

# District Development Support Programme (DDSP)

## Final Project Report

January 1998 to December 2003

RTI International\*  
Joint Education Trust  
Khulisa Management Services  
Centre for Education Policy Development

Funded by United States Agency for  
International Development (USAID)

Contract No. 674-0314-C-00-8009-00  
Project No. 07139

Submitted 30 March 2004

\*RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| ACE   | Advanced Certificate in Education                                  |
| AEEP  | Applied Education in Economics and Planning [course]               |
| AMI   | Assessment Modeling Initiative                                     |
| ARB   | Assessment Resource Bank   |
| C2005 | Curriculum 2005  |
| CASME | Centre for the Advancement of Science and Mathematics Education    |
| CEPD  | Centre for Education Policy Development, Management and Evaluation |
| CIE   | Catholic Institute of Education                                    |
| CoP   | Chief of Party   |
| COUNT | Co-operative Organization for the Upgrading of Numeracy Training   |
| CRC   | classroom resource collection                                      |
| DDO   | District Development Officer                                       |
| DDSP  | District Development Support Programme                             |
| DEC   | Department of Education and Culture                                |
| DoE   | Department of Education  |
| DST   | District Support Team  |
| ELET  | English Language Educational Trust                                 |
| ELSEN | Education for Learners with Special Education Needs                |
| EMD   | Education Management Development                                   |
| EMGD  | Education Management and Governance Development                    |
| EMIS  | education management information system                            |
| ESST  | Educational Support Services Trust                                 |
| FET   | Further Education and Training                                     |
| GMU   | Grants Management Unit (RTI/Pretoria)                              |
| HoD   | Head of Department   |
| HSRC  | Human Sciences Research Council                                    |
| IEB   | Independent Examination Board                                      |
| IEET  | Institute for Excellence in Education and Training                 |
| INSET | in-service education and training                                  |
| JET   | Joint Education Trust  |
| KZN   | KwaZulu-Natal  |
| LCD   | Link Community Development   |
| LLC   | Language, Literacy and Communication                               |
| LO    | Life Orientation   |
| MiET  | Media in Education Trust   |
| MSTP  | Management of Schools Training Programme                           |
| NDoE  | National Department of Education                                   |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| NGO    | nongovernmental organization                                    |
| OBE    | outcomes-based education  |
| PDoE   | Provincial Department of Education                              |
| PMP    | Performance Monitoring Plan                                     |
| PMT    | Project Management Team   |
| PPD    | Provincial Project Director                                     |
| PROTEC | Project for Technological Careers                               |
| RAIN   | Resources and Information Network                               |
| READ   | READ Educational Trust  |
| RFA    | Request for Applications  |
| RFP    | Request for Proposals   |
| RIEP   | Research Institute for Educational Policy/Free State University |
| RNCS   | Revised National Curriculum Statements (Curriculum 2005)        |
| RTHT   | Right to Hope Trust   |
| RTI    | Research Triangle Institute                                     |
| SASA   | South African Schools Act (1996)                                |
| SCISA  | Science Curriculum Initiative in South Africa                   |
| SEA    | Superintendent of Education: Advisory                           |
| SEM    | Superintendent of Education: Management                         |
| SGB    | School Governing Body   |
| SMGST  | School Management and Governance Support Team                   |
| SMILE  | St. Mary's Interactive Learning Experience                      |
| SMT    | School Management Team  |
| SO     | Strategic Objective   |
| SoW    | Scope of Work   |
| USAID  | United States Agency for International Development              |

## CONTRACT INFORMATION

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1. Reporting Period</b>                      | 1 Jan 1998 – 31 December 2003                        |
| <b>2. Organization</b>                          | RTI International                                    |
| <b>3. Contract Number</b>                       | 674-0314-C-00-8009-00                                |
| <b>4. Postal Address</b>                        | Postnet Suite 243 Private Bag X15<br>Menlo Park 0102 |
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| <b>9. Amount Funded (Obligated)</b>             | \$23,045,374 (fully funded)                          |
| <b>10. Starting Date of Project</b>             | 1 January 1998                                       |
| <b>11. Expiration Date of Project</b>           | 31 December 2003                                     |
| <b>12. Name of Person Submitting the Report</b> | Richard Cartier, Chief of Party                      |
| <b>13. Date Report Submitted</b>                | 30 March 2004  |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *District Development Support Programme: Final Project Report, January 1998 to December 2003*

The District Development Support Programme (DDSP), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), was awarded to RTI International in January 1998. The project was redesigned shortly afterward by USAID in consultation with the National Department of Education (DoE), and program implementation commenced in 1998-1999.

A key feature of DDSP was the development of approaches, practices, models, structures, and systems, with a view to replicate them in other schools and districts. DDSP carried out this mission primarily through five grants and two subcontracts. The grantees and subcontractors, which were selected competitively, delivered work in four target provinces selected by USAID and the DoE as key recipients for this assistance: KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, and Limpopo. Fourteen districts and 589 schools were involved in DDSP and were selected by the Provincial Departments of Education (PDoEs) based on need.

DDSP operated on two chief premises. The first was that *ownership* by the target provinces, districts, and schools was critical for success and sustainability. Given this point of departure, the programs implemented were geared toward a high level of involvement by the participating institutions, as well as continuous consultation. The second most important aspect of the program was *accountability* and a shared understanding among departments, service providers, and RTI of what this meant. Hence, there was clarity of purpose and responsibility: The departments of education and USAID were clients and therefore had to be served; RTI managed the program; and the grantees, subcontractors, and their associated organizations provided the desired services.

One of the key principles of DDSP was **ownership**. From its inception, the project staff strived to get the Provincial Departments of Education (PDoEs) to own the project. PDoEs participated in the needs analyses and in drawing up the Requests for Applications (RFAs) that lined out the programs required to address provincial needs. They were full partners in approving and selecting the grantees, appointing key project staff, reviewing and approving all draft manuals prepared for the project, managing the programs, and monitoring program implementation. RTI insisted that grantees first obtain PDoEs' approval for any program implementation.

The national DoE's District Development Programme—also getting under way as DDSP began—chose to use *organization* and *human resource development* as strategic levers to assist its education transformation efforts. DDSP was conceived in tandem with these two aspects of the District Development Programme, with the intention to operationalize education policy frameworks around governance and curriculum, by defining the roles and strengthening the capacity of District Education Offices to provide effective support to schools.

Accountability of the grantees and subcontractors was maintained through strict reporting and monitoring. A set of 55 indicators measured program achievements against 16 project objectives annually. DDSP indicators included both process and output (or outcome) indicators, to provide USAID with a range of information for assessing project achievement and impact. In 2001, the indicators were revised, leaving 48 indicators.

Substantial gains were achieved over the four years of implementation and sustainable good practices were modeled for replication within districts and schools. Among these were:

- evaluation of the most appropriate models for school support, including a level of flexibility so that the models could be adapted to the context of each province;

- ongoing alignment of project training programs with those of the Provincial Departments of Education;
- interaction based on “school clusters,” or groups of schools that included better-performing schools, poor-performing schools, and master or lead teachers who served as a resource;
- a variety of training methods—including residential and in-place training, at various times of the school day and the school year—tailored to best accommodate educators in the target provinces;
- careful support and management of “cascade training,” a method in which individual teachers—and other participants in residential training—subsequently returned to their school cluster and, following a detailed cascade training plan, delivered the training that they received to teachers within both their home school and other schools within their cluster;
- involvement of district office staff in upgrading teacher skills, mentoring, and co-facilitating training, to ensure that the programs would meet the districts’ and provinces’ identified needs, and to move these staff into closer advisory relationships with the schools they oversaw;
- accommodation of rural, remote, and poorer schools through additional advisory services, as well as provision of classroom materials and furniture;
- differentiation of schools based on need—and movement of schools from one stage to the next over time—as a way of maximizing support offered to the neediest schools and districts; and
- development and delivery of accredited training, to ensure both consistency in training content and a perception of professionalism.

The lessons and experiences of practitioners in DDSP were published in a book and shared through a final project conference in 2003. Sample pages of other DDSP published documents, such as newsletters, brochures, and reports, are included as illustrations throughout the report.

The report is organized as follows. Section 1 presents basic background on the project structure, including the design history, staffing, objectives it was expected to meet, progress indicators, project monitoring and evaluation, and budget information. Section 2 is a set of recommendations for policy and practice derived from the experiences of USAID, RTI, and educators and education officials at the national, provincial, district, and schools levels in South Africa. Section 3 contains details about the specific grants and subcontracts that were awarded in the four provinces to carry out the technical assistance and training. The outline of Section 4 follows the USAID-specific goal, subgoals, and objectives, with correlated information drawn from the project activities to demonstrate how the goals and objectives were addressed. Section 5 describes the additional activities DDSP carried out over the life of the project. Finally, a series of annexes offers additional information about the project.

## SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The District Development Support Programme (DDSP), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), was awarded to RTI International in January 1998. The project was redesigned shortly afterward by USAID in consultation with National Department of Education (DoE), and program implementation commenced in 1998-1999.

DDSP was designed with the DoE to ensure that USAID/South Africa's contribution made a positive difference to primary education in the country. It involved working within a limited geographic area and at levels within the education system that directly support schools. Thus, DDSP focused on improved teaching and learning through better instructional leadership, management, and governance at the primary school level, and on management and instructional leadership at district, circuit, and school levels.

A key feature of DDSP was the development of approaches, practices, models, structures, and systems, with a view to replicate them in other schools and districts. DDSP carried out this mission primarily through five grants and two subcontracts. The grantees were Media in Education Trust (MiET), Management of Schools Training Programme (MSTP),<sup>1</sup> Link Community Development (LCD), and READ Educational Trust (READ). The subcontractors were Education Foundation Trust and Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). They were selected competitively, delivered work in four target provinces selected by USAID and the DoE as key recipients for this assistance: KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, and Limpopo. Fourteen districts and 589 schools were involved in DDSP and were selected by the Provincial Departments of Education (PDoEs) based on need. (Annexes A and B contain profiles of the schools and the grant and subcontract schedule.)

### Project Structure

#### *Startup and Redesign*

Originally known as the South African Basic Education Reconstruction Project (SABER), DDSP was designed in 1995 and awarded to RTI in January 1998. Immediately afterward, the project was redesigned by USAID in consultation with South Africa's DoE. Project implementation in the provinces was delayed until mid-1998 pending DoE approval. Real time available for project implementation was reduced in relation to the overall project period. During late 1998 and early 1999, advocacy work began in the provinces and initial consultations were held to plan the provincial programs. This laid the foundation for government buy-in of individual provincial project design, which culminated in five Requests for Applications (RFAs) for grant awards and Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for two subcontracts.

#### *Staffing*

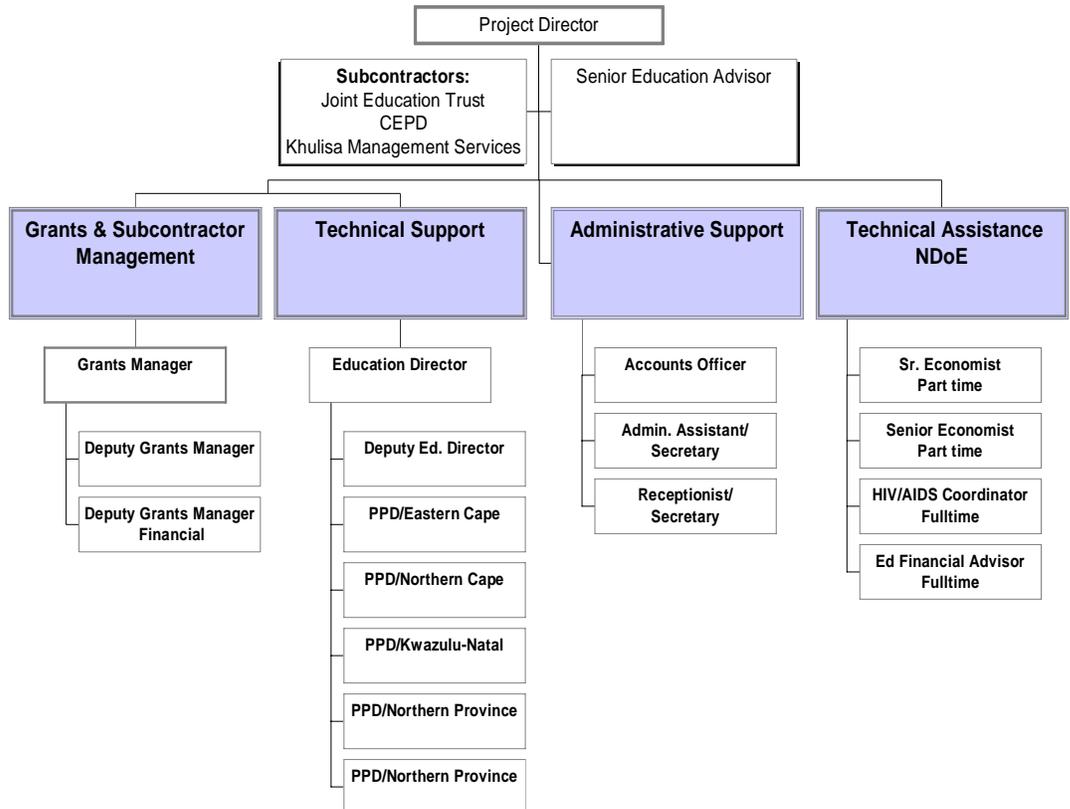
The DDSP program management structure was reconfigured as determined by project needs in 1999 (see Figure 1). Originally, a Project Manager and a Senior Technical Advisor held project oversight responsibilities, supported by a Grants Management Team and an Education Director. This leadership structure turned out to be inappropriate, so the project organogram was restructured in June 1999. The DDSP project management structure was replaced by a Chief of Party (CoP) with overall responsibility for DDSP. The Senior Technical Advisor was retained on a part-time basis. The Grants Management Unit continued to manage grants and subcontracts.

The DDSP office in Pretoria was staffed by a Chief of Party, a Grants Manager, two Deputy Grants Managers, an Education Director, a Deputy Education Director, an Accounts Officer, and administrative staff.

