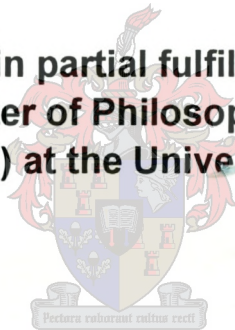


SUSTAINABILITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SITES IN SELECTED RURAL AREAS

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**Assignment presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Value Analysis and
Policy Formulation) at the University of Stellenbosch**



Supervisor: Prof. CJ Groenewald

December 2000

"DECLARATION

I, undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted at any university for a degree.

Signature:

Date:

ABSTRACT

This study is guided by the question: what is done to sustain early childhood development (ECD) in South Africa? The research is conducted in selected rural areas in Namaqualand and the Karoo. A selection of ECD centres is taken as the study material. In depth interviews and workshops were conducted with various role-players connected to ECD to provide case material for analysis. Apart from the findings of this research the study concludes with a number of recommendations of how to address questions of sustainability, self-reliance and development of these centres and the communities they are located in. The study is contextualised within the situation of wide-spread and ingrained poverty amongst the communities living in rural areas in South Africa. The study pleads for explicit educational policy reforms, a stronger role to be played by government institutions on all levels and by community institutions such as churches, the empowerment of women and the organisational reform of ECD centres. The overall theme is that the education of young people is paramount to the development of communities. The self-reliance of the centres is primarily depended on the sustainability of community life as a network of social and economic relations.

The first chapter introduces the research problem, the reasons why this study is deemed necessary and a framework of the research process. It includes a description of the context and methodology of the study.

The second chapter outlines the concepts of self-reliance, development and sustainability from the point of view of the progressive and participatory paradigms, the basic requirements for sustainable development, such as lifelong learning for all people and the interdependencies that enhances progress and development.

Chapter three is devoted to Early Childhood Development (ECD). A historical overview and the current status of ECD, including government policy, in South Africa is presented. The gaps existing between the different echelons that are directly or indirectly involved in ECD are identified.

The fourth chapter deals with ECD sites. Their objectives and the benefits for ECD education as well as care-taking strategies are described and researched. The multidimensional purposes and tasks with respect to children and parents as well as the community are especially highlighted.

Chapter five develops the integrating function of ECD sites within community further. The focus is on the various interdependencies and relationships between an ECD site and its environment. The role of parents, women and their ties with ECD and local churches, especially within rural communities, is analysed. Also, the wider community, the different organisations that has relationships with ECD, the practical utility of networks, and the contribution of government structures are dealt with.

Chapter six outlines the conditions that will enhance and enable an ECD site to become more sustainable and self-reliant.

Finally, chapter seven proposes conclusions and recommendations flowing from this study. The most basic condition is education and learning. The idea of a culture of lifelong learning for all is stressed and it is proposed that this should start at the youngest possible age. ECDs should therefore have a strong impact on learning. The main contributors to this process are women, local churches, the different tiers of government and lastly, funding organisations.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie word gelei deur die vraag: wat word gedoen om die volhoubaarheid van vroeë kinderontwikkeling (ECD) in Suid-Afrika te verseker? Die navorsing is in geselekteerde landelike gebiede van Namakwaland en die Karoo uitgevoer. 'n Seleksie van ECD sentrums is as studiemateriaal gebruik. In diepte onderhoude en werkswinkels is onderneem met verskeie rolspelers in ECD om toepaslike gegewens vir ontleding te verskaf. Afgesien van die bevindinge van die ondersoek wat beskryf word, kom die studie tot gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings oor hoe om die volhoubaarheid, selfvoorsiening en ontwikkeling van hierdie sentrums en die gemeenskappe waarin hulle gevestig is, te verseker. Die ondersoek is gekontekstualiseer binne die situasie van wydverspreide en ingegroeide armoede in die gemeenskappe van landelike gebiede in Suid-Afrika. Dit lewer 'n pleidooi vir uitdruklike opvoedkundige beleidshervormings, 'n sterker rol deur regeringsinstansies op alle vlakke en deur gemeenskapsinstellings soos kerke, die bemagtiging van vroue en die organisatoriese hervorming van ECD sentrums. Die algehele tema is dat die opvoeding van jong mense allesoorheersend is in die ontwikkeling van gemeenskappe. Die selfvoorsiening van hierdie sentrums is primêr afhanklik van die volhoubaarheid van die gemeenskapslewe as 'n netwerk van sosiale en ekonomiese verhoudings.

Die eerste hoofstuk stel die navorsingsprobleem, die redes waarom die ondersoek as noodsaaklik beskou word en 'n raamwerk vir die navorsingsproses bekend. Dit sluit in 'n beskrywing van die konteks en metodologie van die studie.

Die tweede hoofstuk bied 'n uiteensetting van die begrippe selfvoorsiening, ontwikkeling en volhoubaarheid. Dit word gedoen vanuit die oogpunt van progressiewe en deelnemende paradigmas. Verder word die basiese vereistes vir volhoubare ontwikkeling, soos lewenslange leer vir alle mense en die interafhanklikhede wat vooruitgang en ontwikkeling sal verhoog, aangedui.

Hoofstuk drie is gewy aan vroeë kinderontwikkeling (ECD). 'n Historiese oorsig en die huidige stand van ECD, insluitende die owerheidsbeleid, in Suid-Afrika word aangebied. Die gapings tussen die verskillende vlakke wat direk of indirek betrokke is by ECD word uitgewys.

Die vierde hoofstuk handel oor ECD sentrums. Hulle doelstellings en die voordele vir ECD opvoeding sowel as sorg strategieë word beskryf en nagevors. Die multidimensionele oogmerke en take met verwysing na kinders en ouers asook die gemeenskap word veral beklemtoon.

Hoofstuk vyf ontwikkel die integreringsfunksie van ECD verder. Die fokus is die verskeie interafhanklikhede en verhoudings tussen 'n ECD sentrum en sy omgewing. Die rol van ouers, vroue en hulle bande met ECD en plaaslike kerke, veral in landelike gemeenskappe, word ontleed. Verder word ook gekyk na die wyer gemeenskap, die verskillende organisasies wat in verhouding staan met ECD, die praktiese waarde van netwerke en die bydrae van die owerheid.

Hoofstuk ses gee 'n oorsig van die voorwaardes wat 'n ECD sentrum se volhoubaarheid en selfvoorsiening sal verhoog en bemagtig.

Ten slotte stel hoofstuk sewe gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings wat uit die studie spruit, voor. Die mees basies voorwaarde is opvoeding en leer. Die idee van 'n kultuur van lewenslange leer vir almal word beklemtoon en dit word voorgestel dat dit op die vroeë moontlike ouderdom 'n aanvang neem. ECDs behoort daarom 'n sterk impak op leer te hê. Die hoof bydraers hiertoe is vroue, plaaslike kerke, die verskillende vlakke van regering, en ten slotte befondsingsorganisasies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"'t Kan verkeren" said G. A. Brederode, a famous Dutch poet who lived in the 16th century and his expression is applicable indeed! In 1985 I immigrated to South Africa after having been a principal of a pre-school in The Netherlands. I arrived at the height of the forceful oppression of the South African population by the White minority government. A period in which Human Rights were denied and poverty, materially and mentally, was the 'way of life' for so many. For a few years I became involved with informal pre-school education in different parts of rural South Africa, but I left the education field in 1995 thinking that I never would become involved again. The research in pursuance of a simple question 'what is done to sustain an Early Childhood Development site?' fulfilled a circle. The subject caught my deepest concern and interest.

In 1996, I had the opportunity to extend my education when I entered the University of Stellenbosch for the master course 'Value Analysis and Policy Formulation'. It was the 'fulfilment of the circle' that helped me dedicate this assignment to the Early Childhood Development field.

To carry out the research I received much co-operation and support of the different key-role players in the ECD field as well as from DOCKDA committee. Very helpful was the Namaqualand Association for Pre-school Education. The co-ordinator, Anna Witbooi, needs special thanks as she provided me with a place to stay while being in Namaqualand. Certainly I will not forget all participating ECD sites, the interviewees, State Departments in the Northern Cape Province and all people who were available for consultation. I thank them all.

