

PHBBS 207

INTERIM EVALUATION OF THE BASIC EDUCATION
AND
SKILLS TRAINING (BEST) PROGRAMME

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F O R E W O R D

This evaluation report is a result of the interim evaluation of the Basic Education and Skills Training (BEST) Programme which was commissioned by the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) and USAID. The main purpose was to determine the progress the programme has made since it started and how the US\$45,000,000 has been used up to date.

The evaluation was undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team of seven professional education, civil engineering experts and an economist. The team consisted of:

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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Best Available Document

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 BACKGROUND

At independence in 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe initiated a major expansion of the education sector at all levels. The initiative involved transition from an elitist system to a system which provides universal access to primary and secondary education and expanded vocational/technical training opportunities. Enrolment at all levels increased dramatically. Between 1980 and 1985 enrolments in primary schools grew by a phenomenal 172% or 28.7% per year, while in secondary schools, the expansion was an unbelievable 576% over the same period or 96% per year.

This dramatic expansion brought the consequent need for substantial construction of new facilities and replacement of facilities destroyed during the war, training of new teachers and instructors for schools, teachers' colleges and vocational/technical colleges, and expansion of ministerial administrative and planning capacity.

The combined effect of the expanding activities of the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare has been to put a strain on the country's financial resources. At present, they both claim about 9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the situation at the moment has reached a stage where the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) can no longer significantly increase its contribution to the promotion of educational activities in the country, although the GOZ is spending more than Z\$400 million per year on education. Indeed, their share as a proportion of total government contribution has been marginally decreasing: 19% in 1982/83, 18% in 1983/84 and 1984/85, and 17% in 1985/86. This is the point at which the Basic Education and Skills Training (BEST) Programme fits into the whole picture of financing education in Zimbabwe.

1.1.2 BEST AID GRANT NO. 613-K-606

According to the agreement between the GOZ and USAID, the basic goal of the Basic Education and Skills Training (BEST) Sector Assistance Programme is to contribute to Zimbabwe's economic and social development. This is done by providing additional budgetary resources, to assist the GOZ implement its planned programme to expand its educational and employment skills training system, with special emphasis on improving cost-effectiveness and equity within the overall system.

The programme's resources are utilized to support those items and activities contained in the GOZ's Annual Estimates of Expenditure including the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) which are expected to contribute to the removal of the key educational constraints inhibiting the attainment of the GOZ goal to expand its education and skills training system. The constraints identified for this programme are: limited resources, insufficient numbers of trained teachers/instructors, inappropriate instructional curriculum, inefficient/inequitable spatial allocation of educational/training facilities, and insufficient planning capacity. Under this programme grant, a total of US\$45 million was granted over a three-year period, with disbursements to be made over five years, in support of the programme's goal as identified above.

1.3 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE BEST PROGRAMME

1.3.1 Aims and Objectives of the Evaluation

The terms of reference are divided into a number of aims and objectives. These were as follows:

1.3.1.1 Ascertain to what extent the original aims and objectives as stated in the BEST approved document have been and are being achieved. These original aims and objectives are to develop:

- a) a more efficient use of educational resources that will allow increases in the numbers of children enrolled in school and will increase the availability of relevant vocational/technical training;
- b) substantial increases in the numbers of fully qualified elementary, secondary and vocational/technical teachers and the institutionalized means of providing qualified teachers on a continuing and cost-effective basis;
- c) demonstrable improvements in the quality, relevance, and instructional effectiveness of the curricula of both elementary and secondary education and in vocational/technical training programs;
- d) a more equitable distribution of teaching and vocational/technical training to rural areas and other geographically dispersed regions of Zimbabwe and efficient mechanisms in place to assure the maintenance of equity; and

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b) a strengthened administrative, planning and management capacity at various critical levels of the education and vocational/technical training system, leading to a more cost-effective use of resources and the moderation of recurrent financial burdens.

1.2.1.2 Identify problems that are/were being faced in the implementation of the BEST programme

1.2.1.3 Determine if there were/are any unintended outcomes in the course of the implementation of BEST.

1.3.1.4 Assess the quality and relevance of education and training as they relate to constraint areas under the BEST programme.

1.3.1.5 Make recommendations to the GOZ and USAID on issues pertinent to the improvement of BEST in terms of its management and implementation.

1.4 AREAS AND/OR ASPECTS TO BE EVALUATED

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the evaluation outlined above, the evaluation focussed on the progress made by BEST in achieving its goals through the following areas and/or aspects. The specific activities funded under the BEST Programme are listed below:

- 1.4.1 Construction
- 1.4.2 Equipment
- 1.4.3 Staffing and Staff Development
- 1.4.4 Cost-effectiveness
- 1.4.5 Technical Assistance
- 1.4.6 Institutional Development including curriculum development and teacher training
- 1.4.7 Administration and planning of programme.