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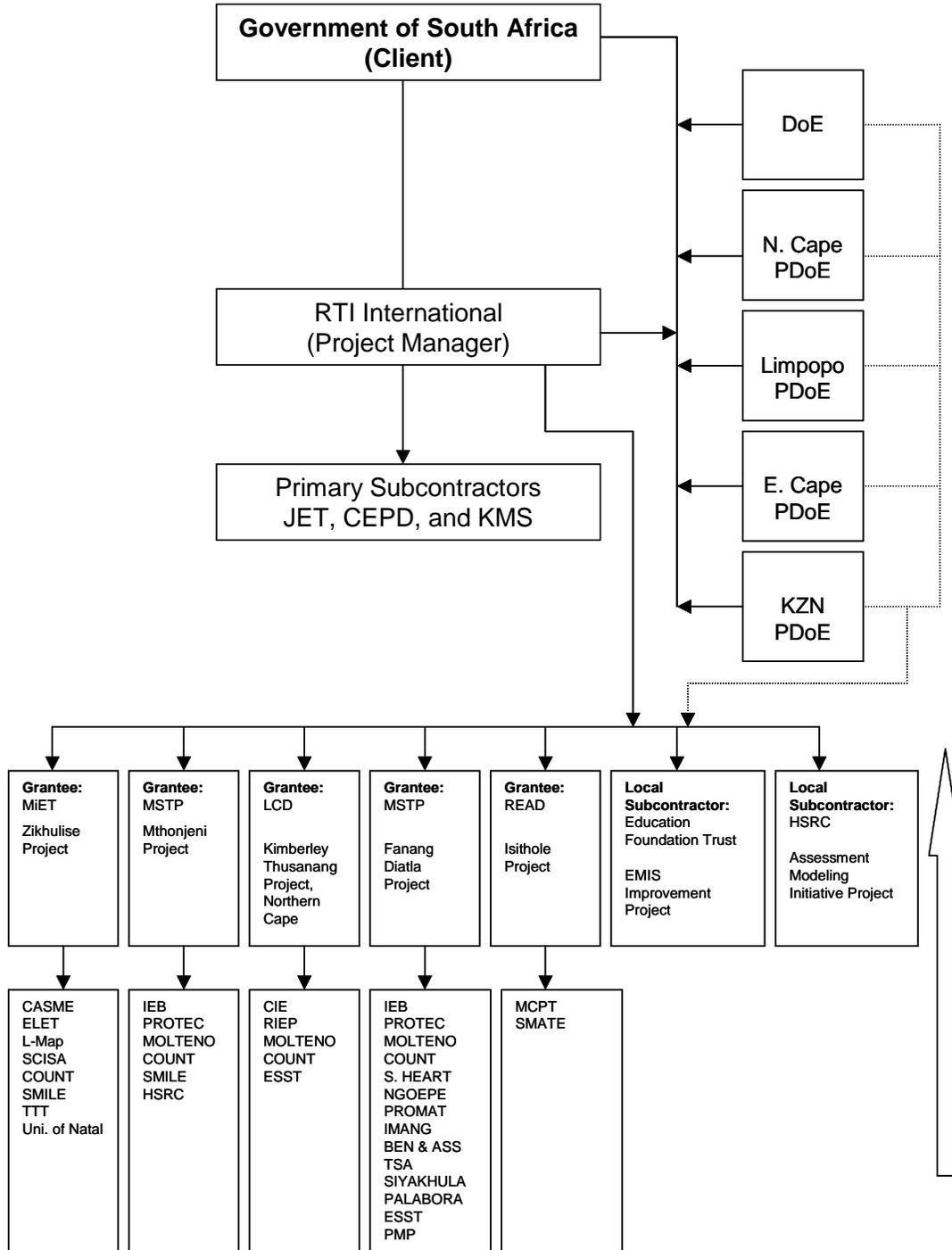
<sup>1</sup> MSTP was issued grants for KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo provinces.

**Figure 1. Organizational Chart**



DDSP also deployed Provincial Project Directors (PPDs) based in each province. Because of the large number of schools in Limpopo Province, two PPDs were deployed in this province. Of the five PPDs, two (Northern Cape and Limpopo) were direct RTI hires; the remaining three were seconded to DDSP by the PDoEs. All seconded staff reverted to their respective departments at the end of 2002. (Figure 2 clarifies these relationships.)

**Figure 2. DDSP Relationships: Service Delivery to Provinces**



## Budget

Table 1 shows the final DDSP budget; Table 2 summarizes the project level of effort.

**Table 1. Project Budget (2001-2003), in U.S. Dollars**

| <b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>             | <b>Incurred FY04<br/>1st Quarter</b> | <b>Contract-to-Date<br/>Incurred Costs</b> | <b>Committed and<br/>Pipeline Costs</b> | <b>Total Expended</b> | <b>Contract<br/>Budget</b> | <b>Funded<br/>Amount</b> | <b>Remaining \$,<br/>Contract<br/>Budget</b> | <b>Remaining \$,<br/>Funded<br/>Amount</b> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Contract Line Items</b>      |                                      |  |   |                       |                            |                          |  |  |
| Salaries                        | 24,208                               | 1,923,102                                  | 0                                       | 1,923,102             | 1,981,010                  | 1,981,010                | 57,908                                       | 57,908                                     |
| Fringe Benefits                 | 12,266                               | 712,317                                    | 9,600                                   | 721,917               | 731,325                    | 731,325                  | 9,408  | 9,408                                      |
| Indirect Technical Expense      | 12,713                               | 922,732                                    | 3,072                                   | 925,804               | 950,275                    | 950,275                  | 24,471                                       | 24,471                                     |
| Travel & Transportation         | 4,240                                | 907,232                                    | 447                                     | 907,679               | 993,919                    | 993,919                  | 86,240                                       | 86,240                                     |
| Expatriates Expenses            | 959                                  | 34,513                                     | 42                                      | 34,555                | 46,500                     | 46,500                   | 11,945                                       | 11,945                                     |
| Other Direct Costs              | 63,422                               | 1,062,511                                  | 59,801                                  | 1,122,312             | 1,143,881                  | 1,143,881                | 21,569                                       | 21,569                                     |
| General & Administrative (Rate) | 28,785                               | 1,396,340                                  | 18,241                                  | 1,414,581             | 1,459,500                  | 1,459,500                | 44,919                                       | 44,919                                     |
| Materials & Equipment           | 1,604                                | 814,686                                    | 150                                     | 814,836               | 776,820                    | 776,820                  | (38,016)                                     | (38,016)                                   |
| Consultants (Labor & Travel)    | 0                                    | 88,738                                     | 0                                       | 88,738                | 88,738                     | 88,738                   | (0)  | (0)  |
| Subcontracts                    | 760,651                              | 5,005,909                                  | 208,324                                 | 5,214,233             | 5,113,029                  | 5,113,029                | (101,204)                                    | (101,204)                                  |
| Materials Support Expense       | 24,118                               | 154,527                                    | 6,254                                   | 160,781               | 156,388                    | 156,388                  | (4,393)                                      | (4,393)                                    |
| Subtotal                        | 932,966                              | 13,022,607                                 | 305,931                                 | 13,328,538            | 13,441,385                 | 13,441,385               | 112,847                                      | 112,847                                    |
| Fixed Fee                       | 51,313                               | 716,243                                    | 16,826                                  | 733,069               | 726,400                    | 726,400                  | (6,669)                                      | (6,669)                                    |
| Total Costs plus Fixed Fee      | 984,279                              | 13,738,850                                 | 322,757                                 | 14,061,607            | 14,167,785                 | 14,167,785               | 106,178                                      | 106,178                                    |
| Grant Funding                   | 50,647                               | 8,720,791                                  | 5,060                                   | 8,725,851             | 8,877,589                  | 8,877,589                | 151,738                                      | 151,738                                    |
| <b>TOTAL CONTRACT</b>           | <b>1,034,926</b>                     | <b>22,459,641</b>                          | <b>327,817</b>                          | <b>22,787,458</b>     | <b>23,045,374</b>          | <b>23,045,374</b>        | <b>257,916</b>                               | <b>257,916</b>                             |

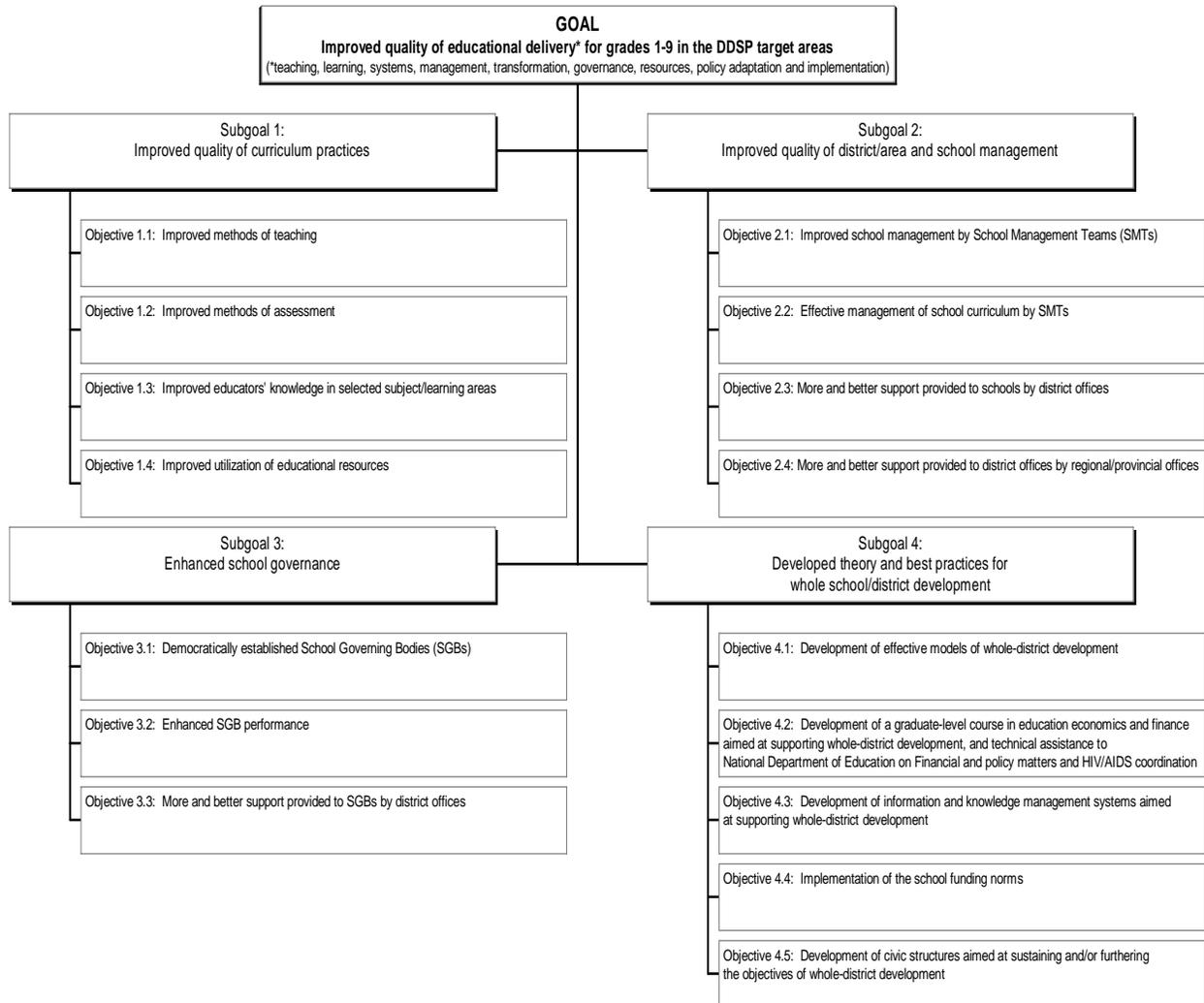
**Table 2. Level-of-Effort Summary**

| <b>Firm Name</b>                        | <b>Person-Months Incurred<br/>Through December 2003</b> |
|---|---|
| RTI                                     | 150.03  |
| Joint Education Trust                   | 3.32  |
| Khulisa Management Services             | 13.12   |
| Centre for Education Policy Development | 41.95   |
| Total                                   | 208.41  |
| Contract Level of Effort                | 208.50  |
| <b>Remaining Level of Effort</b>        | <b>0.09</b>   |

## DDSP Goal, Subgoals, and Objectives

A clear goal, subgoals, and objectives guided the DDSP from its inception. The PDoEs and grantees structured their annual work plans around the subgoals and objectives; thus, the reporting on specific grants and subcontracts in Section 4 follows this pattern. This structure also permitted the project team to appropriately monitor the project, as described in greater detail below. Figure 3 shows the links among each objective and subgoal.

**Figure 3. DDSP Goal, Subgoals, and Objectives**



The DDSP goal and subgoals aimed at improving the quality of education delivery, including teaching and learning, management, governance, and support provided to schools. The goal and subgoals could only be achieved by empowering key stakeholders involved in educational delivery and support to influence—as well as sustain—positive changes in schools and districts. Therefore, the single most important focus of the program was to facilitate development of approaches, practices, structures, and operational systems to promote effective schooling, improved educational management, and school support. A balanced emphasis bringing qualitative changes through the district office as well as from within schools themselves was DDSP’s primary task.

In terms of improving the quality of education, the project also aligned itself with the national social priorities, which included HIV/AIDS awareness at the district and school level.

Several cross-cutting issues, many of which became the seeds of DDSP best practices, spanned more than one objective. Some are revisited in Section 2 with recommendations arising from the experiences in the provinces:



- evaluation of the most appropriate models for school support, including a level of flexibility so that the models could be adapted to the context of each province;
- ongoing alignment of project training programs with those of the provincial Departments of Education;
- interaction based on “school clusters,” or groups of schools that included better-performing schools, poor-performing schools, and master or lead teachers who served as a resource;
- a variety of training methods—including residential and in-place training, at various times of the school day and the school year—tailored to best accommodate educators in the target provinces;
- careful support and management of “cascade training,” a method in which individual teachers—and other participants in residential training—subsequently returned to their school cluster and, following a detailed cascade training plan, delivered the training that they received to teachers within both their home school and other schools within their cluster;
- involvement of district office staff in upgrading teacher skills, mentoring, and co-facilitating training, to ensure that the programs would meet the districts’ and provinces’ identified needs, and to move these staff into closer advisory relationships with the schools they oversaw;
- accommodation of rural, remote, and poorer schools through additional advisory services, as well as provision of classroom materials and furniture;
- differentiation of schools based on need—and movement of schools from one stage to the next over time—as a way of maximizing support offered to the neediest schools and districts; and
- development and delivery of accredited training, to ensure both consistency in training content and a perception of professionalism.

## Indicators for Tracking Progress

DDSP began with 55 separate indicators to track progress and levels of achievement (see Table 3). Such a large number of indicators was cumbersome and time consuming to track. The indicators were developed by USAID and RTI to measure the achievement of DDSP's goal, four subgoals, and 16 corresponding objectives. The indicators were negotiated through the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) approved by USAID in late 1999. As it turned out, however, grantees spent an inordinate amount of time collecting data and attempting to analyze the 55 indicators. Thus, the number of indicators was reduced by eliminating several redundancies, leaving the project with 48 indicators. Nevertheless, the basis for calculating annual changes remained the 55 indicators, as reprogramming of the database was not considered cost effective.

Although data were collected on 55 indicators, RTI reported to USAID on seven key indicators determined by USAID/South Africa's results reporting requirement to USAID/Washington. These key indicator results, presented in Table 4, showed marked improvement from 2000 to 2002-2003.

Intensive school- and cluster-based work dramatically shifted the results in 2002. Although clear targets were set for each indicator, the focus was on achieving an improvement in the indicator results rather than on achieving the targets set. Hence, in the seven main indicators reported to USAID, improvement over baseline was achieved for all indicators; indicator 12 and indicators 2, 6, 13, and 19 exceeded the target for that year. For the complete indicator results table, see Annex C.