Thanks to the Catholic Institute for Education (CIE) I had the disposal of a tape recorder and transmitter. This allowed me to pose the questions without having to ask to repeat what is said, but I could fully concentrate on the interviewee. It also enabled me to refer literally to what is said. Also thanks to Rural Development Support Programme (RDSP) who helped me with the lay-out of the questionnaire.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education & Training
ACVV	Afrikaanse Christelike Vrouevereniging
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ANC	African National Congress
B&B	Bed and Breakfast
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CECD	Centre for Early Childhood Development
CGE	Commission on Gender Equality
CIE	Catholic Institute for Education
C&FW	Child and Family Welfare
CGE	Commission on Gender Equality
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DOCKDA	Dioceses of Oudtshoorn, Cape Town, Keimoes/Upington and De Aar
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELRU	Early Learning Resource Centre
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IDT	Independent Development Trust
IFI	International Financial Institute
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
GB	Governing Body
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution
GRADE-R	Reception Year Class
KaMBRO	Karoo Mobilisasie Beplanning en Rekonstruksie Organisasie
KAVO	Karoo Assosiasie vir Voorskoolse Onderrig
LOF/LDF	Lokaal Ontwikkelings Forum/Local Development Forum
NAMKO	Namakwalandse Katolieke Ontwikkeling
NAPE	Namaqualand Association for Pre-school Education
NC	Northern Cape Province
NCC	Namaqualand Council of Churches
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NQF	National Qualification Framework
RC	Roman Catholic
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme

RDSP	Rural Development Support Program
SADEP	South African Development and Education Programme
SMMEs	Small Micro and Medium Enterprises
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WDR	World Development Report

INTRODUCTION

"The doors of learning and culture shall be opened! Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children". The Freedom Charter, 1955.

Since the first democratic elections of 1994 education became one of the most urgent aims to transform: all children of South Africa have the right to receive education and therefore the availability and accessibility of educational institutions became a priority. Other sources of great concern are: reallocation of resources aiming at equal distribution; parental involvement and participation. Besides all this there is the need for the curricula to become adjusted to future requirements, as economies more and more will be based on global structures where high electronic technology and accessibility of knowledge prevail.

The inequality within the education field of before 1994 puts an enormous pressure on the newly elected democratic government to correct the imbalances of the past and to prepare people for the future. Harold Wolpe points out in his article *'Education and Social Transformation, Problems and Dilemmas'*: "...for the principal political actors the development of policy options to educate and to equip the people with skills to participate in the management of the economy and the political system, has become a matter of particular urgency" (Unterhalter, 1991: 5). This statement is reinforced when the White Paper says: "it is the responsibility of all those involved in the education of young learners to meet the challenge of ensuring that all learners engage successfully with the new curriculum. All learners need to be supported to become numerate, literate well balanced citizens" (1007: iii). The responsibility for education is restricted to learn young learners only by the White Paper, as it should need to encompass all people.

The government has set some priorities: to transform education and to overcome existing gaps and inequalities within education. The transformation of education includes retraining of teachers and school governing bodies, but it is not the only concern of the government. An overall transformation of the society as a whole, such as social transformation and redirecting of resources should go hand in hand. A point of attention for the government is that education needs to start at the youngest age possible and thus should include formal and informal Early Childhood Development.

The subject under study of this assignment is the sustainability of Early Childhood Development sites. From now onwards referred to as ECD, ECD education and ECD care. More specifically I focused on the sustainability of ECD sites in selected rural areas. The context of this study is a research commissioned by DOCKDA into the above stated issue and ECD sites situated in Namaqualand and The Great Karoo were involved.

DOCKDA is a Rural Development Agency that delegates funding from the agencies Cordaid (The Netherlands) and Broederlijke Delen (Belgium). The abbreviation stands for the **D**iocese of **O**udtshoorn, **C**ape Town, **K**eimoes/Upington and **D**e **A**ar. The Dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church are geographically situated in the Western, Northern and Eastern Cape provinces and are mainly the rural and semi-urban areas such as West Coast, The Great Karoo, Gordonia, Namaqualand, Little Karoo and the areas bordering the Eastern Cape.

DOCKDA predominantly focuses on projects involving women, projects and with youth programmes, which includes young children. DOCKDA spends much attention on the people most marginalised in the society, namely people in rural areas.

ECD is a focus area of DOCKDA and is considered to be an integral part of holistic community development. Besides the ECD education the young child receives, it lays the foundation the future of the child will be built on; the acquired self-confidence and a better self-esteem enhances the opportunity to complete primary and further education successfully. DOCKDA feels its vision and aims require it to look more in depth at ECD sites so that it positively assist them to become sustainable. DOCKDA wishes to be instrumental in this process in the most appropriate way.

This study will include parts of the research done for DOCKDA as the findings help one to understand the complexity of the concept of sustainability and the conditions enabling ECD sites to become sustainable.

1.

Problem Statement and Overview of Study

1.1 Introduction

When the question was posed "*what is done to sustain ECD sites?*" I had not expected to meet so many gaps, and latent and obvious problems between the different echelons affecting the Early Childhood Development. The National Education Department encounters huge problems to correct the imbalances of the past within the field of education. The ECD field is still compelled to be the 'appendix' of the official policy in spite of the fact that nice and inspiring words are uttered and written about it in the White Paper 'Foundation Phase, 1997'. Presently the financial means are lacking to implement compulsory ECD provision for each and every child in South Africa. Alternative ways to provide ECD needs to be found and supported as South Africa's national budget for education is below the world average (ESSET, 1999: Series 5).

Next, the question "what is sustainability and how needs it be interpreted concerning ECD sites?" has confronted me with the complexity of the concept 'sustainability', as it is more than a financial issue only. The problem of sustainability has deeper origins and global trends stabilise or destabilise national economies.

Then, the development and education of young children needs to be looked at from a holistic perspective, which stretches as far as the holism of the society and its environment. Lastly, how does the holistic development approach influence and enhance the sustainability of ECD sites?

1.2 Contextualisation of Problem

To facilitate a better understanding of the context of the problem posed in this assignment it is useful to introduce a few aspects which affect the possible sustainability of ECD.

The care of the child and his/her education has been revised and re-valued

through a deeper and better understanding of the development of the young child. In the 20th century it has become part of the social and political agendas of governments, NGOs and development organisations. Policies for ECD are developed and implemented but the results are varying from country to country.

Rich and poor countries

Mainly in the developed, rich countries education is supported by a stable year-to-year budget. The opposite occurs in the developing and underdeveloped countries where little or no provision is available because of reasons such as the concentration of wealth, the imbalanced distribution of resources between the rich and poor countries and the compulsory implementation of the structural adjustment programmes affecting the 'soft targets'. Some targets are health care, education and social provisions. Michel Chossudovsky writes in his book *The Globalisation of Poverty* "educational establishments are closed down and teachers are laid off due to lack of funds" (1997: 70). The first victims of the structural adjustment policy are the very young children and women. Moreover ECD is habitually considered to be a 'women issue' and the care and education of the young child is allocated to be their task. Yet, the changing times urge parents and childminders to look at new childcare needs and facilities.

In developed and mainly industrialised countries education is mostly fully subsidised, including salaries for teachers and educational equipment. ECD provision is included in this programme. In developing countries education is only partly subsidised, teachers are often underpaid and ECD is mainly provided for thanks to the financial support of NGOs, individuals and foreign donors. In such a way the local and national NGOs take over the responsibilities of the State. NGOs play an important role in the training and support of practitioners and ECD. Yet, the training offered, although of high quality, is regarded to be 'informal' and accreditation by the National Qualification Forum and Department of Education is not yet forthcoming.

The Bernard van Leer Foundation writes about the changes in the situation of the children in Africa throughout the last decades, comparing the early days and today. The Foundation states "despite all these changes, one certainly holds: children remain their parents' riches. However, these 'riches' are often

treated very poorly by the larger world community" (1994: 1).

South Africa

The overall situation of South Africa is unique as the country is in the process of political and social transition. It has, since the beginning of the 1990s moved from a political structure of a minority ruled government, driven by racial oppression and violence, to a democratically elected government. The reasonable peaceful process compelled the new government to address the imbalances of the past and to look for transformation in order that services and provisions should be equally distributed and accessible for all people.

The National Department of Education and the Provincial Departments had the task of uniting the different Education Departments, which had previously been based on ethnic division. The implications of this process are radical. Major financial and other resources needed to be channelled to the previously disadvantaged schools, and the introduction of Curriculum 2005, plus a new teacher learner ratio had to be implemented. Disturbing and disappointing is that ECD does not belong to the priority issues of the National Education Department although a Reception Year is introduced for 5 - 6 year olds. The current indication of the Reception Year is Grade-R or Grade-0.

