding how children learn and what their basic needs are; in observing children and interacting with them in ways that will build self-esteem and develop independence; and in beginning to reflect on their own practice."⁶

A carefully selected number of assessment criteria relating to this unit standard were used as a basis for the observational schedule or instrument that the fieldworkers used. Hence, the discussions that follow are divided into subsections that correspond to the relevant assessment criteria.

5.1.1 Age-Appropriate Activities

The DQF developed by the IAC outlines the following specific outcome: practitioners should "set up developmentally appropriate learning activities, inside and outside, covering all

6 Unless specified as fieldworker observations, the quotes in this chapter all come from "Draft Qualifications Framework and Interim Unit Standards", IAC, National ECD Pilot Project, 1997.

aspects of learning and development". In order to meet the standards required of a practitioner at Level 1, the practitioner must demonstrate that she can facilitate activities that are developmentally appropriate for 5 - 6 year old learners. Two assessment criteria clarify this requirement:

- "The activities and resources are suitable for the general developmental level and interests of the children."
- "The balance between child-centred (self-chosen, play) activities and adult initiated activities is appropriate to the general developmental level of the children."

Furthermore, the DQF demands that:

- "Props, such as puppets or pictures, are used to facilitate comprehension."

The requirement that practitioners facilitate age-appropriate activities becomes more demanding at Level 4 where the practitioner needs to demonstrate that:

- "Spoken language is used effectively to help children internalise what they have learnt."

A basic understanding of child development underpins the provision of a wide range of developmentally appropriate learning activities, inside and outside, to include opportunities for:

- Creative activities.
- The use of tools.
- Gross motor skills.
- Imaginative play and life skills.
- Exploration of the natural world.
- Exploration of the made world.
- Planning, designing and making.
- Early literacy.
- Guessing, predicting, trying things out and reaching conclusions.
- Early numeracy and mathematics.
- Speaking, listening and communication.
- Activities [that] are carefully planned to include both familiar objects and novel objects to ensure that they both allow children to build on previous experience and to face a challenge.
- Large group sessions (like story times or ring times) [that] are timed and managed to meet the development needs of the children.

The fieldworker observations show that ECD practitioners are using age-appropriate language and vocabulary to address the learners. Practitioners frequently make use of the learners' first language as a means of ensuring that "the children internalise what they have learnt" (as stipulated for Level 4). One example of the use of the learners' first language is offered by the following observation:

- "Practitioner uses Zulu with the learners and learners show an understanding of the

language since they join in."

Other ways in which practitioners ensure that the learning programme is suitable for ECD learners include the use of educational equipment (required at Level 1) with which 5-6 year old learners can engage, and the integration of activities that draw on everyday experiences that the learners can relate to: "activity was based on learners' daily life experience". A number of practitioners use simple educational equipment together with appropriate language (frequently the learners' first language) to illustrate concepts. This is demonstrated in the following observation:

- "The practitioner uses simple educational equipment such as painted canned food tins which are in different colours to differentiate between various colours. She further uses simple Xhosa in this."

Some examples of the activities facilitated by practitioners, and the educational equipment used for their 5-6 year old learners are:

- "Waterplay".
- "Painting, cutting and pasting, modelling with dough".
- "She used pictures to illustrate the bible story".
- "Construction toys".
- "Drawing activity at the learners' level".
- "Puzzles...the learners had no difficulty in independently working with them (with little supervision)".
- "Cards...food charts, road sign charts, my body charts, alphabet charts..."

The above examples suggest that ECD practitioners are making an effort to assist their learners to explore the natural and made worlds, and to encourage learners to explore their capacities to create and to make. Evidence of the integration of such activities and educational equipment suggests that many practitioners have gone beyond Level 1 in terms of their facilitation of age-appropriate learning. Practitioners are required to be sensitive to the concentration spans of 5-6 year old learners; therefore, activities need to be appropriately timed. While this was not a common observation, one fieldworker noted: "the song which they were singing was short, simple and interesting." Two more atypical observations, which were nonetheless encouraging, imply that some of the practitioners have developed an age-sensitivity, which corresponds to that required at Level 4. One of these fieldwork observations indicated that the practitioner "checked [her learners'] understanding by asking questions".

However, there is also evidence that suggests the use of inappropriate language for 5-6 year old learners by ECD practitioners. The following three observations provide evidence in this regard:

- "Practitioner uses Xhosa and then translates with learners into English which the learners hardly follow and can't pronounce the English words."
- "Vocabulary used is not conducive to proper learning as the practitioner uses some Afrikaans slang and some of the learners do not understand this. Xhosa [used by the

practitioner] is not up to standard and may confuse the learners."

- "With regards to Zulu, practitioner uses appropriate vocabulary; but when talking English, practitioner tends to use difficult words that learners do not understand."

Concluding Comment

The above observations suggest that ECD practitioners are facilitating age-appropriate learning by using language, often the learners' first language, to introduce and explain concepts to ECD learners.

This process is frequently supported by the integration of age-appropriate educational equipment and "props". This suggests that practitioners are succeeding in meeting the assessment criteria stipulated at Level 1. Some of the practitioners have clearly gone beyond Level 1 by demonstrating their sensitivity towards timing activities appropriately, and integrating activities which help learners explore the natural and made worlds in creative and age-appropriate ways.

Unfortunately there is still evidence of some practitioners using inappropriate language and terminology. However, the observations suggest that this is the exception rather than the rule.

5.1.2 Facilitating Learner Interest

The DQF outlines the following assessment criterion for Level 1, which falls under the specific outcome that insists that the practitioner "use a range of activities for working with individuals, small groups and large groups":

- "Children's interests in a story or group activity is held."

And under the specific outcome "Reflect on own practice", the IAC stipulates that:

- "Changes are made to activities in response to children's needs and their level of involvement."

This need for the practitioner to ensure that learners remain actively engaged in the learning process is translated into a different assessment criterion at Level 4, where (SO-4) it is stated:

- "Groupings for story time allow, where possible, for the different needs and interests of the children."

The fieldworkers observed that only in a minority of cases were practitioners failing to maintain learner interest. What is interesting is the ways in which practitioners succeed in keeping the learners engaged. Most commonly, practitioners use a question-and-answer method, often applied in innovative ways, such as in the following case:

- "...practitioner invites the learners to show their knowledge of how the rain is formed. Learners show interest as their lesson is covered during a rainy day and what is discussed is what is happening outside."

Furthermore, practitioners were often observed facilitating learner participation by inviting

learners to talk about their own experiences and to share stories:

- "...practitioner allows learners to share their own experiences with animals they know in their environment."

The integration of a variety of activities into the learning programme is also being used to keep the learners interested, together with the use of stimulating and often brightly coloured educational equipment. Fieldworkers noted that the integration of physical and creative activities into the learning programme was also effective in keeping learners engaged. The use of dramatisation that allows learners to act out different parts, giving them time to make things out of dough at the "dough table", and allowing opportunities for cutting and pasting are some of the ways in which creative activities were effectively used. Physical activity and outdoor activities were also seen to be effective in holding learner interest:

- "She asked them to do rhymes, while on the other hand performing physically, so everyone was interested. They also sing songs doing physical exercise."
- "They were taken outside, of which you could see that they were happy and that they enjoyed being out."

The use of novel educational equipment was also observed:

- "Practitioner uses new pictures and had thus enticed the learners to be interested in the lesson."

Some learners were kept interested by having to make choices, and by being given time for free play. But as anyone who has ever had prior experience in a learning environment knows, a dynamic practitioner finds it easier to maintain the interests of her learners. Fieldworkers describe how inspired and animated practitioners were able to hold a class more easily than colleagues who were less enthusiastic and entertaining. Some observations described such practitioners as "lively", "involved", "active", using "gestures, facial expressions" and "hand signals" and telling jokes. However, equally important in maintaining learner interest is the capacity of the practitioner to facilitate a responsive learning environment. This was often done by encouraging the learners to clap when one of their classmates responded to a question correctly. On a more individual level, one fieldworker observed how:

- "The learners are kept interested in whatever they are doing in the sense that when the learners got everything right she gave them stars on their papers."

This last issue further testifies to the importance of individualised attention in keeping the learners engaged.

Fieldworkers also reported cases where learners were not kept interested. Often, these learners were left to their own devices: "...she lets them play with the blocks on their own. They basically keep themselves busy." In some cases, a practitioner performed so much that learners were no longer engaged in active learning and became passive, or conversely, learners had an unparticipative practitioner: "Practitioner just sat at her desk all the time."

Some practitioners would either ignore, or discipline those learners that had clearly lost interest:

- "...practitioner fails to keep all of them active but rather chooses to ignore those that do not participate."

A lack of variety and rote learning was also observed as contributing to learners' apparent lack of interest.

Concluding Comment

While there were cases of practitioners not maintaining learner interest, most fieldworker observations indicated that this was not the norm. On the contrary, most practitioners seem to be able to make use of a wide range of techniques for keeping learners engaged in the learning programme. Some of them have even begun to demonstrate techniques and competencies which are only required at Level 4, such as in the following case:

- "The practitioner keeps the learners busy during outdoor play. She took out some wheeled toys for the learners to play with. Another group are busy with water play."

5.1.3 Facilitating Learner Participation

The DQF outlines the following assessment criteria at Level 1 (FAL SO-4):

- "Children are helped to achieve what they have set out to do."
- "Children are helped to make choices."
- "Children are given time and encouragement to get deeply involved in activities."
- "Time is given for children to respond to questions before the adult intervenes."

The only additional requirement stipulated at Level 4 is that:

- "Children are actively encouraged to collaborate where appropriate."

Fieldworkers observed that most practitioners are encouraging learners participate and make choices. However, at a number of sites, learners were not given the opportunity to make choices since the practitioner determined the shape and nature of the learning programme, leaving no room for learner preferences.

The most typical technique used by practitioners to encourage learner participation was asking learners questions. However, the DQF stipulates that children should never be forced to participate in activities. Hence all cases of practitioners selecting learners to answer questions would become illegitimate as a means of encouraging learner participation. Instead, practitioners are required to allow learners to volunteer responses to questions. In this way we return to the importance of choice and freedom of participation to outcomes-based learning. One simple example of this principle being respected is illustrated by the following two observations:

- "...she asked them that anyone who wants to tell the story can come forward, without pointing at them."
- "...she does not say e.g. 'Vusi, do that' but she says 'anyone who is willing to do an activity, he/she must stand up and do the activity'. By so doing, she encourages them to participate without being pushed...."

The importance of this flexibility is demonstrated by another fieldworker's observation:

- "The learners could choose where they wanted to work and when they were finished with a task, they could once again choose which other activities they wanted to partake in."

This last observation constitutes a classic example of learner-paced ECD education. An acceptance of different perspectives amongst the learners, and the demonstration of a non-judgemental response from the practitioner was observed as being effective in encouraging learner participation:

- "She asked questions about the lesson. They discussed the different weather patterns."

Other techniques that were observed by fieldworkers included dramatisation, storytelling and movement, as well as referring to subjects to which the learners could relate.

However, not all practitioners facilitated learner participation and choice. At almost two out of five sites visited, learners were not being allowed to make choices. In these situations a more passive learning model was being applied in which the practitioner dictated what activities were to be done and how these were to be carried out. Learners were simply expected to follow instructions:

- "She tells the children where they must sit and which activity they must do."
- "The learners' movement is limited if not controlled by the practitioner. She ignores all their attempts to change activity."
- "Practitioner dictates all the time and learners are shunned whenever proposing something else."

In other cases, learners are offered opportunities to participate, but this participation is defined within a tightly structured learning programme that does not accommodate learner choice. Sometimes the shortage of opportunities for learners to make their own choices is a product of an overly participative practitioner:

- "There were few choices left in the movement ring because she showed them the actions."

Fieldworkers also observed situations in which all learners were always required to participate in the same activities at the same time. This again has the effect of undermining learner choice. In other cases, the only opportunity offered for learners to express choice was during their free playtime session.

Concluding Comment

Most of the observations show evidence of practitioners effectively helping learners to participate and make choices, thereby demonstrating that the assessment criteria stipulated for Level 1 are realisable. However, none of the observations indicated that practitioners were going beyond the requirements of Level 1, to encouraging learners to collaborate in meeting a challenge (assessment criterion for Level 4). The discussion, which will be covered later, looks at observations of group work and testifies to practitioners encouraging such collaboration between learners. Nevertheless, there remains a number of sites at which the practitioner instructs the learners who remain passive and unable to make choices that impact on the learning programme. The latter indicates that in certain contexts the new outcomes-based pedagogy is yet to replace old paradigm concepts of teaching and learning.

5.1.4 Management of Individuals and Groups

The DQF outlines the following specific outcome (FAL SO-4): that practitioners "use a range of techniques for working with individuals, small groups and large groups...". At Level 1, the DQF stipulates that:

- "Children are not forced to participate in activities. Stories are told and read to individuals and groups. Group games are well organised and efficiently managed."

At Level 4, more sophisticated group facilitation is required:

- "Large group sessions (like story times or ring times) are timed and managed to meet the developmental needs of the children. Groupings for story time allow, where possible, for the different needs and interests of the children. Large groups are skilfully managed using a range of techniques and supports (story props, songs, games, rhymes, musical instruments, inflection and tone of voice). Children are actively encouraged to collaborate where appropriate."

The observational data relating to whether and how practitioners are combining class, group and individual activities is not as encouraging as many of the other sets of observational data. At almost half of the sites, the fieldworker described the practitioner as relying exclusively on one format for facilitating learning. In most of these cases the practitioner was simply working with the class as a whole:

- "Activities which were conducted during my presence were done in a whole classroom approach. She never grouped them into groups. She never addressed them individually but she addressed them as a whole class."

The above illustrates the worst case scenario. In other cases observed, practitioners simply did not address their classes for protracted periods of time. Some practitioners conducted activities with the whole class. There is a potential shortcoming of exclusively working with the class as a whole: managing an often large group of 5-6 year olds invites practitioners to use recitation and rote methods of learning rather than activities that facilitate creativity and problem solving. The following case serves as an example:

- "Learners sing and recite as a class."

However, this does not imply that activities involving the whole class never accommodate learner creativity and exploration. Activities such as a "music ring" can allow learners to actively engage and innovate during the activity, together with their classmates. Other practitioners similarly chose to work with the class as a whole, but this was done by integrating collective activities such as that described above, together with question-and-answer sessions which rely on the responses of individuals within the class:

- "In her first activity she asked them to sing as a whole class. Secondly, she asked them to show their body parts individually to the whole class."

The above example is not demonstrating a combined use of class and individual formats. While inviting individuals during a class session to respond to questions or to demonstrate something to the class does involve active learning, this does not constitute an individual activity, but rather remains a variation of a class activity. A typical example of an individual activity is an arts and crafts activity wherein learners create their own work independent of their classmates.

Fieldworkers frequently observed practitioners making use of two methods. Often this involved the use of a class activity to introduce a theme or set of concepts, followed by either a group or individual activity where learners were encouraged to work with the concepts collaboratively, or explore them individually. One example of the above is:

- "Learners do an activity as a class, then each learner individually models the behaviour."

An even more prevalent trend amongst the observations was the situation in which the practitioner used the class format for music, religious education or storytime, and preferred working with groups when doing a creative activity:

- "She addressed the whole class during bible story time and also during the feeding time. The learners were broken into groups according to their ages during creativity time."

In one out of eight sites where observations were made regarding the formats used, fieldworkers observed practitioners making use of class, group and individual activities:

- "The practitioner began by working with the whole group. When the learners were given the opportunity to choose what to do, they played in small groups or on their own."
- "Learners were given the opportunity of working with the questions asked either in groups, individually or as a whole class."

Below is an example of a particularly innovative combination:

- "Practitioner addresses whole class and then gives questions to groups of which some individuals give answers on behalf of the group."

The above example illustrates that this practitioner is encouraging learners to collaborate

with one another when faced with a challenge. This is a standard that is only demanded of practitioners pursuing a Level 4 ECD qualification.

Concluding Comment

The above observations indicate that most practitioners are combining class work with at least one other form of activity, whether based on the individual or on the group. A minority of practitioners are combining all three formats, which assists learners in developing different sets of life skills while dealing with the particular theme or concepts being emphasised. However, at almost half of the sites the practitioners are relying exclusively on only one method, most often the class.

On the basis of the above, the norms and standards relating to this discussion and Level 1 may be realisable for just over half of the practitioners observed, but a large proportion of ECD practitioners are still not integrating differently formatted activities into their classroom practice. This may reflect an under-emphasis or lack of clarity with respect to the above during the training and follow-up visits.

5.1.5 Introduction of Other Languages

The DQF outlines the following specific outcome: practitioners "interact and communicate effectively with children in a range of situations, including daily routines" (FAL SO-3). The assessment criterion that is stipulated for Level 1 states:

- "Music, songs, rhymes and creative activities are used to help children acquire a second language."

No additional standards are applied with regard to the introduction of a second language at Level 4.

This is, however, a controversial subject as some practitioners believe that introducing a second language at an ECD level is too early. Preferably, ECD learners should be able to learn in an environment where only their first language is used. Because this is a discussion focusing on how well those practitioners that have been trained are fairing in terms of the norms and standards developed by the IAC, the observational data described below has been analysed with the assumption that practitioners should be introducing a second language to their learners. The encouraging trend that is noticeable in the observational data is that in almost six out of every seven classrooms a second language, and in some cases even a third language, is being introduced as required using songs and rhymes:

- "Songs, hymns and prayers are said in Tswana, English and Afrikaans."

Some of the practitioners go one step further than simply encouraging their learners to recite or sing in a second language, and rather facilitate question-and-answer sessions that integrate a second language:

- "She tells the religious instruction in Xhosa. She asks questions in Xhosa and Afrikaans. The learners respond well to this."

Another practitioner tried to ensure that learners were following the English by asking questions to check their comprehension:

- "She introduced English words into the group discussion, asking questions to see how much the learners could understand. They sang action songs using English words...."

Another application of this principle is the use of one language (often the learners' first language) to introduce a theme, followed by a creative activity that is carried out in the second language (most often English):

- "Whilst the practitioner was busy with their theme, she was using Sesotho. When they started with their drama they used English right through the drama."

Less encouraging is the predominant usage of the second language, often English. In such cases the first language of the learners is only used to translate the more complex English vocabulary:

- "When the learners were asked 'days of the week' and 'months of the year', they [the learners] mentioned this in English, so in most of the cases the practitioner used English and she explained in their languages."

A similar source of concern is the fact that at some of the sites, the English that was used was inappropriate for 5-6 year old learners. As a result, learners get lost and become distracted :

- "English is also used but too difficult for the learners to follow."

In one case, the fieldworker described the practitioner using a language that integrated different words from different languages. This is not appropriate as the learners could come to learn a 'language' that is not in common usage:

- "She mixes Xhosa with Afrikaans—such a language is not proper."

Practitioners used one language in only five out of the 34 cases where an observation was made regarding the languages used in the learning programme.

- "She speaks to them in Xhosa all the time."
- "She spoke Afrikaans."
- "She uses Ndebele only."

Concluding Comment

The requirement at Level 1 that the practitioner introduce a second language using songs, rhymes and creative activities is realisable. It seems that most practitioners are having little trouble doing this. It is only when this second language is given primacy over the learners' first language, and/or is used in an inaccessible way which alienates the learners, that this can become problematic.

5.2 Facilitating Healthy Development

The Facilitating Healthy Development unit standard is described as follows:

"This is a core unit standard which is compulsory for a General Education and Training Certificate in ECD for practitioners to maintain a safe and caring learning environment that supports the healthy development of children in an inclusive and holistic way.

Learners credited with this unit standard are able to demonstrate the applied competence to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment, to support children with special needs, and to ensure that children's basic emotional and social needs are met in a supportive environment that helps children manage their own behaviour."

5.2.1 Learners' Health and Safety

The DQF outlines the following specific outcome:

- "Protect the safety of children and adults." (FHD SO-1)

Under this specific outcome, the following assessment criterion is detailed at Level 1:

- "Potential dangers are identified and dealt with as quickly as possible to protect the safety of children and adults. Children are supervised by a responsible person at all times."

The other specific outcome relevant here states that practitioners must "support good health and nutrition." (FHD SO-2) In this case, the following is required:

- "Suitable provision related to the age of the children is made for children's physical needs (e.g. rest or sleep, exercise)."

At Level 4, practitioners must ensure that:

- "Children are protected from obvious environmental health hazards (e.g. the sun, polluted water). Children are supervised appropriately for their developmental level in relation to the degree of risk involved."

The fieldworker observations indicate that at just over twenty percent of these sites, the supervision of the learners' health and safety was inadequate in terms of the requirements for Level 1. At Level 1, ECD practitioners are required to demonstrate that learners are not only under constant supervision and kept out of situations that are potentially dangerous, but that learners' physical needs, including physical exercise and rest, are met while they are at the site. In many of the cases in which this did not occur, practitioners were simply not supervising the learners. The following examples illustrate this point:

- "Practitioner very neglectful and some learners were observed playing unattended in the street."
- "Practitioner always took no notice of the learners."

However, sometimes the situations observed went beyond neglect. At some sites fieldworkers observed learners being confined, often indoors, even when the weather was good.

- "Learners were only allowed out of the classroom once, when she took them out for sanitation. Otherwise no healthy activities were seen and learners spent the whole day in the classroom."
- "Learners were always locked indoors."
- "Learners are always bound to be in one place all the time and may not or cannot do anything unless otherwise instructed."

The last observation demonstrates a situation that is the antithesis of outcomes-based ECD provision as learners are not just being confined, but they are given no opportunities to meet their own needs and make their own choices.

In other cases, it is physical needs other than the need for exercise and movement, that the practitioner at the site is failing to consider:

- "The learners were playing on the cold floor in the classroom. There were no mats for them to sit on."
- "Two learners were noted to be suffering from the flu but practitioner simply ignored them."
- "They [the learners] did not wash their hands before they ate...they [the learners] do eat at the crèche but by the time I left [mid-afternoon] they had not had a resting period yet."

Although on the other side of the scale, there were numerous cases where fieldworkers described practitioners who supervised learners in such a way so as to ensure that learner's health and other physical needs were being met:

- "They [the learners] were encouraged to wash their hands before eating. They had balanced meals and a naptime. They were not sent [outside] to play because it was too wet. Instead the practitioner took them for a walk to get some fresh air."
- "She lets them use the toilet frequently. They eat quite healthy meals and [have] a sleeping time. During outdoor time the practitioners are there to observe the children. The outdoor playing area is also raked before the children use it ."
- "They didn't have any chairs and tables...the practitioner had sponges for the learners to sit on...."

In some cases it was clear that not only did the ECD practitioner supervise the learners and ensure that potentially dangerous situations were avoided, but she also tried to develop an understanding amongst the learners regarding health and safety:

- "She watched them when they were playing outside. She introduced safety around fires into her discussion on winter."
- "Learners know the rules that concern their safety and health."
- "Practitioner always cautions learners against unsafe acts or plays [read: games]."

Most of the practitioners were not as thorough as the cases described above. However, it was evident at the remaining sites that basic hygiene (learners were encouraged to wash their hands before eating) and safety (practitioners did not lose sight of their learners) were respected. At most of the sites where the practitioner was demonstrating a minimal awareness of learners' physical well-being, time was set aside for eating, physical exercise (outdoors, weather permitting) and rest.

Concluding Comment

The above discussion indicates that the specific outcomes and assessment criteria relating to the supervision of learners health and safety stipulated for Level 1 are being met in the majority of cases. This suggests that these standards are realisable for practitioners trained under the ECD Pilot Project.

5.2.2 Facilitating the Development of a Positive Self-image

The DQF outlines the following assessment criteria for Level 1 relating to the support of each learner's emotional and social development:

- "The message that each person is important, respected and valued is conveyed to the children. The expression of a range of feelings by children is accepted."
- "Children are encouraged to learn self-help skills and choose activities for themselves."

At Level 4, different assessment criteria are applied:

- "All children are helped to self-reliance and initiative in developmentally appropriate ways. Children are helped to recognise and deal with their feelings. All children are helped to develop a positive self-image and identity. Children's social development is facilitated in developmentally appropriate ways (e.g. smiling, sharing and taking turns, conflict resolution skills)."

Fieldworker observations indicate that praise is a common means by which practitioners affirm learners, thereby facilitating a positive self-image. But the shortcoming of relying on praise exclusively is that most frequently it is 'correct' responses, or behaviour that is reinforced. This leaves those learners who either do not conform to the practitioner's interpretation of 'correct' or learners who are not 'achievers' out of the loop:

- "She [the practitioner] praises them [the learners] when they answer correctly."

Many practitioners also encourage their learners to applaud when another learner gets something right:

- "During the story when she asked the individual children to point to specific things, she would praise them. This would be followed by the whole class clapping hands."

When a practitioner often publicly rewards learner achievements he/she can facilitate a competitive learning environment, which, contrary to encouraging a positive image of the self and independence, encourages a perception of the self that is contingent on how peers are doing:

- "When the learners were painting, one learner had painted beautifully and she showed the whole class and she told the learners that those who worked very well will receive stars."

However, there was evidence amongst the fieldwork observations that many practitioners acknowledged and rewarded effort and participation:

- "She [the practitioner] praises them for their work. Also the ones who could not read her word-cards: she encourages them to try again."
- "Learners are allowed to discuss certain issues and when coming up with answers practitioner acknowledges their efforts."

Other observations, like the one below, demonstrated that practitioners were also facilitating the development of a positive self-image amongst learners by being receptive to learners' contributions and thereby encouraging individual learners to express themselves:

- "She listens to the learners if they discuss their work with her."

Other practitioners facilitated positive self-image by encouraging the learners to be independent and to make choices, thereby demonstrating faith in their respective capacities:

- "She allows them to assist with all the activities – even answering the phone. By allowing them to be self-disciplined and independent, she builds their self-confidence and ultimately a positive self-image."
- "Practitioner encourages learners to work out things for themselves and acknowledges their efforts."
- "Practitioner encourages the learners to make their own choice of music."

By making a choice, each learner gets an opportunity to assert their preferences and hence their identity: this is what I like and this is who I am!

One practitioner went as far as encouraging her learners to work collaboratively. In this way, she was encouraging a positive sense of self by allowing each learner to develop an understanding that each person has a contribution to make to the team:

- "She encourages the learners to help each other finish the puzzle, and praises them when it is done."

On the other side of the spectrum of observations noted, relating to the facilitation of positive self-image, fieldworkers described practitioners who were apparently indifferent to learners' efforts:

- "Practitioner does not acknowledge, affirm or recognise learners' efforts."

Some practitioners demonstrated autocratic classroom practices:

- "Practitioner only gives a 'telling' instruction in which she only participates."
- "Practitioner always avoids cases [situations] in which learners must have their own inputs."

The above tendency is problematic as these practitioners neither encourage nor accommodate learner expression or independence. This creates an environment that remains unresponsive to learner contributions and can leave the learners feeling powerless (the antithesis of the concept of positive self-image) in the presence of a dictatorial practitioner. A less extreme example, but which demonstrates the same destructive process is described in the following observation:

- "Practitioner only kept on talking to the learners without checking on their pace of understanding what was being covered in the lesson."

Here the undermining of learners' sense of capacity is even more apparent than in the previous two observations. But once again this is brought about by an unresponsive practitioner who thereby creates an unresponsive environment which can alienate learners to the extent that they no longer try to engage in the learning programme, and no longer attempt to participate. Such a scenario can translate into a classroom scene in which the practitioner lectures and guides the learning process, unaware or disregarding the fluctuations in learner attainment or interest. She is simply content that her learners sit quietly in front of her. Nonetheless, in such a situation, it will be apparent that most of the learners are not finding the activity engaging. They sit there passively because of the threat of sanction if they do otherwise. Such situations go beyond simply not facilitating the development of a positive self-image in each of the learners. These environments encourage a self-image that reads: I am not clever/capable because I am not following, because the practitioner never notices when I try (obviously my attempts are not good enough), because the only time that she does notice me is to scold me. And if I believe that 'I can't' then I am either going to sit quietly and accept defeat, or I am going to inspire attention of the scolding kind because I need attention, and if this is all that I am going to get...

But while difficult to imagine, there is evidence that the above is not the worst case scenario. The following case describes a 'worst practice' situation:

- "Practitioner simply laughs at the learners whenever they respond or suggest [that they/the class] do something."

Mocking attempts by the practitioners undermines self-image and encourages the learners to equate self-expression with humiliation.

Concluding Comment

On the whole, at almost five in every six sites, the development of learners' positive self-image is being encouraged, and learners are being affirmed for expressing their own ideas or views. This means that at most of the sites visited, learners' contributions are being valued, thereby making these learners experience a sense of importance within their learning environment. This translates into confidence, which further facilitates creativity and exploration, both crucial dimensions of outcomes-based learning. However, only at a minority of the sites visited did fieldworkers observe practitioners encouraging learners to work things out on their own or in groups. This means that while some of the assessment criteria relating to the facilitation of a positive self-image are being met (and hence are seemingly realisable), others, which rely more heavily on a change in discourse to outcomes-based facilitation of learning, are currently less realisable amongst ECD practitioners. Practitioners are still more comfortable with controlling the learning programme (and relying on practitioner praise to encourage learners to feel valued), than they are with learner-paced and learner-responsive approaches to the facilitation of positive self-image.

5.2.3 Dealing with Difference

The DQF outlines the following assessment criteria at Level 1 relating to the ways in which the practitioner is expected to respond to differences:

- "Each child is treated as an individual. Awareness of anti-bias practice, attitudes and values is demonstrated."

At Level 4, this requirement becomes more detailed:

- "Anti-bias practice and respect for the cultural, religious and experiential background of individual children and their families is demonstrated."

The observations relating to the way in which practitioners treated the concept of difference, whether of a gender, racial, cultural or religious kind, were interesting. An overview of all 45 observations revealed that at the majority of sites (35/45), the practitioner was either simply non-discriminatory in her practices, or her class was so racially and culturally homogenous that the concept of difference never entered the learning programme on the day that the site was visited. The observations that follow demonstrate the apparently non-discriminatory approach, which often manifests in the form of equal access for all learners to all the activities:

- "She didn't group boys and girls separately and the learners seemed to play with everything."
- "She treats all the children equally. All of them can play at all the activities. She includes different languages in her programme."
- "She does not discriminate between the learners. She respects and treats every child as special."

The last observation almost mirrors the orientation of the assessment criteria for Level 1

which reads: "Each child is treated as an individual. Awareness of anti-bias practice, attitudes and values is demonstrated."

The following observations illustrate the situation in which the class of learners is relatively homogenous. It is apparent that the practitioner chose not to emphasise demographic differences:

- "Learners are from one race and culture and differ on region which is not an obstacle in learner relations."
- "Since they [the learners] shared a common culture, racial and religious background, there were no differences. In the case of gender, there was no gender differences [in terms of the way learners were treated], children were treated equally."
- "Children share a common race and socio-economic background. On the side of gender – they are all equal [in the eyes of the practitioner]."

A number of practitioners went one step further by actively involving the learners and integrating anti-bias into the learning programme:

- "Practitioner discourages the learners from discriminating against one another sexually [on the basis of gender] or racially."
- "Practitioner encourages learners to accept each other and treat each other as brother and sister, and as one person [as individuals]."

What is fascinating about the latter observation is that it reveals a slight irony: while the practitioner is clearly attempting to encourage anti-bias behaviour between the learners, the concept of gender difference remains so deep that this difference is overlooked. She refers to the learners treating "each other like brother and sister". The following practitioner similarly seems to fight racial difference while perpetuating gender difference:

- "...[while] she does not discriminate between learners of different races, boys and girls line up separately...."

Some practitioners integrated anti-bias into the learning programme in particularly innovative ways. One of the observations described the practitioner facilitating an activity in which all the learners, regardless of gender, engage in what is traditionally treated as a gendered activity:

- "All learners do one thing at the same time, e.g. cooking time – they do or play the same roles: as people doing cooking."

This same principle is taken one step further in the following observation where this practitioner chooses to subvert gender stereotypes in an even more concerted manner:

- "Learners do the opposite sex's things, i.e. boys do 'girl things' and girls do 'boy things'."

One other practitioner demonstrated that she was already meeting the assessment criterion at Level 4 ("Anti-bias practice and respect for the cultural, religious and experiential background of individual children and their families is demonstrated"), by dealing openly in such a way as to broaden the learners' appreciation of difference in a positive sense:

- "She introduces culture in her programme. Traditional dance and songs are practised. She does not discriminate between the learners."

However there is evidence in a very small number of cases (3/45), that difference is used as a basis for discriminatory practices amongst ECD learners:

- "Roles of boys and girls are different and practitioner always separates boys from girls."
- "When the practitioner was taking out toys, she first took the play home equipment with dolls and pillows and she asked all the girls to go and play outside and she left the boys with cars, blocks, puzzles and some other shapes."
- "When I arrived, there were only boys in the block corner and only girls in the doll corner."

Concluding Comment

The above observations testify to a 'lowest common denominator' amongst ECD practitioners of anti-bias classroom practices. This is in keeping with the assessment criteria relating to the treatment of differences at Level 1, and suggests that the standards set for ECD practitioners are clearly realisable in this area.