**Table 3. DDSP Indicators**

| Goal, Subgoals, and Objectives   | Indicators   |
|--|--|
| <b>GOAL:</b> Improved quality of educational delivery for grades 1-9 in the DDSP target area | 1. Eliminated.   |
|  | 2. Increased learner performance on grade 3, exit point assessment.  |
| <b>SUBGOAL 1:</b> Improved quality of curriculum practices                                   | 3. Increase in the mean index score for all educator-focused indicators below, except indicator 11.  |
| <b>Objective 1.1:</b> Improved teaching methods  | 4. Increase in the number of educators demonstrating the use of a variety of innovative learner-centered teaching techniques.  |
|  | 5. Increase in the number of classrooms where learners are "actively and meaningfully engaged" in learning activities.   |
|  | 6. Increase in the number of educators with prepared lesson plans containing identified outcomes.  |
|  | 7. Frequency of marked homework assignments.   |
|  | 8. Quality of marked homework assignments.   |
| <b>Objective 1.2:</b> Improved methods of assessment   | 9. Increase in the number of educators that maintain a clear, systematic recording of learner performance.   |
|  | 10. Increase in the number of educators who practice continuous assessment.  |
| <b>Objective 1.3:</b> Improved educator knowledge in selected learning/subject areas         | 11. Increase in the number of educators who can exhibit an acceptable level of knowledge necessary to teach in the grades to which they are assigned.                                |
| <b>Objective 1.4:</b> Improved utilization of resources                                      | 12. Increase in the number of educators capable of developing their own teaching and learning materials (applicable for Zikhulise Project <sup>2</sup> in KwaZulu-Natal [KZN] only). |
|  | 13. Increase in the number of educators who use teacher-developed learning and teaching materials (applicable for Zikhulise Project only).   |

<sup>2</sup> This grantee project is described in Section 3.

| Goal, Subgoals, and Objectives  | Indicators  |
|---|---|
|   | 14. Decrease in the number of schools/classrooms found with learning materials locked up in storage and/or undistributed during school hours.   |
| <b>SUBGOAL 2:</b> Improved quality of district/area and school management                                     | 15. Increase in the number of Section 21 schools of the South African Schools Act (SASA).   |
| <b>Objective 2.1:</b> Improved school management by School Management Teams (SMTs)                            | 16. Decrease in annual educator absenteeism.  |
|   | 17. Increase in educator punctuality.   |
|   | 18. Increase in the number of schools maintaining systematic records of learners' academic progress, resources and resource use, correspondence, and learner attendance records.      |
|   | 19. Increase in the number of schools that develop school development plans.  |
|   | 20. Increase in the number of schools that create and use timetables.   |
|   | 21. Increase in the number of schools that have minutes of regular staff meetings.  |
|   | 22. Eliminated.   |
|   | 23. Increase in the number of schools that have safety and security plans in place.   |
|   | 24. Increase in the number of schools that have signed "subcontracts" with the district ensuring meaningful participation in DDSP toward contributing to improved school performance. |
| <b>Objective 2.2:</b> Effective management of school curriculum by SMTs                                       | 25. Increase in the number of educator performance appraisal activities conducted by Head of Department (HoD) or other school manager.  |
|   | 26. Eliminated.   |
| <b>Objective 2.3:</b> More and better support provided to schools by District Offices                         | 27. Increase in the frequency of support visits made by District Officers to schools.   |
|   | 28. The existence of District Officer job descriptions that delineate roles and responsibilities that further, support, and maintain whole-district development.                      |
|   | 29. Increase in the number of teacher training days provided and/or coordinated by District Officers to schools.  |
|   | 30. Increase in the "customer satisfaction" score on District Office performance.   |
|   | 31. Increase in the number of school performance reports collected and maintained by the District Office.   |
| <b>Objective 2.4:</b> More and better support provided to District Offices by Regional and Provincial Offices | 32. Increase in the frequency of Regional Officer/Provincial Officer visits to the District Office.   |
|   | 33. Increase in the "customer satisfaction" score on Regional Office and Provincial Office performance.   |
| <b>SUBGOAL 3:</b> Enhanced school governance  | 34. Eliminated.   |
| <b>Objective 3.1:</b> Democratically elected School Governing Bodies (SGBs)                                   | 35. Existence and evidence of democratically elected SGBs.  |
|   | 36. Increase in the percentage of women serving on SGBs.  |
| <b>Objective 3.2:</b> Enhanced SGB performance  | 37. Increase in the number of SGBs/schools that fully meet the policy documentation requirements of SASA.   |
|   | 38. Increase in the number of SGBs/schools that show evidence of applying SASA policies.  |
|   | 39. Percentage of schools that have audited or examined budgets.  |
|   | 40. Percentage of schools that maintain bank accounts.  |
|   | 41. Percentage of schools with approved annual budgets.   |
| <b>Objective 3.3:</b> More and better support provided to   | 42. Increase in the number of District Officer SGB-support visits.  |

| Goal, Subgoals, and Objectives   | Indicators  |
|--|---|
| SGBs by District Offices   | 43. Increase in the number of training days provided and/or coordinated by District Office to SGBs (SGB training days). |
|  | 44. Increase in the “customer satisfaction” score on District Office performance.                                       |
| <b>SUBGOAL 4:</b> Developed theory and best practices for whole school/district development  | 45. Eliminated.   |
| <b>Objective 4.1:</b> Development of effective models of whole-district development  | 46. Number of effective models of whole-district development.   |
| <b>Objective 4.2:</b> Development of a graduate-level course in educational economics and finance aimed at supporting whole-district development and technical assistance to DoE on financial and policy matters and HIV/AIDS coordination | 47. Approved course as a graduate level course at Wits University.  |
|  | 48. Hire technical assistants for DoE (new indicator 48).   |
|  | 49. Eliminated.   |
| <b>Objective 4.3:</b> Development of education management information systems (EMISs) aimed at supporting whole-district development   | 50. An EMIS that supports implementation of the school funding norms.   |
|  | 51. An EMIS that supports the national assessment.  |
|  | 52. Number of people trained to use EMIS.   |
|  | 53. A project Web site.   |
| <b>Objective 4.4:</b> Implementation of the school funding norms   | 54. Eliminated.   |
| <b>Objective 4.5:</b> Development of civic structures aimed at sustaining and/or furthering the objectives of whole-district development   | 55. Number of institutionalized structures specifically designed to support ongoing educational transformation.         |

**Table 4. DDSP Indicator Results, 2000-2003**

| Indicator   | Unit of Measure  | Baseline Data,<br>Year 2000 | Year 2001 |        | Year 2002 |        | Year 2003      |                |
|---|--|-----------------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|----------------|----------------|
|   |  |                             | Planned   | Actual | Planned   | Actual | Planned        | Actual         |
| 2. Increased learner performance on grade 3 exit point assessment.<br>Required by USAID   | Mean score correct   | 37%                         | (39%)     | 36%    | (42%)     | 45.6%  | (42%)          | 44.74%         |
| 19. Increase in the percentage of schools that develop school development plans.<br>Requested by USAID                            | Percentage of schools with plans   | 41.5%                       | 50%       | 58%    | 75%       | 77%    | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| 27. Increase in the frequency of meaningful support visits made by District Officers to schools.                                  | Average or mean number of visits per District Officer over previous 6 months | 0                           | No target | 0.6    | No target | 0.6    | No target      | 0.5            |
| 37. Increase in the percentage of SGBs/schools that fully meet the policy documentation requirement of SASA.<br>Required by USAID | Percentage of SGBs (or schools)  | 2%                          | (30%)     | 10%    | (50%)     | 30%    | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| 42. Increase in the amount of District Office SGB support.  | Average number of visits in previous 12 months                               | 1.8                         | 2.5       | 2      | 3         | 2.8    | 3              | 2.9            |

| Indicator   | Unit of Measure         | Baseline Data,<br>Year 2000 | Year 2001 |        | Year 2002                                  |   |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|--------|--|---|
|   |                         |                             | Planned   | Actual | Planned                                    | Actual  |
| 12. Increase in the percentage of educators capable of developing their own teaching and learning materials (for Zikhulise Project in KwaZulu-Natal only). (This was measured only in 2001 and 2002.) | Percentage of educators | 36%                         | 45%       | 10%    | Not applicable because contract completed. | Although only 10% of the schools sampled showed evidence of educator-produced materials, the Summative Evaluation 2001 (a DDSP internal evaluation) stated that “with respect to this indicator, 121 SEAs [Superintendents of Education: Advisory], SEMs [Superintendents of Education: Management], and 124 Lead Educators were trained. The capability of educators producing Learner Support Materials in teams is rated ‘A’ or Successful=Objectives largely achieved.” |
| 13. Increase in the percentage of educators who use teacher-developed learning and teaching materials (for Zikhulise Project only). (This was measured only in 2001 and 2002.)                        | Percentage of educators | 21%                         | 30%       | 91%    | Not applicable because contract completed. | In 12 out of 13 schools, sampled field workers found evidence of the use of learner support materials. Overall, then, observation supports the figure of 91% using or having used learner support materials, from the questionnaire examining the percentage of educators who used teaching and learning materials. At the technical level, lead educators were able to produce lessons making some use of learner support materials.                                       |

## Monitoring and Evaluation

### *Participatory Evaluation*

Since the process of change is ongoing, with sometimes unexpected impacts, information was seen as a valuable tool in supporting development planning and accountability. Consequently, under DDSP, emphasis was put on a participatory research approach involving stakeholders. This participatory approach empowered stakeholders and beneficiaries to better understand where performance could be improved and to take action to improve learners' educational attainment.

Such an approach is evident by the resources and time invested in the DDSP situation analysis and in the planning and execution of the monitoring and evaluation cycles throughout the life of the project. Data were collected twice each project year using specific instruments to gauge changes in each indicator from year to year.

Eleven instruments were developed for collecting the data for the twice-yearly monitoring and evaluation. Different sampling procedures were followed with each instrument. Seven instruments were pretested in primary schools or District Offices in January 2000 and thereafter revised to create what was called the "School Profile." Certain data from provincial and national EMISs were meant to supplement information for the School Profile. (Unfortunately, EMIS data for the required period were not available for use in the analysis.) To accommodate the differing needs of the provinces, grantees were encouraged to add questions to further explain or explore some issues raised in the instruments. However, to allow comparability across all provinces, none of the original items in the instruments was omitted. Grantees trained the field workers according to pre-established instructions.

Similar flexibility was allowed for sampling in each province. Although the requirements were minimal, each province had the opportunity to select a sample suited to its circumstances and needs. A minimum of 30% of all DDSP schools in each province (or 50-60 schools, whichever was greater) was included in the sample. The sample remained constant over the project period, except to accommodate some school mergers or additions. A timeline for data gathering and capturing was set, along with considerations of cost implications. Ultimately, grantees drew a sample that was representative within the constraints of time and funding.

### *Monitoring of Training: The Kirkpatrick Strategic Training Model*

The Kirkpatrick Strategic Training Model process<sup>3</sup> was closely followed during the entire project intervention. It was used to monitor the impact of all training that grantees implemented under DDSP (a table summarizing DDSP training appears in Section 3). The model describes how the effects of training can be evaluated at four interdependent levels:

Level 1: Learner satisfaction: Were trainees satisfied with the quality of training?

Evaluation questionnaires were handed out for trainees to complete anonymously at the end of each course. Trainees' comments about the content of training—supplemented by course notes and the trainers' opinions—were very informative in determining the success or failure of a particular training course. These responses were then confirmed by RTI staff auditing the training. Feedback from early training courses on DDSP helped to correct issues relating to length of training, accommodation, catering, and quality of trainers, especially pertaining to use of a specific language and training material.

Level 2: Learning: Did trainees learn, or acquire the knowledge, skills, or attitudes the training was intended to convey?

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<sup>3</sup> See Donald L. Kirkpatrick, *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 1998, 2nd ed.).

The level of attainment of skills, knowledge, or attitudes during training was assessed by the trainers either during the course or during the trainees' post-training presentations. These presentations were assessed using course checklists, which helped to determine in which aspects of the training the participant required more input or practice.

**Level 3: Application:** The purpose of training is to change behavior, and this means performing a job better or differently. If trainees learned or acquired knowledge, skills, or attitudes in the training workshops, did they apply these to their jobs or at their workplace? What indications are there of such application?

In DDSP, behavioral changes in the classroom were easily observed by project trainers during the intensive school-visits program. This ensured that trainees were visited at least twice per quarter. Observations were recorded on a school follow-up checklist and individual trainee progress was tracked using a grading system, which also recorded comments from the trainees. The performance-related checklists revealed significant and cumulative increases in competence in the related fields, particularly among educators.<sup>4</sup>

**Level 4: Organizational Performance:** If knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned at training workshops were applied, did it make a measurable difference to the performance of the school? What evidence is there to support the judgment reached?

This level of information was gleaned from schools themselves and from District Officers' observations during school visits. Through regular school and district visits, the grantees, PDoE officials, and RTI reported on the performance of the institution (school or district) and acted appropriately.

Although these multiple levels of evaluation were seen as time consuming and elaborate by PDoEs in general, there was a sense of appreciation for the tightly managed training evaluation cycle and the positive spinoffs from its implementation. District officials particularly played a key role in feeding back into Level 4 of this process through their school support work and through co-facilitation.

### ***Monitoring and Evaluation of Grantees and Subcontractors***

Project management systems tracked and alerted management to what degree actual results were being achieved against planned activities. Grantees reported activities delivered during the quarter through quarterly financial and program reports. These activities were also tracked through the school support visits and monitoring by RTI. DDSP also developed a project-tracking matrix (see Annex D). This was based on delivery and performance according to the grant and subcontractor agreements and amendments. The matrix was a simple tracking tool that assisted PDoEs and RTI in evaluating grantee and subcontractor progress. This document was shared with grantees and subcontractors for comment and correction. It also helped the grantees to focus on what had been agreed, to identify the gaps, and to ascertain whether a project had deviated from approved programs.

### ***Combining Monitoring Information from Multiple Sources***

The combination of the indicator results, annual work plans, Gantt charts reflecting the project schedule, and project-tracking matrix proved to be a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation process. Information triangulated from these tools helped to gauge project achievements comprehensively. DDSP managers were also able to confirm delivery and indicate inconsistencies, allowing the PDoE to make better-informed decisions during quarterly and monthly management meetings.

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<sup>4</sup> Trainees other than educators included representatives from School Governing Bodies, School Management Teams, district offices, PDoEs, and the community at large.

## **SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE ARISING FROM THE DDSP EXPERIENCE**

During the implementation of DDSP, PDoEs and district officials identified a number of useful practices for their programs that can survive within recurrent budgets. In addition, a number of key issues regarding district development emerged. During the Interprovincial Meetings, officials from the four provinces and all districts, as well as project implementers, strived to identify activities that were making a difference in the schools. These are recorded here as recommendations for both policy and practice.

### **The Need for a Policy on Districts**

Over the past five years, there has been general agreement at both the national and provincial departments of education on the central role of districts in improving the quality of education offered by schools. A number of projects have focused on developing effective districts, very similar to DDSP. These projects stated the need for a policy on the operations and existence of districts. Current legislation recognizes the school and provincial structures but furnishes little clarity on the district. The DoE should look seriously at developing a policy framework to guide functions, responsibility, and resourcing of districts. The Education Management and Governance Development (EMGD) Directorate at the DoE is currently preparing frameworks that may lead to norms and standards for districts. DDSP has participated in these discussions.

### **Training Strategies**

#### ***Timing and Location of Training***

Grantee training programs highlighted an urgent need to build the capacity of educators in pedagogy and content knowledge. Training programs originally were conducted during instruction time, however, which took educators away from the classroom. In the case of small and farm schools, this meant that the school had to shut. Provincial projects experimented with residential programs using vacation periods, and then following up with cluster and school support for educators. This strategy proved effective and is recommended.

#### ***Use of Lead Educators and Master Trainers***

The DDSP experience revealed weaknesses in the cascade approach to training, in which participants are expected to run workshops for peers when they return to their schools. Not all educators are trainers, and hence they cannot all be expected to train adequately and confidently. In Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, the use of key/lead educators and master trainers was effective, and this approach is strongly recommended.

#### ***Co-Facilitation by District Officials***

To sustain those aspects of training and support that were useful, grantees trained district officials, who then co-facilitated training programs with grantee trainers. The use of departmental officials in this way ensured continuity of capacity within the department at the end of the project. However, this approach is successful only when closely mentored and supported.

### **Assessment Resource Banks (ARBs)**

The grade 3 assessment exercise undertaken by DDSP has benefited the DoE's systemic assessment program. The baseline development and subsequent annual testing also have shown the need to hold nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other service providers accountable for their work. The

PDoEs and DoE should hold them accountable for everything they undertake in the schools and classrooms. In this light, DDSP subcontracted the HSRC to administer the grade 3 test annually and to develop Assessment Resource Banks for the Foundation Phase and subsequently for the Intermediate Phase teachers. Any follow-on program or project to DDSP should use these teaching aids. Teachers who used the ARBs became more effective in improving learning in the classrooms.