In this report, these various aspects are discussed under six areas: Administration and Planning; Training; Teacher Education; Vocational/Technical

Curriculum; Construction and Finance.

However, issues of planning and management and finance are dealt with in all areas which have been put in the annex.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for the evaluation of all the projects under BEST, which have been evaluated, is: Context; Input; Process; Product (CIPP) Model.

1.5.1 Context Evaluation: This deals with intended ends (goals and objectives) which are determined through a series of planning decisions. These decisions are serviced by context evaluation, which continuously assesses needs, problems and opportunities within the decision-makers' domain. In the report, this was used in the discussion of planning, in every chapter.

1.5.2 Input: Intended means (processes and procedures) are determined through a series of structuring decisions. These decisions are serviced by input evaluation, which assesses alternative means for achieving the specified ends.

1.5.3 Process: The actual means are determined through a series of implementing decisions (following the plan or schedule outlined by the intended means). These decisions are serviced by process evaluation, which monitors and 'debugs' the processes to keep them in as close conformity as possible with the intended means and which makes adjustments and refinements that seem to be called for by actual experience. In this report, in some sections, this is dealt with as "implementation".

1.5.4 Product: The actual ends are determined through a series of recycling decisions. These decisions are serviced by product evaluation, which is concerned with comparing actual to intended ends, but which also takes account of other, unintended effects. In this report this is treated as outcomes. However, in certain cases it was not easy to determine the outcomes. The emphasis, as the reports indicates, was on the process.

1.5.5 Data collection instruments: The instruments used for collecting data for the evaluation of the BEST projects are: discussions; document and literature review; interviews; questionnaires and site visits.

1.5.5.1 Familiarization Discussions

Discussions were held with BEST Working Group members to become acquainted and familiar with BEST programme projects and implementation procedures.

1.5.5.2 Literature and Documents

Literature and documents related to the BEST programme such as Programme Grant Agreement, Minutes of BEST meetings, Project Documents, Reports and implementing letters were obtainable in USAID, implementing ministries (MOE, MLMP&SW, MPCH) and the MFEPD. These documents were a valuable source of specific data regarding various projects within BEST.

1.5.5.3 Interviews

Interviews, for some projects, served to clarify document and questionnaire data. There were cases in which information obtained from documents was confusing, depending on what documents were consulted. For instance, the project document for computerization has two starting dates, viz: 1982 and 1985. Interviews cleared this problem in that the project was not funded by BEST until 1985, although it was approved in 1982.

1.5.5.3.1 Interviews limitations: The evaluators ran into some problems in arranging interview appointments with officers, particularly in the Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Social Welfare. For those stationed at the N.V.T.D.C. the evaluators made three, four or five trips to get an appointment. First, the evaluator went there to make an appointment, second, to go and confirm it and, third, to go for the interview but to find nobody, fourth, to make another appointment and confirm it and, five, to go and interview the officer. This happened on several occasions.

The main reason was that officers were not on the phone. However, in some cases the interviewees were not available after appointments had been confirmed. The evaluators were told that the officers had been called for meetings at Head Office and it was not possible for them to contact the interviewers to tell them of the problem. This tended to delay the process of data collection.

1.5.5.4 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to collect data in a number of projects such as: distance materials, technical subjects kits, upgrading of primary teachers, Belvedere Teachers'

College, computerization of the Regions, industrialization of examinations, administration of BEST projects, etc. The details regarding the returns of questionnaires are dealt with under each appropriate project. However, it is necessary to point out that all the questionnaires, except for upgrading of primary teachers, were hand delivered and collected. Generally, the rate of return was very high:

Data was collected during the period of February 16 to 7 March. This was due to the fact that funds were not available for travel until the 16th of February.

1.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data in the various projects is divided into: discussion/analysis, observations and recommendations.

1.7 FEATURES OF THE REPORT

The rest of the report is arranged as follows:

Chapter 2 : A synthesis of General observations and Recommendations.

Annex 1 : Administration and Planning
Annex 2 : Curriculum
Annex 3 : Teacher Education
Annex 4 : Vocational/Technical Training
Annex 5 : Construction
Annex 6 : Finance

Chapter 2 is a synthesis of the generic observations which appear in most of the BEST programme activities. This arrangement will help the BEST evaluation team to make an overall assessment of the programme.

The annexes provide a detailed discussion on individual activities/projects under BEST on which the overall assessment is based. The annexes also serve as a reference section for the overall observations and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 A SYNTHESIS OF GENERAL AND COMMON OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As indicated in chapter 1 of this report, chapter 2 is directed at general observations and recommendations resulting from the detailed discussion/analysis, observations and recommendations of each evaluated activity of BEBI under such topics as: general administration of the BEBI programme, curriculum, teacher education, technical/vocational training, construction and finance.