5.2.4 Practitioner Management of Learner Behaviour

Under Facilitating Healthy Development, the DQF details the relevant specific outcome and Assessment Criteria relating to the management of learner behaviour at Level 1 as follows:

- "Help children to manage their own behaviour. Children are helped to understand and follow agreed rules of behaviour. Expectations for children's behaviour are appropriate to their general developmental level. Methods of avoiding behaviour problems are used, and positive aspects of children's behaviour are noticed. Unacceptable aspects of children's behaviour are managed calmly. The use of punishment or any other behaviour that is abusive or hurtful to children is not used."

At Level 4, the only additional requirements are that:

- "Problem situations are anticipated, and appropriate action is taken to prevent behaviour getting out of control. Concerns about persistent behavioural problems are discussed with responsible family members or guardians and/or persons qualified to give advice."

It was of course unrealistic to expect fieldworkers to be able to testify as to whether this latter requirement was being met at the sites.

This data set was the most difficult to analyse because the day that the fieldworker visited

a given site did not necessarily present opportunities to observe the practitioner's response to managing learner behaviour (i.e. learners do not behave unacceptably every day, and there is not always a necessity to either discuss or remind learners every day about a prior discussion about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour). Hence in certain cases the fieldworker could not provide a conclusive description of whether the practitioner met with the norms and standards pertaining to the management of learner behaviour. So the discussion that follows needs to be understood as a tentative reflection of practitioner practices in this area. At times, the data is ambiguous. Two examples of such ambiguity are provided by the following observations:

- "All learners are encouraged to behave."
- "Learners are well-behaved and only act on instruction and are very soft-spoken."

How are we to understand the first observation? Does this statement mean that the practitioner and learners have already come to a shared understanding about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and that the practitioner simply has to remind the learners about this to inspire acceptable behaviour? Or does this mean that the practitioner simply "tells" the learners to behave, assuming that they all understand what this entails? The same ambiguity holds for the second observation, and with regards to observations that simply indicate that learners are seemingly "well-behaved". Is this a product of practitioner practices that are consistent with the norms and standards stipulated by the IAC, or a product of threats of severe punishment?

Despite this methodological challenge, it is apparent from the observations that some of the practitioners are clearly meeting the standards set for management of learner behaviour at Level 1, while others are not. Let us therefore focus this discussion on these two ends of the spectrum. However, before proceeding it is necessary to note a certain trend apparent in the data. Many of the observations collected are consistent with older classroom practices (emphasising 'control' of learners). These practices, while not being synonymous with unacceptable practices such as manipulation and the threat of physical and/or emotional punishment, nonetheless fail to go far enough to satisfy the requirements of Level 1. The norms and standards governing the management of learner behaviour insist that the practitioner set realistic expectations of the learners, and that the learners and the practitioner understand one another and have a shared understanding of what is acceptable, or unacceptable, and why. It is insufficient for the practitioner to simply shake her head at, or "making eye contact with, a 'misbehaving' learner, or to tell a learner to stop doing something. An explanation of why the particular learner behaviour is obstructive is required. Amongst this set of observational data, there were many examples of this lack of explanation.

However, to return to the positive, there were a number of cases that demonstrated a calm approach to managing learner behaviour on the part of the practitioner, as was observed at the following site:

- "She mostly assisted the children with the school-readiness activity, but she also rotated around the room to the other activities. When she saw that the boys were becoming too noisy at the dough, she involved them in the school-readiness activity."

This case illustrates a common strategy apparent across a large number of the observations, namely the combination of keeping learners stimulated and occupied while simultaneously remaining watchful so as to notice when a learner or group of learners becomes restless:

- "By asking them questions while interpreting a hospital chart, she keeps them interested. This automatically controls their behaviour because they participate."
- "Practitioner keeps learners occupied and under close watch."

The first of the above two observations highlights a very pertinent point: the practitioner's capacity to facilitate learner participation and her capacity to hold learner interest are central to her ability to manage learner behaviour. The stimulated learner is unlikely to become restless and obstructive:

- "She changes the activity when the learners lose interest. The learners immediately respond to the change in activity positively."

A related factor impacting on co-operative learner behaviour is the integration of freedom of choice for the learners into the learning programme:

- "She manages their behaviour through giving them tasks which they enjoy. They could do whatever they wanted. This approach gives them freedom which they enjoy."

Another positive sign is apparent in those observations that describe the learners as 'self-disciplined'. This implies that it is a deeper understanding of co-operation within the classroom that guides such learner behaviour rather than any threat of punishment:

- "She rotates from the one area to the next, but mostly the children just continue playing without her supervision. They really displayed a lot of self-discipline."

A particularly encouraging observation indicated that the practitioner discusses requirements regarding behaviour with the learners, which constitutes one of the assessment criteria relating to the management of learner behaviour:

- "The learners didn't seem to give her any problems and all behaved well. Near the beginning of the session they talked about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour."

However, on the opposite end of the scale, there were a number of cases where practitioners are clearly using problematic practices. These cases can be divided into three categories. In the first category the practitioner simply ignores unacceptable behaviour, or worse – seems not to be concerned with learner behaviour at all:

- "Practitioner ignores misbehaving learners. One learner had started to tease others during a lesson but the practitioner took no heed of this."
- "Learners always do as they please all the time."

The second category includes practitioners who only acknowledge and react to

unacceptable aspects of learner behaviour and never seem to reward the positive aspects of learner behaviour:

- "She does not interact with them unless there is fighting in which case she will ask them to stop their fighting."

It was apparent from the rest of the observations made at this site that this practitioner only reacted to unacceptable behaviour, and gave the children little attention beyond this. This is in direct opposition to the norms and standards requirements for managing learner behaviour.

The third category includes practitioners who rely on punishment to manage learner behaviour:

- "Practitioner abruptly scorns misbehaving learners and even threatens them with severe punishment."

The above approach is in direct contravention of the norms and standards governing this aspect of ECD practitioner practice, and has the effect of rendering the learners passive and fearful. Intimidation is not an appropriate method of managing learner behaviour. While practices that fall into any of the above three categories were observed at only one in every nine sites, this is nonetheless a source of concern. Why is it that having received training these practitioners are persisting with unacceptable practices such as these?

Concluding Comment

At under one in three sites, fieldworkers observed practitioners meeting the norms and standards governing the management of learner behaviour at Level 1. Therefore, at the majority of sites, the required standards are still not being applied. Hence it seems that this set of norms and standards are realisable, but more training is required to effect a broad change in discourse with regard to the management of learner behaviour.

5.3 Managing the Learning Programme

The Managing the Learning Programme (MLP) unit standard is defined as follows:

"This is a core unit standard which is compulsory for a General Education and Training Certificate in ECD for practitioners to maintain an ECD learning programme that meets the basic needs of children and their families within the community context in which they live.

Learners credited with this unit standard are able to demonstrate the applied competence to establish respectful and co-operative relationships with co-workers, families and the community; to contribute to programme planning, evaluation and administration; and to follow an accepted code of conduct."

5.3.1 Practitioner Preparedness

Managing the Learning Programme constitutes one of the three unit standards described in the DQF. This unit standard emphasises the planning and administration of the learning programme. In keeping with this standard, the following assessment criterion for Level 1 requires that:

- "A regular daily routine providing for all the developmental needs of the children is maintained. Planning of programme activities is done on a regular basis with co-workers of supervisory staff if applicable."

If the above standards are applied, the practitioner should show evidence of having thought through the day's activities and having prepared and organised the necessary educational equipment to support these activities.

At Level 4, this standard becomes more demanding:

- "The daily programme (schedule, time table) is planned and implemented to meet children's needs for routine, play and active learning through a balance of different types of activities."

According to the observations, most practitioners appeared to have prepared the learning space: the necessary educational equipment and art materials, etc. were laid out and ready for the learners, and the learning programme for the day appeared to have been thought through and planned. However, at a third of the sites where fieldworkers made observations in this regard, it was very apparent that the practitioner was ill-prepared for the day.

Those practitioners who appeared to have prepared and planned, demonstrated this in the following ways:

- "She didn't know I was coming but she was well-prepared with notes, aids, equipment, story, etc."
- "Her creative activities as well as her fantasy area and discovery table were set out. The rest of the day also followed smoothly."
- "Her activities were clear, logical and straightforward, reflecting that she had prepared."
- "Whatever was sung or recited had a certain meaning. It was carefully planned."
- "The learners were all familiar with their morning routine"

The last observation indicates that learner's responses and familiarity constitutes just as important an indicator of the preparedness of the practitioner. Routine is regarded as important to quality ECD provision. This does not, however, mean that the practitioner does not remain responsive and receptive to learner's preferences and whether or not the learners engage with an activity. The qualitative data collected, which relates to practitioner responsiveness and the level of learner interest, assessed the flexibility and responsiveness of the learning programme.

The less encouraging observations described practitioners who had clearly given little thought and expended little effort planning the day's activities. These practitioners did not to have considered the shape and content of the learning programme and how this could be best suited to the developmental needs of the learners:

- "The practitioner tended to be unaware about what she was doing all the time. She further did not plan for the day."
- "No [the practitioner did not appear to have prepared], she simply chose easy activities."
- "The practitioner could not do anything other than the artwork and toilet time."
- "Practitioner spent the whole day on painting only."

The last two observations mark a lack of consideration on the part of the practitioner of the need for learners to have a range of developmental needs met. If a practitioner spends the entire day on the same activity, she shows little evidence of having either prepared or planned the day's activities adequately.

Concluding Comment

Most practitioners observed by fieldworkers demonstrated that they had thought through the day's learning programme. The series and sequencing of the activities covered at some of these sites clearly had a logic and purpose to them, which related to the developmental needs of the learners. This indicates that the assessment criteria relating to planning and preparation at Level 1 are realisable for ECD practitioners. However, more than a quarter of the total observations made demonstrated that certain ECD practitioners are not preparing themselves, or the learning environment, in order to keep the learners stimulated and engaged and on a developmental path of learning. This is consistent with the finding from quantitative data that 77.3% of practitioners at community-based sites reported planning for the day.

5.3.2 Facilitation of Activities

Under the unit standard Managing the Learning Programme, the practitioner is required to maintain standards of early childhood care and education by effectively working with both children and adults. More specifically, the relevant assessment criterion at Level 1 states:

- "Self-esteem and confidence in working with children and adults are evident."

This criterion does not change for Level 4. Realistically, however, fieldworkers were only able to make observations within the classroom, hence they were not in a position to comment on the way in which practitioners worked with other adults.

The observations made by fieldworkers indicate that almost all the practitioners observed demonstrated that they had developed skills to effectively co-ordinate a number of activities, sometimes running simultaneously, while remaining responsive to learners' needs. This became apparent in the following observations:

- "The children already know what is expected from them. She also speaks to them in a calm and confident manner."
- "Practitioner skilfully facilitated the activity and had a set outcome which the learners achieved."

- "...by being involved herself, and by being very clear about what she is expecting the learners to do."

The above observations indicate that one of the ways in which a practitioner demonstrates her skill at facilitating the development of ECD learners is by being very transparent with the learners about the purpose of each activity and how the learners can contribute. In a number of cases, it was the effective management of group activities, which demonstrated the practitioner's facilitating skills:

- "During painting the other group was cutting and pasting. If she saw a problem, she went to explain to the particular group what must be done."
- "She moves up and down monitoring each and every group, during group activity."
- "She spends time at each activity table, talking to the learners and assisting them."

Other innovative yet apparently effective ways in which practitioners facilitated the learning programme are:

- "They [the learners together with the practitioner] do the activities in a circle so that she can maintain eye-contact."
- "She smoothly combines different activities."

In the cases that fieldworkers assessed the practitioner as less skilful in the facilitation of the learning programme and the engagement of the learners themselves therein, the observations indicated that the practitioners concerned were neither clear nor confident in their interactions with the learners and in their co-ordination of activities.

Concluding Comment

In the majority of cases, it is clear that the assessment criterion at Level 1, which insists on the practitioner demonstrating self-esteem and confidence in effectively working with the children, is realisable for ECD practitioners. Almost all of the practitioners observed were seen to meet this standard.

5.3.3 Introducing and Ending Activities

Under the parameters of the unit standard Managing the Learning Programme, one specific outcome (MLP SO-5) demands that the practitioner "maintain administrative systems for managing the learning programme". Within this specific outcome, at Level 1, the following assessment criterion is applied:

- "Time is managed effectively so that the daily programme flows smoothly."

This assessment criterion is adjusted for Level 4:

- "Basic principles for selecting and sequencing learning activities are applied to planning the learning programme."

Under these assessment criteria, the practitioner is expected to introduce each activity, and conclude it in such a way that there is evidence of clarity and logical movement and continuity between activities. In keeping with these requirements, fieldworkers had to observe how the practitioner introduced and ended each activity on the one hand, and the way in which the learners responded on the other hand. Finally, the fieldworkers observed how the practitioner ended one activity and began the next: i.e. how she moved between activities.

Introducing Activities

Fieldworker observations indicate that at just over one in five sites, practitioners are not clearly beginning an activity. This means that the learners at these sites have no sense of either direction or purpose at the beginning of each activity. This also heightens the possibility that learners will feel alienated from the learning programme. The following observations illustrate this problem:

- "There was no start to the activity. She [the practitioner] just asked them to take out the blocks which they did – and they continued playing on their own."
- "Practitioner just gave out artwork equipment to learners."
- "Practitioner just instructs learners to sing and recite."

Introductions, like the last one described, do not involve explaining to the learners the 'what, why and how' of the activities in which they are expected to engage. The approach applied here: 'instructing learners', means that they are not given an opportunity to co-operate with and follow the direction and logic of the learning programme. By stating outcomes at the outset of an activity, learners are given the opportunity to understand the purpose of an activity, and thereby engage purposefully in a given activity. This approach forms one of the tenets of outcomes-based education. The observations that follow are more consistent with this approach:

- "She started her creative activities by first discussing exactly what was expected at each activity."
- "She started the creative activities by first talking about the activities that were available to the children and then letting them choose where they wanted to work."
- "She speaks about the different activities and the materials they are going to use at the activity."
- "Practitioner summarises what was discussed previously and then introduces a new activity."
- "She starts by warming up the learners, then introduces all the activities and then gets started."
- "When introducing, she tells them what they are going to do."

Two particularly innovative ways of introducing activities are described in the following observations:

- "She revises the previous day's last activity" (thereby maintaining a continuity in the learning programme, beyond the day's work).
- "The practitioner asked questions to start the activity."

By beginning the activity with questions, rather than simply telling the learners what they are going to do, she makes even the introduction more inclusive. This would enhance the learners' interest in the activity. It also constitutes a creative way of getting the learners thinking about the context and broader purpose of a given activity. Other practitioners used techniques that involved singing or physical movement before settling the learners back down to describe the next activity.

Learners' Response to Introduction

Learners of 5-6 years of age tend to be receptive to practitioners' directions, since at this age their independence is still relatively under-developed. So, as one fieldworker described it: "They [the learners] do not have a choice but to respond." More telling than whether the learners 'sit quietly' or just simply listen to their practitioner as she introduces a new activity, is their apparent enthusiasm about beginning the new activity. Certain trends emerged from the observations in this regard.

Firstly, learners seemed to respond to an introduction particularly well when this included a component of learner choice:

- "They chose their activities and immediately became involved."

It also included learner participation:

- "Learners show a total liking of any lesson that includes some discussion."
- "Learners sat quietly and listened attentively and showed a keen interest in participating."
- "They respond very well and seemed quite excited to report back on their activities. They also responded well to the rest of the discussion ring."
- "They eagerly made the circle outside."

In another case in which the practitioner made use of songs to mark the end of one activity and the beginning of the next, the response of the learners was noted:

- "The learners sang with the practitioner and knew that it was time for the next activity."

The above observation illustrates that learners can also be receptive to beginning a new activity if they are able to engage in a ritual (whether involving singing or movement) that brings them together and reinvigorates them for the next activity.

On the other side of the spectrum, at a number of sites learners responded passively, sometimes appearing bored or even fearful. Such situations corresponded with introductions of a more conventional sort where the practitioner 'told the learners what they were going to do', rather than encouraging them to engage with and discuss the new activity. Examples of such passive responses are provided by the following observations:

- "Learners respond obediently as they appear to be scared of the practitioner."
- "They [the learners] listen to the practitioner. They were very passive."
- "They simply follow orders."

Ending Activities

The observations demonstrated that some practitioners remain responsive and use the level of learner interest as an indicator of when an activity should end:

- "When the learners showed boredom the practitioner stopped the activity."

Other practitioners' confine themselves and their learners to a strict timetable governing the day's activities:

- "She [the practitioner] allocated a specific time – about 40 minutes for the creative activity time. After 40 minutes, she sang a song to end the activity."

In order for learners to get optimum benefit and satisfaction from an activity, they require some understanding of when an activity is going to end. This is to allow the learners to pace themselves. Some practitioners, like the one described in the observation which follows, demonstrated an appreciation of this approach:

- "She [the practitioner] first warned them that it was about time to pack up, gave them another few minutes to finish what they were busy with, and then asked everyone to assist in packing up."

Just as important as making it clear to the learners when an activity is going to end, is attaining some form of closure or conclusion before moving onto another activity. In outcomes-based education such a closure comes when the practitioner revisits the intention of the activity, and assesses whether this outcome was achieved:

- "Practitioner stresses the need of having to facilitate the activity [the outcome], and at the end tries to find out if this need has been achieved."
- "The practitioner summarises what was discussed, asks questions and allows them [the learners] to ask their own questions."

Many of the practitioners, however, simply request that learners tidy up after the activity. While this does attain the necessary closure and maintains a structure, which is clear to the learners, it provides no opportunity to evaluate whether the previous activity outcomes have been achieved. An example of this approach is:

- "She tells them to pack up the equipment."

More innovative ways of ending an activity are illustrated by the following observations:

- "She ended the story by asking opened-ended questions such as 'Who all attend church?' and 'Who ever saw Jesus?'"
- "Practitioner ...smoothly brings activity to an end by recapping on the lesson."
- "Practitioner informs the learners as to the end and asks if there are any questions."
- "She [the practitioner] sings the clean-up song."

On a less positive note, a minority of the observations collected indicated that practitioners were either simply not ending activities, or ending activities in inappropriate ways or at inappropriate times for the learners:

- "This [ending an activity] has never been done throughout the day" (learners were only given one activity for the whole day).
- "Practitioner abruptly ended the lesson."
- "Practitioner simply drops the activity."
- "She abruptly switches from one activity to another, whilst learners are still busy with the current one."
- "Learners are not informed that the activity has come to an end."

The above situations once again run the risk of alienating learners from a learning programme that is unresponsive to the learners needs.

Concluding Comment

From the fieldworker observations, it is apparent that the majority of practitioners demonstrated that they are capable of timing and structuring activities in such a way that learners are clear about what to expect, and what they are trying to achieve in a given activity. This suggests that the assessment criterion for Level 1 relating to the timing and structuring of activities and the learning programme is realisable for ECD practitioners.

5.3.4 Using Educational Equipment and Books

The DQF outlines the following specific outcome (MLP SO-3): "Implement a planned learning programme that supports the care and education of children within the national curriculum framework". Under this specific outcome, two assessment criteria for Level 1 can be applied to the integration of books and educational equipment into the learning programme:

- "An orderly and stimulating physical environment structured to meet children's learning needs is maintained."

- "Sufficient resources (equipment and materials) are provided and/or improvised to support the learning programme."

Regarding the use of books and equipment at Level 4, a different assessment criterion pertains:

- "A wide variety of developmentally-appropriate learning resources (including natural, improvised, scrap and commercial materials) are provided to engage the interests of the children and support the learning programme."

The above requires evidence of two things, firstly that equipment and books are introduced into the learners' day and made easily accessible; and secondly that the learners are seen to respond to the equipment and books which are made available. Two sets of fieldworker observations explore these two issues. The following section discusses the findings for the first issue: the extent and nature of the equipment and books used and the way in which these were used by the practitioners who were observed.

Educational Equipment and Books

The fieldworker observations indicated that at most of the sites practitioners had clearly expended a great deal of effort collecting and making a variety of educational equipment. The following observations illustrate the variety of equipment available to learners at sites like these:

- "They [the learners] were provided with drawing material, dough, puzzles, educational games, Lego, and they could play in the fantasy area."
- "Paper, crayons, make-believe toys, e.g. old clothes, kettle, dolls, irons, etc. construction toys, puzzles, Lego, shapes."

A number of practitioners integrated particularly innovative educational equipment into the learning programme:

- "She [the practitioner] used books, puzzles, waste material and a box turned into a TV."
- "Leaves, sticks, paper, hand-drawn pictures and a story book."
- "Electric guitar!"
- "Home-made equipment to illustrate the religious instruction lesson and a weather-board with pictures to illustrate weather patterns, and a puppet to illustrate body language."

While very few sites had no educational equipment or books, there were a number of sites where the educational equipment used was not available to the learners to play with, but was rather used by the practitioner to illustrate different concepts. Such equipment (pictures, posters, chalkboards), if used on its own, can encourage passivity amongst the learners as they cannot physically engage with nor utilise the equipment for themselves.

At 21% of the sites where fieldworkers observed educational equipment, no books were observed. While this may not indicate that these sites had no books or that the practitioners at these sites never encouraged learners to engage with books, this does mean that books were not a noticeable feature of the learning environment. This is a cause for concern. If books are not visible, then it is unlikely that books are made accessible to the learners at these sites.

According to the quantitative data, 79% of community-based sites in 1999 have books available, which marks an increase from 74% in 1997. In addition, there was no significant difference between community-based sites and primary/reception sites concerning the presence of books in 1999 (primary: 70%, reception: 78%). Out of the community-based sites where books are available, 80.2% made the books accessible to the learners, indicating no change from 1998 when 81% of them made books accessible. In terms of the age-appropriateness of the books, a positive change was found: at 85.1% sites the books are age-appropriate in 1999 but it was so at only 77% sites in 1998. The condition of books has improved from 1998 to 1999 as well. Books at 72.1% of sites are found to be complete and at 66.7% of the sites they are judged to be in great condition, as compared to 56% being complete and 62.9% being in good condition in 1998. Similarly, more community-based sites now have educational equipment than in 1998 (1999: 93.6%, 1998: 84%). The number of sites that have enough equipment for all learners increased as well over the years, from 12% in 1997 to 27% in 1998 and 36.9% in 1999. At most of the sites, the equipment are clean and in fairly good condition. In 1999, nearly all learners (94.2%) can reach the equipment easily while only 59% and 83% were able to do so in 1997 and 1998 respectively.

Learners' Response to Educational Equipment

In terms of the second issue – the response of the learners to the books and equipment available – the research team found that at the sites where learners could engage with educational equipment (and sometimes books), they responded positively. Learners were often familiar with the equipment but this did not seem to detract from their enjoyment of the equipment:

- "[Learners were] excited. They were familiar with the equipment."

However, because of the novelty value, learners were particularly excited when new educational equipment was made available to them.

Learners at many of the sites demonstrated that they were particularly eager to touch, play with and explore the equipment themselves:

- "The learners displayed 100% liking of the equipment and had wanted to use it themselves."
- "[Learners responded] with confidence...and are always eager to touch and use the pictures themselves."

And at the site where the practitioner brought an electric guitar:

- "Learners enjoyed singing whilst backed up by a musical instrument."

Quantitative data suggest that learners respond positively to educational equipment and books when given opportunities. Learners' interest in books increased from 31% in 1998 to 41.4% in 1999 (at sites where books are available). The percentage of learners who were found passive or uninterested in books declined from 42% in 1997 to 11% in 1998 and 0% in 1999. In 1997, learners at 15.7% of community-based sites were found to be passive and still with equipment. In addition, at 12.7% of sites, many learners were careless or destructive when handling educational equipment, while learners at 71.6% sites were careful or guided to be careful with equipment. In 1998, learners at 77.6% of the sites where educational equipment was available were skilfully using equipment and tools. Learners at the same percentage of sites (77.7%) were doing so in 1999.

Concluding Comment

The innovative nature of educational equipment at ECD sites is impressive. However, it remains a concern that books are still not being made easily available to learners. Nonetheless, the assessment criteria for Level 1 which insist on a "stimulating physical environment" equipped with "...resources...to support the learning programme" is being met at the majority of ECD sites, and can therefore be regarded as realisable.

5.4 Conclusion

The fieldworker observations discussed in this section are on the whole encouraging. With regard to the unit standard **Facilitating Active Learning**, all the specific outcomes, and their respective assessment criteria reflected in the research instrument are seemingly realisable. The majority of the ECD practitioners observed demonstrated that they were capable of meeting these standards at Level 1. However, it must be noted that there are still large proportions of ECD practitioners who are relying on methods inconsistent with OBE principles for ECD to manage learner behaviour and utilise rote classroom instruction methodologies. This indicates that practitioners seem to find the new standards more difficult to meet.

With regard to the unit standard **Facilitating Healthy Development**, the specific outcomes and assessment criteria relating to the supervision of health and safety, and to the treatment of differences in the learning programme are clearly realisable for ECD practitioners. However, this is not the case with the standards applying to the management of learner behaviour. Here most practitioners have not made the change in discourse required by DQF, and are therefore not meeting the standards (specific outcomes and assessment criteria) for Level 1. With regards to the facilitation of a positive self-image amongst the learners, there is evidence that learners are being praised and that their efforts are being affirmed. Practitioners are still choosing to remain in control of the learning programme, rather than to make the shift to learner-paced education, which encourages more independence and participation amongst the learners. Nonetheless, more than half the practitioners observed did meet the requirements for Level 1 in this area.

Observations relating to the third unit standard, **Managing the Learning Programme**, were generally encouraging. Practitioners at most of the sites visited demonstrated that they were capable of meeting the specific outcomes and assessment criteria for the five areas reflected in the fieldworker observation instrument. These standards stipulated for the facilitation of the learning programme, practitioner preparedness, the use of educational equipment and books, the timing and structuring of the learning programme are therefore realisable for ECD practitioners at Level 1.

6 ACCREDITATION

This chapter describes the accreditation processes set by the Interim Accreditation Committee (IAC) and the lessons learnt from the implementation of this process. Much of the discussion relies upon the input from the IAC⁷ and whenever possible, data collected from the fieldwork is utilised to illuminate the arguments. By doing so, the research team will answer the following questions:

- Is the IAC/provincial interim accreditation system developed under the Pilot Project effective?
- In the research team's opinion, should this accreditation system become a permanent structure?

There are two types of accreditation under the National ECD Pilot Project: accreditation of practitioners; and accreditation of RTOs. The IAC developed the tools and instruments to be used for both types of accreditation, but is only in direct charge of the accreditation of RTOs. The accreditation of practitioners is designed to be conducted by RTOs while moderated by the IAC.

6.1 The Accreditation of RTOs

The IAC has the responsibility of providing interim conditional accreditation to RTOs in the National ECD Pilot Project. They used as their starting point the Accreditation Guidelines for practitioners proposed in the DoE's Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development (1996).

The accreditation process only started towards the end of the third year of the National ECD Pilot Project. The timing was also not appropriate for RTOs in some provinces, since some were only in the first year of their provincial Pilot Projects. Thus, for instance, many had not transformed their course materials into an outcomes-based approach by the time the interim accreditation process took place.

In summary, the development process for an interim accreditation system comprised:

- Development and trial of a tool for interim accreditation of RTOs.
- Presentation of the tool to RTOs at a national workshop.
- Invitation to RTOs to apply for interim accreditation.
- Review of RTO submissions for interim accreditation.
- Verification/moderation visits to selected RTOs.
- Critical appraisal by the IAC of the process.
- Presentation and critical appraisal of the process at a national workshop.
- Interim accreditation presented to 26 out of 43 RTOs.

6.1.1 The Procedure for RTO Accreditation

The accreditation procedure involved the following steps:

- An application letter was sent out to all RTOs participating in the National ECD Pilot Project.

⁷ Most of sections 6.1.2, 6.2.2 and 6.2.3 reflect the "Interim Accreditation Committee Contribution to Research Report," submitted by the Interim Accreditation Committee. The full report is attached in Appendix A.

- The RTO applied to the IAC for accreditation, specifying the level/s of the courses for which accreditation is sought.
- The RTO submitted the relevant documents required for accreditation, which includes:
 - Organisational profile.
 - Staffing (organisational organogram, resume for each trainer, conditions of service for trainers, staff policies).
 - Community participation.
 - Programmes audit (this includes a case study and portfolio for each practitioner identified in the case study, which will enable the IAC to develop a clear picture of the methods and strategies used in training practitioners, and the design of training programmes and how they meet the requirements of the Draft Interim Unit Standards).
 - All training material relating to the courses specified above.
 - Assessment forms completed by peers (other RTOs involved in the Pilot Project).
- The IAC Technical Secretariat assessed the completed sections of the documents and identifies any omissions and requested RTOs to submit missing/additional material.
- The IAC, IAC Technical Secretariat and members of the DoE assessed the material submitted by the RTOs.
- The IAC, IAC Technical Secretariat and members of the DoE visited selected RTOs in each province with the purpose of verifying the information submitted. These visits included:
 - Interviewing relevant RTO staff members.
 - Observing a training session (or a trainer doing a field visit where it was not possible to observe a training session given the timing of the visits).
 - Interviewing a trainer/s in the RTO.
 - Visiting an RTO supported ECD site.
 - Interviewing a practitioner(s) trained by the RTO.

- Once the IAC had considered all the information, a report on the outcome of the accreditation application was sent to the RTO (Two outcomes of the accreditation process are possible:
 - Interim accreditation with certain provisos.
 - Or core criteria have not yet been satisfied and the RTO needs to resubmit the documents for interim accreditation).
- Concerns about the outcome could be raised directly with the IAC in writing. Should these concerns be of a serious nature, an appeal process would be followed.

6.1.2 IAC's Comments on the Accreditation Procedure

By the end of January 2000, a total of 43 RTOs submitted their application for accreditation to the IAC, 40 of which did so by the IAC deadline (30 September 1999). Six IAC moderators made 19 RTO verification/moderation visits, giving a sample of 47.5% of the 40 applications submitted on time. Based on the testing of the accreditation tools and procedures, the IAC makes the following comments on different aspects of the accreditation process.

6.1.2.1 The Accreditation Process

According to the IAC, RTOs which applied for accreditation had made great effort to put their submissions together and to arrange visits where these were requested. They had shown a willingness to be part of the developmental process and to accommodate the uncertainty inherent in the development of the process.

6.1.2.2 The Accreditation Tool

The IAC felt that the accreditation tool was limiting, as it did not ask sufficient open-ended questions. However, they felt that it provided useful guidelines. Despite the limitations of the tool, there was a lot of scope for RTOs to present themselves positively given the wide range of evidence that was presented by RTOs.

The IAC thought that the accreditation tool lays great stress on course materials and written submissions. However, in the future, the IAC feels that more stress should be laid on assessing trainee or practitioner practice in the field in the accreditation process.

The research team strongly concurs with this recommendation as the training provided to the sites appears, in many cases, to be inconsistent.

6.1.2.3 Presentation of RTOs' Submissions

The IAC believes that the practitioner portfolio presented for interim accreditation evaluation is too restricted. The IAC (or the Quality Assurance Body within the South African Qualifications Authority

framework) evaluators should have more examples of practitioners' portfolios.

Where peer reviews were done well and critically, the IAC found these very useful in the accreditation process. However, less emphasis on terminology should be placed on the peer review, and more time should be given to observe practice and its impact on children.

Despite its expense and the requirement for it to be conducted at short notice, many RTOs reported to the IAC that the peer review was useful to their organisation.

The IAC and the research team strongly recommend that the future Quality Assurance Body consider critically how to ensure that the peer review contributes optimally to the RTO accreditation process.

6.1.2.4 Assessing RTO's Submissions

The IAC and the research team agree that at least two evaluators working independently should scrutinise all RTO submissions.

6.1.2.5 RTO Moderation Visits

The IAC felt that one visit to an RTO is insufficient for moderation, as there should be an engagement between the RTO and the IAC (or the Quality Assurance Body) over a period of time with Provincial Departmental support and input. This will help in the developmental nature of the process. While the cost implications of this are significant, it is necessary in an OBE paradigm to see performance in an authentic setting and visits of some length over a period of time are the best way to evaluate an RTO's competence.

The IAC also recommends:

- The moderation visit time should be negotiated between RTOs and the Quality Assurance Body to observe training in authentic situations and to ensure that the process is collaborative and participatory.
- More responsibility should be given to trainers and practitioners to demonstrate their competence in the moderation process, rather than have the process defined and limited by the accreditation tool.
- Using the peer review questionnaires was not useful for moderation, as the peer review instruments are too atomistic and technical for this purpose. There should be a separate set of more holistic observations/questions for the moderation.

In conclusion, the IAC and the research team recommend that a moderator's tool should be developed that provides for a more holistic assessment of the organisation and that gives latitude to the moderator to explore specific areas that need attention during the moderation visits.

6.1.3 Provincial Comments on the Accreditation Procedure

The IAC has consolidated comments from nine provinces on the procedure used for the accreditation of RTOs, which are summarised as follows.