It is recommended that PDoEs carry on further research to confirm effectiveness of the ARBs. Further, if they are effective in improving classroom outcome, then ARBs for the Senior Phase should be developed and distributed to schools.

## **Education Management Information System**

Education management information systems plus ARBs could be the two most important aspects of DDSP that improve overall management of schools and influence improved teaching and learning in primary schools. The EMIS work undertaken by DDSP subcontractors, PDoEs, and DoE should not be lost. There are two EMIS tools available for schools and PDoEs to use: One is computerized and the other is paper-and-pencil based. These are available and operational. It is recommended that these two systems be further tested and improved. Moreover, there is a continuing need to standardize management systems across South Africa, and in fact the work carried out by subcontractors has contributed widely to the development of an EMIS for South Africa. In addition, other projects such as those coming online from various donors generally have an EMIS component. These projects should be required to use one system and build on what has already taken place rather than starting all over again.

## **Internal DoE Secondment**

In the Zikhulise and the Fanang Diatla projects, college lecturers were seconded to the project as trainers, facilitators, and in some instances, coordinators. This arrangement provided additional bodies for training and support. In the case of Limpopo, these officials became known as District Development Officers (DDOs) and were provided with extensive training and support. At the end of the project, seconded lecturers from KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo were posted to other districts, with different responsibilities. Although the changes in postings do not necessarily mean that the department lost these trained advisors as a resource, their new responsibilities do not necessarily make use of the skills they learned as DDOs. It is recommended that provincial departments place and use these officials more appropriately. Further, as projects come online, PDoEs and the DoE should identify qualified full-time employees for secondment to the contractors or NGO implementers.

## **Project Management Team (PMT) Meetings**

It is recommended that the concept of Project Management Team meetings continue in the provinces for all projects or activities that are outsourced for implementation by NGOs and/or funded by donors. This management structure gives the PDoEs control over what training takes place in their schools. It also keeps the approval process with the government and not NGOs. The PMT has the authority to reject training programs or manuals that are not aligned with PDoE policies and practice.

## **School Support**

DDSP complemented training of educators with school support. For this purpose, School Support Officers were appointed. The School Support Officers often undertook joint school visits with district officials. Different experimental models of classroom and school support were applied in the provinces. DDSP experiences pointed to the importance of classroom and school support by the district. It is recommended that individual and/or cluster-based support for educators become an integral part of district support to schools. This recommendation implies that school support officers become not classroom inspectors, but mentors to teachers.

## **Categorizing Schools for Appropriate Support**

DDSP highlighted the need for differentiated support to schools—that is, one size does not fit all. It became necessary to categorize schools to maximize the support offered. Hence, schools in Limpopo were categorized into “stuck,” “moving” and “strolling” schools. This helped to tailor the number of visits made to schools and the kind of support offered. Dysfunctional schools in Eastern Cape, for example, were targeted for intensive support visits to put in place basic management systems, before educator support was provided. In this way, schools were moved from one category to the next. It is recommended that districts use categorization, and conduct regular scans to assess the movement of schools from one stage to the next. However, this needs to be done sensitively so as not to discourage school districts that need the most assistance.

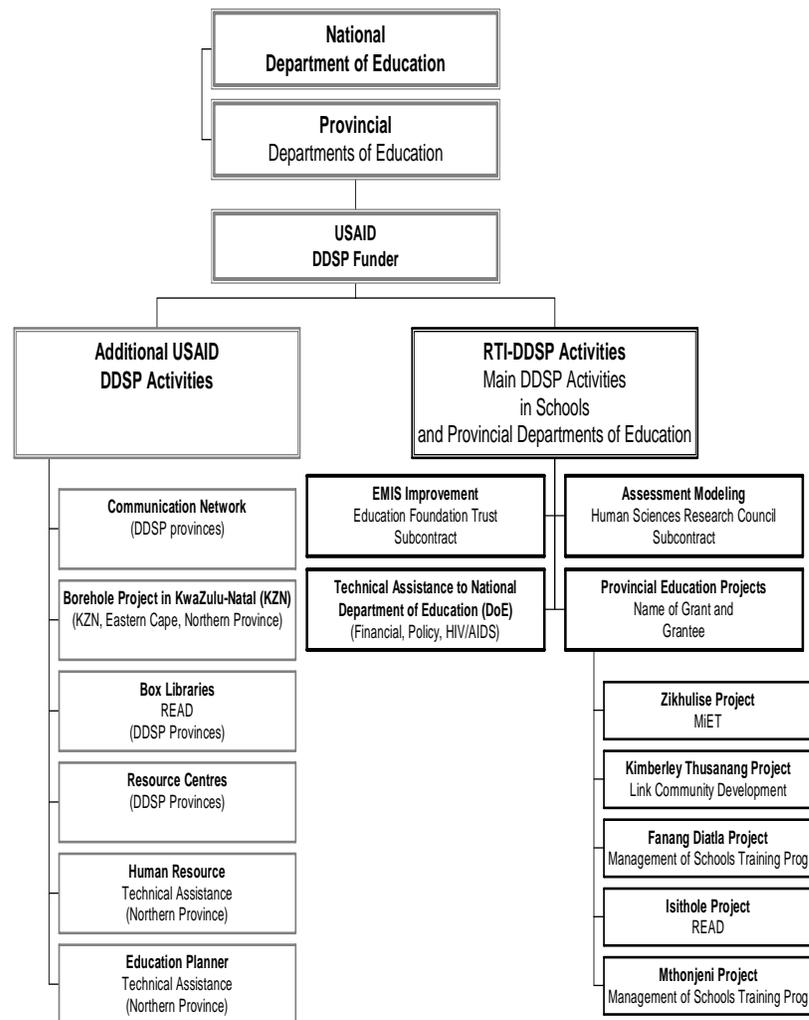
## SECTION 3: GRANTS AND SUBCONTRACTS

### Background on Grants Program

Through DDSP, RTI awarded approximately 95 million Rand in grants and subcontracts to NGOs for services to PDoEs in the four target provinces. In addition, on special request from USAID, short-term subcontracts for the purchase of science kits, other classroom materials, and furniture amounted to 7 million Rand. These additional activities are discussed in Section 5, Other Major Activities Within DDSP.

USAID's definition of DDSP covered all aspects within the basic education portfolio for the four target provinces. Figure 4 shows both the grant projects carried out under DDSP and other activities within USAID's basic education portfolio for the four target provinces, including responsibility for management and delivery.

**Figure 4. USAID Basic Education Portfolio: DDSP Activities**



## Allocation of Funds

DDSP grant funds were allocated to four target provinces, according to the DoE Policy Reserve Funding Formula. Through consultations with the DoE and USAID, provincial fund allocation through DDSP grants considered the following three factors.

- Population, where the rural share was given 50% more weight to target poverty
- Education enrollment and population in age groups 5-17, averaged
- Management structure for each province was considered equal.

The resulting DoE Policy Reserve Funding Formula was applied thus: Funds were allocated equitably based on the three factors above. All grants and subcontracts were awarded in South African Rand. The initial allocation of grant funds was based on an exchange rate of US\$1/R6. Exchange rate gains over the life of the project permitted DDSP to carry out some additional tasks as requested, such as expanded district support during 2003.

DDSP and USAID, through the RFA process, also encouraged grantees to make a cash or in-kind contribution to the project to increase the grantees' stake in the success of the project. Each grantee pledged to contribute an agreed sum toward the project. Table 5 reflects counterpart contributions as of 30 September 2003.

**Table 5. Grantee Counterpart Contributions**

| Project <sup>5</sup> | Contribution Committed by Counterpart (in Rand) | Received from Counterpart Through 30 September 03 (in Rand) | % of Committed Funds Received from Counterpart |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Zikhulise            | 1,157,222                                       | 2,010,638   | 174  |
| Kimberley Thusanang  | 1,706,715                                       | 1,784,593   | 105  |
| Fanang Diatla        | 983,700   | 959,081   | 98   |
| Isithole             | 2,873,238                                       | 2,555,008   | 89   |
| Mthonjeni            | 1,764,746                                       | 2,035,766   | 115  |
| TOTAL                | 8,485,621                                       | 9,345,086   | 110  |

## The Grant Cycle

### *Conceptualization*

The initial work on the project grants and subcontracts involved conceptualizing the program objectives that they were to achieve. Each grant and subcontract addressed specific educational needs within a province. The identified needs were aligned to the objectives of the government (and those of DDSP) and were approved by USAID/South Africa and the DoE.

### *Solicitation and Eligibility*

RTI published five RFAs in order to satisfy the requirement for open competition. Only South African NGOs and legally registered entities with established ongoing programs directly related to the activities described in the RFA were eligible for grant award(s). For each grant and subcontract award, a public announcement was prepared to solicit proposals. The public notices were published in national and local newspapers. RTI prepared the RFA and RFP documents with considerable input

<sup>5</sup> The projects are described in detail later in this section.

from the DoE and USAID. These documents were distributed to interested NGOs. Bidders' meetings were held to further clarify the RFAs.

### ***Selection***

All applications were reviewed to ensure that they met the basic eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications were forwarded to the proposal review panel, which was formed to evaluate applications for each award and comprised provincial department representatives and USAID officials. The panel reviewed each application based on its technical and financial merit. All applications for grant funding also were subject to a scrutiny of past performance. The information gathered from the past performance review was then included as part of the overall assessment of the applicant for making a final selection.

### ***Review Process***

The applications were reviewed in closed sessions, often lasting up to three days. Seven such meetings were held, one for each of the five grants and the two subcontracts. Technical and financial panels were responsible for ranking applications based on the selection criteria described in the RFA or RFP. The panels were strictly guided by U.S. Government rules.

During the review process, each member of the technical and financial panels individually rated the applications using preestablished criteria. These ratings were then discussed at a plenary, and a composite panel score was developed for each application. Based on this rating, a short-list of applicants within the competitive range emerged from which the highest rated applicant was selected.

The panel chair then prepared a report of the proceedings detailing the scores for each application and a narrative for each of the established criteria. The report identified a short-list of potential grantees or subcontractors (determined by the type of award) and detailed the next steps.

RTI then conducted a preaward survey to determine whether applicants had the capacity to adequately comply with USAID requirements and deliver the program. The preaward survey report was presented to the panel that determined the highest ranking applicant, and the final selection was made accordingly.

Once the final selection was made, an in-depth financial survey was conducted of the grantee to determine whether:

- The proposed program description and financial plan were sufficient;
- The applicant had adequate financial resources, or the ability to obtain such resources, as required during the performance of the award;
- The applicant had the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into consideration all existing and prospective recipient commitments;
- The applicant had a satisfactory record of performance with respect to planning and implementing programs;
- The applicant had a satisfactory record of integrity; and
- The applicant was otherwise qualified to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations, and therefore could be certified by RTI to this effect.

### ***Finalization of the Grant Agreement***

RTI developed a grant procedure manual that was approved by USAID/South Africa. Each grant award contained the grant award notice, describing the overall purpose, objectives, goals, and anticipated grant activity, with a discussion on the background to the grant activity. This included a description of how the grant activity would address a specific issue. The grant letter included the overall amount, the period, and the specific terms of the grant.

The grant agreement and the subcontracts contained the program description, an implementation schedule, the budget, U.S. Government mandatory standard provisions, and any applicable standard provisions.

### ***Reporting and Payment***

All grantees and subcontractors were required to submit quarterly reports and annual work plans throughout the life of the project:

- RTI ensured that progress reports and completed disbursement vouchers and invoices were received in the required format. Generally, the grantees and subcontractors met the deadlines for submission of the quarterly and final reports.
- A key process in DDSP was the strategic planning and the subsequent annual work plans drawn up for project implementation. RTI convened Interprovincial Meetings (see box) to allow DDSP players the opportunity to plan together on a quarterly basis. These draft work plans were then ratified by the Project Management Teams (PMTs; see also Section 4, Objective 4.5) before they were finalized. In this way, DDSP ensured that the programs were relevant to addressing the needs of the provinces and were aligned to provincial strategies and objectives.

A unique feature of DDSP was regular **Interprovincial Meetings** held during project implementation. These meetings brought together senior PDoE and district staff from the four participating provinces, relevant DoE personnel, representatives of grantees implementing the programs, and USAID and RTI staff. The meetings were used for strategic planning for the DDSP, sharing of good practices, and discussions on key aspects of the project. Topics discussed at the meetings included strengths and weaknesses of training strategies used by grantees, school support, models of district development, learner assessment, and EMIS.

Periodic advances were disbursed to meet anticipated needs of the grantees. Initial advances were given to cover anticipated costs for a period of two months. At the end of the first month of operations, the grantees submitted a “Request for Advance” to DDSP. The advances were limited to the minimum amounts needed to meet the forecast.

### ***Amendments to Grant Agreements and Subcontracts***

DDSP grants and subcontracts were amended as necessary to accommodate changes in activities as approved by the DoE or to change grant/subcontract value.

### ***Closeout***

All grants were closed out in accordance with USAID guidelines and documentation was submitted. The grant budget was reconciled to ensure that the balance of unobligated funds advanced was refunded. Assets and equipment acquired using grant or subcontract funds were accounted for and control and custody turned over to the PDoE or DoE.

## Training Summary

Table 6 shows summary data on the training activities carried out by the DDSF grantees and subcontractors during the project.

**Table 6. Training Participants, 1999–2003, by Province and Topic**

| Project/<br>Province                  | Improved<br>Curricular<br>Practices | Improved<br>District and<br>School<br>Management | Enhanced<br>School<br>Governance | Developed<br>Theories and<br>Best<br>Practices for<br>Whole<br>School/<br>District<br>Development | Total<br>Person<br>Training<br>Days | Total<br>Person<br>Training<br>Days<br>(Females) | Total<br>Person<br>Training<br>Days<br>(Males) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Isithole                              | 8097                                | 2757   | 1106                             | 0   | 11960                               | 8970   | 2990   |
| Thusanang                             | 1856                                | 1497   | 1192                             | 0   | 4545                                | 3227   | 1318   |
| Mthonjeni                             | 5308                                | 1358   | 2380                             | 0   | 9046                                | 6151   | 2895   |
| Fanang Diatla                         | 6720                                | 4976   | 10015                            | 0   | 21711                               | 14764  | 6947   |
| Assessment                            | 681                                 | 0  | 0                                | 0   | 960                                 | 592  | 360  |
| EMIS                                  | 0                                   | 0  | 0                                | 5492  | 5492                                | 2020   | 3472   |
| Zikhulise                             | 1170                                | 0  | 0                                | 0   | 1170                                | 994  | 176  |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                       | <b>23832</b>                        | <b>10588</b>                                     | <b>14693</b>                     | <b>5492</b>   | <b>54884</b>                        | <b>36718</b>                                     | <b>18158</b>                                   |
| <b>Supplementary Project Training</b> |                                     |  |                                  |   |                                     |  |  |
| Eastern Cape                          | 449                                 | 30   | 1                                | 0   | 480                                 | 288  | 115  |
| KwaZulu-<br>Natal                     | 494                                 | 79   | 55                               | 0   | 628                                 | 376.8  | 151  |
| Limpopo                               | 0                                   | 50   | 0                                | 0   | 50                                  | 30   | 12   |
| Northern Cape                         | 700                                 | 895  | 0                                | 0   | 1595                                | 957  | 383  |
| Graduate-level<br>course              | 560                                 | 228  | 0                                | 36  | 824                                 | 494  | 198  |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                       | <b>2203</b>                         | <b>1282</b>                                      | <b>56</b>                        | <b>36</b>   | <b>3577</b>                         | <b>2146</b>                                      | <b>858.5</b>                                   |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>26035</b>                        | <b>11870</b>                                     | <b>14749</b>                     | <b>5528</b>   | <b>58461</b>                        | <b>38864</b>                                     | <b>19016</b>                                   |

## Grant and Subcontract Summary

### *KwaZulu-Natal: Zikhulise Project*

Media in Education Trust (MiET) was awarded a grant to implement the Zikhulise Project. The project was implemented from November 1999 to October 2002 in KwaZulu-Natal. It was conceived by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture (KZN DEC) and USAID/South Africa as a response to the need for learning resource materials in the province and the need to empower educators to develop their own teaching and learning materials. This grant supported the development of educator and learner support material for grades 4-9 in natural sciences, language literacy and communications, and human and social sciences; and in mathematical literacy, mathematics, and mathematical sciences.