Firstly an eye needs to be kept on some aspects. A society derives benefit by investing in the care for its children including ECD education. All education prepares children and adults for self-development both in the present and for the future; it opens the doors to new technologies and knowledge; and, it enables the coming generation to participate in the globalisation processes. This provokes the second point: care and education needs to be available and affordable for all children's parents. Thirdly, if this is not possible, new or alternative approaches to child rearing need to be encouraged and supported. The Bernard van Leer Foundation refers to the African context, and says "emphasised the many positive aspects of traditional child-rearing patterns and socialisation but that ways should be found to blend traditional practices with the needs and possibilities of a modern society" (1994: 2).

Globalisation

What a modern society is, and if South Africa fits in this framework, is dependent on the degree of 'western' developmental achievements the country finds itself in. Nations are classified globally according to being more or less developed and they are put into compartments: the industrialised world with advanced electronic technology available are the most 'developed' rich Northern hemisphere countries. Then there is the semi and non-industrialised world with little technology which are mainly situated in the Southern Hemisphere. The last countries are mainly poor and can be divided in 'developing' and 'underdeveloped' countries. The position a nation takes in the 'world-ranking' depends as well on its degree of participation in the globalisation processes, which are mainly economically connected.

The process of globalisation needs to be enlarged upon as it affects each and every country, likewise South Africa. My motivation to elaborate on this issue is that nations are compelled by necessity to deal with the phenomenon 'globalisation'. In other words, nations have the sword of Damocles hung above them: to be part of it, or be left out. Both the decisions have short and long term consequences and both affect the economic stability of the country. Globalisation urges nations to become member of world organisations benefiting centralisation or the rise of monopolies, and the already rich countries: World organisations such as the IMF (International Monetary Fund), the World Bank, the WTO (World Trade Organisation), and GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and others. The WTO promotes 'free trade', which is in a way an unequal competition on every economic level and thus causes a wider gap between the haves – represented by the rich countries, and the have-nots – representing the poor countries. What makes South Africa special is the fact that it is part of the global competition only since 1990, but the negative consequences are already visible. Tim Lang and Colin Hines put it as follows "global centralisation is less commented upon even though the centralisation of decision making leaves the citizen and the nation state relatively powerless" (1993: 49). Goulet come to the same conclusion when he remarks "the existing global economic order is uncongenial to the pursuit of equity within developing countries because it is lubricated by forms of competition based on comparative efficiency" (1995: 73). These conclusions are important and need to be listened to as the outcomes of globalisation affect the country's national and regional well being. Globalisation puts a

heavy yoke on the non-industrialised countries like production on big scale, mechanisation, export-driven economy, and a high degree of technology and international fast-money trafficking. South Africa is deeply drawn in the globalisation trend that influences indirectly the sustainability of its own economy. To satisfy the world organisations the policy of the RDP is abandoned and replaced by GEAR and its influence reaches as far as the possible sustainability of, among others, ECD.

A debate can be spent on the question "is South Africa a developed, or a developing country?" The statistics show a decrease in growth in comparison with industrial countries as well as with developing countries. Between 1980 to 1990 the growth was 1.9 (source: Old Mutual report 1995). On the other hand it is dubious and is dependent on the context one speaks from: is it the urban context or is referring to the rural context? The urban context fits reasonably well in the 'developed' category; the rural context falls mainly within the 'developing' category. This study refers to two selected rural areas: Namaqualand and The [Great] Karoo, and both can be classified as belonging to the economically poor and underresourced areas in South Africa.

These two areas are selected as they fall within the boundaries of the Catholic Dioceses, where DOCKDA provides financial and other support to community projects, including some EDCs. This enables me to focus specifically on the two particular areas

Information about the Selected Areas

Since 1994 South Africa consists of 9 provinces of which the Northern Cape geographically is the largest, but has the least number of people per square kilometre. *Namaqualand*: is the most westerly district of the province, separated from Namibia by the Orange River, a long coastline, inland going to Vanrhynsdorp up to the Kalahari Desert. The region is arid, receiving between 50 and 200 mm of rain annually. The population of Namaqualand is approximately 66 500. The majority live in the 7 major towns situated along the copper belt. Previously, the mines provided the majority of jobs. Over the last few years the profitability of the mines decreased and as very little manufacturing takes place in the region, the unemployment rate has an average of 50% throughout the region. Agriculture is limited to intensive cultivation along the Orange River. Other labour providing activities in

Namaqualand are the mariculture, the fisheries and the diamond mining. Some positive developments could be the richness of minerals which can be exploited; the extension of the harbour of Port Nolloth; a more widespread use of solar energy; and possibly cultural and eco- tourism, but this is very much seasonal (CSIR, 1999).

The Great Karoo stretches over three provinces, the Northern, Western and Eastern Cape indicating a vast geographical area. The region can be categorised as being a semi-desert area. The population is thinly spread all over the region emphasising the isolation of the communities and towns. The economy consists mainly of farming with sheep on a large-scale and is controlled by white commercial farmers. Many people on farms have lost their jobs due to the increasing mechanisation, the implementation of new labour laws and the decrease of the subsidy for farming. Another economic set-back was the cutting down of the railway capacity affecting vibrant towns turning them into ghost towns due to the depopulation and increasing unemployment (DOCKDA, 1999). Other labour providing activities could be the introduction of labour intensive alternative agricultural products, eco-tourism, the widespread introduction of solar energy and the creation of circuit-barter markets.

Namaqualand and The Karoo have features in common affecting sustainability in general and thus are relevant for this study

- Vast geographical distances between towns affecting economic activities.
- Local and regional economies are in the hands of few, mainly white commercial farmers.
- Cash flow within communities is limited influencing negatively small entrepreneurial initiatives.
- Spending-power of the people diminishes rapidly due to widespread unemployment and living on credit.
- The 'brain drain' of educated people to towns, leaving the less-affluent people to carry the costs of services.

- Down-sizing of essential services affecting existing jobs [local medical doctors are leaving and replacement is difficult to obtain; post offices carry over services to local shops and/or municipalities].
- Closure of local shops affecting negatively employment opportunities.
- The huge increase of HIV/Aids.
- Relative few NGOs and CBOs are existing and functioning effectively.
- Still widely occurring racism and distrust among the population groups.

The socio-economic situation of Namaqualand as well as of The Karoo is characterised by the points mentioned above and causes 'frustration among the people due to unemployment' and the scarcity of solutions. The unemployment fans widespread poverty, plunging people into a vicious cycle of dwindling basic services. The frustration consequently fans a downward spiral of values and moral principles, such as alcohol and drug abuse, child and women molestation, and violence in the community.

The reasonably peaceful transition in the 1990s created a platform for new and positive developments: free and fair elections clearing the way for participation and co-operation in the different tiers of government: national, provincial and local. The National Government has transferred certain governmental and administrative tasks to the 9 provinces. They in their turn have an autonomous status so that direct interaction between government and people can take place to address developmental problems. The Premier heads the Provincial Council, and is in his turn assisted by democratically elected delegates representing the regions. Together they decide upon the policies to be followed and how to execute the decisions. The provincial government has the disposal of a budget distributed among the different portfolios.

Local Government enables community members to influence their particular and shared interests. Many communities and/or districts have a Development Forum, or a RDP Regional Committee, which have the task of advocating the development interests of the areas they represent; to draw up adequate development plans; and to assist communities with the execution of the plans.

Other positive points are:

- The spiritual and social roles local churches fulfil, in spite of often being divided and splintered.
- Rural communities are reasonably safe in comparison with urban areas.
- Community members know each other: a higher level of social control.
- The environment is healthy, spacious and beautiful.
- Rural areas offer opportunities to explore new, economic initiatives: tourism should be one of the focus areas.

In 1997/8 a National Poverty Forum was established to have poverty hearings and to eradicate the widespread poverty. Such hearings were held in Namaqualand as well as in The Karoo. Yet, at the beginning of 2000 no essential input to eradicate poverty has been made by the Forum.

1.3 Goals of the Study

The study aims to elucidate the importance of ECD, what it is and the effects ECD has on an individual. It is thus necessary to clarify the conceptual understanding: the historical background, the present situation of ECD in South Africa and the governmental policies and programmes that exist to enhance ECD. Lastly, it is useful to look at gaps existing between the different echelons which are in one way or the other involved with ECD and how to address the gaps.

If it can be proved that ECD makes an impact on the lives of people, it requires looking into the broader context. What are the circumstances or conditions within a community and family that necessitates the establishment of ECD sites? This provokes the question of what are the qualities, which are attributed to ECD, such as the objectives and functions it holds. Next, individual ECD sites have to meet a variety of interdependencies and to keep up relations within and outside their 'own' community.

To understand the socio-economic position of rural areas it is useful to look briefly into its context: geographical, climatic, ecological, the social structure of

the population and what are the driving and constraining forces of communities. And what is the influence of these features on the sustainability of ECDs.