The discussion of the general observations and recommendations in the chapter will be at two levels. The first level deals with observations related to: project identification, needs assessment, planning (covering aspects such as: project documents, objectives etc.) and implementation (covering: disbursement of funds, criteria for funding, project co-ordination supervision, narrative and financial reports etc.) The second level deals with the constraints and objectives identified in chapter 1. The main purpose of the discussion in this section of the report is to determine whether, given the general observations, the objectives directed at removing the five constraints (limited resources, insufficient numbers of trained teachers/instructors, inappropriate instructional curriculum, inefficient/inequitable spatial allocation of educational/training facilities, insufficient planning capacity) have been/are being met.

2.1 OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

2.1.1 Project Identification

One of the responsibilities of the implementing ministries was that of identifying the projects and preparing documents for funding. The information available shows that some projects were adequately identified by the ministries concerned but that others (projects) were essentially identified by the politicians and the ministries were then asked to implement them. The data collected regarding this issue show that some people were not aware of the origin of some of the projects they are running. There were a few cases in which PSIP is named as having identified some projects. Some people think the BEBI Working Group (BWG) identified certain projects. This claim has not been supported by documentary data or interview information. (see Annex 1 section 1.7) The evidence provided, which is discussed in section 2.2.1 of Annex 2 shows that some projects were

identified by the Zimbabwe government. The information obtained from the interviews further indicates that funds were earmarked for the implementing ministries before specific projects were identified.

The issue here is not the source or the level of identification of projects but whether the needs of the target audience were taken into consideration in planning the projects, and whether some priority criteria were used in the selection of projects.

2.1.2 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

It was observed that for most of the projects evaluated no formal needs assessment was undertaken and in those for which needs assessment was done, it was inadequately done. A good example of a project for which formal needs assessment was adequately done is the "localization of examination" (see section 1.12.4). In the process of planning this project an officer in the Examination Branch visited the UK for discussion with the British Council, the Associated Examining Board, the Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, the University Entrance, and Schools Examinations Council and the Schools Council. A report was produced as a result. The main purpose of the discussions was to determine the need and feasibility of localizing examinations in Zimbabwe.

A typical example of a project undertaken without a thorough needs assessment done is the "Technical Kits", particularly the assembling and use of kits. Our investigation of this project revealed that the assembling of kits was not preceded by a thorough needs analysis exercise. In all six schools visited in the Mt. Darwin (purchase) area, teachers pointed out that some tools in the kits were not as useful as some that were not included right across the subjects. The agriculture kit was singled out as including an ox-drawn plough which teachers felt was not as efficient as the tractors they hire to do the ploughing for them. (see section 2.2.5.2 Annex 2 for details). There are many examples of inadequate needs assessment we can give from individual projects right across the BEST programme. Furthermore, documentary information also show Mutare, Gweru, and Bulawayo technical colleges had needs assessment done by Yugoslavia, MLMPD, EEC and US consultants respectively. The people interviewed indicated that needs have been accumulating over the years and were known and therefore there was no necessity to waste time and money by undertaking a formal needs assessment exercise when the facts are already known and obvious. This argument is persuasive given the context in the expansion of education at all levels in Zimbabwe.

However, it must be pointed out that lack of needs assessment leads to fuzzy objectives and inadequate planning which result in serious implementation problems.

2.1.3 PLANNING

The teams overall observation was that all projects funded under the BEST programme had most of the documents prepared before funding, but a few project documents were prepared retrospectively.

However, most of the plans for the projects were very inadequate in the sense that objectives were not clear or specific enough to be measured. They were presented at the motherhood level. The evaluators had in some cases to develop further the objectives with the agreement of those concerned in order to determine whether these objectives were being met. The other flaws of some project documents were vague justifications, lacking criteria measurement for objectives and failure to provide activities and time scales. In most projects, time, financial estimates, and other required resources were underestimated, resulting in resubmission for funds and extension of time for the same project. This problem made it difficult for most of the BEST to meet the criteria (see Annex 1, section 1, section 1.4.7) being implementable within the disbursement period of the grant and having adequate provision for finance and other required resources to assure completion, maintenance and continuation of the activity.

In the Distance Education Materials, for instance (see Annex 1 Section 2.3.4.4) it was observed that twenty items per set were prepared in the hope that two pupils would share, but as it turned out the classes were invariably bigger than 40 pupils and hence items were shared by more than two pupils. All this points to lack of thought and detailed planning and needs assessment.

In the Upgrading of former Primary Trained Teachers Project, our observation was that while the concept of upgrading teachers is very sound, not enough thought was given to the assessment of the effects on the above average primary school teachers and secondary school teachers. No benefits were envisaged for those teachers who successfully completed the programme. In particular, it is not clear whether these primary school teachers will permanently remain in the secondary school system or will, after a determined period, return to the primary school system.

In the "Belvedere NVTDC project (Annex 4 section 4.2.1.2.2 and 4.2.1.2.6) we observed that it was reported with some frequency and frustration that inadequate budget

resources were invariably provided, often with large cuts being made in essential funds requested. We also observed that this is the result of inadequate detail in the project documents.