In terms of content, the provinces felt that:

- The accreditation tool does not measure outcomes, but content.
- The questions are not specific enough leading to different interpretations by different people.
- Simple "yes or no" questions prevent in-depth responses.
- The tool is too repetitive.

Provinces also felt that the language and phrasing of questions is inconsistent and too difficult to access meaning.

The provinces felt that it would be helpful if RTOs are given a submission format at the beginning of the accreditation process so that they know what to expect. The preparation of course materials for submission is a very expensive process for RTOs, both in the typing and reproduction. Clear guidelines are needed on how to present case studies. In order to make peer reviews just and useful, assessors need guidelines and skills need to be developed. Peer Review also increases the cost of the whole accreditation process on the RTOs' part.

Finally, the provinces felt that:

- More observation is needed during moderation visits, not just completing the questionnaire. Moreover, the focus of the visits should be on training presented by trainers and the performance of practitioners.
- Accreditation visits should take place more frequently throughout the year. A single visit is not a true reflection of the RTO's ability. Spending one day per visit appears to be insufficient as well.
- The whole RTO team, including all trainers and relevant support staff, should be involved in the discussions and feedback.

6.1.4 Recommendations

As can be seen from the IAC and provincial reflections and comments made, the research team believes that the tools and procedure used are a good start. Both the research team and the IAC think that the yet-to-be-established Quality Assurance Body should base its work on what the IAC has done, which means taking over and further refining the tools and procedure. The following areas especially need refining:

- The accreditation tool should lay more emphasis on assessing training practice in the field rather than only course materials and written submissions.
- The peer review should focus more on observing the training practice, its impact on practitioners and on children.
- At least two evaluators working independently need to scrutinise all RTO submissions.
- More than one moderation visit should be considered as it will provide a more accurate picture.
- A moderator's tool needs to be developed that assesses RTOs in a more holistic way and that gives the moderator latitude to explore specific areas in need of attention.

The research team strongly urges that the DoE should ensure that there is no gap in the accreditation process between the end of the work of the IAC and the establishment of the Quality Assurance Body within the SAQA framework. To ensure a smooth hand-over, the IAC should meet with the new Quality Assurance Body when it is established.

In terms of the criteria used to accredit RTOs, the IAC and the research team recommend adding RTOs' competence to counsel practitioners for the attainment of qualifications at Levels 1, 4 and 5, including information on other providers that offer courses, particularly in fundamental and elective learning.

6.2 The Accreditation of Practitioners

By 1998 the IAC had produced interim norms and standards for RTOs, which had been "workshopped" in all provinces before the 1999 fieldwork. Through a number of workshops, RTOs and Provincial Departments of Education have been given opportunities to comment on the interim Norms and Standards document.

RTOs received training on how to structure existing training material and courses to meet the requirements of the three core unit standards:

- Facilitating Active Learning.
- Facilitating Healthy Development.

- Managing the Learning Programme.

As an additional support to RTOs, the IAC commissioned and produced four booklets, "National Guidelines on the Assessment of ECD Practitioners in the National Pilot Project". One booklet was an introduction to assessment of practitioners, with the remaining three each providing examples of performance indicators of one of the core unit standards. These booklets were distributed to participants at the IAC "Train the Trainers" workshops.

6.2.1 The Procedure for Practitioner Accreditation

The following procedure was used by the IAC to accredit practitioners in the Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal (the first two provinces ready for the accreditation process, having completed their training under the Pilot Project):

- The RTOs assess practitioners against the norms and standards outlined by the IAC. Practitioners are expected to meet the criteria of all three core unit standards (Facilitating Active Learning, Facilitating Healthy Development, and Managing the Learning Programme).
- IAC conducts moderation visits. Practitioners are informed of the scheduled visits.
- Moderation visits include observing:
 - Practitioners working with learners in their sites.
 - Practitioners' records (including evidence of community involvement, records of observation of children, practitioners' planning, and practitioners' portfolios including their assignments that were assessed during training).
 - Practitioners facilitating the children's development, including the critical outcomes.

6.2.2 The IAC Moderation

By the time this report is written, the IAC had only completed the accreditation of practitioners in Northern Cape. The ECD Pilot Project Co-ordinator in the Northern Cape Education Department prepared the provincial summative report, based on the summative assessments of practitioners by the four RTOs training in the province.

The Technical Secretariat noted in its scrutiny of the Province's summative report and the summative assessment forms of practitioners that in the case of two RTOs, all practitioners seeking Levels 1 and 4 met the criteria for all three core unit standards. An analysis of the summative assessment forms of the practitioners from these RTOs seems to indicate that these practitioners were awarded credits without due reference to their formative assessments over the years. The IAC reports that it was highly improbable that every practitioner would meet all specific outcomes for all three core unit standards at the same time when the summative assessment was required. The research team results echo this statement, and those practitioners given accreditation actually demonstrated uneven performance against the norms and standards. This may indicate that the RTOs did not complete the summative assessment forms correctly.

The Technical Secretariat recommended that the Northern Cape Department of Education require that two RTOs revise their summative assessment of their practitioners.

For the moderation visits, the IAC asked to see at least one top practitioner, one average practitioner and at least one struggling practitioner at Level 1 and Level 4 for each RTO, plus additional Level 1 and/or Level 4 practitioners to make up the required number to be observed.

The practitioner visits took place during 22 - 26 November 1999 with five moderators from the IAC. They visited 48 practitioners – a sample of 30.8% of the 156 practitioners who had been assessed by their respective RTOs.

Where possible, RTOs' trainers accompanied the moderators. In addition, at least one Northern Cape Education Department ECD person accompanied the moderator on each of the practitioner site visits. In some cases, this official was the District Subject Advisor.

All moderation was discussed with the personnel from the Northern Cape Department of Education. Agreement was reached between the personnel and IAC moderators on the comments to be given to the RTOs. Where possible, moderation was discussed with the trainers from the RTOs who accompanied the teams on the visits.

The moderators did not conduct a full assessment of each practitioner; rather, they looked at a sample of the skills of the practitioner, based on their observations on the site, as required in a moderation process. On average, one hour was spent at each site.

The moderators agreed that as a rule of thumb, the difference between a Level 1 and Level 4 practitioner would be:

- Ability to work in an OBE mode (Level 4).
- Greater community involvement.
- Planning of appropriate activities and strategies for individual children, based on assessment of children's progress (Level 4).

The moderators were in general agreement with the summative assessments of the sample of practitioners visited for two of the RTOs and thus endorsed the results of the assessment of practitioners of these RTOs.

In the case of the third RTO, some practitioners accredited at Level 4 by the RTO were not yet competent at this level. The moderators recommended that the practitioners at Level 4 should receive a short, focussed additional amount of training and then be reassessed. Since there is a small number of practitioners at Level 4, it was felt that perhaps all of them would benefit from this additional focus, including those who had had their credits endorsed in the moderation.

In the case of the fourth RTO, both the moderators and the Northern Cape Department of Education personnel agreed that the practitioners visited from this RTO could not be accredited even at Level 1. From observation of practitioners at their sites, it was clear that they were not implementing outcomes-based education. Their knowledge base was

questionable, and the quality of their work with the children was below that which one would require even of a Level 1 practitioner. In most cases no preparation had been done for some months. There was little understanding of how to run a programme for children. Large group chanting of songs, rhymes, etc. was mostly offered as examples of learning by the children. There was no demonstration of individualised work with, and assessment of, children by the Level 4 practitioners. Most written observations of children had ceased early on in the year. Record keeping was thus very limited.

The moderators thus could not endorse the results of the practitioners of this RTO as recorded on their summative assessment forms, either at Level 1 or at Level 4. They recommended that the Northern Cape Department of Education should not endorse the results of this RTO, either at Level 1 or at Level 4. The Northern Cape DoE should require further training from the RTO to bring their practitioners up to the required standards. When the RTO declares its practitioners ready for summative assessment, the Northern Cape Department of Education should carry out a further moderation of practitioners to endorse the assessment done by this RTO.

After the submission of the IAC's final moderation report, the whole moderation process from that point on was taken over by the Northern Cape Education Department.

6.2.3 Comments on the Accreditation Procedure

At the National Workshop in November 1999, the representatives from the Northern Cape raised the following issues in relation to the process:

- The rating of practitioners on the summative assessment forms was found to be problematic.
- The moderators in their moderation visits to practitioners should also attend at least one training session in order to get a broader picture of how training is presented.
- The skills of the moderators were appreciated. The quality of moderation was critical and fair.

The view expressed widely at the national workshop with regard to practitioner accreditation was that:

"This process had not enabled practitioners to achieve a whole qualification. At the beginning of the National ECD Pilot Project, practitioners had been led to believe that they could attain whole qualifications. As the process evolved, it became clear that with SAQA requirements for qualifications, which include credits in fundamental and elective learning, the participating practitioners would achieve only part qualifications within the National ECD Pilot Project."

6.2.4 Research Team Comments

The process of accrediting practitioners should be more transparent: practitioners should be informed of the elements involved in this process, including how the NQF works, what are the norms and standards that they will be assessed against, what type of qualifications they could get, how to prove their progress, and so forth. The research team found positive changes at community-based sites concerning training, support, familiarity with norms and

standards and assessment, which indicate efforts on the part of RTOs to get the accreditation process going.

6.2.4.1 Training

It is the aim of the RTOs to offer training and support to practitioners to enable them to move from one level on the NQF to another during the three-year Pilot Project.

In 1999, 80.0% of the practitioners were receiving training under the Pilot Project. This is a marked increase as only 53.6% of the practitioners received training in 1998, reflecting that some provinces actually began the National ECD Pilot Project in 1999.

The data collected shows that two practitioners are being trained in the North West Province. This training cannot be attributed to the Pilot Project as no tenders have been awarded in the North West. In the Northern Province the tender has been awarded and eight out of 12 practitioners reported that they are now receiving training.

Moreover, in 1999, only two of the 87 practitioners (2%) receiving training were unable to name the RTO that trained them, as compared to 4 out of 59 practitioners (7%) in 1998.

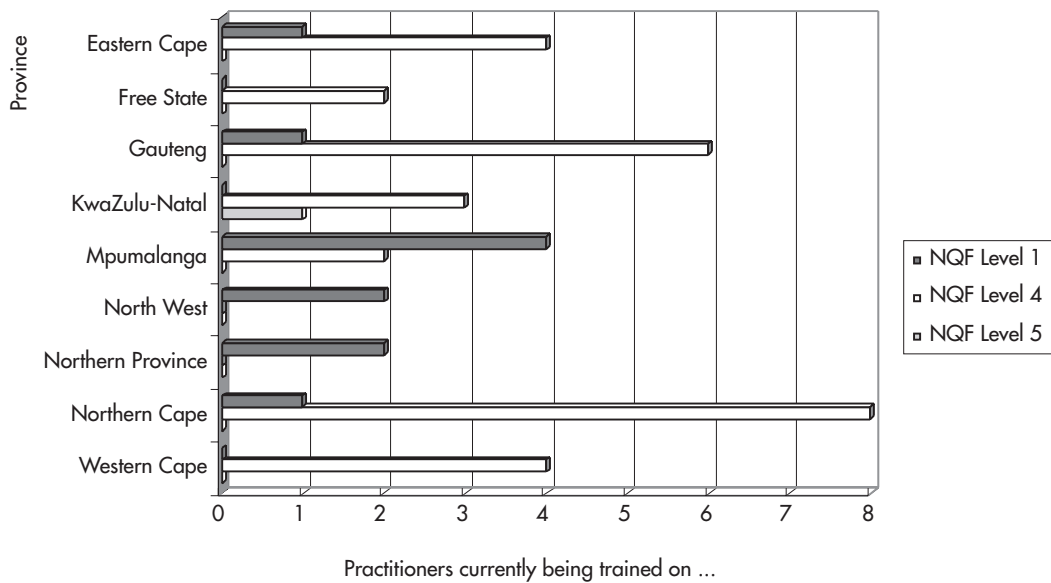
To gauge the frequency of their training, practitioners were asked how long it had been since they last attended a training session. Of the 88 who responded, 36% had attended in the week previous to the fieldwork visit. Overall 56% of these practitioners had attended training between one week and two months prior to the fieldwork visit.

6.2.4.2 Knowledge of NQF Levels

In 1999, 49% (43 out of 88) of the practitioners who had been trained stated that an RTO trainer had told them on which NQF level they were being trained. In 1998, 71% (42 out of 59) of those who had been trained were able to tell their NQF levels. Concern was expressed in the 1998 report that not all practitioners knew the NQF level on which they were being trained. It appears that this situation has not improved.

As can be seen from the following figure, there were provincial differences, with practitioners in the Northern Cape, Mpumalanga and Western Cape being most aware of their NQF levels.

Figure 2: NQF Levels at which Practitioners are Currently being Trained



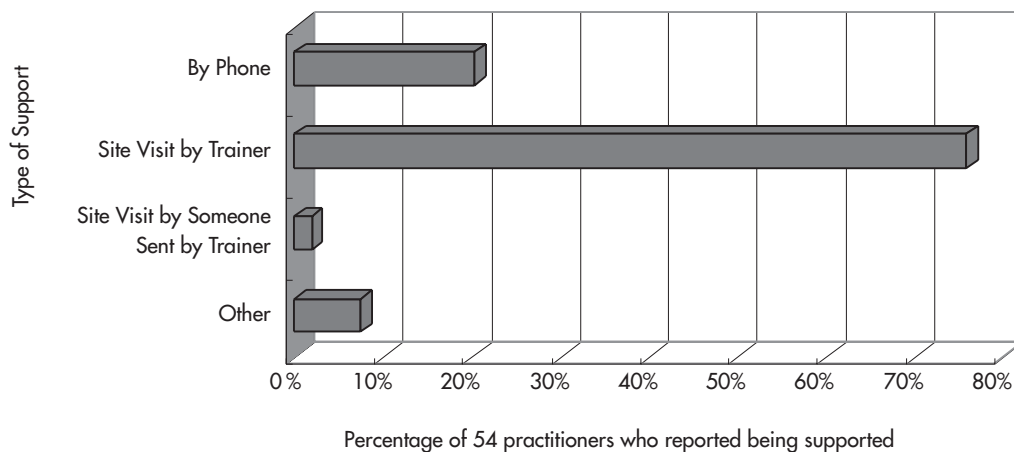
6.2.4.3 Support

Site visits are a vital part of the support RTOs need to offer to practitioners, as these are the most critical of the assessment strategies. During site visits, practitioners have the opportunity to show their skills as well as discussing problems or plans. Site visits give meaning to the phrase ‘learner-paced’ as trainers are able to assess the effectiveness of their training and plan future training on observed needs and strengths.

In 1999, 69% of practitioners (61 of 88) receiving training reported that trainers had visited them between a week (9%) and 3 – 6 months (25%) prior to the field visit. This is a marked increase from 1998 when only 36% of practitioners (21 of 59) being trained had been visited by their RTO.

When asked whether trainers were giving them support, 61% (54 of 88) of practitioners receiving training answered positively. The following chart shows the different kinds of support provided by RTOs.

Figure 3: Type of Support by Trainer



In 63% of the cases (34 out of 54), the support given by trainers was reported to happen within one month of the training session. This finding indicates a commitment by some RTOs to promptly provide support after the training and to ensure that problems do not become entrenched with practice. The practitioners reported that the support was received every two weeks (6%), once a month (23%) and once every few months (45%).

Fieldworkers also asked practitioners what the trainer had done during the site visit. A number of options were given, including "other" so that all forms of support could be noted. Practitioners could name more than one option.

Table 7: Activities during Site Visits

Activities	Percentage of Practitioners/Sites (n=88)
Watched me working	67.0
Pointed out areas where I needed to improve	59.1
Told me what I was doing well	43.2
Interviewed me about my work	28.4
Asked my colleagues to comment on my work	21.6
Gave me a form to fill out	15.9
Asked me to do a written assignment	15.9
Other	17.0

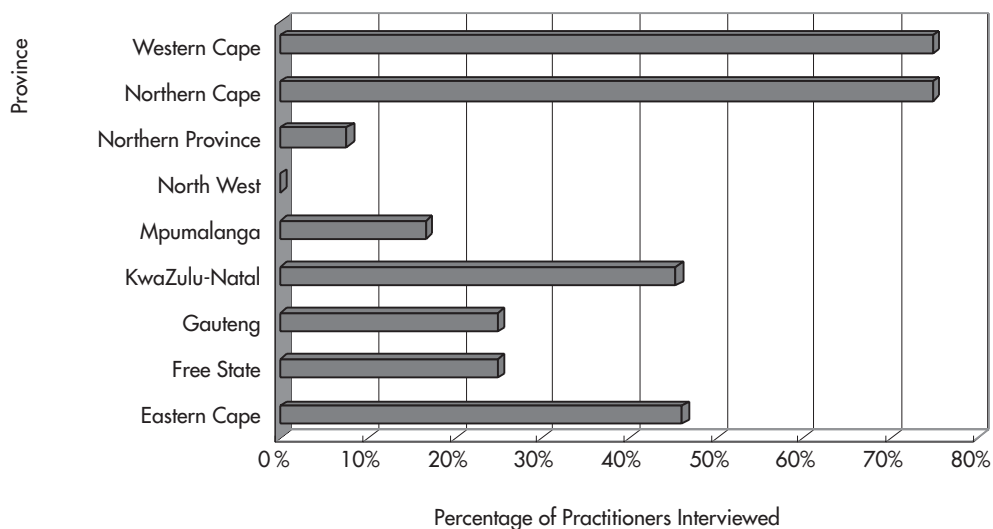
Some of the "other" kinds of support include the trainers looking at the equipment, accompanying researchers, giving general advice or advice on buying toys.

Ideally, the trainer should give written comments/feedback on the practitioner's work during the site visits. Such comments would allow the practitioner to check her work regularly for the problems identified in the last visit, without which no improvement could be made to achieve certain qualifications. However, only 21 practitioners in 1999 reported having received written comments and only five were able to show these to the fieldworker.

6.2.4.4 Familiarity with Unit Standards

It is the belief of the research team that a basic step for a practitioner to understand the accreditation process is to be familiar with the NQF documents. Thus practitioners were shown a copy of the Norms and Standards document and asked whether they had seen it before. Thirty-eight practitioners reported having seen the Unit Standards document, while to 70 practitioners it was still unfamiliar. This indicates an increase from 1998 when only 25 practitioners said they had heard of unit standards.

Figure 4: Familiarity with the Unit Standard Booklet



Thirty-seven practitioners who said they had seen the book on unit standards said they knew what a unit standard was. Seventeen practitioners could not name a unit standard.

Although many practitioners are aware of the Unit Standards document, 37% were not able to say which specific outcomes they had achieved. One explanation of this may be that RTOs are offering an integrated form of training that does not deal with each specific outcome separately. Although this may be good training practice, it is still important that practitioners keep a check of their own progress through the unit standards and they can only do this if they are aware of each specific outcome and whether or not these have been achieved.

6.2.4.5 Assessment

The research team believes that practitioners should be informed about the assessment results otherwise they could not improve their work in a targeted way or achieve the specific outcomes required for a certain qualification. Therefore, trainers should leave a copy of the assessment results with the practitioner. In 1999, slightly more than one half (47 out of 88) of the practitioners receiving training had been assessed by the trainer. This assessment refers to current practice, not to RPL. Of those who felt they had been assessed, 40 stated that the trainers had recorded these assessments but only three were able to show these to the fieldworker, as two practitioners could not show them and 35 said that they had not been given copies. These responses indicate an increase from 1998 when only 22% of those who reported being trained (13 out of 59) said they had been assessed during a follow-up visit by a RTO.

6.2.4.6 Recognition of Prior Learning

If RPL is being implemented fairly, practitioners should be part of the assessment process. They should be aware of the criteria being used and should be able to submit evidence of their own to ensure that the assessor is able to come to a decision based on as wide a range of evidence as possible. In 1998 only 40 practitioners were aware of having been assessed or granted ECD RPL by an RTO.

In 1999, practitioners were asked the question, "just before you started with the ECD Pilot Project training, did your trainer ask you what training, qualifications, or former work experience you had?" Of the 88 practitioners who responded to this question, 77% said that trainers asked what training, qualifications or former work experience the practitioner had. It should be noted that asking about practitioners' previous qualifications is only one of the steps RTOs should take in order to grant RPL, but not the full process. This increase, from those who in 1998 recalled RPL taking place, could be attributed to practitioners now being more aware of the term RPL.

However, during the IAC accreditation process it became clear that RTOs still did not have a good understanding of RPL. The Division for Lifelong Learning at the University of the Western Cape evaluated the RPL methodology and placement of ECD practitioners on the ECD Pilot Project, which reached similar conclusions. It is found that although a combination of procedures was used to determine prior learning, RTOs relied more heavily on evidence in the form of certification than anything else. According to the final report by the Division for Lifelong Learning, "there is very little evidence of observation at a site or portfolio type information being used to evaluate prior learning."⁸ Moreover, this report suggests that prior learning was not recognised as a component of the training curriculum. Neither were practitioners in general aware of RPL processes. Few of them realised that the assessment of them was part of the RPL process, nor have they been informed of assessment results. The RPL process was not moderated in any way. The evaluation report also points out that RTOs lack the assessment expertise that the DoE assumed them to have.

6.2.4.7 Portfolios

In order to accredit a practitioner, evidence of effort and progress made in shifting to the outcomes-based education paradigm is indispensable. An important type of evidence is the portfolio that a practitioner prepares. The existence and quality of such portfolios indicate the extent of practitioners' participation in the assessment/accreditation process.

RTOs and some practitioners have received training and support during IAC workshops on how to prepare and present practitioner portfolios. Sixty-seven of the 88 practitioners (76.1%) who are receiving training stated that they have portfolios and 43 were able to show these to the fieldworker. Of these portfolios, 65% included a range of documents, for example, the practitioners' own observation records, plans and examples of learners work. Of the 67 practitioners, 55 stated that their trainers had seen their portfolios.

6.2.4.8 Planning

Planning is one of the key indicators of practitioners' capability in managing the learning programme. In an outcomes-based education paradigm, practitioners should plan the daily activities based on the outcomes to be achieved and

8 Kathy Watters and Natheem Handricks, "Evaluation of the RPL methodology and placement of ECD practitioners", November 1999, page 15.

learners' needs and interests. The following discussion pertains only to those sites where practitioners remained the same from 1998 to 1999. In 1999, practitioners at 78.4% of community-based sites reported planning for the day, while the figure was 85.1% in 1998. The percentage of practitioners who were able to show a written-down plan was 43.2% in 1999, as compared to 73% in 1998. As shown in the following table, the total percentage of practitioners who mentioned Program Organiser, learners' needs and interests, Illustrative Learning Programme, or outcomes (all OBE related) is lower in 1999 than in 1998.

Table 8: Guiding Principles of Planning at Community-based Sites

	1998 (n=72)	1999 (n=68)
Themes	59.7%	69.1%
Programme Organiser	18.1%	20.6%
Learners' needs and interests	27.8%	7.4%
Illustrative Learning Programme	Not an option	4.4%
Outcomes	2.8%	1.5%
Other	13.9%	17.6%

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% since more than one answer could be given.

N = number of practitioners who planned for the day.

6.2.4.9 Community Involvement

In order to obtain a qualification in the unit standard, Managing the Learning Programme (MLP), at a certain NQF level, practitioners need to show evidence of community involvement. The existence of a governing body and the frequency it meets are indications of such involvement. In 1999, 97.3% of community-based sites had a governing committee, as compared to 96% in 1998 and 86% in 1997. The frequency that such a committee meets is given in Table 9, together with the data from 1998. On average, more than half of the governing committees meet frequently (at least once a month) and another quarter meet quarterly which augers well for community participation.

Table 9: Frequency of Governing Committee Meetings at Community-based Sites

	1998 (n=99)	1999 (n=107)
Once a week	2.8%	1.9%
Once every 2 weeks	12.4%	2.8%
Once a month	59.0%	52.3%
Every 2 to 4 months	21.9%	23.4%
Every 4 to 6 months	1.9%	2.8%
More than 6 months between meetings	1.0%	1.9%
When necessary	9.5%	15%

Note: The percentages in 1998 do not add up to 100% because more than one answer could be given – for example, a committee could meet every 2 to 4 months but also when necessary. In 1999, fieldworkers were required to check only one answer that most accurately describes the situation.

6.2.5 Recommendations

The IAC's moderation experience with the Northern Cape attests to the importance of an independent quality control system that monitors RTOs' accreditation of practitioners. The research team's results from the Northern Cape shows that training had a variable impact and that the RTO providing training was not necessarily a good predictor of the practitioner performance. Thus, the research team concurs with the IAC's recommendation that both the process of moderating the results and accrediting the RTOs should be strengthened and made more rigorous.

At this point, the research team stresses that the IAC or the Quality Assurance Body should carry out the moderation of the summative assessment by RTOs of practitioners and this process should not yet be handed over to the provinces.

Given that the accreditation system has just been set up and RTOs are not familiar enough with the procedure and assessment criteria, it is also important that RTO trainers are given more training in assessing practitioners, with specific emphasis on the RPL.

7 QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter partially answers the research questions relating to the quality and effectiveness of community-based reception year programmes:

- Are community-based reception-year programmes providing high quality, equitable and cost-effective education?
- How do community-based reception year programmes compare to the quality, equity and cost-effectiveness of reception- classes offered at state schools?

The quality of the pilot programme is examined by considering site conditions/ infrastructure and practitioner performance on selected items of the core unit standards of Facilitating Active Learning, Facilitating Healthy Development, and Managing the Learning Programme.⁹

The effectiveness of community-based ECD programmes is examined in several ways. Firstly, the improvement in practitioner performance from 1997 to 1999 is considered in relation to primary and reception sites. Secondly, the same improvement is considered in relation to the training inputs of the National ECD Pilot Project. Effectiveness is also examined by considering the relationship between practitioner performance and learner performance on literacy and numeracy skills.

7.2 Site Conditions/Infrastructure

Few significant changes were found at community-based sites concerning the site conditions. Building materials, availability of outside playing area, toilet facilities, lighting and security measures stayed about the same in 1999 as they were in 1997. Positive changes were only seen regarding hand-washing facilities, sources of water, and provision of food at community-based sites.

Comparing basic conditions at three types of sites in 1999, the research team still found about one third of community-based sites lacking appropriate infrastructure, especially concerning building materials, toilet facilities, lighting and sources of water.

Please refer to Appendix B for details and statistics on site conditions.

7.3 Quality of Practitioner Performance

The quality of ECD services was measured by examining the practitioner's performance on selected items of the core unit standards for ECD. In particular, the five specific outcomes from Facilitating Active Learning, the five specific outcomes from Facilitating Healthy Development, and five specific outcomes from Managing the Learning Programme were observed or measured for all practitioners in the sample (see Table 10). Please consult Appendix C for details regarding the specific assessment criteria that were used to measure each of the specific outcomes.

The baseline measures used in this section are a combination of the 1997 and 1998 data. This is

⁹ For more information regarding the calculation of these scores, please consult Appendix C.

due to the fact that the norms and standards were only finalised after the 1997 study. The final measures mentioned in this chapter relate to those measures taken in 1999.

Table 10: Selected items from the Core Unit Standards

Unit Standard	Selected SO Measured
Facilitating Active Learning	Set up learning activities, inside and outside, covering aspects of learning and development Observe and assess children’s learning, development and responses in order to inform practice Interact and communicate effectively with children in a range of situations Using a range of techniques for working with individuals Reflect on own practice
Facilitating Healthy Development	Protect the safety of children and adults Support good health Support children with special needs Support each child’s social and emotional development Help children learn to manage their own behaviour
Managing the Learning Programme	Work co-operatively with all other adults involved in the programme Implement a planned learning programme that supports the care and education of children within the national curriculum framework Report on children’s progress to parents Maintain administrative systems Maintain standards of early childhood care and development.

A graphical depiction of the quality of practitioner performance can be found in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Practitioner Performance Measures (Same Practitioner)

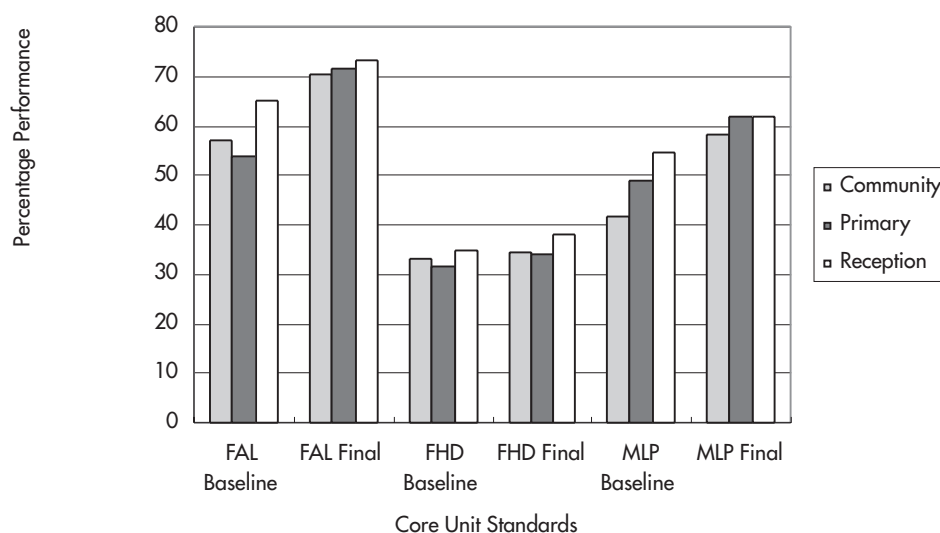
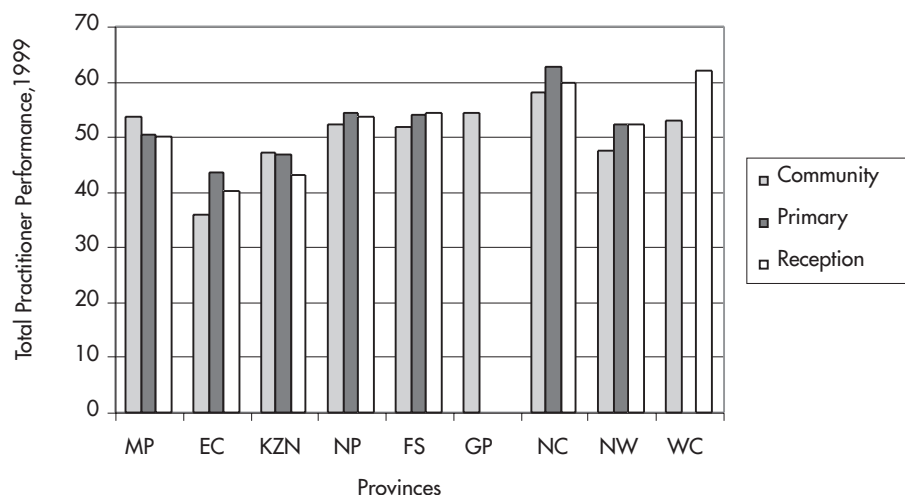


Figure 5 shows the baseline and final scores for practitioner performance in FAL, FHD, MLP and total practitioner performance, for community-based sites, primary sites and reception sites. To eliminate potential bias, this data includes only the sites that remained the same over the three years, as well as only those sites where the practitioner remained the same. As shown, practitioner performance improved for all sites between the baseline and the final study. Moreover, all sites are performing at a relatively high level for FAL, and MLP and a lower level for FHD. However, on the whole practitioner performance improved for community-based sites. Community sites are still under-performing primary and reception sites although the gap has closed over the last three years.

Figure 6 shows the total practitioner performance in 1999 for the nine provinces. Total practitioner performance is calculated as the sum of the FAL, FHD and MLP scores. As shown, the Northern Cape community-based sites have performed the best, whilst the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal have not performed as well as the other provinces. These results conform quite well to the case study evaluations of practitioner performance given in Table 6 (section 4.11). The majority of practitioners in the Northern Cape, Free State, Mpumalanga, Western Cape, and the Northern Province demonstrated strong or average performance in case studies, and their scores on quantitative measures are high as well. On the other hand, most practitioners in the Eastern Cape and the North West score low on both case study evaluations and quantitative measures.

Figure 5 and Figure 6 demonstrate that all ECD sites are currently performing at 70% of expected standard for FAL, 40% of expected standard for MLP, but at much lower levels for FHD (only 35% of expected standard). Furthermore, the changes between the baseline and final suggest that the pilot programme and the education sector in general have emphasised teaching and learning (FAL and MLP), while little emphasis appears to have been given to FHD.

Figure 6: Total Practitioner Performance Score in 1999 by Province



Note: Only community-based sites in Gauteng were examined in the study and only community-based sites and reception sites in the Western Cape.

7.4 Effectiveness of Practitioner Performance

Effectiveness of practitioner performance is defined as the change from 1997/98 to 1999 in the total practitioner performance score (the sum of FAL, FHD and MLP). It should be noted that data was only used on sites where the practitioner remained the same over the three years in order to produce more reliable results.