As soon as the word 'sustainability' is mentioned, questions are surfacing: what is the meaning of sustainability? What are the requirements and conditions? What needs to be done to become sustainable? How can an ECD site sustain itself? I feel challenged to find a few possible answers: firstly to clarify the concept; secondly to demonstrate the applicability of definitions of sustainability; thirdly, to demonstrate how ECD-sites can become sustainable, or how sustainability can be promoted.

In summarising the above the aims are:

- What is ECD, and why is it important in the life course of an individual.
- Under what conditions do we need ECD-sites, and what are the functions and objectives or characteristics of ECD-sites.
- What are the features, socio-economic, constraints and social driving forces of rural areas.
- What is the meaning of 'sustainability' and how can sustainability of ECD-sites be enhanced.

1.4 Chapter Outline

The first chapter provides information about the problem, why this study is necessary and offers a framework of the research process. It also discusses the methodology applied and used in this study.

The second chapter outlines broadly and in depth the concepts, in order of succession, of *self-reliance, development and sustainability*. The approach to the concepts is mainly taken from progressive and participatory paradigms. I deal with the basic requirements for sustainable development: lifelong learning for all and interdependencies. I refer to the new dispensation in South Africa, the developments since 1994 and I focus on the RDP and GEAR.

Chapter three is devoted to early childhood development. The historical overview brings me to the present position of ECD in South Africa, its government's policy since 1994 for the 5 - 6 year olds and for the younger children 0 - 5 years olds. I end with the gaps existing between the different echelons.

The fourth chapter aims to describe the *objectives* of an ECD site focusing on the children's benefit as well as it focuses on the parents. This part is supplemented with research findings. The second part of this chapter focuses on the *functions* of an ECD referring to its multidimensional purposes and tasks. I aim to point out that an ECD has a more functions within a community, which is supplemented by research findings.

Chapter five intends to describe the various interdependencies and relationships existing between an ECD site and its environment. The collection of relationships needs to be seen from a holistic perspective. It depicts how this outlook influences the functioning of the ECD site. After a brief introduction follows the description of the possible interdependencies: parent(s); more attention is on women and their ties with ECDs; the local churches as rural communities rely heavily upon the input the church offers. From here I move to the wider community and I elaborate on the levels of interdependencies: the organisations an ECD site has possible relations with and the practical utility of networks; ending with government structures. I supplement with research findings.

Chapter 6 refers to *sustainability* in relation to ECD sites. Here I present a brief outline of the aspects stimulating and enabling an ECD site to become sustainable. A concept that is applicable cannot easily be put in place. Research findings conclude this chapter.

The last chapter aims to propose conclusions and intends to make recommendations. First I refer to the conclusions and recommendations of the DOCKDA report to offer an overview of what preferably should be done. To provide a more practical approach some major aspects are highlighted. The most basic condition is education; therefore I develop a concept of *what is learning* and its relation to *the culture of lifelong learning for all*, implemented at the youngest possible age. Then follows its impact on ECD. Next I refer to main contributors to this process: women, what is their personal gain by being

involved in ECD; local churches, tiers of government and lastly funding organisations.

1.5 Methodology

The study has proceeded from the quest for sustainability of ECDs, which has manifests itself to be complex and exposes a number of problems. To address the problem adequately and to propose possible solutions it is desirable to collect the most available evidence about the causes of the problem. To do so a research has been commissioned by DOCKDA, which needs to formulate a responsible and constructive way of supporting ECD in the wider context and/or individual ECD sites. The request for research led to a process involving key role-players in the ECD field, ECDs in the selected areas and entailed several activities for collecting the necessary evidence.

The research process can be divided into three phases spread over a period of 6 months. It started in September 1998 and it took till March 1999 when the report was presented at the DOCKDA meeting. The phases are A) consultation, compiling questionnaire and demarcation of selected areas; B) field visits; C) analysing research results and presentation of report.

Before the actual research process could start it was necessary to *contextualise and outline the problem(s)*: DOCKDA wanted to know more about issues concerning ECD. The seriousness of the problem '*sustainability of ECD sites*', how deep the problem is rooted and how it affects the present-day situation. The process included *consultation*, development of an extensive *questionnaire*, demarcation of the *selected areas*, *visiting* the selected areas, *interviewing* participants, the *collection* of all *information*, the *processing* and *interpretation* of all data. In the book *Understanding Social Research* Johann Mouton says, "the process of social research involves continuous interaction between the researcher and the social world. During this interaction or engagement the researcher has to make a number of decisions in the pursuit of valid conclusions. The main stages in this decision-making process are: problem formulation, conceptualisation, operationalisation, sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation" (1996: 63). Finally, the research report was presented to the DOCKDA committee and contained a proposal of possible solutions; and which tools and alternatives are available to address

the problem.

I will refer to the several phases of the research process and at a later stage I will refer to the problems I experienced, the shortcomings and how these were solved.

1.5.1 Phase A. Consultation, Demarcation of Selected Areas and Compiling Questionnaire

Extensive consultation with different role players.

To research a specific issue requires a clear insight into the problems compelling the research and therefore the collection of available information about the subject is essential. Beyond defining the problem(s), the composition of the questions for the questionnaire and interviews is pivotal. Clear, short and to the point questions help the interpretation and understanding of the problem(s) and the underlying factors. Lastly, it is useful to demarcate one or more geographical areas within the boundaries of DOCKDA and which will provide a sufficient sample to base the research on.

I aim with the research to add value to and to uplift an existing less desirable situation, hence the research needs to be valid. I therefore consulted with several key role-players:

Department of Education and Training

Department of Social Welfare, both in Kimberley, Northern Cape Province

Eric Atmore, Director of the Centre for Early Childhood Development, Cape Town

Ross Herbert, rural co-ordinator of Early Learning Resource Unit, Cape Town

Professor Cornie Groenewald, Department of Sociology, University of Stellenbosch

Rural Development Support Program, Cape Town

Catholic Institute for Education, Cape Town

Namaqualand Association for Pre-school Education, Springbok

Identification and demarcation of area of study, the target ECD sites and the sample used eventually.

DOCKDA operates in explicitly demarcated geographical areas and which the Catholic Dioceses cover. This helped me to select and define the geographical areas in which the research should be executed and the

participating ECDs, which I divided into 2 groups. The first group: since 1995 11 ECD-sites have applied to DOCKDA for financial support for different reasons: training of practitioners, equipment and running costs. It was clear that the 11 applicants, all rural and spread all over the Dioceses, should be part of the research. Eventually 8 ECDs participated, mainly in The Karoo (annexure1). To allow me to get a clear picture of the overall situation rural ECD-sites find themselves in I included a number of ECD-sites in Namaqualand and The Karoo, forming group 2 (annexe1).

The Namaqualand Association for Pre-school Education (NAPE)¹ has fulfilled a central role in this phase of the research. Staff members and committee were very willing to participate in a work session; further to spend precious time to reach out to the ECDs to have the questionnaires filled in, collected and to send to me.

Compiling Questionnaire

"What is done to sustain ECDs?" was a question not easily answered as the understanding and the concept of sustainability is complex and dependent on internal and external factors. The compilation of a comprehensive questionnaire was most important, as it should enable me to get an overview of the daily functioning, opportunities and problems ECDs come across. Consequently this was done in consultation with experts in the field of ECD. The questions were composed in such a way that relative short answers only could be provided, as this would help the interpretation of the answers. As the questionnaire (annexe 7) dealt with sensitive information it was required to stress confidentiality. It comprises the following sectors:

¹ NAPE has been established in 1989 and is an initiative of several communities in Namaqualand. Its mission statement is 'Development and promotion of early childhood education for children aged between 0 - 6 years in Namaqualand and Hantam area.' ECDs are invited to join freely the Association. NAPE delivers the following services: Toy library for members of the Association, for pre-primary classes at primary schools, and also to the public if interested, a registration Fee is asked for. A newspaper 'Haasbekgeselsies', which is published once in the 3 month's and sent on subscription. Further NAPE has extensive training programmes, and has been contracted by the 'National Educare Forum' Consortium to offer training to 25 identified practitioners over a period of 3 years. Three 'Core unit Standards' are facilitating the Safe and Health Development of Children, Facilitating Active Learning, and Managing the Learning Programme. Offers training to governing bodies (GBs), and mobilises ECDs to identify projects in their own community to promote self-reliance of the ECD. Other programmes in planning are' Home based - childminding and the production of educational toys.