We take here the "computerization project" as an example of a project within the BEST programme whose plans were well conceived (see Annex 1, section 1.4.1 for detail). The project documents objectives were clear, time in the form of phases were provided, the plan was long term, comprehensive and an integral part of the educational management of the Ministry.

Our overall observation regarding planning is that although there were plans for most projects, most plans were inadequately prepared resulting in inadequate funding and implementation.

2.1.4 IMPLEMENTATION

The observations regarding the implementation of the BEST programme deal with various implementation issues such as: monthly meetings, disbursement of funds, criteria to be met for funding, supervision of various projects (visits), submission of financial and narrative reports, carrying out of responsibilities by BEST members, co-ordination and monitoring of projects, and evaluation of projects.

The teams overall observation regarding implementation of the various activities by BEST committee is that it was well executed. However, this is not to suggest the programme was completely free of problems. Certain activities were not carried out as expected while the majority were properly carried out.

2.1.4.1 BEST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A great deal of discussion was entered into during the interviews in which it was revealed that BEST committee meets monthly. The idea of monthly meetings is most commendable in view of the amount of work that had to be done within the disbursement period. Our assessment shows that the monthly meetings have helped both the GOZ and USAID to release funds and enable as many projects as possible to take off. (see Annex 1 Section 1.7.1) However, at the beginning, there were no terms of reference for the committee and therefore the meetings somewhat lacked direction. It is no surprise that the implementing ministries did not take the committee seriously. The ministries did not see themselves as part of the BEST committee. They went to BEST committee to present their projects for funding. They perceived BEST as the MFEPD and USAID's committee. This explained why there were no permanent representatives from the

implementing ministries. The evaluators were, however, pleased to observe that this problem was finally arrested.

2.1.1.2 ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

The role of BEST committee as it evolved over the years is: to allocate funds, to co-ordinate, to monitor and appraise projects. In view of the amount of money which has been released so far and the number of projects that have been funded, our overall observation is that BEST committee have carried out this function as intended. It was also observed that the speed with which funds were released depended upon the speed with which implementing ministries presented their project documents and upon the accuracy of these documents.

However it was disturbing to observe that some projects were funded without proper project documents being submitted. Annex 6 section 6.2.2 indicates the staff development project is one of those projects that were accepted for funding without proper project documents being submitted. As a result some respondents felt that the project was allocated more funds than could realistically be utilised. The project involved both the Planning and Teacher Education division of MOE, though for administrative purposes it is under Planning.

Supervision/monitoring Projects (Section 4.2.1.3.5)

One of the responsibilities of the BEST Working Group was that of supervising projects, as discussed under Annex 1 section 1.7.1. Our observation is that this function has been properly discharged up to a point. There are reports for site visits made in 1984, 1985 and 1986 respectively. In 1984 during the month of May, visits were made to clinics, primary and secondary schools in the Masvingo and Manicaland Provinces. Participants during these visits were (according to the reports) the MFEPD and USAID. In July 1985, USAID and AED visited Mutare, Bulawayo, Gweru, KweKwe and Kushinga Pikelele Technical Colleges. In August 1986 MPCNH, MLMPSW, MFEPD, AED and USAID, visited KweKwe, Gweru, Bulawayo and Masvingo to monitor and supervise the projects at these points. It was also observed that on all these visits the MOE did not participate.

However, there is positive evidence that all the three implementing ministries, except for a few projects, have not followed the procedures laid down by BEST in submitting financial and narrative reports which, at first sight, appears to confirm aspects of poor management, on the part of ministries. There is evidence, however, which reveals that BEST procedures were not known to Ministry officials and that little attempt, until recently, was made by BEST officials to educate personnel

concerned or insist on submission of financial and narrative reports on projects being undertaken. This is an indication that BEST was lax in the supervision of this aspect of the programme.

The submission of the aforesaid reports would have helped BEST to see the direction a particular project is taking at a glance. Action to correct the direction would have been taken before it was too late.

The team also observed that the supervision of projects at the implementing ministries' level left a great deal to be desired. The specific examples, out of such many examples, the evaluators give are those of these technical kits and distance education materials. (see Annex 2 section 2.2.5.7).

Our observation here is that once the kits were sent into the schools there were no follow-up visitations to make sure that the kits and distance education materials were being used and to determine problems regarding their utility. There were too few in-service courses to familiarise teachers with the kits. The official reason for this lack of supervision is that up until very recently the regional offices did not have education officers in technical subjects and that the CDU staff are already too stretched with other commitments to be of much assistance. Indeed one tends to sympathise with the position of CDU. Since independence, the expansion of services and responsibilities in the MOE has not been matched with the increase of education officers. However, the fact still remains that these projects were not satisfactorily supervised/monitored to ensure efficiency.