7.4.1 Facilitating Active Learning (FAL)

In general, community-based sites appear to have improved more than the primary and reception sites on the unit standard Facilitating Active Learning, although these results were not statistically significant. Like seen in the baseline, community-based sites are still performing slightly poorer than primary and reception sites in 1999, but this difference is no longer significant. Community-based sites are thus closing the gap in performance on FAL, as shown in Figure 5.

In general, those community-based sites that received Pilot Project training were at a higher level of performance on FAL in 1999 than those sites that received no training at all. Therefore, this shows that, since 1997, the National ECD Pilot Project's investment in training has had a small, but positive, impact.

7.4.2 Facilitating Healthy Development (FHD)

For all sites, including primary, reception and community-based sites, there was very little change in performance on the core unit standard Facilitating Healthy Development. Again, the FHD final score for community-based sites in 1999 was still lower than that for primary and reception sites, but this difference was not significant, indicating again that the gap is closing between community-based sites and primary/reception sites.

Similarly, those community-based sites that received National ECD Pilot Project training were at a higher level of performance on FHD in 1999 than those sites that received no training at all – again demonstrating that the National ECD Pilot Project's investment in training appears to have had some positive impact.

7.4.3 Managing the Learning Programme (MLP)

Practitioners in community-based sites significantly increased their performance on the core unit standard, Managing the Learning Programme. This improvement was by 16%, as compared to primary and reception sites that improved by only 9%. This difference in improvement is statistically significant. However, while the final MLP scores for community-based sites in 1999 were still below the scores for primary and reception sites, the significant improvement in MLP performance for community-based sites shows that the gap in performance is closing.

When examining MLP scores for those sites that received National ECD Pilot Project training against those sites that did not receive such training, similar results were found to those for FAL and FHD – specifically, those sites that received National ECD Pilot Project training had higher scores in 1999 than those sites that did not receive training.

7.4.4 Overall Effectiveness

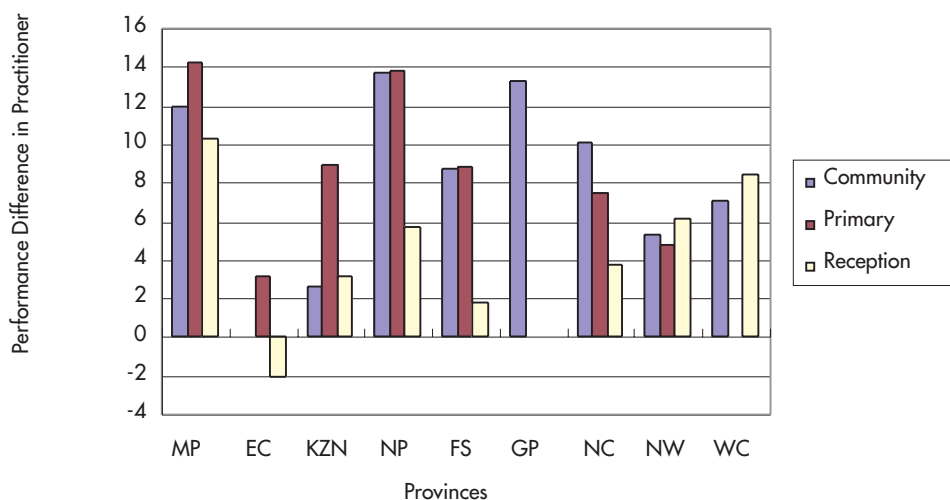
The above data demonstrates that overall, all sites improved their performance on the three core unit standards over the three years, and that community-based sites improved more and are closing the gap in performance relative to primary and reception sites. Particularly in community-based sites, the most marked improvement seems to have been on the unit standard dealing with Managing the Learning Programme. In Facilitating Active Learning, slight improvements were seen for community-based sites while there was a very small change in performance on Facilitating Healthy Development for all sites.

Moreover, in community-based sites, there appears to have been greater improvement in each of these unit standards among those sites where the practitioners received Pilot Project training. Given that the greatest improvement was seen in Managing the Learning Programme, we might conclude that National ECD Pilot Project-funded training focused more on Managing the Learning Programme than on the other two unit standards. As practitioners and RTOs grapple with new concepts, it is possible that performance will stagnate until they all become more conversant with new techniques. At the same time, there is a need to reconsider the very complex range of concepts that practitioners and RTOs have to understand in order to practise effectively.

However, the research team cannot conclude with certainty that the National ECD Pilot Project training programme had a positive impact on practitioner performance. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, statistically significant positive changes were not found for the practitioner performance measures of FAL and FHD over the three years of the project. While we did see positive change over the three years, the difference is not statistically significant. This is most likely due to the fact that the training only really began in 1998 and there has not been enough time to allow significant behavioural change to occur.

The second reason concerns the fact that the effects of other training outside of the National ECD Pilot Project cannot be separated from the effects of the National ECD Pilot Project training. Indeed, in some provinces where no National ECD Pilot Project training occurred, we still found positive change in practitioner performance.

Figure 7: Difference in Practitioner Performance from 1997 to 1999 by Province



Note: In Figure 7 the community-based sites in the Eastern Cape did not change at all. Only community-based sites in Gauteng were examined in the study and only community-based sites and reception sites in the Western Cape.

For example, as can be seen in Figure 7, in the Northern Province where no training occurred, there was an overall improvement in practitioner performance, and in Facilitating Active Learning and Managing the Learning Programme. A possible reason for this is that they were receiving training independent of the Pilot Project (such as those sites receiving support from the Sekhukhuneland Educare Project). Furthermore, in some provinces where community-based sites received National ECD Pilot Project training (such as KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape), only very slight improvements were found.

The above anomalies may be because of one or more of the following explanations: Firstly, our measures of training only focused on the quantity of National ECD Pilot Project training received by each site, and did not focus on the quality of training delivered. Thus the precise relationship between training quality and quantity cannot be calculated at this time. Due to the variation in the quality of training, it is difficult to measure correlation between training and practitioner performance.

Second, as mentioned above, there is the issue of other interventions outside of the Pilot Project which might be reaching the community-based sites and influencing their performance – such as C2005 training or other programmes influencing pre-school learner skills and other training that a practitioner could have received.

Third, the lack of statistically significant evidence to support the positive impact of the National ECD Pilot Project training programme suggests that there was insufficient recognition of prior learning. This may have led to the RTOs offering training at too low a level and so not supporting the practitioners to improve and extend their skills.

Fourth, we based our measures on the norms and standards that are somewhat

vague and ambiguous. This may also be one of the reasons why the National ECD Pilot Project training programme appears to have had less impact than expected. In general, community-based sites should provide opportunities for intellectual, emotional and physical development that children from disadvantaged backgrounds generally lack. In other words, they should not simply be child-minding facilities. However, many South African community-based sites do not provide the expected added value because clear content and skills outcomes for the ECD norms and standards are not set. The norms and standards tend to remain visionary and vague rather than explicit. There is increasing evidence from the international literature that non-specific norms and standards do not promote equity in educational delivery because the child's opportunities for learning and development are left to the whim and commitment of the practitioner. So if, as is widely accepted, children from more stimulating backgrounds arrive at school with early literacy skills in advance of their counterparts then it is important that the community-based ECD site that receives a subsidy to bridge this gap. All outcomes (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes) need to be made explicit to practitioners and parents alike, and all ECD sites should aim to achieve these by the time children leave their sites. Illustrative examples of these early literacy outcomes might include:

- Listen to a story and be able to re-tell in her own way, or discuss it.
- Distinguish between text and pictures.
- Tell a story from pictures.
- Explain why books are special and valuable and how they should be looked after.
- Hold book for reading.
- Identify the front and back of a book.

Unfortunately, the current set of norms and standards lack such specificity – to the detriment of the practitioners and the learners alike. Therefore, in order to be very clear with practitioners, it is critical that clearer outcomes than presently exist in the norms and standards should be developed and instituted.

Lastly, in general, RTO training programmes should be structured to address identified weaknesses in practitioner performance, and in this way group the practitioners with similar training needs. This grouping is almost impossible if there are not accurate measures of current competencies through accreditation credits, recognition of prior learning or other assessment exercises. Until such recognition of competencies processes are implemented effectively, training time will potentially be wasted on practitioners who already have the desired competencies.

7.5 Learner Attainment

The baseline study conducted in 1997 measured literacy and numeracy skills of learners aged 5-6 years old in all sites. That study found that learners in community-based sites under-performed their counterparts at reception and primary sites in all areas.

In 1999, this pattern unfortunately persists, although improvements in community-based sites were greater than in primary and reception sites. Again, indicating that the gap is closing between community-based services and primary and reception sites. The average scores for literacy and for numeracy for 1999 in community-based sites were still lower than the average scores for literacy and numeracy for either primary or reception sites. However, it is positive to note that learner performance in community-based sites increased from 1997 to 1999 and this was a significant improvement over primary and reception sites, where a decrease in learner performance was seen. Where there was a decrease in learner performance – such as with literacy skills – the decrease in community sites was far less than the decrease in primary and reception sites (-1% as compared to -8 and -9% respectively). The changes in numeracy skills between 1997 and 1999 show similar results where mean learner scores in community-based sites increased by 1%, while mean learner scores in primary and reception sites decreased by 5%.

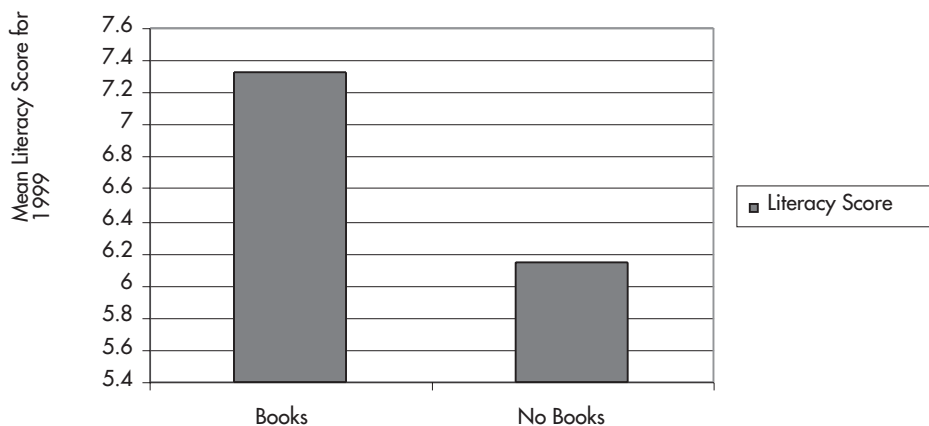
Table 11 shows the difference in literacy and numeracy scores between 1997 and 1999 for all site types within the nine provinces. As can be seen from the table, literacy scores and numeracy scores did not alter significantly between the two years. However, these results show that although the learner skills for numeracy and literacy are still lower at community-based sites, community-based sites are closing the gap and general learner skills are improving at these sites.

Table 11: Differences in 1997 and 1999 Literacy and Numeracy Scores by Province and Site Type

	Literacy 1997 (% out of 15)	Literacy 1999 (% out of 15)	Numeracy 1997 (% out of 15)	Numeracy 1999 (% out of 35)
Western Cape				
Community	58.6	53.3	71.0	66.58
Reception	70.0	54.6	81.0	71.1
Eastern Cape				
Community	47.3	28.6	58.8	49.5
Primary	74.6	42.6	90.8	68.5
Reception	76.0	40.0	83.4	62.2
Free State				
Community	28.0	47.3	53.1	75.7
Primary	54.6	10.6	70.5	84.8
Reception	42.0	54.6	62.0	73.5
Gauteng				
Community	52.0	34.6	72.5	62.0
KwaZulu-Natal				
Community	53.3	36.0	67.7	65.7
Primary	72.0	50.0	51.4	72.8
Reception	54.6	43.0	79.4	74.8
Mpumalanga				
Community	80.6	56.0	91.7	80.0
Primary	92.0	46.6	91.7	81.4
Reception	77.3	57.3	88.5	84.0
North West				
Community	40.6	33.0	62.0	79.4
Primary	58.6	38.6	84.5	85.4
Reception	53.3	41.3	87.5	87.4
Northern Province				
Community	37.3	45.3	70.0	83.7
Primary	62.0	58.6	85.7	91.4
Reception	49.3	46.6	74.2	83.4
Northern Cape				
Community	47.3	52.0	81.1	70.2
Primary	68.6	68.6	88.5	82.8
Reception	56.6	56.6	94.5	72.2

In the baseline study conducted in 1997, we found that the presence of books at the site was significantly related to learner literacy scores. This relationship continues to exist in 1999 – the presence of books at the site was significantly related to mean literacy scores for 1999 across all sites, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Mean Literacy Scores for 1999



The relationship between books and learner early literacy skills is further strengthened by the fact that in those community-based sites that acquired books between 1998 and 1999, learner scores for literacy improved by 4.3%, while in those sites that still did not have books in 1999, learner literacy scores decreased by 4.5%. Although this result is not statistically significant, it does show a net increase for those sites that acquired books. The implications of this are very powerful – the ECD sector needs to focus on both accessing books and on training practitioners to provide support for the development of early literacy skills in order to strengthen learner literacy overall.

7.6 Impact of Practitioner Performance on Learner Attainment

As was seen in the baseline, learner literacy and numeracy scores were significantly related to practitioners' education levels in community-based sites. In general, as the education level of the practitioner increases, so do the scores of the learners for literacy and numeracy. This is particularly relevant for numeracy skills.

Examining the relationship between learner progress and practitioner performance (using the categorisation from case studies in section 4.11) at a general level shows that practitioners who performed strongly had learners with significantly higher mean scores for numeracy and life skills in 1999 than those practitioners who were seen as weak or unacceptable. However, this relationship between improvement in practitioner performance and learner performance on literacy and numeracy was not statistically significant. This shows that currently, practitioner performance on the norms and standards does not seem to be an accurate predictor of learner performance. It may be that there has not been enough training yet to see a change or that OBE is not yet fully understood and implemented. Finally, as argued elsewhere in this report, it may be due to the fact that the norms

and standards do not explicitly specify the skills, knowledge and attitudes required of the learners (such as "able to write name") clearly enough for practitioners, leaving them ill prepared to teach early literacy or numeracy.

7.7 Conclusion

Practitioner Performance increased from 1997 to 1999 and community-based sites improved more than primary and reception sites, indicating that the gap is closing in terms of quality of services provided at community sites. Unfortunately, however, we cannot establish that the programme has been effective as a means of improving practitioner performance. This is probably due to the limited time available in delivering the training programme, as well as the "muddling" of the ECD Pilot Project training efforts with other training programmes (such as C2005 training offered to the ECD Pilot practitioners in some provinces) delivered to the same target group.

With respect to learner performance in literacy and numeracy, community-based sites have closed the gap in learner performance as well. However, literacy scores are still low at some sites probably due to insufficient books available at these sites.

Finally, while there is little statistically significant association between learner progress and practitioner improvement in performance this is again probably due to the limited time available in the Pilot Project to establish such an effect. However, stronger practitioners (as measured by strong performance on FAL, FHD and MLP) seem to show stronger learner performance – although this cannot be statistically substantiated at this time.

8 FINANCE AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS

Financial data was collected at all sites in order to determine:

- The cost-effectiveness of the subsidy for community-based ECD sites.
- Whether the subsidy for community sites is adequate and appropriate.
- The general cost of providing ECD services at community level compared to the provision of reception year at primary schools.

These determinations are taken to answer two of the main research questions for this project:

- *Are Community based programmes providing high quality, equitable, and cost-effective education?*
- *How do Community-based programmes compare to the quality, equity, and cost-effectiveness of reception classes offered at state schools?*

8.1 Finances of Community-based Sites

Overall, more community sites are now maintaining basic financial systems compared to 1997 and 1998.

Respondent Characteristics:

Three quarters of the individuals who were interviewed on community site finances were themselves responsible for finances. This greatly assisted in obtaining detailed and more valid information for estimating the levels of income and expenditure at the site.

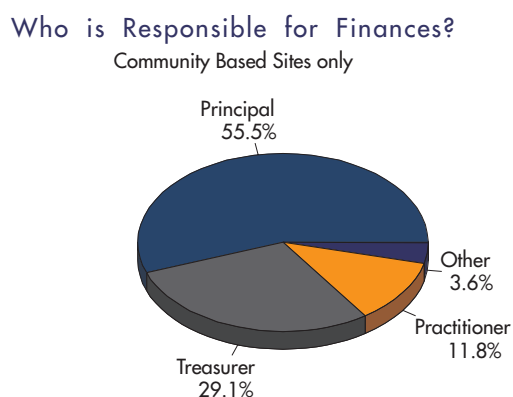
Person(s) responsible for Finances at the Site:

There is a range of individuals responsible for finances at community sites (see Figure 9).

Fee Register:

61% of community sites showed a fee register compared to 74% in 1998 and 60% in 1997. A similar drop between 1999 and 1998 is seen even when we examined the data from the same sites that we visited in the two years. This trend may be partially explained by the findings described below, which show that receiving a subsidy made some sites less rigorous in collecting fees (see section 8.1.4).

Figure 9: Who is Responsible for Finances at Community-based Sites?



Bookkeeping System:

42.7% of sites showed a bookkeeping system compared to 39% in 1998 and 46.4% in 1997, which suggests a fairly stable situation.

Bank Accounts:

94% of sites reported having a bank account up from 83% in 1997 and 91% in 1998. More than half of these have cheques for the account (58% of all sites) also up from 53% in 1998. And every one of these cheque accounts requires two signatures.

These data demonstrates a general improvement in the establishment of financial systems at community sites. However, there does not seem to be any relationship between the issuance of the subsidy under the Pilot Project and the presence of these financial systems. Indeed, it appears that these systems have been established without the impetus of the subsidy scheme, although it has been suggested that the presence of the scheme has spurred many sites toward establishing such systems, even if they had not yet received a subsidy from the Pilot Project.

8.1.1 Do Community Sites Cover Their Costs Each Month?

No. The vast majority of community sites are NOT able to cover their costs each month and this appears to have worsened slightly since last year. 74% of respondents this year (compared to 71% last year) say that they are unable to cover costs. There is no difference between the receipt of a subsidy and the sites' reported ability to cover costs. Like last year, for these sites not able to cover their costs, salaries and food are the most common items to be paid first.

8.1.2 Are Practitioners Paid Despite Shortage of Funds?

The data from 1999 confirms the results of 1998 that most practitioners (71%) were paid in the month of May despite the fact that many of these sites report that they cannot cover costs. This again indicates that salaries are being paid even when there is a shortage of funds, although for nearly half of these practitioners, the amount of the salary in May was reportedly less than the normal amount – suggesting that practitioners are taking pay cuts in their own salaries when funds are scarce, and/or cutting back on other items such as materials, equipment, etc. Again, there is no relationship between the presence of a subsidy (or not) and whether the practitioner is paid.

8.1.3 Monthly Expenses at Community Sites

Table 12 compares the average monthly expenses during 1998 and 1999. Overall there is good correlation between the data obtained in 1998 and 1999, suggesting general reliability of the data. The slight increase in 1999 over 1998 is explained by the fact that more community sites are paying rent and slightly higher electricity and administrative costs in 1999.

Table 12: Average Monthly Expenses (in Rands) Reported at Community-based Sites

Expenses	Mean (average) amount reportedly paid in May 1998	Mean (average) amount reportedly paid in May 1999
Salaries for Practitioners + Support Staff	1,336.89	1,305.88
Rent	22.61	335.22
Electricity	149.17	170.95
Food	817.61	781.91
Equipment/Capital Expenditure	804.41	537.16
Administrative Costs (phone, printing, office supplies)	259.3	309.49
Other	350.94	520.65
Mean Monthly Expenditure	3,740.93	3,961.26

Monthly Salary Expenses: 83% of respondents at community sites provided information on salaries that ranged from R0.00 to R8,332 for the month of May 1999. The higher amount represents salary payments given to multiple staff at a single site.

The average site has 3.7 staff of which 2.8 are practitioners or assistant practitioners and the average monthly salary amount is estimated at R490 per practitioner or assistant practitioner.

The presence of the Pilot Project subsidy is significantly related to higher salary expenditures for the entire site and for individual practitioners (see Table 13). This demonstrates that the subsidy is assisting in supplementing practitioner salaries that are very low in comparison to practitioners at primary schools and reception sites (see section 8.2 below).

Table 13: Difference in Salary Payments between Subsidised and non-Subsidised Sites

Receive Pilot Project Subsidy?	Average Amount of Salary paid in May 1999	
	For entire site	For each practitioner
YES	R 1,700.76	R 688.41
NO	R 1,264.02	R 492.42

Five sites in the Northern Province stated that they receive additional government subsidies

for practitioner salaries. The average amount paid to each practitioner in these sites is R1,664.00 – significantly greater than the amount for other community-based ECD practitioners, but far less than that paid to primary school practitioners – R6,700/month. This shows that while the Pilot Project subsidy has a positive effect on practitioner salaries, it still falls short of bringing the salary level up to the commensurate levels paid to primary practitioners.

Monthly Rent: Only 20% of community sites indicated that they pay rent (ranging from R27 to R1,900 per month), but for these sites, there is a positive association between the National ECD Pilot Project subsidy and amount of rent payments (see Table 14) – suggesting that once sites receive the subsidy, they either negotiate with the owner of the premise to pay more rent or move to new premises which charge rent. Indeed, 20% of sites receiving a subsidy moved in the last 3 years compared to only 9% of sites that did not receive a subsidy. Thus, the National ECD Pilot Project subsidy appears to be related to the move of the site to new (presumably better and safer) premises that also cost more.

Table 14: Difference in Rent Payments between Subsidised and non-Subsidised Sites

Receive Pilot Project Subsidy?	Average Amount of Rent paid in May 1999
YES	R 751.60
NO	R 144.50

Monthly Electricity Payments: Nearly half the community sites (42%) made electricity payments in May 1999 ranging from R4.00 to R720.00. There was no relationship between the payments of electricity by subsidised or non-subsidised sites.

Monthly Food/PSNP Programme: 61% of sites had food expenses during May 1999 with the amount spent ranging from R0 to R6,330.70. There is a significant relationship between the Pilot Project subsidy and payments for food (see Table 15) suggesting that the existence of the subsidy leads to greater food purchases at sites and possibly better nutrition.

Table 15: Difference in Monthly Food Purchases between Subsidised and non-Subsidised Sites

Receive Pilot Project Subsidy?	Average Amount for Food purchases in May 1999	Amount Spent per Learner (all ages) for the month
YES	R 813.55	R 16.11
NO	R 764.90	R 13.16

Monthly Equipment/Capital Expenditures: 23% of sites indicated that they purchased equipment in May 1999 and the amount spent ranged from R30 to R4,000. The higher figure most likely represents a one-time special purchase rather than a regular monthly amount. All except one of these sites was receiving a Pilot Project subsidy, which indicates that the issuance of the subsidy is strongly related to increased equipment and capital

purchases. Moreover, the one site which did not receive a subsidy but which incurred a purchase only spent R30 – further suggesting that the Pilot Project subsidy is also associated with greater amounts of spending in this category.

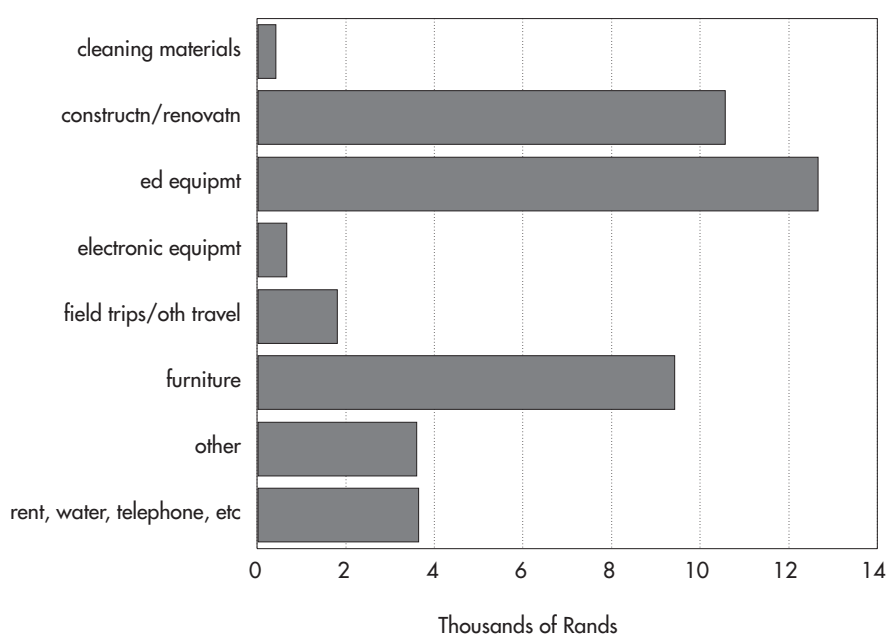
Monthly Administrative Costs: 30% of sites incurred administrative costs during the month of May 1999 with a range of R15 to R1,634. Interestingly, those sites without a Pilot Project subsidy appear to spend slightly more on administrative costs than those with a subsidy (see Table 16). One possible explanation of this is that those sites without a subsidy may need to hire people to do some of their administration (such as financial management) while those with a subsidy have some basic administration skills and can do the administrative work themselves – thereby lowering their need to finance external administrative assistance.

Table 16: Difference in Monthly Administrative Expenditures between Subsidised and non-Subsidised Sites

Receive Pilot Project Subsidy?	Average Amount Spent on Administrative Costs in May 1999
YES	R 341.44
NO	R 289.71

One-time Special Expenditures: 31% of community sites noted that they made 1.6 special purchases during the year. The vast majority of the purchases were for educational equipment, furniture, or construction/renovations at the site and the average value was R695 per purchase (see Figure 10). All except one of these sites were receiving a Pilot Project subsidy, indicating that the additional subsidy funds allowed sites to invest in additional items or improvements at the site.

Figure 10: Breakdown of most Common One-time Expenditures



Summary of Expenses at Community Sites:

Using the above data, it is possible to calculate the monthly expenditures for a "typical" community-based ECD site. Assuming that each site has an average of 2.8 practitioners or assistant practitioners, and an average of 57 total learners at the site (all ages) the costs can be calculated as follows:

Table 17: Estimated Amount (in Rands) Spent Annually by Subsidised and non-Subsidised Community-based Sites

Expenditure item	Non-Subsidised through Pilot Project		Subsidised through Pilot Project	
	Estimated monthly amount	Estimated Annual Amount (assumes 12 months of costs per site)	Estimated monthly amount	Estimated Annual Amount (assumes 12 months of costs per site)
Salaries per practitioner (annual amount assumes 2.8 practitioners/asst. practitioners per site)	492.42	5,909.04	688.41	8,260.92
Rent (pro-rated for sites not paying rent)	28.80	345.60	150.32	1,803.84
Electricity	85.47	1,025.64	85.47	1,025.64
Food	764.90	9,178.80	813.55	9,762.60
Equipment	--	--	537.16	6,445.92
Admin Costs	289.71	3,476.52	341.44	4,097.28
One Time annual Expenditure (1.6 purchases @R695 for 30% of sites)	--	--	--	370.00
Average Annual Expenditure for Community Site		19,935.60		31,766.20
Mean TOTAL number of learners		57		57
Average Annual expenditure per learner		349.75		557.30

For the purposes of these calculations, we took the amounts indicated in the previous discussion, except for the rental costs that were prorated to account for the majority of sites, which are not paying rent.

8.1.4 Monthly Income at Community-based Sites

Table 18 compares the reported income of community sites from 1998 to 1999. Like the data on reported expenditures above, there is good correlation between the data sets suggesting overall data reliability. The increase in income in 1999 over 1998 is mostly attributed to slight increases in private business donations, more fundraising/donations, and from the fact that more sites were receiving the ECD subsidy in 1999.

Table 18: Average Monthly Income (in Rands) Reported at non-Subsidised Community-based Sites

Expenses	Mean (average) amount reportedly received in May 1998	Mean (average) amount reportedly received in May 1999
Parent's Fees	1,584.00	1,296.90
Owner contribution	0	0
Church	0	6.50
Private Business	16.36	151.25
Municipality	0	0
Subsidy from ECD Pilot Project	231.87	440.54
Subsidy from the DoH/W	0	203.83
Subsidy for Parent's Fees	229.40	7.20
Other	0	7.20
Fundraising, Donations, Etc	0	665.03
Mean Monthly Income	2,061.63	2,778.45

Parents Fees:

Nearly all sites (94%) reported that they charged fees and the average amount charged is R456 per learner/year with a range from R5 to R1,920 per year. This translates into approximately R38 per month – a substantial increase from 1997 and 1998 when R20.73 and R27.58 were paid per month, respectively.

However, those sites that receive a subsidy generally charge more per learner than those sites not receiving a subsidy – R499.61 per year compared to R404.92 (see Table 19). This may be partially explained by the differences in sites having sliding fee scales. Overall, 11% of community sites have a sliding scale fee schedule ranging from a low fee of R240 per year to a high of R1560 per year. However, there is a big difference in the presence of a sliding scale fee schedule among sites with subsidies – only 6% of sites without a subsidy offered a sliding scale compared to 17% of sites with a subsidy! Moreover, where there is a sliding scale, the average annual fee charged is considerably higher than at other sites – R936 per year.

Actual payment rates are low – in May 1999, sites reported an average payment rate of only 52.2%. This is lower than May 1998 when the payment rate was reportedly 64%. The presence of the subsidy may explain some of the difference. The reported payment rates for sites receiving the subsidy was significantly lower than those without the subsidy (see Table 19) – suggesting that sites with the subsidies are not as rigorous in collecting the fees

or are more sympathetic to poverty-stricken families that sites dependent on fees.

Table 19: Difference in Payment Rates of Parent's Fees and Amount Charged between Subsidised and non-Subsidised Sites

Receive Pilot Project Subsidy?	Average Payment rate of parent's fees in May 1999	Average Annual Amount Charged per learner in 1999
YES	38 %	R 499.61
NO	69 %	R 404.92

Monthly Income from the Owner of the Facility:

No community sites reported any income from an owner of an ECD site.

Monthly Income from a Church:

One community site reported a contribution of R650 from a church. This site also reported that this amount is less than the usual amount received.

Monthly Income from a Private Business:

One site reported a contribution of R15,125 from a private business. This most likely was a one-time contribution rather than a normal monthly amount.

Monthly Income from the Municipality:

No site reported income from a municipality.

Subsidies from National Government Departments:

DoE PILOT PROJECT SUBSIDY: Compared to 1998, more community sites are now receiving Pilot Project subsidies from the national DoE although this accounts for still less than half of the community sites (45% up from 41% in 1998). All the sites indicating that they were receiving the subsidy were from only 5 provinces:

Table 20: Sites that Reported a DoE Pilot Project Subsidy

Province	No. Sites Indicating ECD Subsidy
Eastern Cape	53.8%
Gauteng	91.7%
KwaZulu-Natal	83.3%
Northern Cape	83.3%
Western Cape	91.7%
Free State, Mpumalanga, Northern Province and North West	0%

Two-thirds of these sites said they receive their subsidy on a quarterly basis. Of the 49 sites that are receiving their subsidy, only 17 could state how much they were supposed to get for the current period. The mean amount for these sites was R2,500 per quarter. These are similar results to 1998, suggesting that most respondents at community sites still don't fully understand the subsidy scheme or the Pilot Project.

DoH/W SUBSIDY:

16% of sites said that they received a subsidy from the Department of Health/Welfare and these are usually received monthly by the sites. However, the vast majority of these subsidies are NOT from the Primary School Nutrition Programme. Rather they appear to be special subsidies, which are provided directly to the site outside of the ECD Pilot Programme and the Primary School Nutrition Programme.

Table 21: Sites that Reported a DoH/W Subsidy

Province	No. Sites Indicating DoH Subsidy
Eastern Cape	1
Gauteng	3
KwaZulu-Natal	2
Northern Cape	6
Northern Province	1
North West	3
Western Cape	2
Free State and Mpumalanga	None

SUBSIDY FOR PARENTS' FEES:

Only 1 community site reported that they had received a subsidy for parent's fees of R720 for the Month of May 1999.

Other One-time Income Contributions:

25% of community sites received donations, or undertook fundraising for the site. The average amount of money raised was R2,710, ranging from R50 to nearly R50,000.

Summary of Monthly Income:

Table 22 and Table 23 below summarises the sources and amount of monthly income at community-based sites. Parents fees have been adjusted to reflect only the actual payment rates shown in Table 19, which seems to be the most important source of income for community-based sites. Money from donation, fundraising, etc. appears to be the next important source of income. National ECD Pilot Project subsidy proves to be another main source of funding for community-based sites.