General information of ECD site

- A. Governing Bodies/Committees
- B. Parents
- C. ECDs
- D. Finances
- E. Practitioners
- F. General
- G. Community
- H. Funded by DOCKDA

Chapter H. to be filled in only by ECDs that received financial support by DOCKDA. A covering letter went accompanied with the questionnaires to invite ECDs to participate (annexe 2).

1.5.2 Phase B: Field Visits

Phase B can be divided into the following activities: on sight visits to 8 ECDs, workshops and interviews.

On sight visits

The 8 ECDs I visited were scattered all over the selected areas. The aims of the visit were: if possible to see the ECD in function; meeting with practitioners and members of the Governing Body (GB); to have the questionnaire filled in; and to have a workshop with parents and practitioners at 2 ECDs.

The personal visits to the ECD sites were very much appreciated. I quote the following at this point from the research:

"The fact that an organisation such as DOCKDA shows interest in rural areas and particular in 'their' ECD seems to be an 'eye-opener' for the people involved. Firstly, [the practitioners] express astonishment that they are seen! They and the work are 'important' enough to receive attention. In short, it helps them grow as human beings, feel appreciated and acknowledged which is crucial for further development and progress. The communication with DOCKA is considered to be very important and all expressed the need for visits and personal contacts."

The visits were not only useful for meeting with practitioners and GBs. It also enabled me to see the premises, the available equipment, the outdoor area, the environment and the community, which the ECD-site serves. The visits offered me a first-hand impression of the constraints practitioners and GBs have to overcome. Further, I was able to observe the immense need for pre-school education in rural areas where such resources are limited. Lastly, I could hear about the positive impact ECD education has on the learning results of children in primary school.

NAPE carried out on site visits and distributed the questionnaires among the 34 member ECD-sites. If necessary NAPE assisted with the filling in of the questionnaire for which it received instructions on how to overcome misunderstandings of terms and/or expressions (annexe 3).

Workshops

At two ECDs I had the opportunity to meet with the GB and parents, who were willing to participate in a workshop. Issues were discussed as to how they perceive their ECD site and how it could become sustainable. The first ECD site was Harlekyntjie Kleuterskool in Carolusberg, Namaqualand and the second, Olifantjie Kleuterskool in Loxton, Karoo (annexe 5.).

NAPE is one of the few NGOs in the Northern Cape Province offering training in ECD education. A workshop was held with the staff and board members to get a better understanding of the training they offer and the impact training has on the sustainability of ECDs (annexe 6).

Interviews

Objectives: to interview key-people to get a deeper understanding of how 'outsiders' experience the functioning of the ECD they know about, how the interrelationships of ECDs with other organisations relate to sustainability. All but one of the interviewees was from Namaqualand and could speak with authority as they have a realistic and up-to-date knowledge of the socio-economic situation and development activities in the region. The interviewees had no personal interests in an individual ECD-site. All interviewees were roughly asked the same questions 'for outsiders' (annexe 4). Depending on the present-day functions they fulfilled, some questions could be altered (i.e.

Derrick Naidoo). The following people I was privileged to interview, and at appropriate times they will be quoted. They are:

Quinta Titus - Jonas, Youth Programme Co-ordinator, NAMKO, Okiep

Chris Jones, CIE, Springbok

Hendrik Visser, Executive Officer District Council, Springbok

Maarten Bezuidenhout, Director RDP, Springbok

Margaret Visser, Diamond Trust, Department Education, Training and Development, Springbok

Peter Volmer and Charmain van den Heever, NCC, Springbok

Neville van Wyk, Department of Local Government and Housing, Springbok

Derrick Naidoo, National Co-operative Association of South Africa and SADEP, Cape Town

1.5.3 Phase C: Processing and Analysing Research Results

31 questionnaires returned: 23 filled in by ECDs associated with NAPE and 8 filled in by ECDs which received financial support from DOCKDA of which one is an associative member of NAPE.

The processing of the questionnaires was difficult and the assessment is based on: 1) the experiences of practitioners and committees; 2) the available information and knowledge about developments in the ECD field that practitioners and committees have access to. And lastly 3) how the information and knowledge served [or disserved] the ECD-site.

1.5.4 Some obstacles and shortcomings in research process

I encountered some constraints: vast distances between the ECDs; high travel costs involved; and the limited time as DOCKDA allowed me a period of 6 months to execute the research. All this compelled me to restrict the visits to those that I considered of importance. So I was not able to go to all ECDs, which participated in the research, nor was I able to attend the process of filling in the questionnaires in Namaqualand. NAPE took up the task to do so. This fact prevented me from experiencing forthcoming problems and from hearing reactions concerning issues posed in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was extensive, for many subjects needed to be covered. I had to restrict the length of the answer and that could have affected the

content and outcome of the answers. In other subjects some questions were repeated, but in a different way. The provided answers were quite difficult to process and therefore I decided to reflect as many answers as possible or to combine certain answers

I omitted to attach a numeric value to each question to enable a more accurate outcome by way of computation. This problem was anticipated in the way a question was put. All answers given on a particular question were applicable to that question and the grouping of the answers helped me to explain the tendencies, such as 'attitude', 'financial' and organisational'. If almost the same answer was given, I put the number behind it, for example: **What is the procedure to appoint or elect a practitioner.** Answer: Advertisement *and* announcements: **15**. Thus 15 ECDs filled in this answer.

In spite of the fact that I explained carefully the purpose of my visit, the questionnaire and my relation with DOCKDA raised expectations, which I could not prevent. I impute this to the limited availability of resources in the rural areas, the desperation for training, financial and material support and attention for their expanding social problems.

1.6 Literature Study

A major challenge was to decide upon the literature, as much reading material is available but not all is applicable for this study. A push in the right direction was the kernel of the topic on which everything revolved around: *the understanding and concept of sustainability in relation with ECD*. A second point that I kept in mind was the thought of which development practice is the most appropriate for the selected rural areas

To understand the concept 'sustainability' and to connect it with ECD compelled me to look for suitable literature about sustainability as well as about ECD. The concept of sustainability can be explained and logically thought through in different ways and there are many contributing factors. The understanding and explanation of the concept depends of on which side of the ideological and political 'border' one find oneself in. All involved in development and also many politicians intend to agree that sustainability must be striven after, but the interpretation concerning the application leaves much

to be desired. The concept of sustainability has been developed over time, beginning with the World Commission on Environment and Development. In the 1980s the Commission formulated the first definition of what is understood by sustainability. This caused a chain-reaction of visions, opinions, conclusions and foremost it created an awareness of the urgency to take development seriously. The debate is not yet finished and according to the World Bank, the "achievement of sustained and equitable development remains the greatest challenge facing the human race" (Goulet, 1995: 126). This statement has not much changed at the end of 1999.

In my study, I approach the concept of sustainability from a progressive, radical and holistic point of view that is particularly applicable for the situation South Africa presently is in. Sustainability needs to be looked at from different perspectives, as Stan Burkey does. Since 1986 he has been working in development in Uganda. He stresses the importance of *self-reliance* and considers the 'correct attitudes' of people to be essential for development as the 'correct attitudes' helps people to decide upon their destiny (1993: 50). Denis Goulet, a professor in Education for Justice at the University of Notre Dame (USA), stresses the *ethics* involved in development processes. Max-Neef, a progressive economist in Southern America, stresses the satisfaction of *fundamental human needs*, which influence the quality of life. They, and other authors I have not mentioned here, all agree that people need to come first. The authors have offered me a deeper insight and understanding of sustainability. It has a complexity and linkage with self-reliance and development in general.

ECD in South Africa is still in its infancy. ECD for 0 - 5 years is not an integral part of the national education policy. Too many children between 0 - 7 year olds never enter an ECD-site. ECD is still seen as women's issues and is primarily based on voluntary input. To stress the importance of ECD I often quote the Bernard van Leer Foundation, a private institution in The Netherlands, concentrating largely on ECD all over the world. Its leading focus is on the situation of children in developing and non-industrialised countries and the rural areas in South Africa can be ranked among them. The Foundation is actively involved in Africa and supports South African NGOs active in ECD training. The reports offered me valuable information for this

study. Further I made use of available policy papers concerning education and information obtained from the Department of Education of the Northern Cape Province

1.7 Themes of the Study

The aims of the study outlined before offer the opportunity to look into the wider context of what sustainability means for different people. The concept of sustainability is preceded by an elaboration on self-reliance and development. The three concepts cannot be separated and more explicitly the one concept lays the foundation for the other. The first theme: Conceptual clarification of sustainability.

Early Childhood Development is the next theme and offers firstly a theoretical clarification and then focuses on the importance of it for the individual. It is followed by a brief overview of the history and its present situation in South Africa. In conclusion, some existing gaps and barriers are presented.