2.1.4.3 CO-ORDINATION

It was observed that there is lack of co-ordination between implementing ministries and within projects. Maintenance of equipment is clearly such an area where we observed such lack of co-ordination between ministries of Construction and Education. The believed assumption was that the Ministry of Construction would do the servicing of the equipment at Belvedere Teachers College. However, it is not clear whether there was consultation with the Ministry of Construction at the point equipment orders were being made. Such consultation as pointed out in Annex 3 section 3.3.4, would provide professional advice and some indication by the Ministry of Construction of the range of expertise they could provide and hence a limitation on the type of equipment to be ordered. Though the College started in 1982 there is no record of any kind reflecting a systematic monitoring of this expensive equipment by the Ministry of Construction. It was therefore impossible to assess the quality of work

done by the staff from the Ministry of Construction. It was observed that a large number of personnel at Belvedere Teachers College seemed very unclear about how the maintenance unit from the Ministry of Construction was supposed to operate relative to the total college organizational structure.

In some schools in the Mt. Darwin area, we observed that the fence which was sent under the agricultural kits, was not put up because only the Ministry of Construction had, according to policy, the responsibility to do the erection. This led to the delay in starting agricultural activities, particularly the periods during which animals roam about (see Annexes 2,3, & 4 for details).

In Annex 2 section 2.2.5.4 it was observed, regarding the appointment and posting of Belvedere student teachers that the project phases were largely determined on the basis of the projected rate of production of student teachers from the College who would be posted to schools to introduce the technical subjects or replace students going back to college for further training. Evidence, however, shows that there has been little co-ordination between CDU, teacher education division, and the staffing office to ensure that Belvedere Teachers' College students are in fact employed in the manner suggested in the project document. Only twenty-five (4%) teachers/respondents were Belvedere Teachers' College students. Of these only two were teaching technical subjects as well as their academic options. The rest taught only academic subjects. Thus the appointment of Belvedere Teachers' College students to schools, it was observed, has not been co-ordinated to meet the project requirements/objectives. The college point out that posting student teachers far out of the urban centres is expensive for the college when lecturers follow these student-teachers for teaching practice supervision. This is a valid point made by the college. However, it was observed that even in those few schools where they are placed there are no technical kits. Lack of co-ordination in the posting of Belvedere Teachers' College trained teachers is preventing the government to meet its objective of achieving educational equity in manpower development, and the allocation and distribution of other resources.

REDUCTION OF CONSTRAINTS

The constraints identified for the BEST Programme which have been outlined in Chapter 1 of this report are as follows: limited and inequitably allocated resources, insufficient teachers/instructors, inappropriate instructional curriculum, inefficient/inequitable spatial allocation of facilities and inefficient planning

This section of the overall observation is directed at the determination of whether there was or was not reduction of these constraints. (This section is not meant to be lengthy since the determination is based on the observations.)

2.1.5.1 Limited and Inequitably Allocated Resources.

The Government of Zimbabwe identified the allocation of resources as limited and inequitable and therefore BEST was charged with the responsibility of reducing/removing this constraint. Our overall observation regarding this constraint was that very good progress has been made in that seven vocational technical colleges, two VTC's, and the NVTDC are operating or are in an advanced stage of construction, whereas only two vocational/technical colleges existed at independence. In addition to technical colleges mentioned above, Belvedere Teachers College set up under this programme is fully functional. The setting of these colleges, although some are not fully operational, has the potential for increasing the development of manpower in the ministries of Labour and Education. This constraint is closely related to constraints 2 and 4. (see Annex 4 section 4.3) Some care needs to be taken, however, to ensure that an imbalance does not occur due to too great an emphasis on urbanized technical colleges providing for high technical skills, vis-a-vis rural skill centres and appropriate skills development.

2.1.5.2 Insufficient numbers of Trained Teachers and Instructors

This constraint has to be looked at from the enrolment point of view. In the Ministry of Labour, both permanent and temporary measures have been taken to remedy the position but these of necessity, are long-term and the effect has not been felt. With regards to this Ministry there is some evidence that the programmes were hurriedly planned and implemented and some doubts have been expressed about the eventual quality and experience of the end product. It is too early to comment further but in view of the importance of these products, close monitoring is felt to be advisable. (see Annex 4 for detailed discussion). In the Ministry of Education, there are two projects which were directed at this constraint: the upgrading of former primary trained teachers and Belvedere Teacher Training College programme.

The main objective of the upgrading programme was to make a significant contribution in meeting the shortage of qualified teachers at secondary level. It was, however, observed that this project failed in many respects to

meet the envisaged objective. The output from the project was 83 teachers in 1985 and 106 teachers in 1986 which statistically represents a negligible contribution to the teaching force in the secondary school system. It was also observed that one of the possible reasons for its failure, quantitatively, was that the schools Division could not, due to shortage of teachers, release more than 150 teachers a year.