Table 22: Monthly Income for Community-based Sites that RECEIVE A SUBSIDY

	Estimated monthly amount	Estimated Annual Amount (assumes 12 months of costs per site)
Parent's Fees (R41.63 per learner x 57; learners x 38% payment rate)	901.70	10,820.46
Owner contribution	0	0
Church	6.50	78.00
Private Business	151.25	1,815.00
Municipality	0	0
Subsidy from ECD Pilot Project	833.33	10,000.00
Subsidy from the DoH/W	203.83	2,445.96
Subsidy for Parent's Fees (for those unable to pay)	7.20	86.40
Other	7.20	86.40
Donation, Fundraising, etc		680.02
TOTAL		26,012.24

Table 23: Monthly Income for Community-based Sites that DO NOT RECEIVE A SUBSIDY

	Estimated monthly amount	Estimated Annual Amount (assumes 12 months of costs per site)
Parent's Fees (R33.66 per learner x 57 learners x 69% payment rate)	1,323.84	15,886.08
Owner contribution	0	0
Church	6.50	78.00
Private Business	151.25	1,815.00
Municipality	0	0
Subsidy from the DOH/W	203.83	2445.96
Subsidy for Parent's Fees (for those unable to pay)	7.20	86.40
Other	7.20	86.40
Donation, Fundraising, etc		680.02
TOTAL		21,077.86

8.1.5 Comparison of Expenditure and Income at Community Sites

The above data suggests that the Pilot Project subsidies are being used at sites to substitute parents fees and supplement practitioners salaries with government monies. This has the effect of placing more "cash" into the pockets of parents and practitioners. In addition, other subsidy effects appear to include: greater tolerance for lower payment rates of fees, an increase in rental payments (because sites are presumably moving to better premises), and increased expenditure on educational equipment and/or capital improvements (such as renovations). Subsidies also have a supplemental economic effect – overall income levels are approximately 20% higher at sites with subsidies despite the substitutions described above.

8.2 Finances of Primary/Reception Sites

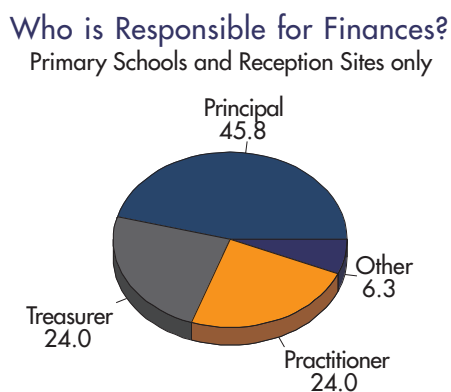
Respondent Characteristics:

78% of the individuals who were interviewed on primary school and reception site finances were themselves responsible for finances. This greatly assisted in obtaining detailed and more valid information.

Person(s) responsible for Finances at the Site:

There is a range of individuals responsible for finances at primary and reception sites (see Figure 11)

Figure 11: Who is Responsible for Finances at Primary and Reception Sites?



Fee Register:

73% of primary and reception sites showed a fee register compared to only 52% in 1997 and 70% in 1998.

Bookkeeping System:

65.4% of sites showed a bookkeeping system compared to 58% in 1997 and 50.7% in 1998.

Bank Accounts:

Nearly all primary and reception sites (99%) reportedly having a bank account up from 96% in 1998 and 92% in 1997. Nearly all of these have cheques for the account (93% of all sites) also up from 92% in 1998, and nearly all of these cheque accounts (99%) require two signatures (90% of all sites). These data demonstrate that primary and reception sites have also made progress in managing the financial system. They are doing especially well in managing bank accounts.

8.2.1 Income at Primary and Reception Sites

Subsidies from Government Departments: Only 15% of primary and reception sites say that they receive a subsidy for pre-primary learners from the Department of Education. Significantly more reception sites are recipients of such a subsidy (see Table 24).

Table 24: DoE Subsidies for Pre-primary Learners

Receive a subsidy from the DoE for pre-primary learners?	Primary	Reception
NO	93.3 %	77.4 %
YES	6.7 %	22.6 %

68% of all primary and reception sites receive support from the Department of Health and Welfare – either in the form of the Primary School Nutrition Programme (53% of sites) or from another DoH/W programme (4% of sites) or both (7% of sites). Slightly more primary schools than reception sites receive support from the DoH/W (see Table 25).

Table 25: Support from DoH/W to Primary Schools and Reception Sites

Receive a subsidy from the DoH/W?	Primary	Reception
Generally Yes	13.3 %	9.4 %
Specifically, PSNP	68.9 %	55.6 %

Of those participating in the Primary School Nutrition Programme, nearly 40% receive their support in the form of cash (or cheques) and the remaining 50% receive their support as food.

Parent's Fees:

Nearly all primary schools and reception sites (97%) charge parent's fees (compared to 93% in 1998), but there is significant variation in the rates charged. Overall the fees range from R5.00 per year to R1200 per year with a mean annual charge of R109 per learner. However, there is a significant difference between the mean rate charged at primary schools (R 56/learner/year) and at reception sites (R156.82/learner/year). The reason for such a difference might well be that reception sites receive less government subsidy than primary sites. In addition, the R156.82/learner/year fee is lower than the average fee charged in 1998 which was R224.64.

Subsidies from Government Departments:

Only 15% of primary and reception sites say that they receive a subsidy for pre-primary learners from the Department of Education. Significantly more grade 1 classes are recipients of such a subsidy (see Table 24), which is consistent with the policy that no subsidy should be given to pre-primary learners at primary schools. This in fact also explains why reception sites on average charge more parents fees than primary sites.

Very few sites (only 4%) offer a sliding scale fee schedule to their communities, and all but one of these were primary schools rather than reception sites. This finding is very different from that in 1998, when 10% of primary and reception sites offered a sliding scale for parents fees and twice as many reception sites (12.7% of Grade R sites) offered such flexibility compared to primary school sites (only 6.8%).

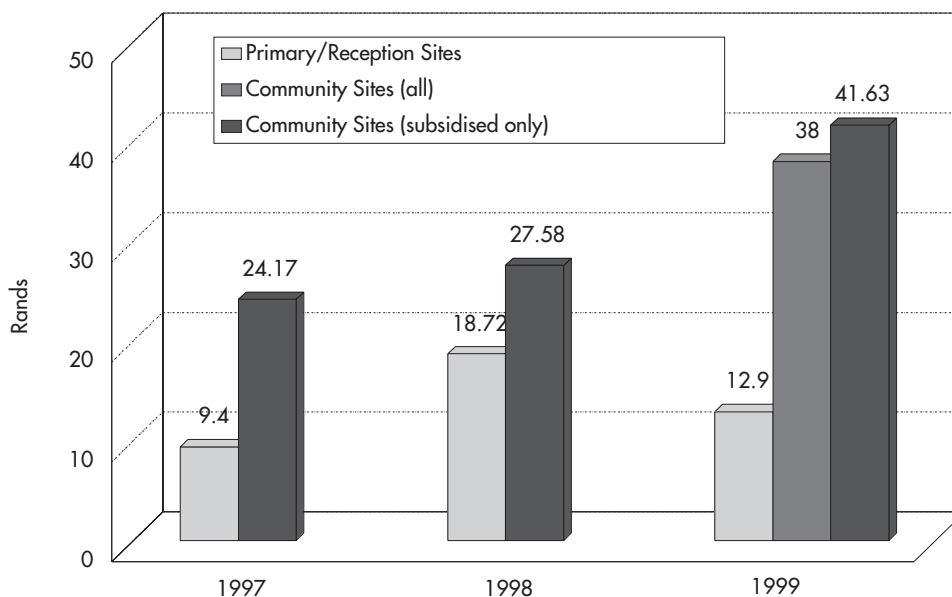
As seen with the community sites, the actual payment rates are low -- in May 1999, both reception sites and primary schools reported an average payment rate was 51%.

8.3 Comparisons between Community Sites and Primary/Receptions sites

Figure 12 below presents the different parents fees charged by the three different sites. Clearly, community sites are placing a greater burden on their families than are primary and reception sites – more of which receive a variety of subsidies in addition to their general financing from the government.

Figure 12: Changes in Average Parent's Fees

Average Parent's Fee Charged per month (Rands)
(calculated as 1/12 of mean annual rates)



8.4 Cost-Effectiveness

The cost-effectiveness of the National ECD Pilot Programme is defined as the cost of programme inputs (for training and the subsidy scheme) relative to programme outputs (practitioner performance and learner performance).

One of the difficulties in calculating the cost-effectiveness is that the actual value of training and subsidies delivered **per site** are not known. Rather, we are only able to determine whether or not the province delivered training and subsidies to the community sites participating in the Pilot Project in that province and the general amount of money spent at the provincial level on training and subsidies. However, this helps us somewhat in comparing scores on learner and practitioner performance and their possible relationship to the investments made by the programme (training and subsidies).

On the basis of generalised financing information for each site (see Table 26), we looked at the relationship between spending on training/subsidies and practitioner and learner performance.

Table 26: General value of Training and Subsidy Provided per Site per Province

Province	Subsidies Spent	Training value	# of sites	Subsidy per site	Training per site
EC	2,796,380.00	1,235,228.24	232	12,053.36	5,324.26
FS	?	228,000.00	0	N/A	N/A
GP	?	5,460,105.00	935	?	5,839.68
KZN	8,462,706.00	1,551,053.00	248	34,123.81	6,254.25
MP	0.00	225,000.00	190	0.00	1,184.21
NC	1,122,800.00	1,906,413.01	149	7,535.57	12,794.72
NP	1,305,000.00	1,400,000.00	450	2,900.00	3,111.11
NW	0.00	0.00	0	N/A	N/A
WC	7,500,000.00	1,575,000.00	215	34,883.72	7,325.58

Note: The training value for Mpumalanga only reflects value by August 1998.

As will be seen from the following sections, there is very little relationship at this time between programme interventions and performance at community sites – suggesting that the programme is not (yet) cost effective. However, given the short time frame for actual implementation, it is unlikely that such a relationship would be evident this early in the programme, and stronger relationships could be measured in the future if the programme were to be continued.

8.4.1 Relationship between Pilot Project Investments (Training–Subsidy) and Practitioner Performance

There is a very weak relationship between the project's investment in training and the subsidy in community sites and the change in the practitioner's performance from 1997 to 1999 (see Figure 13 and Figure 14). As shown in the graphs, many sites with subsidies or training had similar practitioner performance scores as sites without subsidies or training. The R-squared¹⁰ values also substantiate the fact that there is only weak correlation between the programme's interventions and the changes in practitioner performance.

These data demonstrate that there probably hasn't been enough time to measure the precise relationship between the investment made by the programme (as measured by a general subsidy value and a general training value) and the change in practitioner performance. Nevertheless, there appears to be a (weak) inverse relationship between subsidies and practitioner performance while there is a (weak) positive relationship between training and practitioner performance.

¹⁰ R-squared is a measure of the correlation between two or more variables in a logical and causal relationship. R-squared has a value between 1 and 0 and the closer its value is to 1 the more perfect the correlation. R-squared for the subsidy and practitioner performance is only 0.12 (i.e. a very weak relationship) and the R-squared for the relationship between training financing and the practitioner's performance is even weaker – only 0.06.

8.4.2 Relationship between Pilot Project Investments (Training-Subsidy) and Learner Performance

Likewise, there is little relationship between the project's investment in training and the subsidy in community sites and the change in the learners' performance from 1997 to 1999 (see Figure 15 and Figure 16).

The low R-squared values show virtually no relationship between investments in subsidies and training and improved learner performance. The r-squared for the subsidy for both numeracy and literacy is only .05. And although training investment showed a slightly stronger r-square scores for the literacy scores (.17) and the numeracy scores (.09), these scores are still so low that a real relationship cannot exist between the interventions and learner performance.

Figure 13: Trends: Subsidy – Educator Performance

Relationship between General Subsidy Levels and Overall Educator Performance

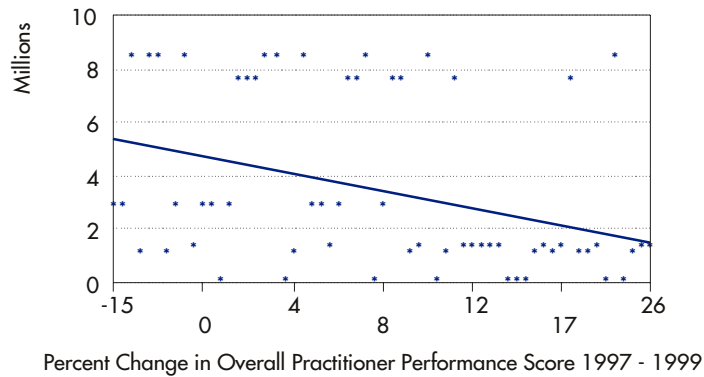


Figure 14: Trends: Training – Educator Performance

Relationship between General Training Investment and Overall Educator Performance

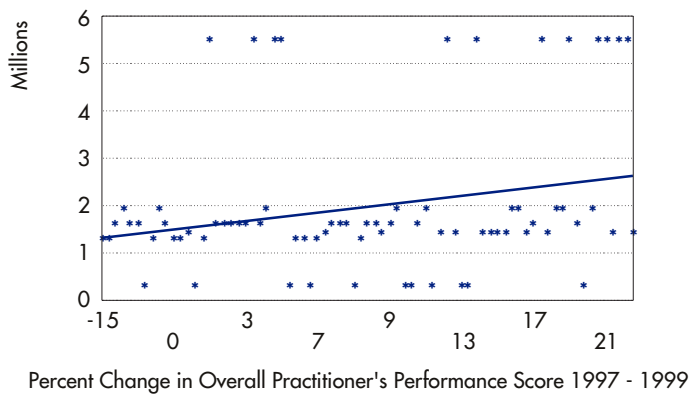


Figure 15: Trends: Learner Numeracy – Training & Subsidies

Relationship between Mean Numeracy Scores among Learners at sites and Investment in Training/Subsidies 1997 - 1999

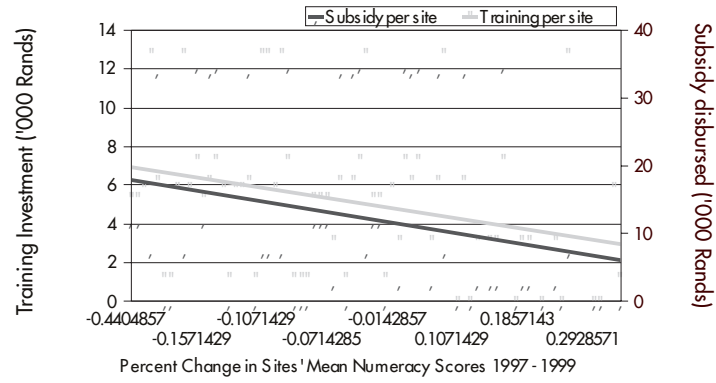
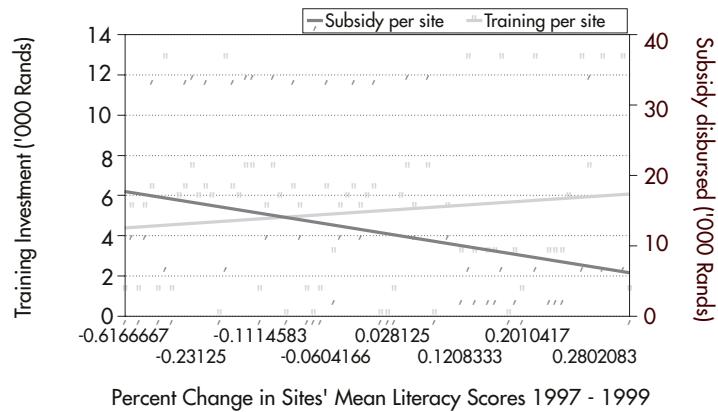


Figure 16: Trends: Learner Literacy – Training & Subsidies

Relationship between Mean Literacy Scores among Learners at sites and Investment in Training/Subsidies 1997 - 1999



9 RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter summarises the research team's response to the research questions based on the analysis given in previous chapters.

9.1 Quality, Equity and Cost-effectiveness

Are community-based reception year programmes providing high quality, equitable and cost-effective education?

How do community-based reception year programmes compare to the quality, equity and cost-effectiveness of reception classes offered at state schools?

In the absolute sense, the majority of community-based sites are not providing high quality education. However, the comparison with primary/reception sites shows that education quality and equity at community-based sites are comparable to those at primary/reception sites. In the area of cost-effectiveness, community-based sites differ dramatically from the other two types of sites. Community-based Grade R provision can be regarded as highly cost-effective for the state, while primary-based Grade R provision (whether in a Grade R or enrolling under-age learners in Grade 1) is more cost-effective for parents.

As argued in the previous chapters, the quality of the community-based practitioners has definitely improved over the three-year process when utilising the norms and standards in the DQF as a standard. In addition, when looking at both practitioner performance and the learner results in the early literacy and numeracy assessment, about a quarter of community-based sites are offering "high" quality education.

There are more community-based sites, however, offering average, weak or unacceptable education. While the trend towards better quality is encouraging, we believe that the following must be implemented:

- Continue training and the accreditation processes for all Grade R and Foundation Phase practitioners, albeit with more rigorous structures and more emphasis on FHD and MLP, and on implementing RPL.
- Ensure that the DoE's Expected Levels of Performance (ELP) for Grade R clearly states the content knowledge, skills and attitudes required are communicated effectively to sites, and easily understood by the practitioners.
- Create a "book flood" to ensure that primary and community-based sites are adequately provisioned with appropriate books or other printed materials, and give practitioners guidelines on early literacy and specifically on how to utilise books and other printed materials.
- Monitor the impact of the above carefully to ensure that practitioner performance and learner attainment continues to improve.

The research team has also seen a distinct improvement in equity over the past three years. Equity is measured by looking at attitudes, practices and facilities in terms of disabilities, gender, ethnic diversity and HIV/Aids.

In 1997, only 3% of community-based sites accommodated learners with disabilities, in 1999 this increased to 36%. In those few community-based sites that have disabled learners, they were included in most activities. This is a dramatic improvement although those involved in special education may argue that it is not truly equitable until all sites can accommodate and involve learners with disabilities. Moreover, it is similar to the practice at primary sites (39%) but better than that at reception sites (20%).

Learning materials and equipment were examined in 1998 and 1999 to determine whether they indicate gender stereotypes. While only 15.5% of community-based sites avoided stereotyping gender roles in their material and equipment in 1998, the figure rose to 31.8% in 1999. While this is still less than one third, it demonstrates a remarkable improvement. In addition, 64.5% of practitioners at community-based sites were able to work actively against gender stereotypes as compared to 68.2% at primary sites. And this is better than practitioners at reception year sites, where only 50% of them actively work against gender stereotypes. In general, at all sites, learners are not grouped according to gender.

Not much has changed in terms of the reflection of South African ethnic diversity in learning materials and equipment at community-based sites. At 53.4% of the sites in 1998, material and equipment showed such diversity while 56.4% of the sites did so in 1999. This is better than reception sites (47.3%) although not as good as primary sites (63.6%).

More community-based sites were willing to accept HIV positive learners in 1999 (84.5%) as compared to 1998 (66%). In terms of access to education, HIV positive learners are clearly being treated more equitably. The gap between community-based sites and primary/reception sites in this regard is closing. The percentage increase from 1998 to 1999 is 28% at community-based sites, but roughly 18% at primary and reception sites.

Not only sites but also practitioners are more willing to have HIV positive learners in their classes. Again, the percentage of practitioners at community-based sites who would accept such learners is comparable to that at primary or reception sites, and the rate of change is greatest at community-based sites (Community: from 70% to 88.2%, Primary: from 84% to 100%, Reception: from 84% to 96.4%).

On the whole, the sites differ slightly in terms of equity criteria, but overall progress is being made in all sites.

Given that quality and equity are moving towards an acceptable level in community-based sites, then the issue of cost-effectiveness is raised. As argued below, the provision of Grade R at community-based sites is substantially cheaper for the Department of Education than providing similar education at schools. However, if one turns the argument around, given that fees are relatively expensive at community-based sites and there is limited provision of government-sponsored food or other resources, then from a parent's perspective, provision of Grade R at a community-based site is not cost-effective. Table 27 provides a broad comparison of who is responsible for, and what are the costs of, running community-based sites as compared to primary and reception sites.

Table 27: Costs of Community-based sites as compared with Primary and Reception Sites

	Community-based Sites	Primary and Reception Sites
Salaries (monthly income)	Estimated at R492 per month at non-subsidised sites and R688 per month for subsidised sites	R6 700 per practitioner per month
Average parents fees charged per month	R38.00	R12.90
Primary School Nutrition Programme	No	Yes
Classroom Infrastructure	Responsibility of the Community	Responsibility of the state
Educational equipment	Responsibility of the Community	Responsibility of the state for Grade 1 and of the School Governing Body for Grade R

As the table shows, salaries are substantially lower at community-based sites than at primary schools and, in fact, are below the government's minimum wage of R1,000 per month. The average parents' fees at community-based sites are over twice as expensive as those being paid at primary schools. The infrastructure and educational equipment are left to the responsibility of the community, whereas the government or the school takes responsibility for the building and educational equipment. Therefore, for the state, the community-based system is the most cost-effective. However, for the parents, the primary and reception system seems to be the more cost-effective and equitable solution.

9.2 Norms and Standards

Are the interim norms and standards, outlined under the Interim Policy for ECD adopted in 1996 and developed by the IAC under the Pilot Project, appropriate and realisable?

Practitioners are required to meet core unit standards under the DQF in order to acquire ECD core credits. The three core unit standards are: Facilitating Active Learning, Facilitating Healthy Development, and Managing the Learning Programme, each of which are in turn broken down into specific outcomes and assessment criteria. An analysis of the research observations indicates that, on a whole, these interim norms and standards are appropriate and seemingly realisable for those practitioners who received training under the National ECD Pilot Project.

With regards to Facilitating Active Learning, practitioners demonstrated that they were capable of meeting almost all the specific outcomes, and their respective assessment criteria at Level 1. Most ECD practitioners are facilitating age-appropriate learning by using the learner's first language to introduce and explain concepts to ECD learners; keeping learners engaged by making use of a wide range of techniques; effectively encouraging learners to participate and make choices; and introducing a second language. It must be noted, however, that a large proportion of ECD practitioners are finding it difficult to shift from a rote response/practitioner centred/whole class

teaching to integrating learner-centred, outcomes and group-based activities into their teaching practices. This points to the need to incorporate change management techniques into training practices to help practitioners shift this fundamental paradigm.

Observations relating to the second unit standard, Facilitating Healthy Development, are clearly realisable in terms of the specific outcomes and assessment criteria relating to the supervision of learners' health and safety, the application of non-discriminatory classroom practices, and to some extent the facilitation of a positive self-image among learners. In 20 percent of the cases, practitioners ignored their safety responsibilities, allowing for example, learners to play in the street without supervision. Also, a surprising proportion (again about 20 percent) ignored hygiene protocol. There is cause for concern with the standards applying to the management of learner behaviour, as threats and corporal punishment are still regularly practised by a third of the practitioners observed. The majority of sites are still not applying the required standards for Level 1 and most practitioners have not made the change in discourse required by DQF.

The third unit standard, Managing the Learning Programme, is also generally encouraging in terms of its realisability. Practitioners at most of the sites visited demonstrated that they were capable of meeting the specific outcomes and assessment criteria, namely practitioner preparedness (approximately 77% had planned and prepared appropriately) and the facilitation of activities, the timing and structuring of the learning programme (approximately 80% started, ended and facilitated activities appropriately). The use of educational equipment and books became more appropriate and accessible during the Pilot period, yet still 21% of sites lacked any books and books were rarely used in comparison with other educational equipment.

While there is general support that the current set of norms and standards are appropriate for practitioners, they tend to lack specificity and remain somewhat vague and ambiguous rather than explicit. There is increasing evidence from the international literature that non-specific norms and standards do not promote equity in educational delivery because the child's opportunities for learning and development are left to the whim and commitment of the practitioner. Therefore, it is critical that clearer outcomes than those that presently exist in the norms and standards need to be developed and instituted.

9.3 Subsidies

Are the community-based ECD subsidies of R2 per five- and six-year old learner over 200 days adequate and appropriate?

The short answer to this research question is no. The financial data suggests no relationship between the presence of subsidy and the sites' ability to cover costs, which indicates that the amount of subsidy is insufficient to help community-based ECD sites to become self-sustainable. Nevertheless, a positive relationship exists between the presence of subsidy and practitioners' monthly salary, rent (indicating better premises), the expenditure on food, and equipment and capital purchases. The subsidy, therefore, has a positive effect on improving access to resources despite the inadequacy of amount.

From a moral perspective, the disparity between the subsidy of community-based sites and primary or reception sites is not fair, for either practitioners or parents. In terms of practitioner salary, our data shows a great discrepancy between the amounts that an ECD practitioner receives at a community-based site (R688.41/month with subsidy) vs. that received at a primary or reception site

(R6700/month). Given that quality of service is improving at community-based sites and that the gap between them and primary/reception sites is closing, salary differences at different sites should be reduced accordingly. In addition, the current monthly salary for practitioners at community-based sites does not even comply with the minimum wage requirement of R1000/month as set by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

For parents, payment compliance decreases with the presence of the subsidy, but on average they pay twice more than at a school and their children do not have access to the food from the PSNP. The current division – in terms of the cost of education – between parents and the government at community-based sites is not reasonable from the parents' perspective. This in fact is one of the main reasons why parents are more willing to send under-age learners to Grade 1 classes. All these reasons suggest that the subsidy amount is inadequate to provide equitable services at community-based sites.

From the provincial administrative point of view, the per-learner-per-day subsidy is not easy to implement. Given the poor documentation on learner age and absenteeism, it is difficult to determine the number of learners at a site accurately. In fact, this policy might have tempted some sites to report learner numbers falsely, since we found the attendance rate at community-based sites are substantially lower than that at primary and reception sites (Community-based: 64.5%, Primary: 82.7%, Reception: 75%). The KwaZulu-Natal model, which subsidises practitioner salaries and educational equipment, seems to be more manageable, especially if ECD practitioners at community-based sites are integrated into the government salary system.

9.4 Provincial Delivery Models

Which provincial ECD delivery models have been most successful?

There is no simple, straightforward response to this question as each of the provinces have their strengths and weaknesses in implementing the National ECD Pilot Project. In terms of implementing the National ECD Pilot Project, the Northern Cape and the Western Cape adhered most closely to the Pilot Project implementation plan. KwaZulu-Natal adapted the National Pilot to subsidise practitioner salaries and educational equipment (rather than individual learners). This appears to be a very effective model. Gauteng's adaptive model was the most integrative of other government departments' (e.g. Health, Welfare, Local Government, etc.) involvement, but did not follow the National ECD Pilot Project training model. Mpumalanga incorporated the Pilot Project training (intermittently, depending on funds), but did not provide subsidies. Like Mpumalanga, the Eastern Cape experienced intermittent funding resulting in the stop and start implementation of the training and subsidies. The Northern Province only awarded its training contract and began subsidies in 1999, three years after the start of the National ECD Pilot Project. The Free State also experienced financial and capacity constraints and decided to reduce the number of sites, to decrease subsidy funding to 50 cents per learner per day and to enter into a co-operative agreement for the training co-sponsored by the training organisations. Finally, the North West never implemented the Pilot Project, in part because of its strong inheritance of government-sponsored pre-schools, and therefore lack of funds.

However, certain lessons emerge from the analysis:

- Participation in the National ECD Pilot Project was variable and different levels of political will

were exhibited by the provinces, with the Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal coming out on top. The Western Cape soon entered these ranks, although it took longer to start the National ECD Pilot Project in this province. Some of the provinces were unable to muster the political will to implement the Pilot Project although the Provincial Heads of Department had all signed off on their provincial business plans.

- Many of the provinces experienced problems where the funds specifically set aside for the Pilot Project were not ring-fenced and their department absorbed the funds, rather than spending them on the Pilot Project. This caused enormous problems for those provinces.
- A few provinces were able to set up effective subsidy systems. However, other provinces ended up utilising very labour-intensive means of accounting for and distributing the subsidy, resulting in delayed payments and bureaucratic inertia in complying with such complex regulations. Other provinces were never able to set up effective subsidy systems.
- Using the number of five and six-year-old learners as the determining factor for the issuing of the subsidies was very difficult. Due to poor learner age documentation and absenteeism, it was difficult to ascertain exactly how many learners fall within the correct age group. The use of learners as the determining factor is probably not the best model.
- Some provincial ECD staff members mastered the tendering process very effectively and in other cases were never able to overcome the tender hurdles.
- The link between the ECD Pilot Project and the Foundation Phase departmental officials was effective in about half the provinces.
- RTO performance in the provinces was also variable, with few able to accurately implement RPL, some actually assessing practitioners through follow-up visits and few informing their participants of how their training fits into the National Qualifications Framework.
- Provincial human, financial and infrastructural resources to support ECD provincial work are variable and, in most cases, inadequate for the provinces to carry out appropriate monitoring of ECD sites. These include: not enough personnel; personnel with many other duties besides ECD; lack of funding for transport and materials; and lack of transport and communications facilities.

9.5 Accreditation

Is the IAC/provincial interim accreditation system developed under the Pilot Project effective?

There are two types of accreditation: RTO accreditation and practitioner accreditation. Both processes were operationalised only the last six months of the life of the National ECD Pilot Project; therefore, a true assessment of effectiveness is somewhat problematic. The assessment is complicated by the fact that at the beginning of the three-year process, the accreditation requirements were not specified in the RTO tenders. Thus, many RTOs were unprepared for both accreditation processes (e.g. in the Northern Cape the RTOs did not understand the summative assessment process and other RTOs had not revised their materials to match the DQF).

Nonetheless, the RTO and practitioner accreditation process appear to already have had an impact and therefore are an effective spur to transformation given provincial and RTO responses to these accreditation processes outlined in Chapter 6. In conclusion, the potential for the accreditation system to be highly effective is apparent.

In the research team's opinion, should this accreditation system become a permanent structure?

The answer to this question is a "provisional yes". The research team feels that if the recommendations (expounded on Accreditation Chapter 6) are implemented, then the accreditation process should become a permanent structure controlled by the new Quality Assurance Body within the SAQA framework.

The recommendations related to the RTO accreditation are summarised as follows:

- The process of moderating and accrediting RTOs should be clearly stated and administered rigorously.
- The accreditation tool should emphasise training practice and practitioners performance in the field in addition to course materials and written submissions.
- The moderator's tool should be adapted to assess RTOs in a more holistic way and that gives the moderator latitude to explore specific areas in need of attention.
- The RTO peer review should focus more on observing the training practice, its impact on practitioners and on learners.
- At least two moderators from the Quality Assurance Body, working independently should scrutinise all RTO submissions.
- More than one moderation visit should be required for the Quality Assurance Body as it will provide a more accurate information and as a single visit is insufficient to demonstrate RTO capacity.
- More time is needed for moderation visits, to ensure observation and time for completing the questionnaire. Moreover, the focus of the visits should be on training presented by trainers and the performance of practitioners.
- The moderation team should provide feedback in such as way that the whole RTO team could access the information.

In terms of the accrediting practitioners, the research team recommends that:

- The process of accrediting practitioners should be more transparent: practitioners should be informed of the elements involved in this process, including how the NQF works, what are the unit standards that they will be assessed against, what type of qualifications they could obtain, and how to provide evidence to prove their progress.
- The accreditation process has only dealt with core credits, it is critical that the new ECD Standard Generating Body (SGB) and other ECD stakeholders ensure that the structure to

support an ECD Qualification is put into place.

- The IAC process of moderation of practitioner accreditation through sampling practitioners trained by RTOs is not yet appropriate as the provincial Departments of Education, the RTOs and the practitioners themselves have not yet internalised the performance requirements necessary for accreditation. Once this internalisation of the new paradigm has occurred, the Quality Assurance Body can resume with a sampling process.
- The IAC or the Quality Assurance Body should carry out the moderation of the summative assessment by RTOs of practitioners and follow the moderation with a visit to all practitioners applying for accreditation to observe and review their records. Accreditation should be linked with learner attainment.
- Given that the practitioner accreditation system has just been set up and RTOs are not familiar enough with the procedure and assessment criteria, RTO trainers should be given more training in assessing practitioners (formative and summative), and on RPL.
- The research team concurs with the IAC's recommendation that both the process of moderating the results and accrediting the RTOs should be strengthened and made more rigorous.

In addition to these accreditation processes regarding the RTO and practitioner, the research team believes that practitioner assessment of learners, moderated by the RTO and ultimately the Quality Assurance Body, should be an additional part of the process. Such assessments (which may include learner portfolio, a test, a demonstration of skills, knowledge and values, etc.) can help practitioners understand what is critical and, indeed, result in greater learner attainment. Other projects have shown that clear learner attainment expectations dramatically improve practitioner performance.

If these recommendations are implemented, particularly those regarding improving the rigorousness of the processes, then the accreditation process is likely to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The research team strongly urges that the DoE should ensure that there is no gap in the accreditation process between the end of the work of the IAC and the establishment of the Quality Assurance Body. To ensure a smooth hand-over, the IAC should meet with the new Quality Assurance Body when it is established.

In conclusion, it is critical that this quality assurance process is continued and, in fact, strengthened for both RTOs and practitioners. Very strong moderation by the IAC (or the new Quality Assurance Body) of the practitioner accreditation process is critical for several years until the RTOs have truly demonstrated an ability to rigorously assess their practitioners. Thereafter, the provinces in co-operation with accredited RTOs should be given this responsibility.