The third theme is Early Childhood Development-sites and outlines their objectives and multiplicity of functions indicated by findings from the research.

The next theme is 'holistic perspective on the sustainability of ECD-sites' and deals in depth with the aspect of 'learning' with ECD as a foundation. Further I deal with the multiple interdependencies and their complexity. Emphasis is on the importance and intertwining of the relationships. Research findings will stress the crucial role of ECD within a community.

The fifth theme is 'sustainability in relation to ECD-sites' and refers to firstly to the clarification of the theoretical concept of sustainability. This is followed by the possible application of the concept on ECD and research findings.

The six and last theme contains 'summary and conclusion' taking into account the research findings and the possible practical implementation of recommendations.

2.

Conceptual Clarification of 'Sustainability'

2.1 Introduction

"...too many development professionals unconsciously believe that rural development will be achieved through the efforts of governments and development agencies. They do not reflect on the possibility that sustainable rural development will only be achieved through the efforts of the rural people themselves working for the benefit of themselves, their families and, hopefully, their communities" (Burkey, 1993: xvii).

'Sustainable development' has now become a fashionable mantra or catchword in international policy circles (Goulet, 1995: 127). Goulet states that one of the most difficult to define and to measure concepts within the development field, is that of sustainability. Much is written about the concept and its meaning; commissions are established such as the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, which defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." The US [United States] President has established a National Council on Sustainable Development. In 1993 the World Business Academy sponsored a conference "The Quest for Sustainability and Prosperity" (Ibid. 126-127), giving rise to the question: is it possible to put prosperity on the same line as sustainability?

The UNDP report (1993:3) sees sustainable development as "human [sustainable] development is development *of the people for the people by the people*. Development *of the people* means investing in human capabilities, whether in education or health or skills, so that they can work productively and creatively. Development *for the people* means ensuring that the economic growth they generate is distributed widely and fairly. Positive development *by people* increases the quality of *their* life. Development *by the people* is "on giving everyone a chance to participate." Is this really happening? Does the economic growth really generate a fair and wide distribution so that people can participate freely? Firstly the South African situation certainly needs redistribution of the existing resources. Secondly, economic growth needs to create activities by way of jobs and self-employment. If the economic situation were very positive, it should create voluntary participation. At present, the

reality is that South Africa has a small economic growth, which demonstrates itself as jobless growth. Thus, does every one really get the opportunity to participate and therefore get a share in the wealth that is created? Further, the UNDP report states "human development involves widening their choices, and greater participation enables people to gain for themselves access to a much broader range of opportunities" (ibid. 21)

Dusseldorp says "*an [development] activity can be considered sustainable*, when it is able to deliver an appropriate level of benefits, for an extended period of time, after major financial, managerial and technical assistance from the national government, an external donor or a NGO is terminated" (1993: 113-114). With this is stressed the quality and durability of the outcome of a development activity and this must be measurable. Dusseldorp further says that sustainable development depends on several factors, such as ecological, technical, financial, economic, social, institutional, judicial and political factors (Ibid. 115).

Burkey considers that firm economic and political bases must be in place to enable social development to be sustainable (1993: 208). In agreement with Dusseldorp and Burkey, Cordaid - a Dutch Roman Catholic Funding Organisation, focuses on activities promoting sustainability and supports activities enhancing a responsible attitude to the ecology. Other factors they consider to be important are social and cultural, financial-economic, technological, organisational and institutional (Policy Paper, 1997:10).

Stan Burkey in his book *People First*, states that "sustainable [rural] development will only be achieved by the efforts of the [rural] people themselves... (1993: xvii; 39). Governments and agencies can assist this process, but they cannot do it themselves". He continues saying "development is obviously a complex and slow-moving process involving people on the one hand and the factors of production and organisation on the other". Burkey refers to some very important requirements for sustainable development such as: people need to participate, development is a process, and people have to deal with certain factors (Ibid. 208). He says, "a self-sustaining development process benefiting the poor must be based on their own mobilisation of their resources". He continues "social development activities must have firm economic and political bases if they are to be sustainable" (Ibid. 208).

Max-Neef also considers people to be the main role players: "development is about people and not about objects" (1991: 16). This approach is the basic postulate of Human Scale Development. Burkey agrees by saying, "it was felt that development in any meaningful sense must begin with, and within, the individual. Unless motivation comes from within, efforts to promote change will not be sustainable by that individual" (1993: 35). Human Scale Development is just this. Personal development becomes the fundamental basis and a group of rural development workers developed this definition:

Human (personal) development is a process by which an individual develops self-respect, and becomes more self-confident, self-reliant, co-operative and tolerant of others through becoming aware of his/her shortcomings as well as his/her potential for positive change. This takes place through working with others, acquiring new skills and knowledge, and active participation in the economic, social and political development of their community (1993: 35-36).

Important is the reference to the awareness of a positive attitude of the individual as 'opening-up' as if this has a 'liberating' function.

Mahbub ul Haq expresses sustainable development very strongly and briefly "It implies a new concept of economic growth...it must become more respectful of the physical environment" (1995: 75-78). And, he adds, "it must translate into human lives". He also stresses that development is a process, including policies concerning different areas or factors as Burkey stated. Haq rejects the definition of sustainable development of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development as being "more a slogan than a framework for action," and he proposes the following "...is sustainable human development, putting people at the centre of the environmental debate. If the basic concept is sustainable development, each generation must meet its needs without incurring debts it cannot repay". Haq looks at four types of debt: environmental; financial; social, and demographic. First needs to be done: "to give an operational framework to the concept of sustainable human development." At the same time the following must be kept in mind: "what must be sustained for the next generation is the capacity to enjoy at least the level of well-being that our generation enjoys," referring to the future but also to the present (Ibid. 77-79). The crucial question is, *if* this framework is in place? And what is the well being of poorest of the poor of the present generation? Haq considers a restructuring of the world's income and consumption patterns of the rich

nations a precondition to be able to develop strategies for sustainable development (Ibid. 79)

Goulet takes the precondition further when he says: "Sustainability requires simple living in which consumption is limited" (1995: 128, 74). He suggests that poor nations ought to practice self-reliance in choosing their development strategies in order to gain freedom from servility to previously existing models. Pointing out that the poor nations themselves need to redirect their own development strategies, he sees that they need to be participatory in the development process and to do so a change of attitude of *all* role players, with respect to development strategies, needs to take place. But is that possible with being in debt to world institutions such as the IMF and World Bank in which the richest countries wield the sceptre? Goulet points out the preconditions, and he argues: "If equity, respect for human rights, and the empowerment of local populations in ways consonant with their values - together with increasing output, raising productivity, and achieving institutional and technical modernisation - are taken as development objectives, then a policy bias in favour of authentic participation correlates highly with genuine development" (Ibid. 98). Haq would add "...and it must translate into human lives," (1995; 78). Genuine development would do so and hence advance the quality of life. Thus, what is necessary is to develop policies and strategies to redistribute wealth by curtailing, redirecting, developing and proposing alternative patterns of spending, whether it be of natural resources, financial and of consumption, will need urgent attention.

In spite of these positive attempts for a better understanding and perhaps implementation of conditions of sustainable development, it is a disputed and complex concept. Always something can be added, or something needs to be changed, and as Wouter Achterberg in *Sustainability and Associative Democracy* poses "taking sustainability seriously is a moral commitment" (W. Laferty & J. Meadowcroft, 1996: 163).

In line with Goulet are Tim Lang and Colin Hines who say "the word *sustainability* is much in vogue, but it perhaps begins to lose its meaning when even giant chemical companies use it" (1993: 12). Next they say, "we prefer the phrase *self-reliance*..."

Colin and Hines use the term self-reliance as such "... in the sense of celebrating and aiming for diversity of production, diversity of economic activity, and retaining control over capital, rather than letting it flow around the world in search of the highest interest" (Ibid. 13). This is a macro economic approach, applicable on national and regional levels, which seeks for alternative ways of promoting economic development on a micro level.

Max-Neef in Human Scale Development understands self-reliance in terms of "a horizontal interdependence and in no way as an isolationist tendency on the part of nations, regions, local communities or cultures" (1991: 58). Neef continues by saying that self-reliance is "a process capable of promoting participation in decision-making, social creativity, political self-determination, a fair distribution of wealth and tolerance for the diversity of identities, self-reliance becomes a turning point in the articulation of human beings in nature and technology, of the personal with the social, of the micro with the macro, of autonomy with planning and of civil society with the state" (Ibid. 58).