The Belvedere Teacher Training project, it was observed, is meeting the objective related to the constraint. That the Belvedere teacher training project is meeting Zimbabwe's need for trained secondary school teachers and that it will in the very near future begin to ease the shortage of trained teachers can easily be seen from the enrolment and success profiles. In 1982, first year enrolment was 107 and the same number, 107, completed their training. First year enrolment has increased from 107 in 1982 to 578 in 1986. (see Annex 3 section 3.2.3.3 for detail) The evaluators believe that this constraint, given the infrastructure of facilities set up, will positively be reduced.

2.1.5.3 Inappropriate Instructional Curriculum

In the Ministry of Labour, it was observed that progress in trying to remove/reduce this constraint has been made after a rather shaky start, with probably too many courses introduced in too short a time. Progress to date has largely occurred due to the efforts of technical assistants. A need exists for the localisation of the curriculum Development Unit in the Ministry of Labour so that continuity and consolidation can occur without undue disruption. There is also need for increasing staff and for organizing staff development programme in the Ministry.

In the Ministry of Education, our observation was that the above constraint is attacked from two points - localization of examination and the introduction of new courses and locally prepared materials through the projects "technical kits" and distance education materials. The Moe has done an outstanding job in this

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The discussion in Annex 1 section 1.12.1 shows that since independence Zimbabwe has tried to introduce new subjects into the curriculum. However, it was observed that teachers and pupils have not been responsive to the new subjects. The reason being that teachers diligently and satisfactorily teach subjects and students work hard at subjects if they are examinable. Localization of the secondary school examinations was seen as one way to encourage curriculum changes that would make secondary school instructional curriculum appropriate and more

relevant to the local environment.

It was also observed that the Government of Zimbabwe adopted a policy of diversifying the curriculum by increasing the scientific and technological contents of education, particularly at the secondary school level. The technical kits project of the BEST programme made this possible by introducing into each of the rural secondary schools at least two technical subjects drawn from a list of eight subjects such as: agriculture, woodwork, technical drawing, metalwork, home economics etc. There are problems related to these projects, but the start has been made. It is hoped that when the BEST programme comes to an end, the Government of Zimbabwe will continue to give financial support to these projects so that the removal of this constraint can be finally realised.

2.1.5.4 Inefficient/inequitable spatial allocation of facilities

A great deal has been done to reduce this constraint particularly when one looks at the number of training facilities for the Ministry of Labour which have been constructed under the BEST programme. However, it was observed that care needs to be exercised to ensure that full utilization of facilities occurs as the provision of sufficient staff, equipment and hostel accommodation still requires attention and completion. In addition, some facilities in this Ministry have possibly been neglected e.g. facilities for the development of a national skills testing service, whilst others have made only limited progress, e.g. upgrade training, as LMPWSW efforts have mostly been directed at college course expansion to date.

In the Ministry of Education, it was observed that a good start has also been made in the removal of the constraint by the provision of computers in the regions. Instead of computerizing the head office only, efforts have been made to computerize all the regions.

The introduction and provision of technical kits, distance education materials and Brothers' Brother Books to colleges and rural secondary schools is an effort to reduce the inequitable spatial allocation/distribution of facilities. We believe that with the improvement of the management infrastructure for each BEST project as identified under individual projects this constraint, in the long run, should greatly be minimized.

2.1.5.5 Inefficient Planning Capacity

It was observed, given the planning problems that have

been identified regarding the planning of various projects by implementing ministries, that little improvement has been possible, mainly due to staff shortage and lack of planning skills.

In LMPSW, the move to the NVTDC by all departments so that Head office is housed under one roof, should improve the position, but it is likely that special attention to this area may become necessary, such as the formation of a centralized Planning Unit at Head Office with the attachment of Technical Assistants before the position improves sufficiently to lessen concern.

In the Ministry of Education, there is the Planning Unit responsible for planning all aspects regarding Ministry activities. However, it was observed that the Unit did not plan all the BEST projects of the Ministry. The various divisions/units within the Ministry prepared their own plans. It is however suggested that in future the Planning Unit should supervise all plans for presentation to BEST.

2.1.6 BEST Programme Contribution

It was observed that in spite of management problems identified across BEST projects, the BEST Working Group have, with speed, disbursed almost \$40,000,000 within a short period, and have, therefore, facilitated the start and completion of many very important projects within a short period as well. This has led to the \$45,000,000 BEST Programme making a significant contribution to the development of education in Zimbabwe. This is so, particularly when one looks at the construction projects where the outcome is visibly observed. There is also evidence of the impact of BEST as demonstrated by the number of teachers enrolled and coming out of the Belvedere Teacher Training programme (see Annex 3).