Implemented by the Izimpande Consortium and headed by MiET, this was the first of five grants awarded by DDSF. It comprised the following service providers.

- Media in Education Trust (MiET)
- Centre for the Advancement of Science and Mathematics Education (CASME)
- Co-operative Organization for the Upgrading of Numeracy Training (COUNT)
- The English Language Educational Trust (ELET)
- St. Mary's Interactive Learning Experience (SMILE)
- Science Curriculum Initiative in South Africa (SCISA)
- The Teacher Trust.

Zikhulise was managed by a Project Steering Committee led by a full-time senior provincial official. The Steering Committee consisted of senior departmental representatives from each of the eight regions in the province, teacher unions, RTI, USAID, and other relevant stakeholders.

A total of 104 department officials and 120 grades 4-9 educators were trained on materials development over a period of 18 days during 2000. In 2001, the departmental officials and the trained DEC officials transferred skills and knowledge learned to Heads of Department in each of the eight regions. An average of 15 lead educators per region were trained and supported through school clusters. School clusters were set up around each of the trained educators to enable the lead educators to share their newly acquired knowledge and skills on materials development with other teachers

Although the Zikhulise Project worked with a selected number of departmental officials and lead educators per region, it reached over 3,600 of the most under-resourced schools in the province by distributing the materials produced through the project and by cascading training through its lead educators, district officials, and subject advisers.

Zikhulise used a practical distribution system established by MiET called Resources and Information Network (RAIN), through which the materials were distributed to 3,660 schools across the province by commercial transport companies.

The project built a strong relationship with the departments of education at both provincial and regional levels. During the implementation of Zikhulise, regular meetings were held with the senior KZN DEC officials, regional chief directors, and directors.

The project assumed that by 2002, the officials of the department (the SEAs and SEMs) would be the critical agents for sustaining materials development processes among educators. However, given the responsibilities of the SEAs and SEMs, the cascading of materials development training did not happen as expected. As a solution, the KZN DEC deployed redundant college lecturers still paid by the government to mentor and support the lead educators in the school clusters. In 2001, the KZN DEC, in collaboration with Izimpande Consortium, requested an extension of the project, which allowed the project to train 50 such college lecturers on materials development and empower them to effectively mentor and support lead educators. A costed extension was granted for the period November 2001 to June 2002, followed by a no-cost extension up to October 2002.

Project experiences as well as the summative evaluation show that the cascading of training using the school cluster network proved to be the most viable strategy for effective delivery. The deployed college lecturers were therefore earmarked to sustain the work started in the clusters.

The focus of the project in the last five months was on providing much-needed support for the lead educators to facilitate the effective functioning of the school clusters in the regions. Furthermore, it focused on working side by side with the departmental officials in supporting cluster schools.

#### ***Northern Cape: Kimberley Thusanang Project***

Link Community Development (LCD) was awarded a grant from December 1999 to September 2003 to address the overall DDSP goal to “improve quality educational delivery for grades 0-9 in the DDSP target areas.” The project emphasized developing the sustainable capacity of the DoE to deliver support to schools. The Kimberley Thusanang Project’s overall objective was to provide the province

with a model of educational improvement that could be replicated or adapted more widely in Northern Cape.

The project worked in 65 schools in five school clusters in the Francis Baard District, focusing on SGBs, SMTs, and Foundation Phase (i.e., grades 0-3) learners. The staffs of the Kimberley Regional Office and the Northern Cape DoE participated in the program. The number of target schools was reduced over the life of the project since four farm schools were closed through amalgamation.

Project Management Team meetings, held every quarter, were used as a forum for reporting on implementation as well as for obtaining approval on new developments in the project. The PMT consisted of project staff, school principals, district and provincial officials, teacher unions, and other stakeholders, including RTI and USAID.

The PMT ensured that service providers were held accountable and remained responsive to departmental priorities. It issued approvals for the implementation of training programs, training materials, and modules, and assisted with coordination of the training plan. Its management function also extended to approving key appointments on the project and guiding the grantee on provincial needs and priorities. The meeting enjoyed high-level support from Northern Cape DoE officials, who played a constructive role in the project. As noted, LCD led the Kimberley Thusanang Project consortium and was responsible for project management and staffing. The Kimberley Thusanang Project's consortium consisted of the following service providers:

- Link Community Development (LCD)
- Catholic Institute of Education (CIE)
- Research Institute for Educational Policy/Free State University (RIEP)
- The Molteno Project
- Co-operative Organization for the Upgrading of Numeracy Training (COUNT)
- Educational Support Services Trust (ESST)
- Right to Hope Trust (RTHT).

#### ***Limpopo Province: Fanang Diatla Project***

The Fanang Diatla Project grant extended from December 1999 to September 2003. The project was designed to support educators and district officials in improving the quality of education in six districts of Limpopo Province: Apel, Polokwane, Mkhuhlu, Hlanganani, Vuwani, and Palala. There were 255 schools in the project. The overall purpose of the Fanang Diatla Project was to create a model of improved teaching and learning that was sustainable and replicable.

Integral to the concept of the project was the importance of a holistic approach to improvement, involving the district, school, and community in the development initiative. Buy-in and active involvement of all levels of the district was crucial to implementation, success, and sustainability. A good deal of time and effort was spent on advocacy and in establishing relationships with the PDoE.

The project was aimed at two levels: leadership of the system and leadership of the classroom. These were seen as pressure points, and if pressure was applied at the same time, it would ensure synergy to create conditions for improved teaching and learning.

The Provincial Management Committee led by the PDoE was the forum for project management and reporting at the provincial level. It consisted of PDoE representatives, project staff, district officials, teacher unions, and other stakeholders, including RTI and USAID. Provincial Management Committee meetings were held regularly at the outset but less frequently during 2002 and 2003. The Committee was used, however, for reporting on implementation as well as for approval of necessary changes in the project. The Fanang Diatla project implementers were led by Management of Schools Training Programme (MSTP). The partnership consisted of the following:

- Management of Schools Training Programme (MSTP)
- Project for Technological Careers (PROTEC)
- Siyakhula Trust
- The Molteno Project
- Educational Support Services Trust (ESST)
- Ngoepe Business Services
- Co-operative Organization for the Upgrading of Numeracy Training (COUNT)
- Promat Colleges
- Sacred Heart College Research and Development Unit.

***Eastern Cape: Isithole Project***

The Eastern Cape Isithole Project was implemented from December 1999 to September 2003. Project implementation in the province began in January 2000 and intensive training programs were adopted at the school level.

The Isithole project was based on five principles. These were:

- Democratic deliberations through consultation;
- Integrated participatory planning;
- Understanding of the value of information and information sharing;
- Developing, documenting, and building on models of excellence; and
- Sustainability and replication.

It targeted 97 schools in six districts. With the restructuring of districts during 2001-2002, the six original districts collapsed into four, but the school numbers remained unchanged.

The project management team, known as the Regional Advisory Committee, consisted of a broad forum, including an extended management committee, district managers, senior district representatives (such as a provincial representative, normally the superintendent general or a deputy), RTI and USAID staff, service providers, teacher union representatives, and other stakeholders. The Regional Advisory Committee ensured that planning between the district and the grantee was an integral and aligned process. It also ensured that all communication was up to date and clearly understood, and that cooperation among all stakeholders was maximized. The Committee met quarterly and quarterly reports were introduced for discussion.

***KwaZulu-Natal: Mthonjeni Project***

The Mthonjeni Project was implemented from February 2000 to September 2003. The purpose of the grant was to improve the quality of primary education in one district in KwaZulu-Natal. The Mthonjeni Project was an integrated curriculum and Education Management Development (EMD) project in the Nkandla district.

The grant was awarded to a partnership led by MSTP. The partners implementing this project included:

- Management of Schools Training Programme (MSTP)
- Co-operative Organization for the Upgrading of Numeracy Training (COUNT)
- St. Mary's Interactive Learning Experience (SMILE)
- PROTEC
- Independent Examination Board (IEB)
- Media in Education Trust (MiET)
- Sacred Heart Research and Development.

The project aimed to create a model of improved teaching and learning which was replicable by the PDoE. Through its implementation, education managers, school governing body members, grades 0-9 educators, and learners within the DDSP target schools were empowered to improve the quality of teaching, learning, and service delivery at the school level within the general framework of the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS; also called Curriculum 2005, or C2005). Even though this project focused on Nkandla district, it was expected to train other district officials from the Ulundi region.

The project and the KZN DEC established a Project Management Committee, which served as a forum for project monitoring and implementation. The project plans and implementation processes were discussed in this forum. The Project Management Committee engaged the KZN DEC in managing the project and guiding quality improvement in the district. The Committee included all district officials, regional DoE representatives, representatives from the principal association, RTI and USAID staff, teacher union representatives, other service providers, and stakeholders.

### ***EMIS Improvement Project***

The Education Foundation Trust was subcontracted to develop and build on existing education management information systems, plus norms and standards for school funding. The contract period was initially from October 2000 to December 2002, and was then extended to September 2003. The project, which aimed at improving information and knowledge systems to support whole-school development, focused on improving education quality by providing EMIS technical assistance to the four DDSP target provinces. Through improved information for better decision-making, the project contributed to the achievement of all the project goals and subgoals.

The EMIS Improvement Project built on the existing systems within the DDSP provinces. Pilot work took place in Northern Cape because there were fewer DDSP schools in that province and because most Northern Cape schools had the necessary infrastructure, such as electrical and telephone lines. Education Foundation Trust placed technical assistants within the provincial planning department. They piloted and presented a model of EMIS improvement through shoulder-to-shoulder work, real-time development, and real-life best practices. As the pilot project unfolded in the PDoE, the best practices that emerged from this experience were shared with the other DDSP PDoEs, thus enhancing EMIS delivery in selected schools and demonstrating the benefits of an improved EMIS.

The project developed an EMIS that supported gathering of relevant management data at the school level, as well as appropriate aggregation and transmission of data to district and provincial levels. Systems design took into account the data warehousing structures required to facilitate information sharing and the collection of historical snapshots of appropriate statistical information. It also ensured compatibility with existing systems, not only in each province but also at the national DoE.

The systems designed did not assume that schools would have access to the information and communication technology infrastructure they would need to manage their school data electronically. Therefore, the project deployed a school EMIS that allowed for paper or manual data collection, collation, and storage. In the pre-implementation phase, the nature of the existing EMIS was documented, as well as the information requirements of both schools and PDoEs. The DDSP grantees took all of these requirements into account. Building on this, they developed standards, as well as code lists for computerized administrative systems that could be instituted at the school and district levels in Northern Cape. Over a period of two years, the project implemented manual and/or electronic versions of the school administration systems as follows:

- 64 schools in the Kimberley district,
- 30 schools in the Queenstown district,
- 77 schools in the Polokwane district, and
- 55 schools in the Nkandla district.

The project undertook to provide comprehensive training and ongoing support to at least three people per school: principal, deputy principal, and school secretary/administrator. The training aimed to ensure that schools had a thorough working knowledge of the systems implemented. The project also provided training and ongoing support to staff in all district and provincial offices where the system was installed.

### Assessment Modeling Initiative (AMI)

Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) was subcontracted to manage the Assessment Modeling Initiative in four DDSP provinces. The overall objective of the Assessment Modeling Initiative was to contribute to and inform the development and implementation of a functional national assessment system in South Africa. This would be attained by:

- Proposing a single assessment model, used within all four DDSP provinces but flexible enough to operate somewhat differently in each;
- Disseminating lessons learned from this process to stimulate an informed discussion among relevant stakeholders in South Africa for the development of a national assessment system;
- Generating information necessary for DDSP to further its aims to develop models of fully functional districts; and
- Correlating district-school-classroom factors with learner performance.

The purpose of the Assessment Modeling Initiative was to provide information that would be used to make decisions on how to improve the teaching and learning process, monitor school effectiveness, and evaluate intervention (NGO) programs.

The project's scope of work was limited to highlighting those aspects of a national assessment system that occur at the district, school, classroom and community levels; focusing on grade 3 learners; and operating within the DDSP target districts and schools.

In order to implement the Assessment Modeling Initiative effectively, four components were identified that individually or collectively addressed the various aspects of the project. These were (1) consultative and support workshops, (2) Assessment Resource Banks for Foundation Phase educators, (3) administration of the Mahlale instruments (numeracy and literacy test) to third graders in 450 DDSP schools, and (4) analysis and reporting of the test results.

Consultative workshops were held with relevant stakeholders, especially education officials at the national, provincial, district, and school levels. The purpose of the consultation was to:

- Introduce the project and HSRC to all stakeholders;
- Set up protocols, lines of communication, and mechanisms to ensure project success;
- Discuss implementation plans for the project so as to develop a sense of partnership for the implementation of the project;
- Discuss the development of an illustrative model that would address the "assessment needs" of the relevant stakeholders; and
- Secure stakeholder participation from the beginning of the process to engender ownership of the project.

## District Development Support Programme (DDSP)

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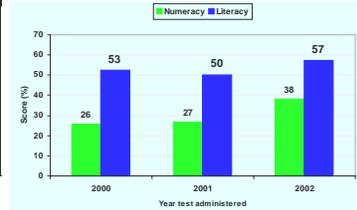
**Improved learner performance in DDSP schools**

The DDSP is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded initiative and managed by RTI International. Its sub-contractors are JET Education Services, Centre for Education Policy Development, Evaluation and Management (CEPE) and KMS Management Services cc (KMS).

The DDSP goal is the improved quality of education delivery for Grades 1-9. It focuses on improving curriculum practices, improving school and district management, enhancing school governance and developing models of effective districts.

Paper-and-pencil tests to assess Grade 3 Literacy and Numeracy performance in DDSP schools were developed by JET Education Services in 2000 and administered to all DDSP schools in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The tests were called the Mahlale instruments and were translated into eight other languages offered by the DDSP schools. The Numeracy test comprised open-ended questions (not multiple-choice) in four strands, namely counting and ordering, addition, subtraction and multiplication. In the Literacy test, all questions were multiple-choice questions that assessed learners on core reading competencies such as recognition of frequently used words, sentence completion and comprehension of short fiction and non-fiction texts.

The average scores obtained in Numeracy and Literacy over the three years are given below. Learner performance on the literacy tasks was significantly higher than the numeracy tasks across all three years. The largest increase detected was on the numeracy tasks, 12% while the increase for literacy was 5%.



| Year test administered | Numeracy Score (%) | Literacy Score (%) |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2000                   | 26                 | 53                 |
| 2001                   | 27                 | 50                 |
| 2002                   | 38                 | 57                 |

**DDSP Final Conference** "DDSP: Improving the Quality of Primary Education"

The DDSP will hold its final conference on 25-26 February 2003 in Johannesburg. The main purpose of the conference is to share the models of district development from the provincial projects. The Deputy Minister of Education, Ms. Mofokeng Mofokeng will present the key note address. The conference will be chaired by senior managers of the Department of Education. Conference participants include personnel from DoE, USAID, the four PDoEs, HODs from all provinces, participating district managers, school principals, teacher unions, tertiary institutions, funders in education, DDSP grantees and sub-contractors and NGOs that have been involved in the implementation of the DDSP.