Goulet observes self-reliance to be a strategy "in order to gain freedom from servility to previously existing [development] models" (1995: 74). He adds: "one of the highest priorities of a self-reliant strategy is to organise the economy in ways that free people from manipulation by the market". Burkey defines self-reliance as "self-reliant participatory development is an educational and empowering process in which people, in partnership with each other and with those able to assist them, identify problems and needs, mobilise resources, and assume responsibility themselves to plan, manage, control and assess the individual and collective actions that they themselves decide upon" (1993: 205). This definition contains several important propositions, which are also reflected by the other authors mentioned above. Propositions such as education, empowerment, process, partnership and others. I will explain more about what I understand by the concepts of self-reliance, development, and sustainability by dealing with the concepts individually.

2.2 Self-reliance

"Self-reliance is at the centre of development" It is understood as a process capable of promoting participation in decision-making, social creativity, political self-determination, a fair distribution of wealth and tolerance for the diversity of identities,

self-reliance becomes a turning point in the articulation of human beings in nature and technology, of the personal with the social, of the micro with the macro, of autonomy with planning and of civil society with the state (Max-Neef, 1991; 57:58).

Burkey says "you cannot *make* people self-reliant; people *become* self-reliant". He emphasises that self-reliance is "more a *question of attitudes* than of money and materials" (1993: 50). When Burkey speaks about attitudes he stresses "correct attitudes" (Ibid. 50). Max-Neef and Burkey have the same objective: to empower people who were previously disempowered, and to enable people to act positively upon the circumstances in which they live. For Burkey adds "people must feel and believe that it is their own efforts that are driving the development process" (Ibid. 50). Empowerment in the context of my argument must be seen in a broad perspective: people who through participation and involvement achieve the power enabling them to direct the course of their lives. To direct implicates widening the choice, to be free which way to go, the way that seems to be the best.

Empowerment is also the understanding of the political and social context they find themselves in enabling them to change direction and improve their situation. Empowerment does not concern only the individual person, but the whole related community. Through empowerment people are enabled to establish different organisations and local networks to assist them in the process of change, and in such a way they create a healthy and competent interdependence. The empowerment of a group in which each individual is respected and his/her input counts will create capability, more acceptance and willingness to participate. What may not be neglected is the empowerment of individuals. Yet to focus only on a particular individual might give birth to alienation and even create division. The empowerment process needs to be a community effort and needs to contain two things I think are important. It ought to help people understand their potential and their limits, both in their personal capacity as well as in their impact on the environment. Paulo Freire argues that empowerment should be thought of in social class terms. He believes in educating people in critical political understanding and in order to help them become aware of the context in which they live, and the influences of oppressive forces on their lives.

Goulet brings me to the same point; he argues that the heart [or the essence] of 'self-reliance' is the commitment to creative innovation and adaptation in the

light of local constraints, values, priorities, and heritage (1995: 74). Commitment is an attitude of being and feeling responsible for something I do, or I am involved with, or I decide to do. Commitment can only come forward when people have an understanding of the world in which they live and when they are able to use their creativity and humanness to change a certain situation. To enable people to understand their world, they need empowerment that helps them change their attitude as they acquire the skills and the ability to do so. Only people who become aware that *their* attitude is decisive, including their attitude towards life, towards the environment and towards themselves, are able to become creative and innovative, because their action has a special purpose and context.

How prevalent are attitudes of negativity, passivity, resignation, and resentment? And how prevalent are related behaviours - indifference, negligence, wastefulness, and mismanagement, not to mention intolerance and violence? Attitudes can be positive, but also negative and are very dependent on the situation people find themselves in. It is therefore inevitable to look at what Paulo Freire calls "the world in which people live... And how they perceive specifically their world"² (Hamman-Poldermans, 1975: 75). It is crucial that people are able to contextualise their particular situation so that they get an understanding of it; that they learn the necessary skills to change their own circumstances. It is important that people get an understanding of what the driving and constraining forces are in their lives and community and that they learn to focus on their strength, creating happiness, confirmation and openness for the small things in life. Negative attitudes are an expression of abuse, exploitation, vulnerability, disempowerment, low self-esteem, low self-confidence, fear of change, but also an expression of unhappiness and wrong information. It must not be forgotten when people are not informed about and have no part in certain affairs or developments, feelings of resentment and of rejection become prevalent.

Self-reliance requires a wide variety of knowledge and skills (Burkey, 1993: 50). According to Burkey people need to learn four things: 1) how to form and manage their own organisations; 2) how to use their organisations to gain access to resources and services and to prevent exploitation; 3) how to acquire and adapt new knowledge and technologies for improved agriculture and other income-generating activities. Lastly 4) how to establish and manage

² Het onderzoek naar de leefwereld specifieke wijze van denken over hun eigen situatie

these activities. The four points direct us to capacity building and extensive training programmes to empower people to make the optimum use of available resources and skills. All points are very relevant for the survival of ECDs; therefore they need some more attention. Before I do this I will refer to capacity building which is a pivotal part of training and creates an optimum situation to learn particular skills to enhance the functioning of a person, group, or organisation. Targets for training need to be set on the priorities of the people or organisations involved. Training can take place on different levels such as in organisational skills: bookkeeping, general management, staff management, group dynamics, analytical skills. Technical training involves how to use a computer, bricklaying, welding, learning to read and to write.

Training and capacity building are not the same thing, but training is an important part of capacity building, it is indissolubly connected. But what is capacity building? It is putting people, individually or as group, in the centre of development. Helping people to become the first and main partner in development they have decided upon, or differently stated, 'people come first'. Hand-in-hand has to go developmental activities, followed by actions, all this to be done in their interest and at the same time the environment needs to be respected. Capacity building means enabling people to bring out their own talent, skills and abilities. They require the necessary and new skills in order to participate, co-operate and make decisions concerning development initiatives. They need to acquire the know how to mobilise the necessary resources and to apply them in a responsible way, to be able to evaluate the process of creating a degree of self-reliance, and this stimulate the development people want. Self-reliant participatory development is by definition capacity building, as it is a two-way learning and strengthening process where people are both respected and involved at the centre of the activities. Burkey describes the process as "self-reliant participatory development is an educational and empowering process which people, in partnership with each other and with those able to assist them, identify problems and needs, mobilise resources and assume responsibility themselves to plan, manage, control and assess the individual and collective actions that they themselves decide upon" (1993: 205).

The acquisition of knowledge, skills, and I would like to add access to information, are pivotal in the process of development and so it is essential that the concept of 'learning is a lifelong process for all' takes root within

communities. The basic principle, which needs to take root, is to start with the knowledge and skills known and available among people. The fact that people have a wide experience of different aspects of life and which is inherent to their being is incisive. Experience is part of the existing knowledge that needs to be utilised for the improvement of their lives and for transferring the experience to other people and the next generation. Besides it helps people to understand their own present situation. The same with the skills, which cover a variety, from the most basic understanding of doing things, to the more sophisticated, such as entrepreneurial, organisational, and technical skills. Also they need to be utilised and transferred. Learning needs to be seen as an ongoing challenge and a goal to enable change, but also to be in charge of and to own the processes involved. The last I would like to add is that change is only an option when it progresses from a presently, less desirable situation, into a desired future situation.

I want to refer to the four major issues Burkey find to be essential and deal with each point individually.

1) *People need to learn how to form and manage their own organisations.* This statement can be divided in two parts: learn how to *form* their own organisations, and learn how to *manage* them, as these are two different entities. People organise themselves as they as individuals can not reach or gain what can be done in a group, association or organisation. Burkey says "...men and/or women who have a common interest in working together to individually and collectively improve their lives.... small group of people, sometimes allied in larger associations, who have been able to change their lives for the better through their group action" (1993: 130).

To form or build up an organisation has the prospect of continuation as long as the organisation serves its purpose. A second reason is, but is often unintentional, to build an institution and this process might imply further organisational development growing from a simple organisation for a local, individual and/or collective purpose, reaching the level of a political party.

People need to have the belief that they are able to set up an organisation that helps them to make a difference in their lives, no matter how small the difference might be. To form an organisation requires that people know what steps need to be followed, what requirements are necessary to become an

organisation, and to know *why* the organisation is necessary. Further *what* is its vision and *what* does the organisation expect to do? Burkey points out some interesting principles for group formation. The people must be motivated to come together to work for their own common good; voluntary membership; the members must share a common interest; the composition and size of the group is important; and the group must be autonomous and thus being able to make decisions regarding the preceded principles (1993: 136-141).