2.1.7 Recommendations

The overall observations have shown that the BEST Programme as a whole has significantly contributed to the development of education in Zimbabwe. The observations have also indicated that there are some aspects of the programme which require attention in order to improve the programme. It is these areas, (needs identification, planning, allocation of funds, supervision etc.) for which recommendations are made.

2.1.7.1 Needs Assessment

Under normal circumstances, even if facts are known, a comprehensive needs assessment should be undertaken to streamline the areas of concentration in a programme, and particularly where foreign funds are involved, the needs

assessment exercise should be undertaken by local personnel.

2.1.7.2 Planning

Project plans should be detailed enough to include all the necessary activities to make it easy to implement and fund. In the Ministry of Education, the Planning Unit should help other divisions within the Ministry to prepare their project documents. In the Ministry of Labour, a centralized Planning Unit should be formed at Head Office to undertake research, needs assessment, design and monitoring functions, and to assist with the implementation of projects.

2.1.7.3 Supervision

It is not enough for BEST Working Group to supervise the programme as a whole, but it must see that those who are in charge of individual projects in the implementing ministries supervise their projects, because the success of individual projects leads to the overall success of the BEST Programme. The MFEPD need to insist on narrative and financial reports for and evaluation of projects as part of the supervision and monitoring role.

2.1.7.4 Co-ordination

Co-ordination of programme/project activities should be ensured between implementing ministries, within ministries and within projects. In this connection the BEST Working Group should ensure that activities by one ministry facilitates the activities of another. This is a problem occurring between Construction and Labour, and Construction and Education. This could be achieved by demanding reports (see section 2.1.7.3) above.

2.1.7.5 Limited and Inequitable Allocation of Resources

Some care needs to be taken to ensure that an imbalance does not occur due to too great an emphasis on urbanized technical colleges providing for high technical skills, vis-a-vis rural skill centres and appropriate skills development. In addition, where facilities are provided, attention must be given to ensuring full utilization by providing for ancillary and support devices such as staff, equipment and residential accommodation.

2.1.7.6 Inefficient Numbers of Trained Teachers/Instructors

Staff Development activities require to be introduced, particularly in the Ministry of Labour, and these should provide for both long and short term needs. While in the Ministry of Labour regarding the B. Tech., it is

recommended that close monitoring of the courses should be taken to ensure the eventual quality of the product of this programme. There is also need to evaluate the B.Tech programme. In order to attract and maintain good quality staff in the technical colleges, Ministry of Labour should improve salaries for lecturers. Regarding the upgrading of primary school trained teachers, if the project is reintroduced, the schools division should release teachers as envisaged in the plans if they are to meet the objectives.

2.1.7.7 Inefficient Planning Capacity

Please see 2.1.7.2 above.

2.2 Specific Recommendations for Specific Areas

2.2.1 PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

- 2.2.1.1 Funds should not be allocated or released without the required documents being presented to the BEST Working Group.
- 2.2.1.2 There should be a mechanism to enforce the production of financial and narrative monthly reports.
- 2.2.1.3 Where project documents are adequately prepared, BEST Committee should approve them quickly.
- 2.2.1.4 The problem of ever requesting additional funds for the same project should be discouraged. This can be done by insisting on adequate planning before the project is approved for funding under BEST.
- 2.2.1.5 USAID should not prepare project documents for implementing ministries.
- 2.2.1.6 MFEPD has the responsibility of communicating the planning and management requirements to implementing ministries.
- 2.2.1.7 The MOE should identify and appoint a person to take charge of the Automation of Examinations.

2.2.2 CURRICULUM DESIGN AND INNOVATION

- 2.2.2.1 Projects should not be allowed to start unless there is evidence that there is enough trained manpower to plan, administer and monitor them throughout the

institutionalization period.

2.2.2.2 Every project should have an evaluation unit from the beginning to ensure efficient utilization of human and material resources, and to ensure that widely accepted principles and procedures of project materials development and dissemination are generally followed.

2.2.2.3 CDU should vigorously fight for more human and material resources, to ensure that work is fairly distributed among its officers and that officers in post are not overstretched by attending to too many projects at a time.

2.2.2.4 The costing of projects should be thorough to enable realistic projections to be made.

2.2.3 TEACHER EDUCATION

2.2.3.1 There should be comprehensive planning to avoid costly errors.

2.2.3.2 Programme guidelines should always be produced to assist implementers.

2.2.3.3 Provision should be made for additional staff and materials.

2.2.3.4 Workshops and seminars should be mounted for personnel ultimately involved in the running of the project.

2.2.3.5 Staff development should be undertaken to boost the capability of the implementing ministries.

2.2.3.6 Adequate facilities to support the activities of the project should be provided.

2.2.3.7 There should be greater co-ordination between Government ministries providing supportive services to each other.

2.2.3.8 Periodical evaluation should be done to determine the progress being made in the implementation process.

2.2.3.9 Communication should be improved between sections involved in the running of a project.

2.2.3.10 Safety and security facilities should be provided and adequately maintained.

2.2.4 VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL EDUCATION

2.2.4.1 A Staff Development Unit should be introduced at Head Office to plan and administer a comprehensive staff development programme. In addition, local Staff Development Units require to be formed at all colleges to provide for local on-job needs and to assist the central unit in analysing needs and monitoring progress.