To co-incide with the final conference, the DDSP has published a book, "DDSP: Improving the Quality of Primary Education". The book contains 30 papers reflecting on the experiences of the project in schools and districts, written by departmental officials, Grantees, sub-contractor and RTI-DDSP staff. The book also includes the models of district development from each of the projects. Included in the book are CDs containing selected modules and manuals used in training throughout the project. Copies of the book will be distributed to all schools and districts participating in the project, and to PDoEs and tertiary institutions. It is hoped that this book, written by practitioners will make contribute to school and district improvement in South Africa.

Workshops were organized in all four DDSP provinces with education officials and Foundation Phase educators. The workshops trained educators on the principles and practices of developing items for the ARBs. Such workshops were used to develop 20% of the anticipated items in numeracy and literacy ARBs for grades R through 3.

After the ARBs were developed, workshops were held at the district level to train Foundation Phase educators and education officials on how to apply the ARBs in the classroom.

#### Assessment Resource Banks

The development of Assessment Resource Banks was considered a critical component of the project. It enabled educators to obtain relevant information on learner strengths and weaknesses, to ensure that learners attained specific outcomes, to record learner progress, to evaluate their teaching practices, and to use continuous assessment as a teaching strategy. They also provided appropriate assessment tools that could be readily applied to assess learners against outcomes.

The ARB items were packaged as “testlets” based on specific outcomes. Educators applied these “testlets” either at regular intervals or after the completion of specific objectives. Educators were provided with report cards to record learner progress at regular intervals.

During the extension period of the HSRC subcontract, Assessment Resource Banks for the Intermediate Phase (grades 4-6) were developed and tested. There was not sufficient time during the extension period to train educators or district officials in their use.

#### Administration of the Mahlahle Instruments

The Mahlahle test instruments developed for third graders by Joint Education Trust (JET) were used to collect baseline information from DDSP schools. The same instruments were administered annually by HSRC in the DDSP schools to evaluate the impact of the DDSP education support interventions. The information collected was linked to both learner performance and educator assessment practices.

Appropriate mechanisms for storing data were considered critical for easy access and application. The data management and analysis component of this project ensured that the baseline data already collected by JET were easily linked to the annual data collected over the next three years.

## SECTION 4: PROJECT ACTIVITIES, BY SUBGOAL AND OBJECTIVE

This section is designed to clarify the connections between the project subgoals and objectives discussed in Section 1 and the grant and subcontract activities as described in Section 3. Each grant or subcontract was expected to demonstrate contributions to achievement of the project subgoals and objectives. Areas that were considered key contributions are highlighted below for easy reference.

### Subgoal 1: Improved Quality of Curriculum Practices

DDSP was designed to be implemented at the district level, as well as to provide effective curriculum support to schools and to enhance the relationship between the district officials and schools. At the school level, Subgoal 1 focused on empowering educators to teach more effectively within the framework of the Revised National Curriculum Statements (Curriculum 2005 or C2005), enabling the creation and use of learner support materials, empowering school principals to become instructional

C2005 is a break from the old curriculum. It envisages for general education a move away from a racist, apartheid, rote-learning model of learning and teaching to a liberating, nation-building, learner-centered, outcomes-based system. C2005 is intended to allow greater mobility among different levels and institutional sites, and the integration of knowledge and skills through learning pathways. Its assessment, qualifications, competency, and skills-based framework encourage the development of curriculum models aligned in theory and practice to the National Qualifications Framework, a joint effort by the national departments of labor and education involving nondiscriminatory development of human resources. C2005 shifts the emphases and nature of the desired outcomes and learning areas, and calls for radically new approaches to program design, teaching methods, power relationships, and assessment. It redefines the roles of teachers, learners, and school managers, and of textbooks and examinations.

leaders, and enhancing the role of parents in educating their children.

The delivery of the curriculum is the central thrust of the schools, the districts, and the departments of education as a whole. How effectively the curriculum is delivered, how effectively it is received, and how efficiently it is managed and supported determines its impact on learners. The delivery of the new curriculum is key to addressing the numerous impediments to quality education in public schooling, the appreciation of which provides the basis for this program subgoal.

Four aspects were targeted under this subgoal: pedagogy, learner assessment, educator knowledge, and use of teaching and learning resources—all of which have a direct impact on learner achievement.

#### *Objective 1.1: Improved Methods of Teaching*

The introduction of Curriculum 2005 required DDSP to implement **educator programs aimed at improving teaching methods**. Before the signing of grant agreements, DDSP arranged educator capacity-building workshops, at the request of the PDoEs, in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape. They centered on teaching methods in the context of the national curriculum. In Northern Cape, DDSP assisted the PDoE (in partnership with the South African Democratic Teachers' Union) to prepare teacher trainers for the implementation of Curriculum 2005.

In Eastern Cape, DDSP assisted the Distance Education Campus of Fort Hare University in exploring innovative teaching methods for **multigrade classrooms**.

For the Zikhulise Project, MiET conducted **preparatory training programs** in each of the eight regions of KZN. It gave educators (particularly those who had not received C2005 training) a basic orientation to outcomes-based education (OBE), resource-based learning, and development of learning and teaching resources by the educator. In the other DDSP provincial projects, grantees conducted similar programs before going into in-depth training for educators on teaching methods,

with specific reference to the learning areas of language literacy, mathematics, natural sciences, and life skills.

The grantees used a **variety of different strategies to train educators** in curriculum design, lesson preparation, presentation, and methodology:

- In Northern Cape, because of the distances between schools, the project held residential workshops, and used a 50/50 mixture of training during school and vacation time, so as not to withdraw more than one classroom teacher from duty on a school day. All workshops for farm schools and general teaching and learning were implemented on a residential basis. This proved to be quite successful, with invitee attendance at workshops increasing to well over 80%. The amount of productive contact time in a day was improved, and contributed to building a collegial spirit among the participants. The grantee trainers demonstrated lessons as part of a first round of support visits. During the second round of school visits, the trainers observed teachers in their classrooms and assisted them with their methodologies. Departmental officials co-planned and co-facilitated these workshops. There was a move toward the use of school-based workshops for selected needy schools in Northern Cape.
- In KwaZulu-Natal, schools selected teachers to attend training programs in particular learning areas during the holidays. In each of the circuits in Nkandla district, centralized workshops were held simultaneously.
- The same method was used in Limpopo Province, where in addition, one-day follow-up workshops held in each district provided feedback to teachers on school and classroom support visits. A key strategy used by trainers in the Fanang Diatla project was using methods of working with the whole class but in small groups. Course content received more emphasis after the first educator test results were released and assessment formed a major part of all training sessions.

The project in the Northern Cape also completed the production of farm schools manuals, which provided unique and fully contextualized materials for educators and trainers. The **farm school program** focused on exclusive issues facing farm school teachers and covered creating a classroom environment, making visual aids, planning lessons, facilitating, assessing students, and teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Also addressed were inclusive education, life skills, and HIV/AIDS education.

In Eastern Cape, **key educators (teachers)** were selected in each learning area. These key educators attended an intensive training-of-trainers course so they could offer ongoing school-based support to their colleagues. The grantee trainers visited individual schools to observe the educators. When they encountered unsatisfactory performance in the classroom, they instituted remedial strategies immediately. These usually took the form of a demonstration lesson conducted in the classroom, either by the trainer or by an educator in the school who was performing well. Discussions on the lesson followed and an opportunity was provided for the relevant educator to present the lesson. If the need for further assistance was widespread, cluster workshops were organized.

### ***Objective 1.2: Improved Methods of Assessment***

In line with the new Curriculum 2005, the DoE introduced a new learner assessment policy for schools. This policy marked a departure from the way in which learners were traditionally assessed. There was a significant move away from summative examinations to continuous assessment in a more integrated way. This shift called for extensive capacity building for educators.

DDSP focused on both generic assessment practices required of educators and on assessment practices within particular learning areas. Here the learning areas selected were language literacy, mathematics, natural sciences, and life skills.

## Specific assessment practices included:

- In Northern Cape, the numeracy program emphasized assessment as a tool in addition to the generic training and support on assessment provided by the project.
- In Limpopo, the following assessment modes were explained and modeled: checklists, observations, portfolios, project work, research, interviews, peer assessment, self-assessment, anecdotal recordings, and summative assessment, as well as review of numeracy progress maps as a tool for planning, implementing, and assessing.
- In Eastern Cape, grades 8 and 9 language educators received additional training on OBE and group reading as well as assessment and assistance with writing examinations. They also were trained in using the newspaper as a classroom resource and making worksheets for group activities. All of this was to prepare learners (and educators) for assessments conducted in grade 9.
- In KwaZulu-Natal, educators were trained on eight units dealing with planning for assessment, implementation, analysis, recording, and reporting. Demonstration lessons were also held to assist educators on peer, self-, and oral assessment.

The monitoring visits conducted by DDSP pointed to the difficulty educators were experiencing in the field of assessment, despite the training, support, and resources offered. This was largely due to the changed curriculum policies and the radical changes in the assessment requirements for learners.

### **Objective 1.3: Improved Educators' Knowledge in Selected Subject and Learning Areas**

The lack of sufficient and appropriate content knowledge among educators generally in South Africa was identified in the *Presidential Education Initiative Report*, published by JET in 1999. DDSP

decided to focus on improving educators' content knowledge in the areas of literacy, numeracy, natural sciences, and life skills.



## District Development Support Programme (DDSP)



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The DDSP is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded project and managed by RTI, its Sub-contractors are: Joint Education Trusts (JET), Centre for Education Policy Development, Evaluation and Management (CEPD) and KwaZulu Management Services (KMS).

The DDSP goal is the improved quality of education delivery for Grades 1-8. It focuses on improving curriculum practices, improving school and district management, enhancing school governance and developing models of effective districts.

### From classrooms to schools to districts

The DDSP is in its final 15 months of implementation (October 2001 – December 2002). In the first two years the grantees implemented capacity building programmes for educators, School Management Teams (SMT) and members of the School Governing Body (SGB). The programmes equipped the beneficiaries with relevant knowledge and skills to make them more effective in imparting their responsibilities. Parallel training programmes were also conducted for District and Regional officials.

During 2001, Grantees intensified their classroom and school support programmes, which included demonstration lessons, teacher observations, team teaching and interviews with school management. Departmental personnel accompanied trainers and RTI/DDSP personnel on many school visits. Co-integrated planning has been a key feature of DDSP projects were shared in inter-provincial meetings.

Integrated planning has been a key feature of DDSP projects were shared in inter-provincial meetings. assistance to the PDEs. The grantees helped strategic planning in the provinces, regions, and districts. The success of this exercise in Northern Cape resulted in the NCDDE requesting the DDSP grantee to continue the planning exercise for the other regions in the province. In KwaZulu-Natal, the DDSP grantee helped the other four districts in the Umlazi Region to engage in integrated planning.



Teaching and learning in a Classroom

### Creating effective districts—A focus for 2002

The DDSP is focused on developing effective education districts to serve schools and ultimately to improve the quality of educational delivery to enhance learner performance.

town mega-District to set up policies and procedures in Curriculum Co-ordination, Conflict Management, Financial Management, Learner Support Material, SGB support, learner admissions, learner discipline, school development planning and district strategic planning.

The Mthunzi Project plans to engage shoulder-to-shoulder support to help set up systems at the district office. Systems that are targeted include conducting investigations linked to educator misconduct; appraisal of district professional, administrative and general staff, monitoring and co-ordination of HIV/AIDS education; integrated planning, district communication systems, district filing and records keeping and School Funding Norms procurement. The Kimberley Thusingang Project is focusing its efforts on developing the Kimberley Regional Office (now renamed the Francis Baard District). It plans to train regional officials on school finances, Section 21 functions, validation of school policies and other legal documents. The project will also assist in the drafting of remaining provincial job descriptions.

The Fanang District Project plans to train District and Regional Managers on aspects of leadership and management to enable them to provide adequate direction to their staffs.

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- 3 Caseload Management for District Offices in Isithole Project, EC
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An important component of this objective is the improvement of systems at the district office. The Situation Analysis conducted by the DDSP in 1999 revealed that the minimum systems, policies, and procedures required for a district to function, are either non-existent at the DDSP districts, or that they are not effectively used. A key focus of the next work-plan year is assistance in setting up and/or improving systems at the district office as well as continuing capacity building of district and provincial officials.

The Eastern Cape Department of Education has launched new districts due to restructuring. The department requested that the Isithole Project focus on assisting the Queenstown Mega-District with the setting up of new and/or refining existing systems. Isithole will assist the Queen-

DDSP facilitated the **development of educator tests** in numeracy and literacy. The rationale for these tests was the need first to identify gaps in subject content knowledge to enable grantees to build appropriate capacities, and then to assess the success of the training programs. DDSP subcontractors, the DoE officials, representatives from teacher organizations, and grantees participated in developing the tests, which were then validated by the HSRC.

Teacher baseline reports indicated a need for **language training**. Thus, a literacy training program for Foundation Phase teachers included a structured approach to acquisition of literacy in the first language. It also provided guidance in classroom management and development of differentiated learning activities. The approach emphasized communicative language teaching, critical thinking skills, and shared book reading. In Limpopo, while

there was no training directly to improve the language competence of the educators, the training programs to improve methodology and assessment were strong on the theoretical bases for language learning and teaching. Teachers were exposed for the first time to simple explanations as to how

language is learned and to examples of theory translated into classroom practice. The sample language materials were highly structured and provided a model of language for the educators to use with their learners.

The **numeracy program** for Foundation Phase educators started with teachers' content knowledge and then translated that into classroom practice. It emphasized self-assessment.

In Eastern Cape, educators were **trained on a number of relevant topics** in mathematics, language literacy, life skills, and natural sciences. In language literacy, educators were trained in use of textbooks, use of story kits, stories for language development, shared reading and writing, and classroom management and planning. Teachers were required to demonstrate key aspects of the methodology during the last day of the training. In addition, the grantee used school-based, individual educator follow-up and support visits to assess whether training was effective or not.

The Mthonjeni Project used **school holidays** to bring educators to central locations in the six circuits to build their content knowledge in numeracy, literacy, and natural sciences.

#### ***Objective 1.4: Improved Utilization of Resources***

DDSP's main thrust was developing human resources, not providing other resources. However, as part of the training programs, educators were trained on utilizing resources in the classroom. This aspect of the program assumed a greater importance in the context of the scarcity of educational resources in historically disadvantaged schools.

The Zikhulise Project had a three-pronged strategy for training educators in utilization of resources. First, the project conducted **preparatory C2005 training**, which provided a basic orientation to OBE, resource-based learning, and development of learning and teaching resources by the educator. Second, **training-of-trainer workshops** were held for facilitators who would be training educators within this project. This training focused on co-facilitation skills and the use of training manual and materials developed for educators in grades 4-9. Thirdly, **district officials were trained** in focusing on access, development, and use of classroom-based materials; planning and design of learning activities; and preparation of learner support materials.

In Limpopo, the project showed educators **how materials provided before C2005 could be used** for language experience literacy sessions, and how old readers were perfectly appropriate for the shared book reading method. For literacy, the project provided posters, teacher guides, and learner workbooks, and trained educators in how to use them.