10 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This chapter discusses the policy implications of the findings of the three-year research process and draws heavily on the University of Cape Town (UCT) "Learner Progress and Achievement Study"¹¹ which, along with other issues, examined under-age learners in Grade 1 in historically disadvantaged environments. The UCT study was an in-depth qualitative case study of four classes in Khayelitsha in the Western Cape. Furthermore, this chapter reflects IAC and Co-ordinating Committee on Early Childhood Development (CCECD) inputs over the last three years as well as the UNICEF-sponsored Early Childhood Development workshop on the future of Grade R and ECD and attended by Provincial ECD representatives held October 18-19, 1999. During this two-day workshop, provincial representatives were broken into two groups to discuss the following:

- Grade R (age 5 and 6) provision and its wider implications.
- ECD provision from ages 0 to 4.

This report focuses specifically on the Grade R provision, given the emphasis of the national ECD Pilot Project. The criteria used for the recommendations in this chapter include:

- Ensuring Grade R (and, ultimately, ECD) is a core activity of the DoE.
- Identifying the most cost-effective means of providing Grade R.
- Ensuring quality provision of Grade R classes, and ultimately of classes addressing younger learners.
- Discouraging the acceptance of under-age learners into Grade 1. Under-age learners will often struggle with the subject matter and when they do poorly, their first experience of schooling is one of failure, thus colouring their whole school career.
- Shifting the burden of providing Grade R education from poverty-stricken families to the state.
- Supporting long-term poverty alleviation and social development through the promotion of sustainable Grade R provision.

10.1 Should the Reception Year be Compulsory?

Studies have shown that pre-school education has a very positive effect on children's future educational and social development. As summarised by Edith Helmich in a background paper for a comprehensive policy study of Early Childhood Education in the United States,

"A summary of these studies reporting preschool effects on various age groups of low income children shows that, during the preschool years, children demonstrate improved intellectual capacity, i.e., higher I. Q. scores. These initial gains, while not sustained beyond the second grade, appear to

11 Xolisa Guzula, Heather Jacklin, and Ursula Kate Hoadly "Learner Progress and Achievement Study" Research Report 3, School of Education, University of Cape Town, June 1999. For a complete copy of the report, please contact Ms Ursula Hoadley at uh@education.uct.ac.za.

*inhibit special education placement and give the children a short-term advantage in academic success during the first years of schooling. Throughout the elementary school years, the preschool participants demonstrate improved scholastic achievement and reduced frequency of special education placement. Finally, during the high school years and beyond, preschool participants have a lower rate of delinquency and/or criminal charges, a higher rate of high school graduation and a higher rate of employment a year after graduation."*¹²

During the UNICEF 1999 workshop, a group made up of representatives from the Western Cape, Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Free State, Gauteng and the Eastern Cape (representatives from Mpumalanga and the Northern Province did not participate in this particular group discussion) concurred that it was critical for the DoE to fulfil its promise stated in the White Paper on Education: ten years of compulsory education beginning with Grade R. Representatives from Gauteng felt that it might not be affordable to make the reception year compulsory. However, this was a minority view.

The group felt that the provincial DoE's should be given a fair period, after which it would be mandatory for all five and six-year-olds to attend a Grade R class. The generally agreed upon period was by 2005, with the intention that most provinces should increase provision progressively in order to reach 100% provision within this five year period.

It was strongly felt by the group of provincial representatives that the National ECD Pilot Project and other government policies such as the Admissions Policy had already made the provision of Grade R both appropriate and essential.

10.2 Will the New Admissions Policy Eliminate Under-age Learners?

In general, more five and six year-old learners were found in either Grade 1 or Grade R classes than in Community-based sites during the research team fieldwork. This appears to indicate that parents, schools and the community all have assumptions that five- and six-year olds should be attending school rather than ECD sites.

There appear to be three strong incentives for schools to accept under-age learners. These include:

- Financial incentives: the larger the school is, the more the principal is paid.
- Resource incentives: the more learners, the larger the allowable staff complement and other resources.
- Parental pressure: as shown earlier in this report, the cost of attending a Grade 1 class is significantly lower than attending a Grade R class (most of these are unsubsidised and must be paid for out of school funds) or a community-based site. In addition to the lower fees, Grade 1 learners receive food from the Primary School Nutrition Project. Finally, parents

¹² Edith Helmich, "The Effectiveness of Preschool for Children for Low-Income Families: A Review of the Literature", 1985. The studies that have been highlighted in this article include the following: the early 1965 Project Head Start, the Follow Through program study in 1982, the 1978 study for the Educational Testing Service of Head Start programs, Cornell University's Consortium for Longitudinal Studies report in 1978, the still ongoing Illinois model program for the Early Prevention of School Failure Project, the 1982 Philadelphia School District study, and the Perry Preschool Project of 1984.

often believe that their children are better off attending a Grade 1 class as it will ensure that they are "school ready" even if they have to repeat the year. In summary, it is cheaper for parents, the learners have access to better nutrition and parents feel that they are doing their child a favour (the latter is encouraged by the principal).

These incentives are also documented in the UCT study:

"Caregivers have compelling reasons for sending children to school before they are six. These reasons are largely economic, but also related to concerns about the inadequacy, expense and insecurity of pre-school provision. This study has also identified a desire among caregivers to enable children to complete their schooling early in order to avoid being caught up in social practices such as crime, violence, sex and drug abuse.

Schools are caught in the middle between policies that require them to exclude younger learners and pressures within the school, and the community which pushes them towards accepting these younger learners. Pressures on schools include demands from caregivers and empathy for the social and economic circumstances in which caregivers find themselves. These pressures also arise from current educational circumstances in which schools are struggling to maintain enrolments in the face of constantly shifting student populations. It is often easier for schools to push up enrolment numbers at the Grade 1 level than at other levels." (Page 19)

Even if the Admissions Policy is more firmly policed, the UCT study notes that schools are likely to continue violating the policy:

"In the past, schools have responded to these [departmental] pressures by covertly admitting younger learners in spite of policy. Stronger policing of these policies may inhibit these responses to some degree, but is unlikely to eradicate them. More importantly, schools and caregivers are unlikely to perceive these policies as serving their best interests, and therefore legitimate, so long as their reasons for wanting to admit younger learners are not addressed. As one school principal succinctly put it, if schools are expected to admit only learners who are already six, there 'will just be more cheating'. Another teacher added, 'children will roam the streets and parents will be angry'. In so far as the new admission policy is implemented, it is likely to contribute to the distress of poorer families, especially single parent families." (Page 20)

The UCT report argues that over 60% of the caregivers were aware of National Admissions Policy and that they expected the schools to "collude" with them to enter their children at a young age (Page 16) and that:

"In initial discussions and more formal interviews, school staff placed considerable emphasis on tactics employed by parents to misrepresent the ages of younger children by, for example, providing borrowed or altered clinic cards and birth certificates upon application for admission. It was also reported that caregivers would not be accompanied by children at registration, so that the child's size was not evident." (Page 17)

Moreover, schools do not register learners before the school year as:

"Registration in a previous year is not a familiar practice in the Khayelitsha community. More pressing, high failure rates throughout the school system have contributed to a high mobility between schools: when learners fail at one school they move to another school. Consequently, learners are loathe to register prior to receiving their results for the previous year." (Page 17)

In the National ECD Pilot Project research sites, 14% of the total sample of Grade 1 classes had eliminated under-age learners in anticipation of the adoption of the Admissions Policy. This change was most distinctive in the Northern Cape where 80% of the sample of Grade 1 classes had learners of the appropriate age, a distinct change between 1997 and 1998. A similar impact of the Admissions Policy was not seen in any other province¹³. The research team suspects that this is a common practice, a fact borne out by the KwaZulu-Natal ECD official who reported to the group that 37% of learners in Grade 1 in her province are under-age in 1999.

These figures should be treated with a great deal of caution, as the UCT report reiterates:

"Covert resistance to admissions policy results in skewed data relating to grade one enrolments. The 'informal Grade 1' arrangement causes difficulties for the collection of data within the provincial information system. In both schools observed in this study, the majority of learners in the 'informal grade nought', or bridging class, were recorded and reported as having passed at the end of the year. However, they were then placed in the mainstream Grade 1 class in the following year. From a departmental perspective this means that large numbers of learners will have been recorded as having 'passed' Grade 1 and will not have reappeared in grade two in the subsequent year. In the provincial data system, they would then be recorded as Grade 1 drop-outs, in the one year, and as new grade one admissions in the following year. This case provides a possible partial explanation for the very high Grade 1 drop-out rates which are intermittently reported by education departments." (Page 20)

The research team concurs with the UCT team that:

"It is recommended that the Admission Policy relating to school entry be reconsidered in the light of actual conditions in schools and communities. Ultimately, the fate of five year olds must be addressed." (Page 21)

10.3 Where should the Reception Year be Located?

Ultimately, the research report shows that quality of teaching and learning is variable and not correlated with site type. In other words, one can have either excellent or incredibly poor educational provision in community-based sites, in reception year programmes and in primary schools.

Nevertheless, the question as to where Grade R classes should be located still remains. The research team strongly believes that regardless of which institutions are selected, there should be a mechanism to ensure that the institution is accountable to the provincial DoE. It is further believed that the current mechanisms used to ensure accountability in the National ECD Pilot Project are not strong enough, and therefore, the following options for ensuring accountability for community-based sites offering Grade R are recommended:

- Follow the KwaZulu-Natal model of subsidising community-based schools as long as they link formally with a primary school and the principal and the School Governing Body of the primary school is wholly accountable for the quality of the provision and the accountability of funds, supported by the provincial Department of Education and the community site should have representation on this School Governing Body.

¹³ The research team was not allowed to do comparable analysis for Gauteng or the Western Cape, so this statement includes Northern Province, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape, Free State and North West.

- Amend the South African Schools Act (SASA)¹⁴ so that community-based sites offering Grade R can register as independent schools.

The advantage to amending SASA for Grade R is that it would:

- Encourage improved regulation of all sites – the public schools by the provincial authorities and the independent schools/ECD sites through their registration with the provincial authorities (the potential problem with public schools is that they might have the system but not necessarily the capacity to offer Grade R).
- Promote more rational and equitable funding norms (at present some sites receive no subsidy, some receive from either DoE or Department of Welfare and some from both).

If an ECD site were to be recognised as an independent school it would have to abide by regulations set out in SASA. At present the regulations for independent primary and high schools include operating for a year before registering, registering with the province and completing a quality management checklist for subsidy purposes. In addition, impoverished schools are entitled to more funding according to SASA, which works to the advantage of community-based ECD sites.

In 1999 the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) began to encourage schools to register with ISASA. For an ECD site to become a member of ISASA it must sign its code of ethical practice and undergo a quality check. The Executive Director of ISASA argues that the organisation serves a wide range of socio-economic groups and in many cases its members provide quality education for the poor.

The question of state subsidy for independent schools is a matter of contention at present. ISASA has submitted an extensive proposal for funding norms for independent schools. If ECD sites were also to become independent sites then a similar funding formula could be worked out.

In summary, a new two-type school system would require:

- Extending the SASA regulations in an appropriate way to ECD sites offering Grade R.
- Provinces to register all independent and public schools sites.
- Developing a subsidy formula that allows the state to support children from the poorest families.
- Registering ECD practitioners with South African Council for Educators (SACE).

10.4 Should the Government Fund the Reception Year?

Luis Crouch, a prominent educational economist working with the national DoE, states that the answer should be "yes":

¹⁴ South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, Chapter 5 on Independent Schools, Sections 45 and 46, states that "Subject to this Act and any other applicable provincial law, any person may, at his or her own cost, establish and maintain an independent school."

*"An economist would reason that the earlier the level of education, the higher should be the ratio of public to private funding, because the earlier the level of education, the more public spill-overs it has. And, the whole reason for the tighter age-grade norms was NOT to save money, but to spend the money more wisely, doing more age-appropriate things with the kids; it was never meant to generate savings for Treasury. It was meant to improve quality, not to save money. (Improve quality by saving money on some things, like extremely age-heterogeneous grade 1 classrooms, and spending it on wiser things, like pre-school and appropriate preparation.)"*¹⁵

Do the provincial DoE's have the resources to support mandatory Grade R classes? The group of provincial representatives present at the UNICEF workshop argued "yes". Elimination of under-age enrolment will free up both practitioners and classrooms, and while estimates should be based on an EMIS analysis (of the school population to ascertain approximate numbers), this is expected to be approximately 40%. In addition, there is an increasing number of schools that are starting their own Grade R classes, even though the norms and standards for school funding indicate that this grade would not be directly financed through salaries or other funds. This trend should be encouraged and often is the mark of a good quality school as the principal, school governing body and practitioners have recognised that it is desirable to cluster five and six-year-olds in a Grade R class where they will avoid the pedagogic disasters of under-age enrolment in Grade 1. Finally, shifting the priority from non-compulsory Further Education and Training will result in the better use of funds.

The community-based sites participating in the Pilot Project showed that, when provided a minimal subsidy by the DoE, they have the potential to offer quality education. However, as pointed out in this report, more funding will have to be spent to ensure quality through accreditation processes, training and monitoring.

10.5 How can Grade R Learner Attainment be Improved?

The first response to this question is clearly in line with the section on monitoring quality and accountability above – there must be a mechanism for monitoring and, ultimately sanctioning or changing teacher behaviour. Our research shows that over the three years, literacy, numeracy and life skills scores have changed minimally – bringing the community-based sites results up to par with the Grade 1 and Grade R sites. However, the overall scores for literacy remain extraordinarily low. On average these early literacy results hover around 8 out of 15. This result can be attributed in part to the fact that practitioners in all three site types do not understand how to teach early literacy skills such as how to:

- Listen to a story and re-tell the story or answer questions on a story.
- Distinguish between text and pictures.
- Tell a story from pictures.
- Explain why books are valuable and how they should be looked after.
- Hold a book for reading.

¹⁵ Private communication from Dr. Luis Crouch PhD, Research Triangle Institute, commenting in his own capacity. February 10, 2000.

- Identify the front and back of a book.

Unfortunately, C2005 and the Draft ECD Norms and Standards do not help the practitioners to understand that these and other skills are expected of learners before beginning Grade 1. Without a clear statement in this regard, such as the Expected Levels of Performance (ELP), it is not surprising that Foundation Phase practitioners express concern about the expectations of the DoE. For example, Ben Parker and Ken Harley comment:

"A shift from a strongly classified collection code curriculum [pre-C2005] to a weakly classified, integrated code threatens teachers' abilities to appreciate the new context... By making the context clear, strong classification orients individuals to what is expected and appropriate. If weak classification can cause ambiguity and confusion by making the 'recognition rules' elusive, C2005 could be creating a new set of recognition rules unfamiliar to both teachers and learners."¹⁶

This concern appears to cut across ethnic and experience lines, with even highly experienced practitioners expressing fears of inadequacy. Jonathan Jansen's survey of Grade 1 practitioners concludes that:

"Teachers display considerable uncertainty about whether their practices in fact constitute OBE, irrespective of aggregate levels of institutional resources or years of personal teaching experience... Well-qualified teachers with years of experience and a reputation for being outstanding Grade 1 instructors demonstrated the same levels of uncertainty about their practices as in the case of poorly qualified and inexperienced teachers. In part, this uncertainty was derived from the feeling that there needs to be a distinction between past and present practices... Teachers did not appear to know, therefore, whether drilling the three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic) was inconsistent with OBE or acceptable within an OBE framework..."¹⁷

This finding matches that observed by the research team and described extensively in this report. It is further underlined by the UCT study, which describes:

"Teachers were asked to comment on whether OBE had affected the way they taught and to specify in what ways. The following comments from the teachers in the schools indicate a specific understanding of some of the main tenets of the progressivist discourse underlying OBE (such as learner-centred, the teacher as facilitator and exploratory learning), and these concepts appear to have been taken up in a specific way."

- The teacher to facilitate. Most of the work must be done by the learners, even talking. Learners are forced to do research on their learning areas.
- There's less talking and chalkboard writing from me, most of the talking and writing is done by the learners. There's no pressure of completing the syllabus, I have the autonomy power of choosing what to teach, when and how.

¹⁶ Ben Parker and Ken Harley "Concepts, Contexts, Criticisms" Chapter 10 in Jonathan Jansen and Pam Christie, eds. *Changing Curriculum: Studies on Outcomes-based Education in South Africa*, page 192, Juta and Co. Ltd. 1999.

¹⁷ Jonathan Jansen "Inside Classrooms: Chapter 11 in Jonathan Jansen and Pam Christie, eds. *Changing Curriculum: Studies on Outcomes-based Education in South Africa*, page 206, Juta and Co. Ltd. 1999.

- I don't have to tell them everything, they find out for themselves, in fact my teaching is being guided by the learners.
- In a way that I have to be less active, and allow my learners to do most of the work.
- I'm just a facilitator most of the time about 90% of work is done by learners.
- In English for instance the teacher does not have to tell the kids that today we are going to learn fractions, it automatically entered in the lesson.
- The children no longer need to be spoon fed with information, instead I give them problems, they find solutions.

The comments could account for the extent to which the learners are left to work on their own with little mediation and assessment. They could also account for the predominating mode of unelaborated instructions and the absence of elaboration within tasks of the evaluative rules." (Page 50)

There are additional quotes from other publications, which show that practitioners find OBE more meaningful. In particular, they have found that they have had to change their expectations regarding what children are capable of doing: i.e. they are surprised that children can do as much as they can if allowed to experiment, etc.

In terms of the Literacy results, the UCT report describes a typical Grade R/1 classroom with underage learners accurately:

"In all four classes the emphasis was on reading single words, or on the recognition of consonants and consonant sounds...There was very little evidence of pre-reading activities beyond several sound recognition and letter recognition activities. All reading exercises were poorly mediated and none of the four teachers spent time reading with or listening to individual learners. Learners were generally left to do the reading activities on their own and consequently most learners did not participate in or execute the tasks.

Over the two days that each teacher was observed very little time was spent on reading activities. In Class 1, 16 minutes were spent on reading activities, in Class 3, 10 minutes, in Class 2, 25 minutes and in Class 4, 36 minutes (in the case of which the majority of this time was spent on a cut and paste exercise around sound recognition). Table 28 below gives an indication of the nature of the reading activities during the eight-day observation period.

Table 28: Nature and duration of reading tasks; participation of learners and mediation and assessment by teachers.

Class	Nature of Activity	Time Spent on Activity	Learner Participation in Task	Mediation	Assessment
Class 1	Letter recognition (letter 'h')	3 minutes	<5 participate	None	None
Class 1	Letter recognition (letter 'h')	2 minutes	<10 participate	None	None
Class 1	Reading single words	11 minutes	All participate	None	None
Class 3	Letter recognition (consonants)	10 minutes	All participate	None	None
Class 4	Reading single words	16 minutes	+/- 25% participate	Very little	None
Class 4	Letter recognition (consonants)	20 minutes	+/- 75% participate	Demonstrates to several Ls	None
Class 2	Reading single words	7 minutes	+/- 50% participate	None	None
Class 2	Reading single words	8 minutes	+/- 70% participate	Assists several learners	None
Class 2	Reading single words	10 minutes	+/- 65 % participate	None	None

Not once in the course of the eight days of observation were learners exposed to or required to use books. Reading consisted of working through lists of single words or sound recognition exercises. No class readers were seen or used. In the course of the observations in all four classrooms a total of five books were seen in the classroom: two Bibles, a Standard 3 Geography textbook, a book on art ideas for teachers and one large book covering the numbers one to ten with pictures and text in English. Two teachers read from the Bibles, the other books were not seen to be used." (Pages 38-39)

In addition, the UCT study shows that writing skills also suffered:

"Of the total 161 learners observed in the four classes, 42 (26%) were seen not to be able to write their names accurately. Little correction or individual work towards the mastery of name writing was evidenced, except in Class 3, where a few names written incorrectly by learners were corrected. Most learners did not have a good grasp of the actual technique of writing and formed letters in unconventional ways.

As with the reading activities the focus of writing activities was on single words. In only one activity were learners required to write a sentence, however this process was unmediated, and no demonstration was given by the teacher. The learners were instructed: "After you have drawn your cow write a sentence about your cow." Of the 26 learners present, three were able to write a sentence accurately. Eight learners made no attempt and seventeen learners listed a few products derived from a cow." (Page 39)

The ECD Pilot Research shows that the scenario demonstrated in these classes in Khayelitsha are typical of most ECD sites. The mere presence of books contributed dramatically to the early literacy results, with a strong correlation in the literacy assessment results. Nonetheless, given that the assessment exercise with learners should have resulted in scores closer to 15 (similar to the results of numeracy), much work must be done in this regard to correct both concepts of the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed before Grade 1, and the methodology to attain such knowledge, attitudes and skills.

10.6 What would it take to Deliver Quality Services at Community-based Sites?

The question is: how can quality provision be monitored and made accountable? As the UCT study concludes:

"Where under-age learners have been admitted covertly, they have been accommodated in ways which are not educationally desirable. Schools in this study – and we believe many other schools – placed many of the younger learners in an 'unofficial grade nought' class. Difficulties with this practice arise partly from its informal status. There is no departmental support for its administration or curriculum nor are there any accountability structures. It is this status that has created the conditions in which the informal 'grade nought' or bridging class could easily deteriorate into little more than a large scale child-minding operation with little systematic educational content. The extent to which this actually takes place depends on the energy, motivation and pedagogic competence of the individual teacher. Of the two informal bridging classes observed for this study, one had indeed deteriorated into little more than a large holding class while the teacher of the other class had maintained some attempt to structure an appropriate pre-school educational programme." (Page 20)

The ECD Pilot Project attempted to build a mechanism for guaranteeing quality in community-based sites through monitoring the accreditation of practitioners by RTOs. However, the first accreditation process, which took place in the Northern Cape, was not very successful, and certainly not rigorous enough to indicate the extent of quality provision. Nevertheless, some of those assessed to be at Level 4 were found to be excellent and indeed at Level 4, during moderation visits.

The accreditation of the practitioner is simply a first step towards ensuring quality teaching and learning. The best way is regular and systematic monitoring of Grade R teaching (wherever it is offered) through rigorous observation by educational officials (whether a peer, in the school or by district or special offices). The observation criteria should be very clear and include such issues as time on task, learning at appropriate levels, use of assessment and feedback to learners, etc.

Currently, such observation and feedback mechanisms on the quality of teaching and learning do not exist at a provincial or national level in South Africa. However, certain RTOs and individual institutions (e.g. where the head of the Foundation Phase Department works with individuals) appear to have this capacity currently. It is thus strongly recommended that the national and provincial DoE's put into place rigorous observation and feedback mechanisms on the quality of teaching and learning.

Nevertheless, more training at appropriate levels for community-based ECD practitioners are in order and more government subsidies are needed to bring site environment up to par with primary/reception sites. Furthermore, one can never over emphasise the importance of RPL or other assessment exercises before placing practitioners for training. Unless recognition of competencies is carried out effectively, resources and time will potentially be wasted on training that does not address practitioners' needs.

10.7 How should ECD be made "Core" Business in Provincial Governments?

On the provincial and national level, ECD directorates are typically under other directorates – such as schooling or special needs. Structurally, ECD is then generally added on to another directorate or handled in an ad hoc manner. Since it is located in a different directorate in each province, management of the units is inconsistent and uncoordinated. In most provinces ECD structures are completely dependent on the mainstream schooling system for resources. ECD officials at the district level often have to beg for the most basic resources, or have many other responsibilities, such as special education or Adult Basic Education. In some provinces, the ECD personnel do not work with the Foundation Phase staff.

Regional and District/Area ECD staff seldom report directly to Provincial ECD structures. Lines of reporting are more often advisory and authority falls to the Regional or District hierarchy whose main focus is mainstream education and not ECD. Therefore, ECD staff are often pulled off tasks when their supervisor feels it is necessary.

In the majority of provinces, there is no allocation for education material for ECD centres and practitioners are often required to provide their own resources despite earning significantly less than their fulltime mainstream schooling counterparts.

All of the above points to the urgency of ECD to be considered as departmental "core business" and truly linking it to the Foundation Phase, rather than with all the "extra" departmental responsibilities such as special needs and ABET. For this to be successful, the heads of the ECD section should be Chief Directors, sitting on the provincial Broad Management Forum where they can access and, indeed, defend resources. They should have responsibility, according to the UNICEF 1999 workshop participants for both budget and resources, and some responsibility for curriculum and provisioning.

Until Grade R is considered "core business" it will continue to be neglected as an important target group by the schooling system.

Although this report has not really touched on the age-groups 0 to 4, it is critical that the management team is truly inter-disciplinary since the needs of young children to be protected, nourished and supported falls jointly within the roles of the Departments of Health, Welfare and Education.

The co-ordinating institution over the last four years has been the Co-ordinating Committee for Early

Childhood Development (CCECD), a body made up of provincial representatives, national representatives of other departments working with young children (Health, Welfare, etc.) and representatives of teacher unions, training bodies (for example, the Council of University Presidents) and civil society. This large body of representatives is utilised as a forum, which lacks joint decision-making powers and rather makes recommendations to the national DoE. Under the new policy, the UNICEF 1999 workshop participants felt that it is critical that some sort of legitimate body fulfils this role. However, this large group meeting has been largely ineffective. The research team recommends that a national body continue the CCECD but that the different stakeholder groups meet separately before the meetings to address joint issues – for example, the forum is too large to discuss an issue at a teacher training college, and therefore should be discussed at a sub-committee level first and then the recommendations of the group should be taken forward to the larger forum for ratification.

The IAC has laid the framework for the new ECD SGB and the to-be-established Quality Assurance Body. The processes initiated by the IAC – spreading knowledge, skills and attitudes to the RTOs, designing and publishing appropriate norms and standards and accreditation of practitioners and RTOs – should be continued and expanded. In particular, the IAC's recommendations that career paths for non-formally trained practitioners should be addressed and that current legislation should be reviewed are endorsed by the research team. However, as argued above by both the research team and the IAC, this process should be more rigorous and extensive for the first several years until the norms and standards are internalised by all training organisations (RTOs, colleges of education and other tertiary institutions) and practitioners.

10.8 What are the Possible Grade R Implementation Issues?

Although basic education is recognised in the Constitution as a basic right in all the provinces, ECD (even under the Pilot) is generally regarded as a service offered by the department, rather than as a core activity (the exception to this is North West which inherited excellent pre-school facilities from Bophuthatswana). This has detrimental budgetary implications for ECD – as the national DoE found out when the Eastern Cape, Northern Province, North West and Free State absorbed the National ECD Pilot Project funds (which were sourced from the RDP) rather than spending them on the intended project and in spite of completing detailed business plans. It influences the budgetary allocation to ECD and, where other educational sectors have over spent their budgets, money is shifted from the ECD budget. The ECD budget seems not to be ring-fenced in any province.

If the government subsidises ECD salaries, such as the case outlined by KwaZulu-Natal, one critical question arises: who is the employer? If the answer is "the community", then there may not be a problem in terms of the government subsidising ECD salaries. If, however, it is determined that the employer is the DoE, then it is possible that the DoE would be violating the Basic Conditions of Employment legislation. This legislation requires that employers provide their staff with contracts and comply with minimum wage (presently at R1,000).

Finally, while the IAC has moved forward in the accreditation process, by the end of the National ECD Pilot in March 2000, the practitioners' qualification is still incomplete because only the core credits were actually addressed. At this stage, almost no progress has been made on the elective credits and the concept of the fundamental credits was only indirectly addressed in the Pilot Project. One of the key challenges for the national DoE will be to utilise the work done by the IAC and liaise with the new ECD SGB and the still-to-be-established quality assurance body to ensure that non-formal practitioners are accredited and provided a career path.

Appendix A: Interim Accreditation Committee Contribution to the Research Report

NORMS AND STANDARDS

- ***Are the interim norms and standards, outlined under the Interim Policy for ECD adopted in 1996 and developed by the IAC under the Pilot Project, appropriate and realisable?***

The National Department of Education's *Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development* (1996) proposed Accreditation Guidelines for practitioners. It states that these guidelines "reflect the needs and working conditions of the ECD practitioners in relation to the aims for teacher education and the outcomes for teacher education programmes provided by COTEP" (p. 15). It goes on to say that "these guidelines must be modified, adapted and developed through practice." (p. 15)

At its meeting on 17 February 1997, the Interim Accreditation Committee for the National Pilot Project on Early Childhood Development (IAC) pointed out that these Accreditation Guidelines:

- "are very generic, making them meaningless as it is difficult to implement them;
- may look simple, but interpretation may be difficult;
- are written in a level of language that needs to be simplified;
- are clumsy, containing too many words;
- require more work on emotional, physical and creative areas, with the arts in particular needing to be expanded;
- require expansion on the management of schools by practitioners; and
- need a clear distinction made between outcomes and assessment."

The IAC felt, however, that these Accreditation Guidelines could well form the basis for further discussion on norms and standards.

The IAC then embarked on the development of Interim Norms and Standards for ECD Practitioners, starting with a Consultative Document.

In May 21-22 1997 a national reference group workshop was held at which the Consultative Document was tabled and a task team set up to develop the document further. The amended Consultative Document was consulted on through a process of 2-day consultative workshops with stakeholders in all 9 Provinces between mid-June and mid-August 1997.

In support of Curriculum 2005 and recognising the place of the Reception Year within the Foundation Phase, a consultant was contracted by the DoE to write the Illustrative Learning Programme for Grade R.

On the basis of the consultation in the Provinces, a **Proposed Qualifications Framework for ECD Practitioners** and a set of draft **Interim Unit Standards** were developed. These draft Interim Unit Standards were written by an IAC task team, after revisions to the Consultative Document from input given by key stakeholders, at 3-day Provincial Workshops in each of the Provinces, between September 1997 and January 1998.

The Proposed Qualifications Framework and the draft Interim Unit Standards were approved in November 1997 by the IAC and put before the Ad hoc Co-ordinating Committee for Early Childhood Development (CCECD) at the end of 1997. At the same time the documents were disseminated to all Resource and Training Organisations, provinces, and other stakeholders. This document became known as the ECD/NQF document.

The Proposed Qualifications Framework and Interim Core Unit Standards were made available to the Committee on Teacher Education Policy (COTEP) Technical Committee in April 1998 for consideration in their deliberations on Norms and Standards for Educators.

The Proposed Qualifications Framework and Interim Core Unit Standards were discussed at a second National Reference Group workshop in April 1998.

A third round of provincial workshops in the nine provinces was held between March and June 1998 on the Proposed Qualifications Framework and Interim Core Unit Standards.

In June 1998 the ECD/NQF document was sent to an independent consultant for a critical reading. The document was amended on the basis of recommendations received.

The Proposed Qualifications Framework and Interim Unit Standards were recorded by SAQA at the end of June 1998. Following this, the ECD/NQF document was revised and updated and taken to a special IAC meeting in mid-September 1998 for final ratification before going on to HEDCOM.

More than 1600¹⁸ people attended the reference group and provincial consultative workshops over more than a year of development: practitioners, trainers from both the formal and non-formal sectors, provincial ECD Pilot Project Managers, representatives from universities, colleges of education, trade unions and umbrella groups.

The final document compiled by the Technical Secretariat to the IAC is *The Early Childhood Development Sector and the National Qualifications Framework: Norms and Standards for Early Childhood Development Practitioners (1999)*. It follows a qualifications-through-unit standards-approach and lays down the rules of combination for qualifications at NQF Levels 1, 4 and 5 in line with SAQA requirements. It defines the specific outcomes to be attained by practitioners, the assessment criteria to be used when assessing competence and the accreditation processes to be used.

The IAC had agreed previously that unit standards for core units should be written only at Levels 1, 4 and 5

¹⁸ This figure does not represent 1600 different people. Many stakeholders attended more than one of the workshops over the year.

- the levels at which qualifications can be obtained.

The document thus lays down three interim Core Unit Standards for Levels 1, 4 and 5 of the NQF:

- Facilitating Active Learning.
- Facilitating Healthy Development.
- Managing the Learning Programme.

RTOs were expected to develop their own Performance Indicators based on examples provided in four booklets on assessment published by the IAC. The booklets give examples of Performance Indicators for some of the Assessment Criteria for the three interim Core Unit Standards. Generally, RTOs did not develop Performance Indicators. This could account for different 'standards' applied in assessing practitioners and in the development of course materials. Some RTOs have asked for Performance Indicators to be written for all Assessment Criteria on a national basis to standardise assessment practices. However, the IAC took no decision on this. One issue here is that this may become too prescriptive.

Fifteen draft elective (phase, role or subject specialism) unit standards ranging from Levels 1 to 6 were included in the 1999 document for illustrative purposes. Elective unit standards were written for Levels in between and above qualification Levels in order to incorporate training already existing in RTOs.

Since November 1997, all stakeholders in the National Pilot Project have been engaging with the interim norms and standards. The findings below thus represent more than two years of practice by the Resource and Training Organisations and Provincial Departments of Education in the National Pilot Project.