2.2.4.2 A top level investigation, with private sector representation, should be instituted to examine staffing problems and possible solutions.

2.2.4.3 The strict adherence to prescribed BEST procedures in project submission, progress and disbursement reports etc. requires to be introduced immediately.

2.2.4.4 Ways of introducing improved liaison and co-ordination with external-to-government organisations, including the private sector, require to be investigated and a more formalized system introduced.

2.2.4.5 The formation of a Skills Testing Unit requires early attention in order that a uniform national scheme can be implemented.

2.2.4.6 The removal of PSC regulations preventing some staff development activities occurring (e.g. no aid funds for local courses; no course in excess of 1 year) requires immediate attention.

2.2.5 CONSTRUCTION

2.2.5.1 There should be more co-ordination between the designers and the implementing ministries or the users of the facilities at an early stage in the design. It is suggested that a technically qualified person or group is established either permanently or on an ad hoc basis to provide this liaison.

2.2.5.2 Staffing of MPCNH should be reviewed so that their essential functions of overseeing design and construction work can be carried

out more effectively.

2.2.5.3 A set of design standards should be established based on the experience gained in these projects and related to the conditions in Zimbabwe.

2.2.5.4 In all colleges and institutes where technical skills are a part of curriculum and where equipment and laboratory facilities are available, necessary technical capabilities within the college must be developed with a view to equipment and services, instead of having to depend on MPCNH all the time.

2.2.5.5 USAID must establish more effective controls and procedures to ensure efficient utilisation of their funds, better cost-effective procedures, and improved information management.

2.2.6 FINANCE

2.2.6.1 The first thing that needs to be ironed out about the BEST Programme concerns the allocation figures. USAID, MFEPD (especially the Aid Accounting Section and PSIP) should meet to decide on the correct allocation figures. It is also especially important to communicate any additional funding approved, or any alterations in the amounts allocated to a project by the BEST Working Group to the Aid Accounting Section.

2.2.6.2 MFEPD should play a more interested and active role in the programme than it is doing now. The Ministry, especially its Aid Accounting section, has the responsibility to both disburse and monitor the progress of the project. It is also the duty of MFEPD to ensure that the implementing ministries submit quarterly financial and narrative reports as stated in Section 3:6 of the Programme Grant Agreement. In the case of the BEST Programme, MFEPD has not really pushed in this direction and the submission of these reports has been less frequent than should be the case.

2.2.6.3 Ministries should be discouraged from continuously going for additional funding, and one way of avoiding such a situation is to insist from the start that Ministries

should submit well written project descriptions based on sound costing. This is to ensure that cost overruns are avoided. For example, on one BEST Working Group meeting in January 1985, MOE asked for as much as \$2,250,000 in additional funding for Distance Education Materials (\$500,000), Training of Examiners (\$50,000), and National Education Centre (1,700,000). The Ministry of Labour Manpower Planning and Social Welfare submitted requests for US\$2,270,000 in additional funding. Masvingo Technical College required US\$1,7million to purchase equipment for the various mechanical, automotive and electric departments. However, when the project proposal was submitted for initial funding (if at all it was) the question of where the equipment will come from and how it will be funded was never adequately considered. With such "half-worked" project proposals, there will always be requests for additional funding, as is symptomatic of a number of BEST funded projects.

2.2.6.4 There are certain instances where USAID, consciously or unconsciously, encourages direct communication between itself and the recipient of aid. This was found to be the case with Masvingo Technical College. The problems result from this. Firstly, it encouraged the College to want to by-pass the Ministry and go direct to USAID and this was bad enough. It also resulted in delays when the requirements of the College had to be resubmitted through proper channels. Secondly, the College felt it had a special status, and became far less cost conscious in its activities. The case of the swimming pool and the tractor is such an example of a least cost-effective choice by the College. The College should therefore be discouraged from having direct access to the donor, and be discouraged from thinking that the money is there for whatever they need and at whatever cost. At the same time, the College complains of bureaucratic delays that frustrates its acquiring of equipment on time and installing this equipment once it has come. Bureaucratic controls therefore need to be reduced.

2.2.6.5 The MLMP&SW should try and streamline its expenditure in such a way that they try to go for a specialisation of skills at certain

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colleges. The major constraints that they face are that of qualified instructors/lecturers and adequate equipment for workshop, besides the recommendation that the salaries of lecturers (which are low compared to those offered by the private sector) be reviewed and running a staff development programme. A specialisation and concentration of skills at particular colleges will mean that the Ministry does not have to get good technologists for five or six colleges, but only for those colleges specialising in this area.