In Eastern Cape, every classroom in project schools was supplied with a **comprehensive classroom resource collection** (CRC) of books for language, literacy, and communication (LLC), as well as an average of three sets of group readers. The group readers were accompanied by teacher guides containing lesson plans, links with the national curriculum, and exercises for learner use on each story in the collection. The CRC included books covering learning areas not included in the Isithole Project. Grade 1 classes received books for the home language. In addition to the books, educators received four story packs with the relevant teacher's guides and posters. All mathematics educators in project schools received comprehensive kits containing selected resources. These resources were designed to support and enrich the teaching of mathematics for their particular grade. The teachers also received manuals accompanying the kits. Learners in grades 1-5 received learner booklets. Two Life Orientation (LO) manuals were also supplied to LO educators during their training courses.

All project schools received a portable container filled with **science teaching equipment** as well as a second kit for supporting the teaching of biology, and an educator's manual of learner worksheets for use with the equipment. All schools received sets of posters and the relevant worksheets for enriching their classroom activities. All educators received portfolio files and science methodology manuals.

In KwaZulu-Natal, the grantee trained educators on **improvising and using household items, magazines, and other materials** found in and around schools as teaching aids. This was complemented in literacy by training on reading skills and the use of learner activity books.

## **Subgoal 2: Improved Quality of District/Area and School Management**

### ***Objective 2.1: Improved School Management by School Management Teams (SMT)***

One of the critical problems identified by provinces in developing the provincial program was the lack of management capacity. Grantees hence focused on building these skills within School Management Teams. That is, they **selected for training a certain number and/or type of leader from each school**. The project in Northern Cape trained two members of the management team from each school on leadership, human resource development, school policy, instructional leadership, school financial management, and school development planning. Early in the life of its project—before a grant even was issued—the Northern Cape Department of Education had arranged for four regional workshops in the Kimberley, Upington, De Aar, and Springbok regions for all school principals, on forecasting and planning. Management of Schools Training Programme conducted the training.

Two SMT participants were invited from the each Fanang Diatla School. They were trained in whole-school improvement, development planning, conflict management, timetabling and year planning, financial management, instructional leadership, staff appraisal and development, team-building and communication, and instructional leadership. Tecknikon Pretoria accredited this program. The SMT course aimed to help school managers and leaders understand change. They learned how to manage it, and how to manage the people involved in the institution.

In Eastern Cape, the SMT focus was on improving school management in general but emphasizing curriculum management as the core business of the school. In addition to the generic training courses offered to SMT members, the grantee established a special team, the **School Management and Governance Support Team (SMGST)**, whose overall responsibility was to raise the general standard of school management and governance, while paying particular attention to schools identified as being without effective management, leadership, and governance in place. Together, and in consultation with their respective project beneficiaries, the SMGST provided information on the training needs in school management and governance in project schools. Because of this consultation, selected school governance training modules also were translated into Xhosa.

The SMGST prioritized the schools, identified by project and Eastern Cape PDoE personnel, as being partially or seriously dysfunctional in aspects of management and governance. Inclusive meetings were held with the school communities and workshops were conducted as required. Goals were set with the SMTs and SGBs to enable them to move forward, and team members then followed up on these goals. As an indicator of their success rate in turning schools around, the SMGST worked in depth with 18 project schools displaying varying levels of functionality.

In KwaZulu-Natal, School Management Teams from each project school were selected to undergo an **Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) course**, accredited by Natal University. This course included leadership, quality assurance and whole-school development, issues in management and governance, the school as a learning organization, human resource management, and self-managing schools.

### ***Objective 2.2: Effective Management of the Curriculum by SMTs***

Although building the management skills of SMTs was considered important, grantees paid particular attention to helping members of the SMTs develop particular skills that enabled them to deliver the curriculum.

Under the Kimberley Thusanang Project, School Management Teams **were trained in instructional leadership and in supporting teachers in the classroom.** The latter included monitoring of curriculum practice by the SMT, classroom observation, coaching, and debriefing.

Through the Isithole Project, the grantee **trained district officials** in leadership and management, communication skills and assertiveness, staff recruiting, coaching and mentoring, strategic planning, conflict management, grievance procedures, and school support. In addition, the Eastern Cape PDoE Education Development Officers were trained in human resources management and development appraisal, school financial management, and curriculum management. The districts' Subject Advisors were offered courses on curriculum planning for numeracy and literacy, and on facilitation skills. Selected key educators from project schools were also trained with Subject Advisors. This was done to increase the number of master trainers, as there were so few Subject Advisors in each district office. Approximately three key educators were trained from each district.

Nkandla's **ACE course was linked to curriculum management.** The SMTs from Nkandla attending the ACE course were taught curriculum development, and staff appraisal and development. In addition, Principals' Indabas (special meetings) were held at least twice a year to review the skills taught in the course, and to help them prepare for the opening of the school year. Principals and HoDs were also taken through a **course on learner assessment** in which they were trained to interpret results, and develop strategies to improve results.

### ***Objective 2.3: More and Better Support to Schools and SMTs by District Officials***

One of the key objectives of DDSP was the **development of effective district offices.** For district officials to support schools, they needed to have the appropriate skills. In Northern Cape, the project trained district officials to prepare district integrated plans and assist their schools to write school development plans on the basis of resources, capacity, policy, and needs. They were also trained in writing reports, setting up databases in Microsoft Access, budgeting in Microsoft Excel, facilitating, coaching and mentoring teachers, budgeting for schools, and developing and approving school policy. For each of the main Kimberley Thusanang Project training programs (literacy, numeracy, life skills, management, and governance), a parallel program was delivered to Northern Cape PDoE officials.

Recognizing the absence of relevant job descriptions for "district officials" and the need for such documents in developing an effective district office, DDSP commissioned the Centre for Education Policy Development, Management, and Evaluation (CEPD) to study what was needed. In consultation with the PDoEs' head offices and the DDSP districts, in 2000 CEPD **developed draft job descriptions for staff in both PDoE head and district offices.** In Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, and KZN, this input came at an opportune time as the departments had started the process of restructuring. Kimberley Thusanang Project and the Northern Cape PDoE reviewed the CEPD descriptions and developed additional ones for early childhood development coordinators, remedial consultants, HIV/AIDS coordinators, and community development officers. These were done to reflect the objectives of the Northern Cape PDoE.

**Formal programs on school change** also assisted the districts. The Fanang Diatla Project offered the School Change Facilitation program to district officials. The aim of the program was to ensure that there were people at the district level equipped with the skills to help the district and schools as they implemented all the new policies in education. The course comprised the following modules: managing change for organizational improvement; organizational culture; organizational design and development; ensuring organizational effectiveness; organizational analysis; communication and interpersonal relationships; and whole-school improvement.

In KwaZulu-Natal, district officials from the Ulundi region were trained as school-change facilitators, to enable them to better support educators. The Mthonjeni Project trained them on topics such as analyzing schools, diagnosing causes of problems and formulating interventions, developing a School Quality Assurance Framework, carrying out district strategic planning, handling labor relations, coordinating, using learner assessments, and facilitating.

#### ***Objective 2.4: More and Better Support to District Offices by Regional/Provincial Offices***

At the outset of DDSP, it was recognized that **more needed to be known about South Africa's school districts** in general. Thus, JET undertook a literature review of districts internationally and in South Africa, and conducted case studies of two DDSP districts. The objective of the study was to provide a profile of a district, and to present the possibilities and challenges for developing effective district models under DDSP. In response, DDSP recognized that just as schools needed the support of district offices, district offices in turn needed to be supported by regional and provincial offices.

The capacity building and support offered by the grantees in the four provinces differed significantly. It stemmed from the state of flux created by provincial and district restructuring and the general apprehension that accompanied the process.

Fanang Diatla planned and delivered **training aimed at building the capacity of district managers and regional directors**. The project was attempting, through these capacity-building programs, to ensure that there was constant understanding and support of project activities by district and regional management. The modules facilitated included leadership, organizational design and analysis, strategic thinking and planning, and computer training. These workshops ensured that there was constant interaction among the project, district, and regional management.

Regional officials from the KwaZulu-Natal PDoE participated with district officials in workshops on **integrated and coherent scheduling of training activities in the region/districts**. However, because Subject Advisors were located at the regional level and were not answerable to district managers, the grantee did not have much success with capacity building and support for them. This changed after restructuring, when a new management organogram was adapted with greater powers for district managers.

### **Subgoal 3: Enhanced School Governance**

#### ***Objective 3.1: Democratically Elected School Governing Bodies***

In 2000, DDSP commissioned CEPD to assist the four target provinces and the DoE with **SGB election preparations**. This involved working with education management development officials at the provincial level to prepare the various documents for the elections, an advocacy program, and a database to help provinces capture details for the new SGBs. The grantees again helped the PDoEs prepare the SGB elections in 2003. Within the advocacy program, special emphasis was placed on involving parents who were not literate, developing illustrative materials in local languages, training master trainers, and training district officials.

#### ***Objective 3.2: Enhanced SGB Performance***

Grantees trained SGBs elected in 2000 on a range of topics, including roles and responsibilities of the SGB, school development planning, school policy, school financial management, effective meetings, and conflict resolution. The grantees carried out training of SGBs in all four provinces. They all, however, encountered problems that stemmed from differences in education between school personnel and community SGB members. That is, **training prepared for principals and other school personnel was not appropriate for community members**. Community members were alienated when trained at the same time as school-based SGB members and chose not to participate in subsequent programs.

**SGB trainees and training content** varied by project:

- The Fanang Diatla project invited two participants per school to attend the training sessions for newly elected SGBs. After an induction program, they were trained in policy formulation, development planning, and financial management. The training was followed up with cluster support visits.

- In the Isithole Project, three SGB representatives from each school were trained. Some of the training sessions were attended jointly by SGB chairpersons and principals, while other sessions focused just on the parent component of the SGB. The local language, Xhosa, was used for facilitation of the SGB workshops and for the materials produced for participants. Participants learned about the roles and responsibilities of SGBs, school financial management, and fund raising. The SMGST was also used to reinforce the training conducted by the grantee and to assist schools needing specialized support.
- The Mthonjeni Project trained SGB members from Nkandla district on needs analysis, roles and responsibilities, constitution building, development of vision and mission statements, school development planning, and financial management. SGBs were supported in developing the required policies, including an HIV/AIDS policy for schools.
- In Kimberley, the design for the SGB training program took into consideration the need to be accessible to semiliterate SGB members from farm schools. An important aspect of this work in Kimberley was a two-day continuity workshop to ensure a smooth transition between one SGB and the next.

### Objective 3.3: More and Better Support to SGBs by District Officials

Grantees in all four provinces conducted **capacity-building programs for district officials** to enable them to better support SGBs. In many cases, this also involved joint visits with grantee facilitators to schools to address SGB issues.

## Subgoal 4: Developed Theory and Best Practices for Whole School/District Development

### Objective 4.1: Development of Effective Models of Whole-District Development

Each DDSP grant or subcontract developed aspects of a district model relevant to the provinces. Some

District Development Support Programme (DDSP)

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The DDSP is a USAID funded project, managed by the Research Triangle Institute and its sub-contractor—Just Education Trust (JET), Centre for Education Policy Development, Evaluation and Management (CEPD) and Khulisa Management Services (KMS). The DDSP goal is the improved quality of educational delivery for Grades 1-9. It focuses on improving curriculum practices, improving school and district management, enhancing school governance and developing models of effective districts.

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### Effective districts for improving schools

The implementation of the DDSP is in full swing in all four of the provinces participating in the programme viz. Eastern Cape, Northern Province, Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Between March and December 2000, selected service providers have been conducting training programmes for educators, school management teams, school governing bodies and district officials.



leadership and management. School Governing Body members have been trained on constitution making and understanding their roles and responsibilities. To support educators and school managers as they start to implement what they have learnt in the

training workshops, mentors from the service providers make support visits to schools to assist educators in their teaching and offer support to school managers. The mentors are often accompanied by district officials. The programme looks promising.

**Looking at whole district development**

A major focus of the DDSP is a look at how districts can become effective in supporting schools. While service providers will be providing assistance to school personnel on teaching and learning related matters, they will also be helping the district office to re-organise itself. Presently district officials are overwhelmed by administrative work that many cannot provide the kind of support necessary to their schools. The Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD), one of the DDSP sub-contractors, is in the process of developing job descriptions for the different categories of district personnel. The first phase of this process has been completed for the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape. It is anticipated that the draft job descriptions developed will be piloted in the DDSP schools in these two provinces early in 2001. The EC Department of Education is in the midst of a re-structuring process, in which districts are being re-shaped. This process comes at an opportune time.

parts of the model were implemented in the participating districts, while other aspects were recommended for future implementation. The development of the models (or guidelines for effective districts) was a participatory exercise in which grantee and provincial department of education personnel were involved. All four models placed teaching and learning, and the improvement of learner performance, at the heart of the district's functions. In other words, the core function of the district was to be the improvement of learning and learner achievement.

### Project-Specific Models

The Kimberley Thusanang Project model sought to improve schools and the district at the same time, making schools more effective through planning, communication, and service delivery. A key element was the **Integrated Planning Process**, through which the district changed from a control center to a service center. The district produced a District Delivery Statement outlining the activities that each unit could deliver to schools based on their

resources. Schools then produced School Development Plans in which five key priorities were identified, with the focus being teaching and learning. The School Development Plans served as the basis for circuit action plans and the District Integrated Plan.

In the model proposed by the Kimberley Thusanang Project, **the district's primary role was providing services to its "key customers,"** the schools, which had been granted Section 21 functions, and which therefore had self-managing status. This move saw important functions, such as procurement of learning support materials, decentralized to schools. Primary district office functions thus evolved from administration to support, with administration as a secondary function.

The Kimberley Thusanang Project model also had implications for the organogram and job functions of each category of staff at the district. Previously, units in the district office operated as separate entities, performing separate functions in relation to schools. The model allowed for the **creation of support teams** composed of relevant individuals to whom schools could go for particular help and support. The project trained district officials in their key functions.

The Fanang Diatla Project advocated moving the district away from being an "inspector" to being a **source of mentorship and support**, coupled with the necessary pressure. The project experimented with three methods to accomplish this goal. First, the project worked from a common framework, taking a "whole-school improvement" approach—which depicted the school as a system into which the district, provincial, and national departments of education gave input, guidance, and feedback in the form of policies, directives, and plans. Second, the project worked to change values, attitudes, and ethos. This involved asking questions about the ideal school and district, leadership styles, ways of working, and so on. The third method involved implementing a "reflective practice chain" from educators to principals, the district, and the provincial level. In reflective sessions, stakeholders were pushed to assess themselves and their contribution to improved learner performance in their district.

Teaching and learning were the core functions of the district in the Isithole Project model. Hence, much emphasis was placed on **developing district officials' capacity as co-trainers and facilitators** to support schools. In this regard, Subject Advisors were trained to support educators in curriculum delivery, while Education Development Officers were trained to develop and support School Management Teams in management and governance.

The Isithole model included training one **key educator** per school, to support the principal and Head of Department (school) in implementing curriculum programs and to ensure that the key educators' own classrooms were models of best practice. The key educators were the link between the school and the Subject Advisor, and they assisted principals and HoDs in supporting other educators as they implemented new concepts, methodologies, and resources. The project also introduced the SMGST, in which multi-skilled teams of people were used for school support. The project also used key educators in school clusters to assist the district with curriculum support for educators.

In developing a model of an effective district in Nkandla, the Mthonjeni Project factored in the role of the PDoE and regional offices, which were responsible for a number of functions affecting the work of the district—such as procurement and provisioning, capacity building and support for educators on curriculum and learner assessment, and training for SGBs on governance. The approach to district development adopted by the Mthonjeni Project targeted the **development and improvement of systems** and the building of people's capacity to make the systems work. The Mthonjeni model placed much emphasis on school support and monitoring for accountability. Schools in each circuit were divided into clusters of five, with a host school convening a cluster meeting. The Mthonjeni model was based on a District Improvement Framework that defined the core function of the district and the 10 enabling functions to facilitate its delivery. Planning, critical reflection, and continuous learning underpinned the framework. The framework also included indicators of the quality of services delivered by the district office.