Stakeholders were given several opportunities to comment on the Interim Norms and Standards over the two years. The last two were:

- 1 Through questionnaires given to the 77 participants at the National ECD Pilot Project Workshop for Provincial Project Managers and RTO Directors/Co-ordinators on 21-22 July 1999. Six of these were returned, one of these from a provincial consortium.
- 2 The National ECD Pilot Project Workshop for Provincial Managers and RTO Directors on 29-30 November 1999 afforded the 75 participants time to comment on the interim norms and standards in provincial teams.

The participants' comments included:

- the appropriateness of the level of language for comprehension by practitioners;
- difficulties with translating Specific Outcomes into grassroots language in order to achieve critical outcomes and an understanding by practitioners in particular of the concepts behind the course materials;
- a tightening up of terminology used;
- the danger of becoming atomistic in the assessment of practitioners (if we concentrate solely on Specific Outcomes) and losing the integrative approach to training and assessment that has characterised ECD in the past;

- incorporating the changes or additions to individual Specific Outcomes as suggested by the field;
- the overlap among Specific Outcomes (although some stakeholders felt that this was positive, reinforcing the principle of integration. They felt that this could be supported with cross-referencing among Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria in the document.);
- further development of electives; and
- clear guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning.

Despite these issues, the stakeholders acknowledged the large scope of the consultative process involved in the development of the interim unit standards. All stakeholders support the *Norms and Standards* document in general, feeling that the core Unit Standards are appropriate and realisable for practitioners, both at Level 1 and at Level 4.

The detailed criticisms of the document, particularly where these apply to Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria of the Interim Core Unit Standards and the Elective Unit Standards should be conveyed to the newly-formed ECD SGB. Since three members of the present IAC have been appointed to the SGB, this process will be easily facilitated.

Recommendations:

- 1 The IAC recommends that *The Early Childhood Development Sector and the National Qualifications Framework: Norms and Standards for Early Childhood Development Practitioners (1999)* document be forwarded to the Standards Generating Body for Early Childhood Development.
- 2 The IAC further recommends that the SGB put forward for registration the three core Unit Standards at Levels 1, 4 and 5.
- 3 The IAC should provide the SGB with all documentation relating to the development, implementation and review of the norms and standards.

ACCREDITATION

- *Is the IAC/provincial interim accreditation system developed under the Pilot Project effective?*
- *In the Research Team's opinion, should this accreditation system become a permanent structure?*

Interim Accreditation of RTOs

The objective of the IAC was to develop and test a possible system and procedure for accreditation. It was not the IAC's intention to accredit formally RTOs in the National Pilot Project. To do so on a formal basis would have excluded a large number of RTOs in the country not in the Pilot Project.

The accreditation process was very rushed, coming towards the end of the third year of the Pilot Project. The timing was also not appropriate for RTOs in some Provinces, since some were only in the first year of their provincial pilot projects. Thus, for instance, they could not have all their course materials transformed into an outcomes-based approach by the time the interim accreditation process took place.

In summary, the development process for an interim accreditation system comprised:

- 1 Development of a tool for interim accreditation of RTOs in March and April 1999.
- 2 Trialing of the tool in June 1999.
- 3 Presentation of the tool at a national workshop in July 1999.
- 4 Review of RTO submissions for interim accreditation in October 1999.
- 5 Verification/moderation visits to selected RTOs at the end of October 1999.
- 6 Critical appraisal by the IAC of the process in November 1999.
- 7 Further moderation/verification visits to RTOs in November 1999.
- 8 Presentation of the process and critical appraisal of the process at a national workshop at the end of November 1999.

A Working Committee of the IAC drew up the Tool for the Interim Accreditation of RTOs in March and April 1999. The Accreditation Tool was trialed among 7 RTOs in 7 Provinces and presented at the National ECD Pilot Project Workshop for Provincial Project Managers and RTO Directors/Co-ordinators on 21-22 July 1999.

RTOs participating in the Pilot Project were required to make their submissions for Interim Accreditation by 30 September 1999. In all, nine evaluators considered 40 RTOs over three days in October 1999. The evaluators were required to sign an agreement to confidentiality of the meeting's discussions and to respect the copyright of the course materials presented for accreditation. Two evaluators recused themselves from consideration of submissions from organisations with which they had connections.

In this process, the evaluators considered:

- a To what extent the Accreditation Tool is usable.
- b A critique of the Accreditation Tool.
- c What the "core" criteria are without which accreditation cannot be awarded.
- d Issues that arise about accreditation.

After the review process, the evaluators felt that the Tool is usable with changes in detail and clarification of issues:

- 1 Should all Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria be covered in the training material? The Tool is not clear on this.
- 2 The Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria in the Tool do not come out of the ECD/NQF policy document. There would need to be an adjustment to link the two.
- 3 The Accreditation Tool does not look at the impact on children specifically to draw conclusions about the training offered by an RTO.

During the review process, the evaluators decided that the Recognition of Prior Learning will not have much emphasis placed on it in their deliberations, as RTOs were required to do this before the Core Unit Standards were drawn up. It became clear from the scrutiny of RTO submissions that RPL was not well enough understood.

The evaluators decided further that, to achieve full accreditation, RTOs did not need to meet all 5 the assessment criteria in each of the two Specific Outcomes. Instead, the evaluators would make recommendations for the interim accreditation to be awarded based on two **global considerations**:

- a Is the RTO developing in the OBE paradigm within the framework of the NQF ECD interim draft Unit Standards?
- b Does the assessment follow OBE in that it is workplace-based?

They also decided that they would make the process of visiting RTOs and reporting on their interim accreditation status would be as developmental as possible.

RTOs for which evaluators asked for specific areas to be investigated were automatically selected for moderation/verification visits. Additional RTOs were added to have a fair spread across provinces. Those that had core criteria missing would not be visited. Rather, they would be required to re-submit their application to the Technical Secretariat.

Six moderators made 19 RTO verification/moderation visits, giving a sample of 47,5% of the 40 submissions considered. Most of these visits took place from 25 - 29 October 1999, with three further visits taking place from 19 - 24 November 1999.

The basic format of these visits was:

- Observing a training session (or a trainer doing a field visit where it was not possible to observe a training session, given the timing of the visits).
- Interviewing one of the trainers in the RTO.
- Visiting one of the RTO's ECD sites.
- Interviewing one of the practitioners trained by the RTO.
(The above used the same questionnaires as those used in the Peer Review);

- Where evaluators noted during the review process specific areas that needed attention, these were indicated to the RTO concerned and observed by the moderator.

Because of the shortage of time available for the process and the small number of moderators, the visits were short. This situation was not ideal, but was the only pragmatic way of covering a good proportion of the RTOs in the field.

The IAC met on 29 October 1999 to consider the reports on the moderation/verification visits.

Moderators made the following observations about the accreditation process from their experience of the visits:

The Accreditation Process:

- The IAC appreciated the commitment of the RTOs and Provincial Education Departments to the accreditation process.
- Generally, RTOs who applied for accreditation had made great effort to put their submissions together and to arrange visits where these were requested. They had shown a willingness to be part of the developmental process and to accommodate the uncertainty inherent in the development of the process.

The Accreditation Tool:

- The Accreditation Tool was limiting, as it did not ask sufficient open-ended questions. However, it provided useful guidelines upon which to focus. The columns for ticks were not useful.
- Despite the limitations of the Tool, there was a lot of scope for RTOs to present themselves positively. The wide range of evidence that was presented by RTOs attests to this.
- The Accreditation Tool lays great stress on course materials and written submissions. More stress should be laid on assessing practice in the field in the accreditation process.

Presentation of Submissions by RTOs:

- The practitioner portfolio presented for interim accreditation evaluation is too restricted. Evaluators need to ask for more examples of practitioners' work in the form of a portfolio.
- Where Peer Reviews were done well and critically, the IAC found these very useful in the accreditation process. However, less should be asked in the Peer Review about terminology and more time should be given to observe practice and its impact on children.
- Despite its expense and its needing to be done at short notice, many RTOs reported that the Peer Review was useful to them as organisations.
- The future ETQA needs to consider critically how to make the Peer Review work optimally in the whole accreditation process.

Assessing RTO's Submissions:

- At least two evaluators working independently should scrutinise all RTO submissions.

RTO Moderation Visits:

- One visit to an RTO is insufficient. There needs to be an engagement between the RTO and the ETQA over a period of time with Provincial Departmental support and input. This will help in the developmental nature of the process. While the cost implications of this are enormous, it is necessary in an OBE paradigm to see performance in an authentic setting and visits of some length over a period of time are the best way to evaluate an RTO's competence.
- The moderation visit time should be negotiated between RTOs and the ETQA to observe training in authentic situations and to ensure that the process is collaborative and participatory.
- More responsibility should be given to trainers and practitioners to demonstrate their competence in the moderation process, rather than have the process defined and limited by the Accreditation Tool.
- Using the Peer Review questionnaires was not useful for moderation, as the IAC had decided to do. The Peer Review instruments are too atomistic and technicist for this purpose. There should be a separate set of more holistic observations/questions for the moderation.
- A Moderator's Tool thus needs to be developed that asks for a more holistic assessment of the organisation and that gives latitude to the moderator to explore specific areas that need attention during the moderation visits.

The Way Forward:

- There is a difference between assessing an RTO's capacity to do a task and ongoing performance appraisal to ensure the ongoing quality of output by the RTO. SAQA needs to ensure that future ETQAs have the institutional capacity to do both.

Decisions taken by the IAC on the interim accreditation process:

- There would not be an accreditation category of "Full interim accreditation". The IAC felt it was not in a position to award this category, as all the RTOs would have needed to be visited first, in order to make such a decision. The timeframe for the process did not allow for visits to all RTOs.
- Instead, RTOs would receive a letter of "interim accreditation with provisos": some with only technical things to submit, and others with indications of issues of a more substantive nature that would need attention before the official ETQA process begins.
- Those with core criteria outstanding would be sent a letter indicating how these would need to be met. IAC members would meet with them, together with their Provincial Managers, at the National Workshop at the end of November 1999 to explain the problems to them in a face-to-face encounter and to give assistance where necessary. They would be granted until 31 January 2000 to resubmit their submissions for reconsideration for interim accreditation.

- Since the whole process was interim and developmental, all RTOs that applied would continue to progress towards the ETQA process. There was thus no need for an appeal process for this stage of the accreditation process.
- Those RTOs (3 in all) that did not apply for accreditation would be required to apply in terms of their contractual obligations as part of the pilot project. They would have until 31 January 2000 to present their submissions.
- It was decided that the IAC should not recommend to the new ETQA automatic accreditation of the RTOs on the Pilot Project. That ETQA process should follow its own course.
- The IAC acknowledged the need to link its process through the DoE with the new ETQA. It was suggested that the whole IAC meet with the ETQA for 1 or 2 days to hand over the process, once the ETQA is established.
- It was decided that the IAC would not issue certificates to RTOs. They would receive only letters indicating the results of their applications. The letters would emphasise the developmental process of the IAC interim accreditation process.

The moderation of the summative assessment of practitioners in the Northern Cape during the week of 22 November 1999 presented a problem that had already been anticipated by the IAC. Two IAC moderators and the Northern Cape ECD Pilot Project Manager concurred that the results of the summative assessments of practitioners trained by one RTO could not be endorsed, either at Level 1 or at Level 4.

In the previous evaluation of the RTO's submission and the verification visit to this RTO, the evaluators and moderator had agreed that this RTO should receive interim accreditation. The IAC felt that it was not right to disadvantage one RTO on the basis of its moderation of practitioners' assessment if all RTOs had not been scrutinised in the same manner. The IAC therefore awarded the RTO interim accreditation, but pointed out, in the letter to it, its responsibility to its practitioners. (See section **Awarding of Credits to Practitioners**, below.)

This pointed to the need to link the accreditation of RTOs directly to the moderation of summative assessment of practitioners. Such an integrated process would give a fuller and fairer evaluation of RTOs.

Stakeholders were given an opportunity to comment on the Accreditation Process at the National ECD Pilot Project Workshop for Provincial Managers and RTO Directors on 28-30 November 1999. The 75 participants were accorded sufficient time to comment in provincial teams in detail on the various aspects of the process.

The comments, consolidated from the 9 provinces, were:

Accreditation Tool:

Besides criticism of the document's layout and binding that had been corrected by the time of the workshop, participants felt that:

- Feedback of the trial run of the Tool had not been considered or incorporated, despite the fact that the feedback was done at great cost to RTOs.

- The content of the Tool is repetitive.
- The Tool does not measure outcomes, but content.
- Questions are too broad: they could be interpreted in different ways by different people.
- Language and phrasing of questions is not consistent nor is it simple enough for all to understand (Where language was simplified, the questions changed meaning).
- Yes or no questions do not require sufficient depth of responses.
- While it was intimidating to some RTOs, the Tool is now understood.
- The requirement of resumes of trainers is sketchy - some RTOs inserted CVs voluntarily.
- There is a disjuncture between trainer input and RTO accreditation.

Despite the above, one province felt that the Accreditation Tool was clear and assisted the RTOs in preparing documentation for accreditation. Another felt that Section B of the document was a good guide in preparing RTOs for their submissions.

Submissions by RTOs for Interim Accreditation:

RTOs acknowledged that the IAC process was a developmental phase and that it came at a time that was not convenient for all Provinces because of the different stages of their Pilot Project processes, thus making difficult demands on RTOs' time. Views expressed that would have a bearing on a future accreditation process include:

- Give a submission format at the beginning of the accreditation process so that RTOs know what to expect. This will be in the spirit of OBE where the outcomes should be known by the learners right from the beginning.

Preparation by RTOs for the Interim Accreditation Process:

- This was a huge learning experience!
- It was enriching, capacity building and a developmental learning experience.

Preparation of Course Materials for the Process:

- This was a very expensive process - both in the typing and the copying. One province recommended that RTOs send a brief course outline with one or two training modules as exemplars, and that the rest of the course materials be scrutinised on the moderation visits.
- In future, course materials should be sent in much earlier than was the case in this process, as the first step in the moderation process.

Preparation of Organisational Profiles:

- RTOs were enriched by putting organisational profiles into place.

Doing the Case Studies:

- This was a new emphasis, and RTOs were not prepared for this, causing a lot of confusion and different interpretations of what was expected. Clearer guidelines should be given on how to present case studies.
- This will become a learning point for the future, particularly if it is done continuously with practitioners over the whole period of training.
- This will make it a developmental process.

Completing Peer Reviews:

- This was seen as a very useful tool, encouraging collaboration and partnerships.
- Guidelines for assessors are necessary and skills need to be developed (especially for new and inexperienced people).
- This is open to abuse by unscrupulous RTOs.
- This has cost implications for RTOs.

Moderation/Verification Visits to RTOs:

- The IAC should have communicated more clearly how the moderation visits would take place and then more consultation was needed around the visits with a clear statement of the outcomes to be achieved before the visit, together with criteria to be used in the moderation process.
- Do observation, rather than complete a questionnaire.
- The primary focus should be on the training presented by trainers and the performance of practitioners.
- Time spent with RTOs was too short - in one case 20-30 minutes. A moderator cannot give a true evaluation after such a short visit.
- Moderators were not sufficiently informed on RTOs' training programmes and content, thus they were not able to give meaningful feedback.
- While some RTOs felt that certain moderators did not handle the visits professionally, others felt that the visits of their moderators could act as exemplars: they were homely, relaxed and avoided formality. These moderators were considerate and transparent and acknowledged the value of practitioners' implementation.
- Even 1 day is not enough for a visit: 1 visit to an RTO is not a true reflection of the RTO's ability.

- Time should be taken to speak to trainers officially - perhaps a whole day with trainer.
- All trainers and relevant support staff should be involved in the discussions and feedback.
- Accreditation visits should take place more frequently throughout the year. This will give evidence of progress.
- Familiarity with this practice will encourage better feedback and participation and the spontaneity of practitioners who can become overawed by the process.
- RTOs would have preferred immediate feedback and opportunity for comments.
- The whole RTO team should be present for moderation feedback.
- RTOs once again realised that this was a time-consuming and expensive activity.
- Generally, though, it was regarded as a helpful process.
- Generally, RTOs felt that the moderation visit was a positive and encouraging experience for all in the RTO.

General Observations About the Interim Accreditation Process:

- This process has started to expose the NGO world to the reality of accreditation processes in the future.
- The wealth of NGO experience and knowledge was brought to the forefront nationally and in formal structures.
- The accreditation process gives recognition to RTOs.
- It was a valuable learning experience that put RTOs on a learning curve, creating a complete re-evaluation of their own courses and methodology, allowing RTOs to identify gaps in their own organisations and developing their human resources.
- The self evaluation and growth that this created was good.
- It created partnerships among RTOs and with Provincial Departments of Education.
- It was felt that the sector needs to build on the unity that has been created - consultation must continue inter-provincially.
- This will require money for continued involvement of RTOs.

Concerns Expressed About Accreditation Were:

- In this IAC process the focus moved from the practitioner being the most important participant to a focus on the process/system/structure.
- Accreditation for individual trainers at RTOs needs to be considered.

- Governing bodies have a huge impact on the implementation of practitioners. We need training for governing bodies and they need to be accountable - this has an impact on the Unit Standard: Managing the Learning Programme.

Taking the whole interim accreditation development process and the comments about it into review, the IAC felt that the process as it was developed and emerged was effective in that it was able to discriminate adequately among RTOs. The final results showed that 26 RTOs were granted interim accreditation (some with provisos) while 14 did not meet core criteria for accreditation. It was further able to discriminate clearly among these two categories.

The interim accreditation development process resulted in a huge growth among RTOs - in the development of course materials, taking a critical look at their organisational systems and structures, encouraging collaboration, improving training methodology, particularly moving into the OBE paradigm, to name a few aspects of growth. The impetus thus created should continue to the benefit of the whole ECD sector.

It has been acknowledged widely that the ECD sector is one of the first sectors to embark upon a systematic accreditation process through a piloting process. As with all pioneering work, the process had its shortcomings. However, these should be seen as growth points in the future ETQA process.

Awarding of Credits to Practitioners

Northern Cape was the only Province that could do summative assessment of practitioners before the completion of the research report.

The ECD Pilot Project Coordinator in the Northern Cape Education Department prepared the Provincial Summative Report, based on the summative assessments of practitioners by the 4 RTOs training in the province.

The Technical Secretariat noted in its scrutiny of the Province's Summative Report and the Summative Assessment forms of practitioners that in the case of 2 RTOs, all practitioners at Levels 1 and 4 met the criteria for all three Core Unit Standards. An analysis of the Summative Assessment forms of the practitioners from these RTOs seems to indicate that these practitioners were awarded credits without due reference to their formative assessments over the years. It seems highly improbable that every practitioner would meet *all* Specific Outcomes for all three Core Unit Standards at the time of the summative assessment.

The Technical Secretariat recommended that the Northern Cape Department of Education require these two RTOs to revise their summative assessment of their practitioners to reflect the reality on the ground.

For the moderation visits, the IAC asked to see at least one top practitioner, one average practitioner and at least one struggling practitioner at Level 1 and Level 4 for each RTO, plus additional Level 1 and/or Level 4 practitioners to make up the required number to be observed.

The Provincial Department personnel made the selection, based on the summative assessment forms and informed the practitioners of the scheduled visits and what the moderation team wished to see:

- The practitioners' in action in their sites.

- The practitioners' records:
 - Evidence of community involvement, e.g. minutes of meetings.
 - Practitioners' records of observation of children.
 - Practitioners' planning.
 - The practitioners' portfolios, including their assignments that were assessed during training.
- How the practitioner facilitates the children's development, including the critical outcomes.

The practitioner visits took place from 22 - 26 November 1999 with five moderators from the IAC. They visited 48 practitioners - a sample of 30.8% of the 156 practitioners who had been assessed by their respective RTOs.

Where possible, RTOs' trainers accompanied the moderators. In addition, at least one Northern Cape Education Department ECD person accompanied the moderator on each of the practitioner site visits. In some cases, this person was the District Subject Advisor.

All moderations were discussed with the personnel from the Northern Cape Department of Education. Agreement was reached between the personnel and IAC moderators on the comments to be given to the RTOs. Where possible, moderations were discussed with the trainers from the RTOs who accompanied the teams on the visits.

The moderators did not do a full assessment of each practitioner - rather, they did a *sampling* of the skills of the practitioner, based on their observations on the site, as required in a moderation process. On average, 1 hour was spent at each site.

The moderators agreed that as a rule of thumb, the difference between a Level 1 and Level 4 practitioner would be:

- His/her ability to work in an OBE mode (Level 4).
- His/her planning of appropriate activities and strategies for individual children, based on assessment of children's progress (Level 4).

The moderators were in general agreement with the summative assessments of the sample of practitioners visited for two of the RTOs and thus endorsed the results of the assessment of practitioners of these RTOs.

In the case of the third RTO, some practitioners credited at Level 4 by the RTO were not yet at this Level. The moderators recommended that the practitioners at Level 4 should receive a short, focussed additional amount of training and then be reassessed. Since there is a small number of practitioners, all of them would benefit from this additional focus, including those who had had their credits endorsed in the moderation.

In the case of the fourth RTO, both the moderators and the Northern Cape Department of Education personnel agreed that none of the practitioners visited from this RTO could be credited even at Level 1. From observation of practitioners at their sites, it was clear that they are not implementing outcomes-based education. Their knowledge base is questionable. The quality of their work with the children was below that which one would require even of a Level 1 practitioner. In most cases no preparation had been done for some months. There was little understanding of how to run a programme for children. Large, massed group chanting of songs, rhymes, etc. was mostly offered as examples of learning by the children. There was no

demonstration of individualised work with and assessment of children by the Level 4 practitioners. Most written observations of children had ceased early on in the year. Record keeping was thus very slight.

The moderators thus could not endorse the results of the practitioners of this RTO as recorded on their summative assessment forms, either at Level 1 or at Level 4. They recommended that the Northern Cape Department of Education should not endorse the results of this RTO, either at Level 1 or at Level 4. The Department should require further training from the RTO to bring their practitioners up to the required standards. When the RTO declares its practitioners ready for summative assessment, the Northern Cape Department of Education should carry out a further moderation of practitioners to endorse the assessment done by this RTO.

After the submission of the IAC's final moderation report, the whole moderation process from here onwards was taken over by the Northern Cape Education Department.

At the National Workshop in November 1999, the representatives from Northern Cape raised the following issues in relation to the process:

- Rating of practitioners on the summative assessment forms was found to be problematic.
- The moderators in their moderation visits to practitioners should also attend at least one training session in order to get the bigger picture of how training is presented.
- They appreciated the skills of the moderators. The quality of moderation was critical and fair.

The view expressed widely at the National Workshop with regard to practitioner accreditation was that:

- This process had not enabled practitioners to achieve a whole qualification. At the beginning of the Pilot Project, practitioners had been led to believe that they could attain whole qualifications. As the process evolved, it became clear that with SAQA requirements for qualifications, which include credits in fundamental and elective learning, the practitioners in the Pilot Project would achieve only part qualifications within the Pilot Project.

Taking the whole process of the moderation of summative assessment of practitioners by RTOs and the comments about it into review, the IAC felt that the moderation process carried out could serve as a replicable model for all moderation of assessment of practitioners. The IAC acknowledges that the process took place in only one Province. However, the case studies of the four RTOs were so varied, that it is safe to say that they covered most anticipated cases. The ways in which the IAC recommended these cases be treated were found to be fair by the participants.

As mentioned previously, this moderation process could be considered to become part of the whole accreditation process of RTOs.

Recommendations:

- 1 The IAC recommends that processes and tools used in the Interim Accreditation process of RTOs be recommended to the yet-to-be-established ETQA as an effective process.
- 2 The DoE should ensure that there is no gap in the accreditation process between the end of the work of the IAC and the establishment of the ETQA in the ECD sector.
- 3 The IAC should meet with the new ETQA when it is established, to ensure a smooth hand-over.
- 4 The IAC recommends that the career path for non-formally-trained ECD educators should be addressed. The DoE should initiate discussions to review current legislation to include these educators for the purposes of remuneration and employment.
- 5 The IAC recommends that the process of moderation of the summative assessment by RTOs of practitioners be implemented nationally.
- 6 The IAC recommends that criteria for the accreditation of RTOs include their competence to counsel practitioners on the requirements for the attainment of qualifications at Levels 1, 4 and 5, including information on providers that offer courses, particularly in fundamental and elective learning.
- 7 The IAC recommends that RTO trainers be trained in assessment in order to assess practitioners, with specific emphasis on the Recognition of Prior Learning.

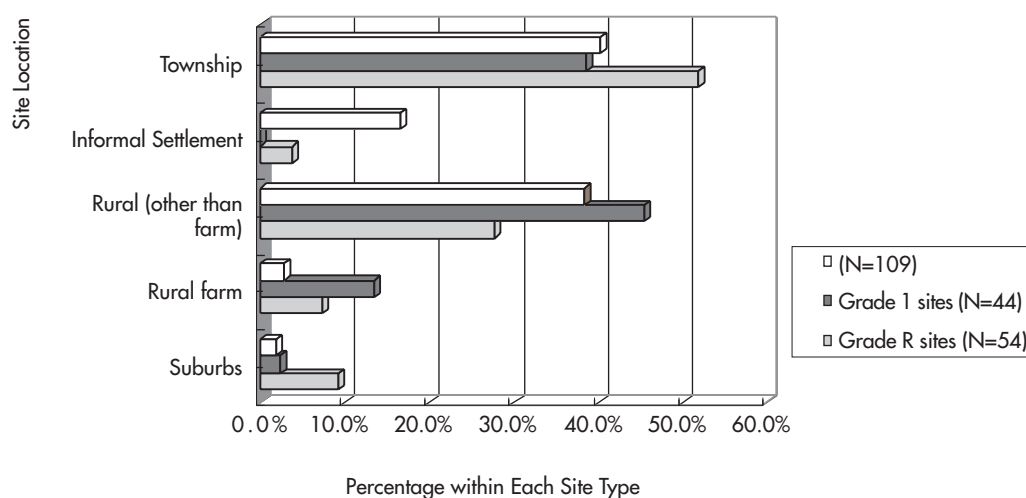
Appendix B: Site Information

This appendix provides basic site information, such as statistics on physical infrastructure, enrolment and staff team for 1999. Comparisons with 1997 and 1998 data are given and graphs drawn when necessary.

LOCATION

As in previous years, most of the sample sites are located in townships and rural areas other than farm. Please see the figure below for a detailed breakdown of the site locations.

Figure 17: Site Location by Site Type



In terms of the infrastructure and per capita income, "township" and "suburbs" could be grouped into one category that is better in both aspects, while "informal settlement," "rural" and "rural farm" belong to the other. The representativeness of the sample is maintained as long as the percentage of sites from these two broad categories within the experiment group (Community-based sites) is similar to that within the control group (Grade 1 and Grade R sites combined). As can be seen in Table 29, there is a balance between advantaged and disadvantaged areas in terms of infrastructure.

Table 29: Balance between Advantaged and Disadvantaged Areas in the Sample

	Experiment Group (Community-based Sites)	Control Group (Grade 1 & Grade R Sites)
Township & Suburbs	42%	52%
Informal Settlement, Rural (other than farm) & Rural farm	58%	48%
Total	100%	100%

A comparison of the average distance from ECD sites to the nearest primary school reveals a drastic change over years. In 1997, 13% of the community-based sites were located on the site of a primary school. This figure rose to 19% in 1998, yet dropped to 8.2% in 1999. The team hypothesised in the year-two report that the increase might be because a certain proportion of local primary schools offered ECD sites classrooms and grounds as a support. A closer examination of the drop from 1998 to 1999 reveals that some sites that were on the same premises of a primary school moved to an area about 1-5 km away from a primary school. Figure 18 and Figure 19 describe the breakdown within community-based sites and Grade R sites separately.

Figure 18: Distance to Nearest Primary School: Community-based Sites

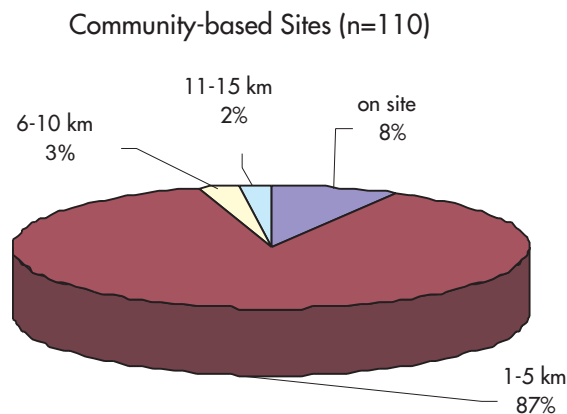
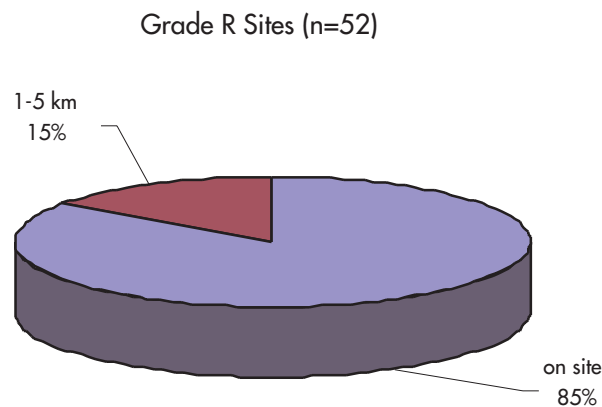


Figure 19: Distance to Nearest Primary School: Grade R Sites



Between 1998 and 1999, at least 17 sites moved, which is 8.8% out of the 193 sites that answered the question of whether the site moved since 1998. Among these 17 sites, 15 are community-based, one is a Grade R site and one a Grade 1 site.

BUILDING AND FACILITIES

No significant changes have occurred over the three years in terms of the building materials. At one third of community-based sites, practitioners and learners still spend their time in a place made of mud, wood, tin or pre-fabs. The comparison between community-based sites and Grade 1/R sites is as stark as it was in previous years. While less than two thirds of community-based sites are located in solid structures (i.e. in buildings of brick, plaster or cement), 97.7% of Grade 1 sites and 94.5% of Grade R sites are enjoying such structures.

Table 30: Building Material at Community-based Sites: Change over Years

	1997 (n=109)	1998 (n=110)	1999 (n=110)
Mud	9.2%	11.8%	8.2%
Brick/Plaster/Cement block	65.1%	60.0%	60.9%
Wood	4.6%	9.1%	7.3%
Tin	21.1%	14.5%	15.5%
Pre-fabs	Not an option ¹⁹	4.5%	2.7%
Other	Not an option	0.0%	5.5%

Similar to the baseline and interim studies, most (82.6%) of the community-based sites have an outside playing area. Most of these playing areas are fenced and judged to be clean and safe.

In the 1999 study, 78.9% of community-based sites had cooking facilities on the premises. This is a drop from 86.4% in 1997 but an increase from 71% in 1998.

Such fluctuation might be associated with the participation in the Primary School Nutrition Project (PSNP). In the interim study, the research team reported that some provinces discouraged their community-based sites from participating in the PSNP and urged provinces to take advantage of the PSNP. Comparing across sites in the same year of 1999, percentages of Grade 1 and Grade R sites with cooking facilities are significantly lower (Grade 1: 34.1%, Grade R: 43.6%).

At those community-based sites with kitchen facilities, 37.2% use electricity while 30.2% rely on gas, which is similar to the situation in year two but a clear improvement over the condition in year one when only 30.9% used electricity and 22.7% relied on gas.

¹⁹ "Not an option" means that the item was not provided as an option following the question in the instrument.

SANITATION

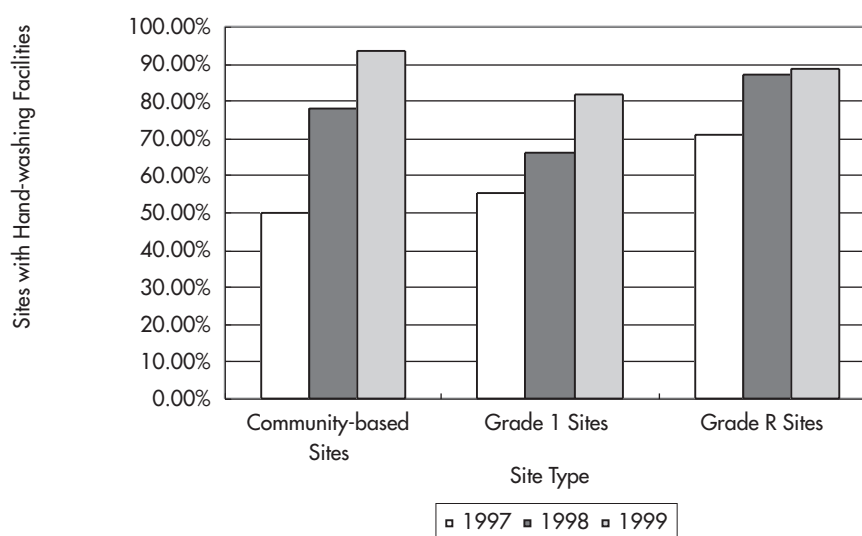
Comparing the data on toilet facilities over three years, no improvement has been found at community-based sites. The following table offers the details. Please note that percentages do not add up to 100% because more than one type of toilet could be used at one site.

Table 31: Sanitation: Change over Years

Community-based Sites	Flush toilets	Pit Latrines	Potties	Bucket system	Grassy or sandy area	Other
1997 (n=110)	47.3%	29.1%	13.6%	9.1%	10.0%	Not an option
1998 (n=110)	44.5%	33.6%	11.8%	17.3%	8.2%	0.0%
1999 (n=110)	43.6%	33.6%	14.5%	12.7%	5.5%	0.9%
Grade 1 Sites						
1997 (n=45)	53.3%	35.6%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	Not an option
1998 (n=44)	50.0%	43.2%	2.3%	4.5%	2.3%	0.0%
1999 (n=44)	61.4%	34.1%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	0.0%
Grade R Sites						
1997 (n=55)	69.1%	32.7%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	Not an option
1998 (n=55)	70.9%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	1.8%
1999 (n=55)	68.6%	29.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%

On the other hand, encouraging changes occurred at community-based sites regarding hand-washing facilities. The percentage of sites having hand-washing facilities increased from 50% in 1997 to 78% in 1998 and to 93.6% in 1999. As can be seen from Figure 20, the percentage of sites with hand-washing facilities has improved at Grade 1 and Grade R sites as well. However, it is clear that the greatest change took place at community-based sites.

Figure 20: Hand-washing Facilities: Change over Years

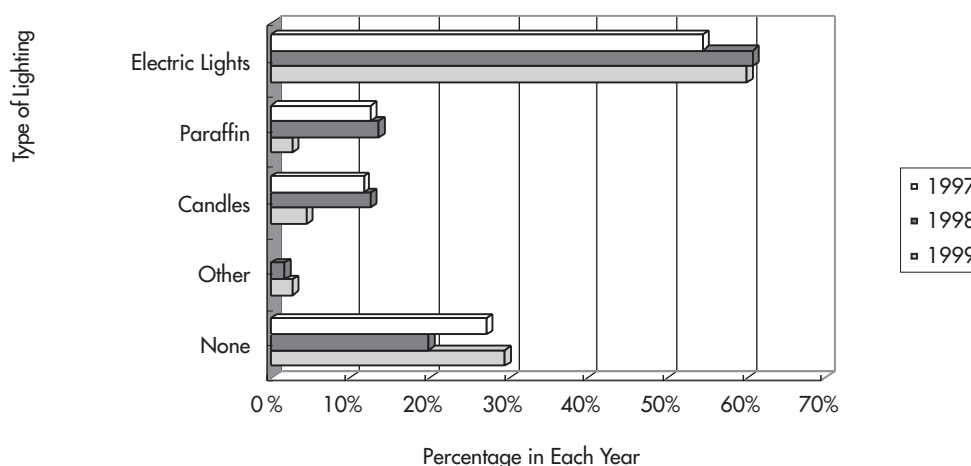


In addition, more than two-thirds of community-based (76.0%), Grade 1 (67.6%) and Grade R (71.4%) sites were judged to have clean sanitation and hand-washing facilities, which is another improvement from three years ago.

LIGHTING

The 1999 data concerning lighting at community-based sites are not encouraging. Almost the same percentage (60.2%) of sites enjoys electric lights as in 1998 (60.9%), and nearly 30% sites do not have any kind of lighting. Fewer percentages of sites, however, were using paraffin and candles in 1999 than in 1997. On the whole, there is no significant improvement between year one and year three, although the situation was better in year two. It seems that many community-based sites where no lighting was available in 1997 started using paraffin and candles, but stopped using them in 1999. A few of them might have lost lighting after moving sites. Others may have stopped using paraffin and candles as they are not stable or safe sources of light. Figure 21 illustrates this finding at community-based sites.

Figure 21: Lighting at Community-based Sites: Change over Years



WATER

The 1999 findings regarding source of water indicate moderate improvements at community-based sites between 1998 and 1999, yet impressive between 1997 and 1999. It is shown in Table 32 that over two-thirds of community-based sites now have access to piped water, as compared to just over half of the sites having piped water two years ago. Statistics on other sources of water, i.e. nearby tap, borehole and brought by learner/parent/community, declined clearly from 1997 to 1999, which makes sense since the availability of piped water decreases the need to obtain water from other sources. The only exception is tank water, which seemed to become less important in 1998 but reclaimed its position in 1999. For two of the four sites that relied on tank water in 1999 but not in 1998, it is in fact an improvement since they were using water from a nearby river in 1998. The other two were using water from pipes and from a tap nearby in 1998.

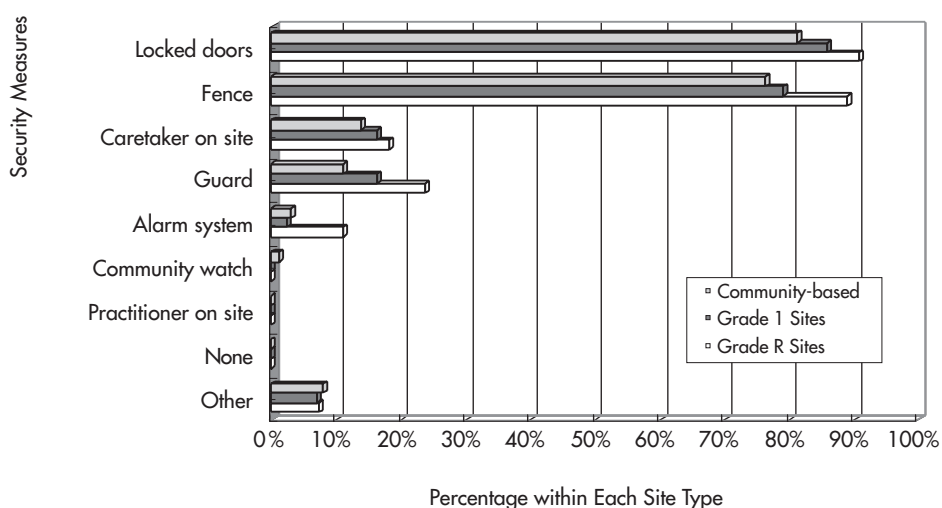
Table 32: Water: Change over Years

Community-based Sites	Tank	Pipes	Tap Nearby	Borehole	Brought by learner/parent/community	Other	No Water
1997 (n=110)	6.4%	54.5%	30.9%	2.7%	8.2%	Not an option	1.8%
1998 (n=110)	2.7%	62.7%	22.7%	1.8%	4.5%	7.3%	0.0%
1999 (n=110)	6.6%	67.3%	20.0%	0.9%	1.8%	5.5%	Not an option
Grade 1 Sites							
1997 (n=45)	15.6%	53.3%	22.2%	4.4%	6.7%	Not an option	8.9%
1998 (n=44)	13.6%	65.9%	4.5%	6.8%	6.8%	2.3%	0.0%
1999 (n=44)	6.9%	84.1%	6.8%	4.5%	0.0%	2.3%	Not an option
Grade R Sites							
1997 (n=55)	7.3%	69.1%	18.2%	0.0%	1.8%	Not an option	5.5%
1998 (n=55)	10.9%	78.2%	7.3%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
1999 (n=55)	7.2%	87.3%	3.6%	3.6%	1.8%	0.0%	Not an option

SECURITY

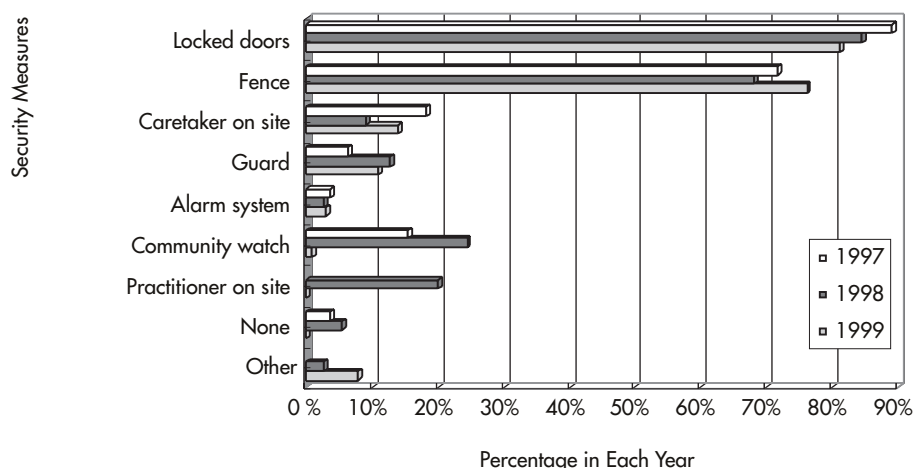
Security measures are found to be of no difference (in a statistical sense) among community-based, Grade 1 and Grade R sites in 1999, as can be seen from Figure 22. All sites that answered the question (101 community-based sites, 43 Grade 1 sites and 55 Grade R sites) concerning security measures have at least one way of protecting themselves. The majority of sites have locked doors or fences.

Figure 22: Security in 1999



The comparison within the community-based group across three years reveals small-scale changes on the whole. The difference in the percentage of sites with locked doors or fences is small from year to year. Two statistics dropped to zero or almost zero in 1999—the percentage of sites with practitioners staying on site and the participation in community watch programmes.

Figure 23: Security at Community-based Sites over 3 Years



FOOD

The proportion of community-based sites that provided food for their learners in 1999 is 92.7%, vs. 57% in 1997 and 86% in 1998. This encouraging change is accompanied by an increase in the participation in nutrition projects. In 1997, 14.4% of community-based sites that provided food participated in the Primary School Nutrition Project (PSNP). The figure dropped to 4% in 1998 as some provinces discouraged such participation. The 1999 figure bounced back to 17.3%, including those participating in other types of nutrition projects, such as the Community-based Nutrition Project and Food Aid. Nevertheless, the site is still the main provider of food at community-based sites. Within the same year of 1999, it is not surprising to find PSNP as the main source of food at Grade R and Grade 1 sites, as it has always been.

LEARNERS

The average number of five- and six-year-old learners has remained the same at community-based sites but has increased at Grade R and Grade 1 sites. The increase at Grade 1 sites is worrisome since it might indicate that no serious attention has been paid to the under-aged learner problem. Table 33 illustrates the changes over time. It should be noted that the degree to which this average figure varies is very different among three groups, fluctuating most at Grade 1 sites in 1999 and at Grade R sites in 1997.

Table 33: Average Number of Five- and Six-year-old Learners per Site

	1997			1999		
	Community	Reception	Primary	Community	Reception	Primary
Free State	36	54	69	28	58	30
KwaZulu-Natal	33	77	54	26	51	67
Mpumalanga	22	76	60	33	56	50
Eastern Cape	34	161	45	25	47	58
Western Cape	27	56	N/A	30	43	N/A
Northern Cape	39	48	63	24	35	19
Northern Province	51	62	47	39	64	46
Gauteng	15	N/A	N/A	16	N/A	N/A
North West	39	32	26	38	61	104

In 1999, community-based sites had the lowest attendance rate on average (65%). The rate for Grade 1 and Grade R sites is 83% and 75% respectively. In addition, this average attendance rate varies most at community-based sites and least at Grade 1 sites (for 1999 data only).

STAFF

No change has occurred in terms of average number of staff members at community-based sites. There are four staff members on average in 1999 as it was in previous years. The minimum number recorded in 1999 is one, while the maximum is 18. It is no surprise that the average number of staff members is much higher at Grade 1 (16 staff members) and Grade R (19 staff members) sites.

Neither has any evident change been found regarding the average number of practitioners at community-based sites between 1998 (1.5 practitioners) and 1999 (1.6 practitioners). The baseline study found 2.5 practitioners on average at community-based sites. However, as the team suggested in the 1998 report, the change might be explained by error in data collection—counting principals with teaching duties as practitioners rather than as principals.

On average, there are 1.2 practitioners dedicated to five- and six-year-old learners at community-based sites, 2.4 at Grade 1 sites, and 1.7 at Grade R sites. And the difference between groups is statistically significant. On the other hand, the learner/practitioner ratio at five- and six-year old group is not that different comparing the three types of sites. At community-based sites, one practitioner takes care of 26 learners on average, which is the same as that at Grade 1 sites. The average number of learners that one practitioner looks after is 33 at Grade R sites.

LANGUAGE

There are minor changes regarding the home language of practitioners and learners at all three types of sites in 1999. For details of the breakdown of practitioners' home language, please refer to Table 34. For more detailed information on the most common home language of learners, please see Table 35.

Table 34: Practitioner Home Language

	Community-based Sites (n=110)	Grade 1 Sites (n=44)	Grade R Sites (n=55)
isiZulu	19.1%	15.9%	14.5%
isiXhosa	22.7%	22.7%	20.0%
Tshivenda	1.8%	2.3%	0.0%
Setswana	17.3%	22.7%	10.9%
isiShangani	2.7%	2.3%	3.6%
Sesotho	12.7%	6.8%	9.1%
Siswati	4.5%	4.5%	5.5%
Sepedi	10.0%	9.1%	5.5%
isiNdebele	1.8%	6.8%	1.8%
English	5.5%	4.5%	16.4%
Afrikaans	9.1%	6.8%	18.2%

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% as some practitioners have more than one home language.

Table 35: The Most Common Home Language of Learners

	Community-based Sites (n=110)	Grade 1 Sites (n=44)	Grade R Sites (n=55)
isiZulu	17.3%	15.9%	12.7%
isiXhosa	21.8%	20.5%	20.0%
Tshivenda	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Setswana	18.2%	29.5%	12.7%
isiShangani	1.8%	2.3%	3.6%
Sesotho	12.7%	6.8%	9.1%
Siswati	4.5%	4.5%	10.9%
Sepedi	11.8%	9.1%	5.5%
isiNdebele	2.7%	6.8%	0.0%
English	2.7%	2.3%	10.9%
Afrikaans	5.5%	2.3%	14.5%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

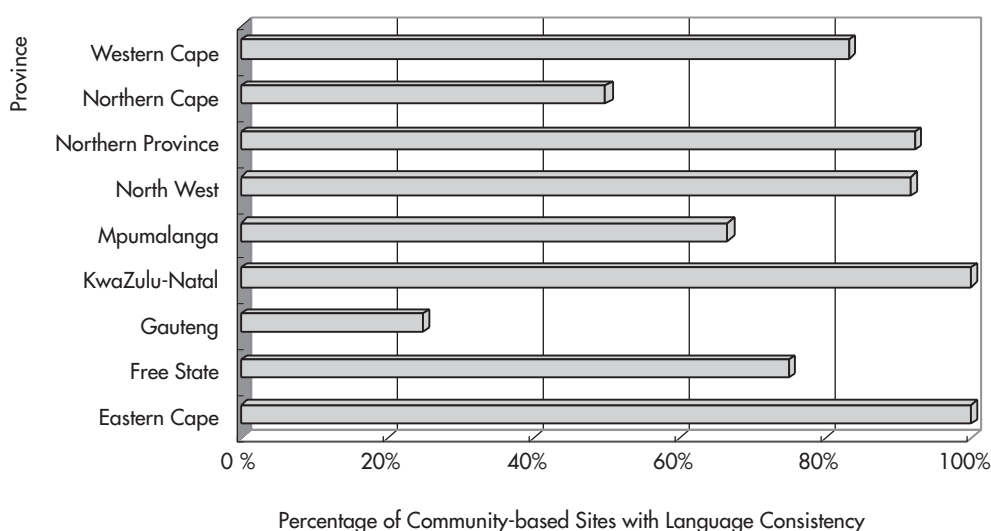
Note: Percentages are derived from dividing the total number of sites (110 for community-based, 44 for Grade 1 and 55 for Grade R) by the number of sites where the language was recorded as the most commonly used one amongst the learners.

This research is more concerned with whether a practitioner mostly uses her/his own home language for instruction and whether it is the same as the most common home language of learners. The research team believes that when all three are identical, both practitioners and learners perform better in teaching and

learning. A slight improvement in terms of this consistency is found in the 1999 data. There are 76.4% of community-based sites that benefit from such consistency, as compared to 74% in 1998. Same as in 1998, 86% of Grade 1 sites have language consistency. The figure for Grade R sites increased from 73% in 1998 to 80% in 1999.

The reason that the improvement at community-based sites as a whole is modest is because some provinces made progress regarding language consistency while others did not. Examining Figure 24 we notice that provincial differences still exist. KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape have reached 100% consistency, whilst the Northern Cape and Gauteng are still below the 50% line. Nevertheless, over 70% of community-based sites in six of the nine provinces have achieved language consistency. In addition, language consistency is more difficult to achieve in provinces where differential levels of linguistic diversity are high, e.g. in Gauteng.

Figure 24: Language Consistency at Community-based Sites by Province



At the 26 community-based sites where the most common language of instruction is different from the home language of the practitioners and/or the most common home language of the learners, the major reason given for the inconsistency is "mixture of languages in class." "Parents' desire that practitioner teaches in that language" and "practitioner prefers to teach in that language" are the next most popular reasons mentioned. At one site the practitioner said that English was used so that learners could get familiar with the language.

Over half of the Grade 1 practitioners said the inconsistency was due to the mixture of languages in class. One practitioner suggested that parents prefer classes be taught in that language, while another claimed that she preferred to teach in that language. One practitioner taught in English hoping that learners would later be able to communicate with English speakers.

At Grade R sites, "mixture of languages in class" and "parents' desire" were quoted as main reasons for the inconsistency. A few practitioners said they preferred to teach in that language. One practitioner used English because she also hoped learners would be able to communicate with English speakers.

When examining the most common languages of instruction separately, the team sees a clear shift at community-based sites in 1999. IsiZulu and isiXhosa are both ranked as the most common language of

instruction, followed by Setswana, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English. In 1998, the ranking was English, isiZulu and isiXhosa; and the 1997 ranking was English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa, Setswana and isiZulu. The usage of English in classrooms has become much less popular. For details, please refer to Table 36.

Table 36: Most Commonly Used Language of Instruction

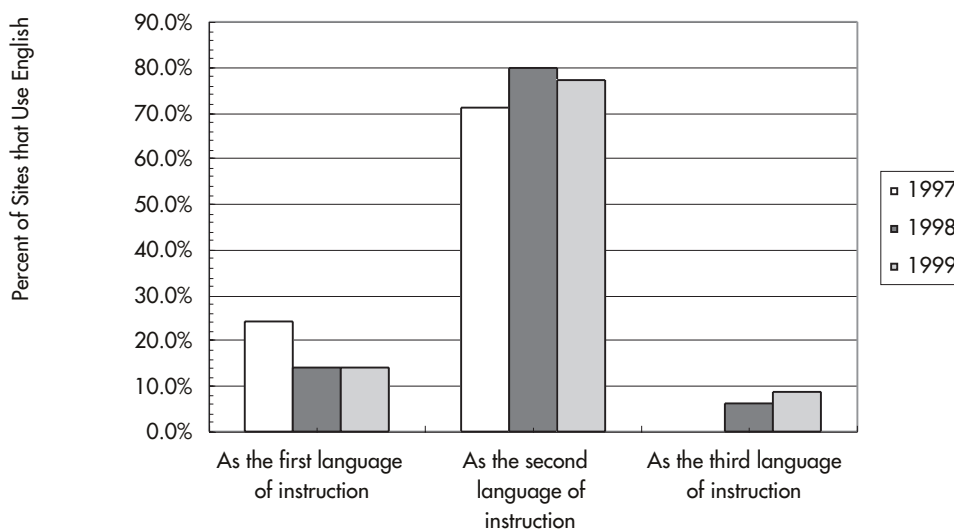
	Community-based Sites (n=110)	Grade 1 Sites (n=44)	Grade R Sites (n=55)
isiZulu	19.1%	15.9%	12.7%
isiXhosa	19.1%	18.2%	16.4%
Tshivenda	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Setswana	14.5%	22.7%	12.7%
isiShangani	1.8%	2.3%	3.6%
Sesotho	12.7%	9.1%	9.1%
Siswati	3.6%	2.3%	7.3%
Sepedi	10.0%	9.1%	3.6%
isiNdebele	0.9%	6.8%	0.0%
English	7.3%	9.1%	20.0%
Afrikaans	10.0%	4.5%	14.5%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Note: percentages derived from dividing the total number of sites (110 for community-based, 44 for Grade 1 and 55 for Grade R) by the number of sites where the language was recorded as the most commonly used for instruction.

Not only has the English language lost its importance as the most common language used in the classroom, the usage of English in general (including as the first language of instruction, or the second or the third language of instruction) has declined as well. In 1997, it was used at as many as 87% of community-based sites. Yet it was only used at 63% of community-based sites in 1998, and was reduced to 51.8% of sites in 1999. In other words, nearly half of the community-based sites now do not use English in their classrooms at all. Afrikaans as a language of instruction experienced a similar trend but to a lesser extent between 1998 and 1999. A total of 20 of the 110 community-based sites (18.2%) taught in Afrikaans in 1999, as compared to 19% in 1998 and 26% in 1997.

In 1999, amongst the community-based sites where English was used for instruction, 14.0% used it as the first language of instruction, 77.2% use it as the second, and 8.8% as the third language of instruction. This indicates a shift when compared to the 1997 data, where 24% of those using English used it as the first language and 71% of them used it as the second language. However, not much of this shift happened between 1998 and 1999, since 14%, 80% and 6% of community-based sites where English was used were using it as the first, second and third language of instruction in 1998. On the whole, the fact that local languages rather than English are used more often as the main languages of instruction is encouraging since early literacy and other language skill attainment is stronger when utilising home languages. Figure 25 demonstrates this shift.

Figure 25: English as a Language of Instruction at Community-based Sites (n=110)



A similar trend exists for Grade R sites. The percentage of sites using English as the first language of instruction decreased from 52% in year two to 36.7% in year three, while those using English as the second language of instruction rose from 48% in 1998 to 63.3% in 1999. In 1999, of those Grade 1 sites that used English in classrooms, 23.5% used it as the first language of instruction and 76.5% used it as the second choice.

HIV/AIDS

Questions on attitudes towards HIV/Aids learners were asked again to both principals and practitioners in 1999. The percentage of sites that would accept HIV positive learners increased greatly from 1998 to 1999. At community-based sites, 66% would accept such learners in 1998 while 84.5% would do so in 1999. The same statistics increased from 84% to 97.7% at Grade 1 sites, and from 84% to 100% at Grade R sites.

Little change has happened concerning a written/official policy on admitting HIV/Aids learners, though. Only one percent of community-based sites had such a clear policy. Slightly more Grade 1 sites (4.5% vs. 1.5%) have such a policy in 1999 than in 1998, yet no one could show the policy to the fieldworker. Of the three Grade R sites (5.4% in 1999; 6% in 1998) that claimed to have a policy on HIV/Aids positive learners, only one was able to show the policy to the fieldworker.

The percentage of practitioners who would accept HIV/Aids positive learners also increased, from 70% to 88.2% at community-based sites, from 84% to 100% at Grade 1 sites, and from 84% to 96.4% at Grade R sites. As many as 99.1% of practitioners at community-based sites know how HIV/Aids is transmitted, as compared to 87% in 1998. All Grade R and Grade 1 practitioners know how it is transmitted, indicating a 5% increase for Grade R sites and a stable condition at Grade 1 sites as compared to 1998. Of the 109 practitioners who knew the mode of HIV/Aids transmission, many pointed to multiple modulations. Table 37 offers breakdowns of the modulations mentioned. Obviously, the number of practitioners who gave correct answers (unprotected sex and through the blood) increased, and fewer practitioners gave incorrect answers compared to 1998.

Table 37: Practitioners' Knowledge of HIV/Aids Transmission: Community-based Sites

	1998 (n=96)	1999 (n=109)
Unprotected Sex	90 (94%)	95 (87.2%)
Through the Blood	78 (81%)	88 (80.7%)
Kissing	6 (6%)	2 (1.8%)
Hugging	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Playing	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mosquitoes	1 (1%)	1 (0.9%)
Other	14 (13%)	11 (10.1%)

Note: n = number of practitioners who said they knew how HIV/Aids is transmitted. Of the 14 practitioners who answered "other" in 1998, six gave incorrect answers such as "sharing toothbrush" or "sharing blanket", etc. Of the 11 who answered "other" in 1999, four gave incorrect answers.

Most practitioners and principals at all three types of sites said they would not have any concerns or worries about having HIV/Aids positive learners. Of those with concerns or worries, the main reason given is that they would need to monitor the infected learner more carefully. The next most common reason is that other learners might be at risk of infection. Some also acknowledged the need for them to learn more about how to cope with HIV/Aids positive learners. Some were worried whether other learners and their parents would accept HIV/Aids positive learners.

Of those practitioners and principals who were not ready to accept HIV/Aids positive learners, the fear that other learners would be at risk of infection is the main reason given. The lack of confidence in dealing with HIV/Aids positive learners is the next most common reason.

Appendix C: The Calculation of the Change Scores for Practitioner Performance

OVERVIEW

Practitioner Performance was examined by considering the three unit standards (FAL, FHD and MLP) over the three years. The specific outcomes and assessment criteria for each of these unit standards at Level 1 were closely examined in order to calculate the global scores for FAL, FHD and MLP and for practitioner performance as a total.

At a general level, the core unit standards were examined and the criteria that were directly measured in all three years were used. The baseline and interim studies were combined in order to provide a baseline score, and this was compared to the results from the final study in 1999. Questions were selected which best matched the specific outcomes within the core unit standards, and only the questions that were the same in the instruments of 1997, 1998 and 1999 were used. More items were taken from the interim study than for the baseline study as the norms and standards were only finalised after the baseline study was completed. These were quantified according to desired practitioner performance. The specific criteria that were used to measure each of the three core unit standards are outlined in the following paragraphs. The items from the assessment instruments that were actually used to measure these criteria are provided in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

FAL (MAXIMUM POSSIBLE POINTS = 22²⁰)

For FAL, all five specific outcomes were used. For the specific outcome of setting up learning activities, inside and outside, covering all aspects of learning and development, the following criteria were considered:

- activities are set up to support children's physical, social, emotional, intellectual, language and creative development in an integrated way (FAL 1.1) (1 point);
- an awareness of anti-bias practices is evident in the activities (FAL 1.4) (2 points). Bias was examined in relation to gender and ethnicity;
- activities are managed calmly and effectively (FAL 1.5) (3 points); and
- resources are well-maintained and accessible to the children (FAL 1.6) (3 points).

For FAL 1.5, the actual question pertains to the learners' relationship with the practitioner. It is assumed that if the learners seem frightened or uncomfortable, then lessons are not managed calmly and effectively. Instead, if the learners respond to the practitioner and feel at ease, lessons are considered to be managed in a way that is more calm and effective.

20 The number of points is determined by the specific question(s) asked in the instruments to measure a specific outcome. The total number of points that each practitioner/site gets may vary due to missing values.

For the second specific outcome of observing and assessing children's learning, development and responses in order to inform practice (FAL 2) (2 points), the following two criteria were used:

- children are observed throughout the learning site in a range of situations (inside, outside, in daily routines); and
- [practitioners] demonstrating an awareness of the needs, difficulties and achievements of children.

For the third specific outcome, interact and communicate effectively with children in a range of situations, the criteria of

- children are talked and listened to in a range of activities and routines (FAL 3.1) (3 points);
- children are helped to achieve what they set out to do (FAL 3.3) (3 points); and
- children are helped to make choices (FAL 3.4) (3 points) were used.

In FAL 3.1, it was assessed whether practitioners were listening to, answering and initiating interaction with the learners.

The fourth and fifth specific outcomes of FAL were examined at a general level, where these refer to using a range of techniques for working with individuals (FAL 4) (1 point) and the practitioners should be able to reflect on their own practice (FAL 5) (1 point). Here, it was assessed whether practitioners are adapting their practice to learners' own needs and interests.

FHD (MAXIMUM POSSIBLE POINTS = 38)

All specific outcomes for FHD were used. The specific outcome of protecting the safety of children and adults was assessed by examining the following:

- whether a safe and clean physical environment is maintained (FHD 1.1) (3 points), where the outside area was examined for cleanliness, safety and whether it was fenced;
- emergency procedure are identified and carried out, where the sites possess fist-aid kits (FHD 1.5) (3 points); and
- all accidents and injuries are recorded and reported to the appropriate authorities (FHD 1.6) (1 point).

The following two specific criteria were used to assess the specific outcome of supporting good health within FHD:

- implementing sanitation and hygiene practices (FHD 2.1) (3 points) and
- signs and symptoms that might indicate illness are recognised immediately (FHD 2.3) (7 points).

Supporting children with special needs was examined by considering

- whether facilities existed which would accommodate learners with disabilities (FHD 3.3) (1 point) and
- whether responses to children coping with abuse and/or violence was supportive (FHD 3.4) (6 points).

To assess the specific outcomes of supporting each child's emotional and social development, the criteria used were

- whether the message that each person is important, respected and valued is conveyed to the children (FHD 4.1) (1 point) and
- whether children are helped to get along (FHD 4.5) (3 points). Within this criterion, a specific example was used to assess how practitioners would assist the children in this respect.

Helping children learn to manage their own behaviour (FHD 5) (10 points) was assessed by examining the ways in which children were helped to understand and follow rules of behaviour and by examining what behaviour the practitioner considered unacceptable.

MLP (MAXIMUM POSSIBLE POINTS = 26)

In MLP, the specific outcome of working co-operatively with all other adults involved in the programme was assessed by using the specific criteria of

- the programme and needs of the children being discussed with co-workers or other adults on a regular basis (MLP 1.2) (7 points) and
- assessing whether a governing body existed, and how often it met (MLP 1.3) (2 points).

For the specific outcome of implementing a planned learning programme that supports the care and education of children within the national curriculum framework, the following criteria were used

- sufficient resources are provided and/or improvised to support the learning programme (MLP 3.2) (2 points);
- a regular daily routine exists, consisting of lesson plans and ways of conducting activities, providing for all the developmental needs of the children (MLP 3.3) (2 points); and
- the purposes of the various activities are understood in terms of the national curriculum framework (MLP 3.5) (3 points).

Reporting on children's progress to parents was also used to assess managing the learning programme (MLP 4) (4 points). Maintaining administrative systems was examined by assessing whether basic records of information (specifically, registration forms) relating to the children and the programme are kept and are up to date (MLP 5.2) (2 points).

The final specific outcome of maintaining standards of early childhood care and education was assessed by using the criteria of

- following an accepted code of conduct (MLP 6.3) (2 points) and
- making sure that conditions of employment and rights are communicated and are understood (MLP 6.4) (2 points).

Table 38: Facilitating Active Learning

Unit Standard	Baseline Study Q #	Interim Study Q #	Impact Study Q #	
FAL 1.1	030	5.10 first question	5.7 first question	
FAL 1.4 (colour)		5.14	5.10	
FAL 1.4 (gender)		5.15	5.11 (yes = the material and equipment do not show gender stereotypes)	
FAL 1.5		5.23	5.16	
FAL 1.6 (well maintained)		5.10.4 5.10.5	5.7.4 5.7.5	
FAL 1.6 (accessible)		5.10.3	5.7.3	
FAL 2		2.14a (2.14.2 and 2.14.3 together)	2.22 first question 2.22.1 either yes category	
FAL 3.1		4.17 08	5.13	5.9
FAL 3.3			2.19	2.27
FAL 3.4				5.14
FAL 4	5.2 yes		5.5.1.2 yes	
FAL 5	2.11 (learners needs and interests)		2.18 (learners needs and interests)	

Table 39: Facilitating Healthy Development

Unit Standard	Baseline Study Q #	Interim Study Q #	Impact Study Q #
FHD 1.1	4.5	1.18.1	1.21.1
FHD 1.5	Were kits shown		4.6.2 1.24.1
1.24.2			
FHD 1.6		2.29 first question	2.41 first question
FHD 2.1		1.12 1.13 1.14	1.14 1.15 1.16
FHD 2.3		2.22 first question	2.31 first question
FHD 3.3		5.11	5.8
FHD 3.4	4.20	2.30	2.42
FHD 4.1		5.24	5.17.1
FHD 4.5	4.15 (second part) talk it over with learner encourage learner to share remove learner from group		2.24
FHD 5		2.17 2.18	2.25 2.26

Table 40: Managing the Learning Programme

Unit Standard	Baseline Study Q #	Interim Study Q #	Impact Study Q #
MLP 1.2	3.2 3.4		1.27 1.27.1
MLP 1.3		2.13 2.13.2	2.21 2.21.2
MLP 3.2	07		5.7.1
MLP 3.3		2.13.1 (lesson plan and ways of conducting activities)	2.21.1 (lesson plan and ways of conducting activities)
MLP 3.5		2.11 (programme organiser and outcomes)	2.18 (programme organiser and outcomes)
MLP 4	4.22		2.23.1
MLP 5.2	1.8 1.9		1.6 first question 1.7
MLP 6.3		1.9 1.9.1	1.11 1.11.1
MLP 6.4		1.8 1.8.1	1.10 1.10.1

Note: The numbers given in columns 2, 3 and 4 of each table refer to the questions in the research instrument formulated to measure the particular unit standard.