### Commonalities of District Models

Not unexpectedly, some common elements of district models emerged from the different projects. Some cross-cutting aspects of the DDSP district modeling exercise are described below.

**Improved systems:** DDSP assisted districts to put in place minimum administrative and management systems to make the work of education managers more effective. Improved systems of communications, filing, registry, learner assessment, EMIS, curriculum management and delivery were the minimum efforts in systems improvement. More importantly, DDSP helped facilitate the improvement of systems simply by posing questions to the district: What needs to improve? Who is best placed in the district to affect changes in the systems? How should these systems be maintained?

**Systematic planning:** Provincial projects also assisted districts in annual planning and coordination of activities. In some districts, the process of integrated planning was very effective, such that district plans aligned with school development/improvement plans. Again, questions were asked: When should planning take place? Who should be involved? What form should these plans take? How are the various components in a district office coordinated, and by whom? How are the different activities in the district office coordinated through the planning process?

**Taking remote areas and financial constraints into consideration:** DDSP projects were based largely in rural areas where schools were quite far apart from each other and the district offices. Despite the distance, financial, and other constraints in districts, some models of school support emerging from the DDSP projects were effective. These factors were taken into consideration when schools were clustered and in servicing of the clusters.

**Multiple training methods:** All projects extensively trained educators, school managers, SMTs, SGBs, and district officials within the framework of national policy and practice. Depending on the particular situation of districts and schools, training was conducted through any one of the following methods: centralized workshops, cluster training, individual school training, demonstration lessons in the classroom with non-DDSP educators observing, residential training during vacation, training during holidays, and training during the school term. Special provisions were made to allow one-teacher schools and farm schools to participate gainfully in training. Hence, training was entirely tailor-made for the districts concerned. Some of these practices are informing provincial in-service education and training policies. Co-facilitation of training by district officials and grantee trainers has proven to be beneficial. The schools and communities see that the training and support come from the government and not NGOs. In addition, the training presented is aligned with the policies of the PDoEs and is not an interpretation of trainers.

**Job descriptions:** District officials' understanding of their job functions is an important part of an effective district. The job descriptions commissioned by DDSP were used by the provinces as a reference tool.

The book *DDSP: Improving the Quality of Primary Education* (Pretoria: Department of Education, USAID, and DDSP/RTI International, 2003) contains details of the district development models that emerged from the project. It also contains articles and papers written by participants from all levels in DDSP. The book permitted those people directly affected by DDSP to write about their experiences and best practices.

### ***Objective 4.2: Development of a Graduate-Level Course in Education Economics and Finance Aimed at Supporting Whole-District Development and Technical Assistance to DoE on Financial and Policy Matters and HIV/AIDS Coordination***

#### Assistance to DoE

The DoE has been involved in a complex but necessary internal transformation process while continuously being accountable to the public. This has left the department little time to analyze available data, generate long- or medium-term scenarios, or engage in systems development. Yet,

such work is vital for the ongoing transformation of the post-apartheid system, a process that is by no means complete.

The DoE generally hires consultants, either with its own funds or with donor funding, to perform this critical work. The work is time consuming since the government must hire consultants, negotiate contracts, liaise with donors, and oversee the delivery process.

DDSP introduced some stability by placing consultants within the DoE. The embedded consultants were supervised by the DoE and used DoE resources on their assignments. Clear service contracts, and the strict accountability of consultants, ensured that these professionals spent time on more medium- to long-range analytical and planning work, rather than on bureaucratic procedures or current political pressures. Moreover, by being located within the DoE offices, the consultants were able to gain in-depth knowledge of the organization and to develop close working relationships with senior managers, which in turn resulted in assistance that was highly responsive and sensitive to the needs of the DoE.

The DoE has repeatedly expressed a strong need for the services of more—and better—economists, systems developers and analysts, statisticians, demographers, and policy analysts, particularly those specializing in education and having sound knowledge of the South African context. The System Planning Branch of the DoE has been particularly strong in articulating this need. This branch—one of five within DoE—has in the past incorporated and utilized embedded technical assistants with great success.

DDSP worked with the DoE through out the life of the project in the following categories: (1) policy advice, (2) technical assistance, (3) research, and (4) training. From project inception until 2001, the majority of the technical assistants were part-time technical advisors. In May 2001, at the request of the DoE, DDSP placed a full-time financial advisor and an HIV/AIDS coordinator at the DoE.

The key areas of part-time technical assistance to the DoE over the life of the project are summarized below.

- *Policy advice.* RTI helped define one of the prickliest issues in school funding in the South African Schools Act. The advice led to the creation of what is arguably one of the most innovative school financing systems in the developing world. As with most sophisticated policies, implementation will take time. Policy work also concentrated on the funding aspects of the various subsectors, such as adult basic education and training, early childhood development, Further Education and Training (FET), and Education for Learners with Special Education Needs (ELSEN).
- *Technical assistance.* Assistance took place through technical inputs to various processes, including the implementation of the funding norms themselves. This was a huge task, as it implied the creation of a system that could track expenditures down to the school level. Included in the technical assistance was implementation of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework; information and quality assurance systems, preliminary assessment of demographic trends, and preparation of a Scope of Work (SoW) for a demographer to make population projections; an opportunities assessment in public-private partnerships; and preparation of an SoW for a finance expert to conduct feasibility studies.
- *Research.* Research was carried out in some areas such as teacher supply and demand and labor market and structure of the matric exam system. Another area was the measurement of school efficiency and production function issues and preparation of an omnibus research proposal to be funded by the World Bank. This will be a major piece of research, perhaps the most important ever undertaken in South African education.

### Course in Education Economics and Finance

Throughout DDSP, part-time technical assistance was provided for training education officials both formally and informally. The formal training included two versions of an Applied Education Economics and Planning (AEEP) course (see next paragraph) during all of 1999 and 2000, an AEEP refresher course in 2001, training for two South African education officials at RTI in North Carolina in August 2001, and an EMIS training course in October 2001.

Under an earlier technical assistance agreement, RTI had placed a long-term education economics advisor within the DoE from 1996 to 1998. Toward the end of this assistance, the advisor was requested to institutionalize a “Friday afternoon education economics club” that had been meeting for the two years. USAID also supported the institutionalization of the course. Thus, a graduate-level, certified course—the AEEP—was offered at the University of the Witwatersrand, with the Education Foundation Trust handling the logistics and the RTI advisor providing the structure, readings, and most of the lectures. The AEEP consisted of five 1-week sessions of lecturing and one 1-week session of empirical classwork. The course addressed education economics, education finance, evaluation and accountability, statistics, information systems, and planning tools. After two years, however, it was discovered that the supply of officials with the background necessary to benefit was quite limited. The third year offered two 1-week refresher sessions to some of the graduates from the first two promotions.

### ***Objective 4.3: Development of an Information and Knowledge Management System Aimed at Supporting Whole-District Development; and Objective 4.4: Implementation of the School Funding Norms***

Objectives 4.3 and 4.4 were treated jointly within one subcontract since they were so closely related in terms of process and information sharing.

As noted in Section 3, DDSP subcontracted with Education Foundation Trust to implement the EMIS Improvement Project. It aimed at assisting the provincial and national departments of education in their efforts to **standardize the system of data collection and analysis** in South Africa and to **implement school funding norms**. The system was designed to segregate data requirements into the following areas: learner profiles, personnel, curriculum and assessment, school governance, finances, and physical resources. The project piloted a manual system (paper and pencil) and an electronic system in Northern Cape, and then implemented them in selected districts and schools in the remaining DDSP provinces. The project placed experienced and skilled advisors within the Northern Cape PDoE planning unit to pilot and help enhance their model of EMIS improvement and functionality based on real-time development and best practices. As the Northern Cape phase of the project unfolded, a model emerged that was shared with the other DDSP provinces. EMIS technical advisors in each of the four provinces worked closely with provincial and district personnel to ensure continuing implementation of the project.

Manual EMIS training for schools was conducted in the selected districts of all provinces. School and cluster EMIS committees were established. The EMIS school committee was responsible for developing EMIS policy for individual schools and drove the implementation process at the school. One important responsibility of the EMIS committee was training relevant school staff on the concepts of EMIS and the effective management and maintenance of an information system.

### ***Objective 4.5: Development of Civic Structures Aimed at Sustaining and/or Furthering the Objectives of Whole-District Development***

DDSP established a number of structures at different levels of the system to ensure the sustainability and continuation of its programs. At the provincial level, **Project Management Teams** were created. These teams were made up of relevant provincial and district personnel, project personnel, and representatives from USAID and RTI. The PMTs met quarterly and were responsible for giving direction to the provincial projects. The PMTs proved to be useful structures for the PDoEs, and the

idea was used for other projects run by the PDoEs. In Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, the PDoEs intend to continue operating other projects through these structures.

At the district level, **District Support Teams (DSTs)**—which mirrored the PMTs—were set up. These did not survive, however, mainly because of the central role of the district officials. Because of the restructuring processes in the provinces and the consistent movement of district staff, the DSTs could not be served by the responsible district officials. The concept, however, was accepted by districts and it is expected that the structures will be regenerated.

At the school level, **School Support Teams** were formed. These structures existed and operated differently in the provinces. They largely served to support curriculum capacity building in project schools. School Assessment Teams and School EMIS Teams were also established to support the implementation of the Assessment Modeling Initiative and EMIS Improvement Projects respectively.

An important aspect of DDSP was the **empowerment of local NGOs**. In Northern Cape, the development of local NGO capacity started with training by the Institute for Excellence in Education and Training (IEET) to implement school governance training. Local NGOs were also trained on financial management, proposal writing, and fund-raising.

## **SECTION 5: OTHER MAJOR ACTIVITIES WITHIN DDSP**

### **Training on HIV/AIDS**

Training related to HIV/AIDS was not part of the USAID RTI contract and therefore was not included in any of the grant agreements. During an Interprovincial Meeting, it was agreed that RTI had the moral responsibility to include HIV/AIDS in DDSP; thus, the projects assumed HIV/AIDS awareness and training as part of their responsibility and introduced it within the life skills programs.

In Northern Cape, life skills training for Foundation Phase teachers included a definition of what “teaching life skills” means, an explanation of the inclusive classroom, identification of and teaching about burning issues in the community, HIV/AIDS education, and planning and assessment of life skills lessons. The training approach emphasized the transformation potential of outcomes-based education.

In Limpopo, HIV/AIDS information dissemination included training for district officials, integration of HIV/AIDS training into various other training sessions, and the provision of information on developing a School Policy on HIV/AIDS. In February 2002, DDSP schools were provided with an EMGD Kit that contained a draft HIV/AIDS policy to be used as a reference for drawing up a school policy.

In Eastern Cape, a series of school and classroom support sessions on HIV/AIDS was conducted in DDSP schools. In addition, the project assisted in creating awareness to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS among learners. HIV/AIDS was included in the school curriculum through mathematics and life orientation. The project assisted schools in developing HIV/AIDS policies. These policies helped in the understanding of how people infected and affected should be cared for. Other diseases related to HIV/AIDS were identified with the help of health departments’ leaflets and brochures. In addition, the grantees ensured that relevant HIV/AIDS and sexuality awareness material was included in a USAID box library that was supplied to all project schools.

In KwaZulu-Natal, SGBs were assisted in developing HIV/AIDS policies for schools.

### **Participation in Working Groups**

DDSP participated in a number of working groups set up by the DoE. This included the EMDG Advisory Team to advise the DoE on school governance and management issues, and on a plan for district development. It also included participation in a School Funding Task Team.

DDSP also participated in the Research School Development initiative convened by JET. This initiative was responsible for publishing an important research paper, *The Sound and Fury: School Development in South Africa*.

MiET developed training manuals for SGBs in KwaZulu-Natal funded by USAID. DDSP was requested to review the manuals and provide critical comment.

In addition, DDSP was invited to participate in national consultations on district development (DoE; National Business Initiative), school development (DoE, Gauteng Department of Education), and accountability and support seminars (JET).

## **Cooperation with Other Projects and Donors**

Over the course of its implementation, DDSP cooperated with various projects and donors through one-on-one meetings to coordinate program activities. These included programs funded by Irish, French, British, and Netherlands aid organizations.

In Eastern Cape, the senior management established a project coordinating committee so that they could meet with all donors and program implementers on a regular basis. Such meetings were held to keep senior management informed on progress of projects and to ensure greater alignment of donor programs with departmental strategic objectives.

DDSP participated with the PDoE in the coordination of education project work funded by Ireland Aid in Limpopo province. There was sharing of information and documentation. One DDSP staff member was hired by Ireland Aid at the end of his contract.

USAID commissioned the Academy for Educational Development to establish resource centers in the “nodal schools” in districts in which DDSP was implemented. RTI shared its logistical information with the Academy for Educational Development, and helped use the DDSP project management structures in each province to report on its progress. RTI provincial project directors helped to arrange for the servicing and repair of the photocopiers placed at these centers.

USAID also commissioned READ Education Trust to supply each DDSP school with the box libraries mentioned earlier. READ used the logistical support available from DDSP, and reported its progress through the DDSP project management structures.

The major donors implementing education support programs in South Africa were invited to the Interprovincial Meetings and the final DDSP Conference in February 2003, in which the models of district development were presented. They were also provided with copies of the DDSP publication, *DDSP: Improving the Quality of Primary Education*.

## **Assistance for USAID DDSP Conferences**

In May 2002, at USAID’s request, DDSP provided logistical support for a two-day conference to review computer-networking proposals for KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape provinces. The conference was attended by representatives from the PDoEs, State Information Technology Agency, and USAID.

In May 2000, USAID requested DDSP to provide logistical support for a three-day conference to review the Borehole Project in three DDSP provinces (one of several USAID DDSP activities; see Figure 4 above for a list). This conference was attended by contractor and provincial representatives.

## **Science Kits Project for Northern Cape**

Following a request from USAID and the Northern Cape PDoE, all DDSP schools in the Frances Baard district received science kits through a competitive purchase order issued to a specialized vendor. This procurement included training for Learning Area Managers and educators in using the kits. The Northern Cape Department of Education used the Learning Area Managers to conduct school support visits.

## **Furniture and Instructional Materials Procurement for Flood-Affected Schools in Limpopo**

In 2001, at the request of USAID, DDSP purchased school instructional material and furniture for 30 schools affected by floods in 2000 in Limpopo. Vendors from Limpopo province were awarded

contracts to supply furniture and instructional materials following competitive bidding. Furniture and instructional materials were delivered in 2002.

### **Book Distribution**

During 2002, the U.S. Government donated over 500,000 books, videos, transparencies, and other instructional materials to Nigeria and South Africa. South Africa received the majority of the donated books for primary school pupils and teachers. USAID requested that DDSP carry out the distribution to the most disadvantaged schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape. RTI consulted with DoE and the PDoEs, and identified schools, resource centers, libraries, and other locations to receive the materials. RTI subcontracted with MiET to carry out the warehousing, packing, distribution, and monitoring of the instructional materials. The materials were accompanied by a four-page manual of suggestions for teachers on how best to use the materials.

### **DDSP Publication**

*DDSP: Improving the Quality of Primary Education* was published in February 2003. The book contains papers, articles, and the models of district development from each of the projects. Contributions were made by national and provincial departmental officials, grantees, subcontractors, and RTI's DDSP staff. The book also contains a CD with selected modules and manuals used in the project. Copies were distributed to the participants at the final DDSP conference, and to tertiary institutions, donor organizations, and education-related NGOs in the country. Copies of the book are presently housed in the DoE offices in Pretoria to be made available to the public on request.