To manage an organisation requires the availability of and accessibility to a variety of management skills and therefore individual development and capacity building are prerequisites. The learned skills need to be applied in favour of the organisation to guarantee its optimum functioning and its continued existence. Skills such as how to have a meeting, as group meetings are crucial in the process. Then, there is financial ability; bookkeeping; administration; know how to involve members; keeping of registration lists, minuting the meetings, how to be transparent and accountable. All these skills are very applicable to keep an ECD-site running.

2) People need to learn how to use their organisations to gain access to resources and services and to prevent exploitation. An organisation is expected to offer specific services to the community, and an ECD delivers very particular services. It is thus useful that the GB of the ECD, and all parents included, know how to access and to obtain available resources to secure the delivering of qualitative services. There are resources such as state subsidies or other financial means, but we need to include access to appropriate and adequate training, access to networks to receive support, advice and relevant information about the latest developments in order to enable the establishment of new plans and implement new ideas. To prevent exploitation, there might be a Union, and in the case of ECDs, they might to become members of an umbrella body, which looks at the interest of the practitioners. Many are expected to do the work voluntarily or to work for a minimum salary.

3) People need to learn to acquire and adapt new knowledge and technologies for improved agriculture and other income-generating activities. An interest with creating ongoing opportunities to learn needs to be cultivated. Particularly in rural areas, the promotion of different methods of vegetable gardening and small-scale agriculture is a necessity to allow people to add to sustainable livelihood and to break the cycle of chronic under-nourishment.

The Northern Cape ECD Pilot Programme states: "A proper community building project should be aimed at the empowering of the parents for some time until the parents can take over the management. The parents must be allowed/trained/ empowered to become self-sufficient." This statement is insufficient, it will only "...for some time until..." be instrumental to empower people, I would argue that it needs to be an ongoing cycle of mutual stimuli to enable people, and in this case parents, to acquire and adapt to the new.

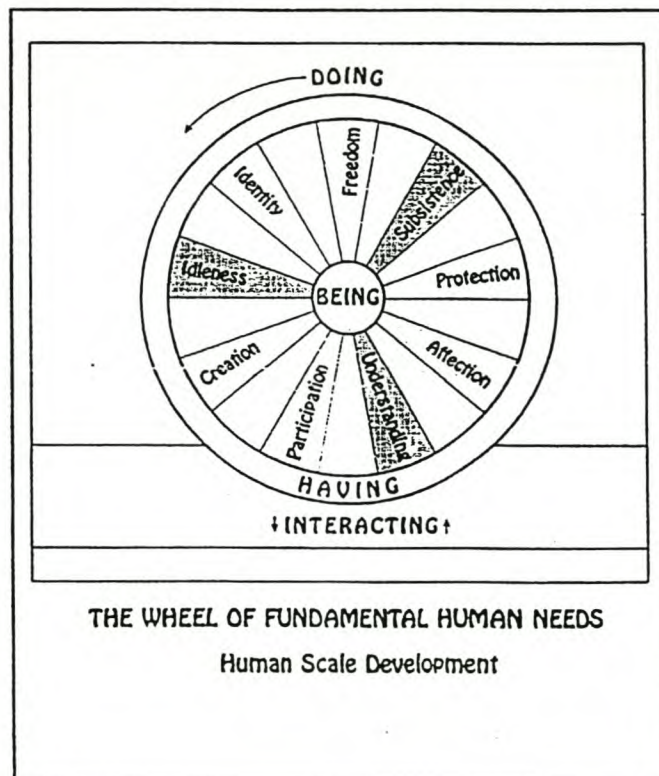
4) *People need to learn how to establish and manage these activities.* To sustain activities and projects people need to learn to take decisions and actions based on self-confidence and self-determination in order to apply and implement the newly learnt knowledge and skills. A process of building up a positive self-actualisation and self-image needs to be part of ongoing learning and training activities. People need to know which are the prerequisites to manage the started activities and projects, how to maintain and how to carry over to the next group of parents and interested people. The idea of lifelong learning needs to be the principle which underlies all development, because as Burkey says "it can be learned, but it cannot be given" (1993: 51).

The four above mentioned points refer to people to be *the* centre of development, considering it is people who learn become self-reliant and people who change their attitudes from being subservient and silenced into the "correct attitudes" (Burkey, 1993: 50). Correct attitudes imply self-acceptance, valuing one's self, self-confidence, self-esteem and the self to have the possibility of satisfying their fundamental human needs. The fact that people can satisfy those needs is called by Max-Neef *quality of life* (1991: 16).

Quality of life is what provides dignity to people and is something people all live strive and work for. How the fundamental human needs can be satisfied requires more attention, but first should be asked: What are the fundamental human needs? Burkey says the following "...those things that an individual must have to survive as a human being" (1993: 30). Denis Goulet talks about Basic Human Needs and he continues " ... the priority task of development thus becomes neither to maximise nor to optimise aggregate growth, but rather to satisfy a cluster of basic human needs felt by the poorest segments of the nation's population, those lying under some 'poverty line'. This cluster of basic needs includes goods and services relating to nutrition, health, housing, education, and access to jobs" (1995: 87). Keith Griffin in *Alternative*

Strategies for Economic Development urges that "top priority should be given to the satisfaction of basic needs. These include the need for food, clothing and shelter as well as the provision by the state of primary health care programmes and universal primary and secondary education" (1989: 30). Griffin quotes how the ILO defines basic needs, and which includes the "minimum requirements of a family for private consumption" and "essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport..." (Ibid. 172).

Griffin utters the same condition as Goulet when he says "...about giving priority in development to the needs and desires of poor people" (Ibid. 172). This is all to enhance quality of life. Max-Neef stresses the importance of the quality of life as "...in turn depends on the abilities to satisfy their fundamental human needs adequately" (1991: 16). Max-Neef adds the kernel of the quality of life when he includes psychological dimensions such as feeling appreciated and loved. Such needs will be satisfied in a different way than, for example, the need for food, yet both can not be divorced. He distinguishes nine fundamental human needs based on values: freedom, subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, creation, idleness, and identity. *Human Scale Development* has developed the wheel of fundamental human needs.



Max Neef's classification of fundamental human needs

Fundamental Human Needs	Being (qualities)	Having (things)	Doing (actions)	Interacting (settings)
subsistence	physical and mental health	food, shelter, work	feed, cloth, rest, work	living environment, social setting
protection	care, adaptability, autonomy	social security, health systems, work	co-operate, plan, take care of, help	social environment, dwelling
affection	respect, sense of humour, generosity, sensuality	friendships, family, relationships with nature	share, take care of, make love, express emotions	privacy, intimate spaces of togetherness
Understanding	critical capacity, curiosity, intuition	literature, teachers, policies, educational	analyse, study, meditate, investigate	families, schools, universities, communities
participation	receptiveness, dedication, sense of humour	responsibilities, duties, work, rights	co operate, dissent, express opinions	associations, parties, churches, neighbourhoods
leisure	imagination, tranquillity, spontaneity	games, parties, peace of mind	day-dream, remember, relax, have fun	landscapes, intimate spaces, places to be alone
creation	imagination, boldness, inventiveness, curiosity	abilities, skills, work, technics	invent, build, design, work, compose, interpret	spaces for expression, workshops, audiences
identity	sense of belonging, self-esteem, consistency	language, religion, work, customs, values, norms	get to know oneself, grow, commit oneself	places one belongs to, everyday settings
freedom	autonomy, passion, self-esteem, open-mindedness	equal rights	dissent, choose, run risks, develop awareness	anywhere

(Max-Neef, 1991:32-33)

Instead of *protection* I would prefer to put security, because security is less passive, it includes protection and it concerns a wider scope such as job and

income security. The security in the wider, global context is at risk due to the increasing globalisation of poverty, hunger and threat of HIV/Aids, as can be seen in South Africa.

The nine needs are the same in all cultures and do not vary over time. The lack of satisfaction of any fundamental need is poverty, indicating that poverty is more than not having material possessions.

It is useful to make a distinction between *needs* people have and *wants* people create, or as Max-Neef calls the wants: *satisfiers*. The *needs* can be understood, as the basic commodities people need to have fulfilled to offer them a degree of quality of life. In other words the satisfaction of the basic needs contribute to the dignity of people. The lack of satisfaction of any fundamental need is poverty. Poverty is thus much wider than the lack of material goods³. *Wants* are the commodities that might contribute to the quality of life, but are not necessarily useful and are often artificially created by, for example, advertising and encouragement of consumerism.

In South Africa in the lowest 40% of households the basic fundamental needs are *not* fulfilled and they still live in Third World conditions. The other 20% of households have in a degree their basic needs fulfilled and they are able to top up by adding the wants of the First World. I mention particularly that they have their basic needs fulfilled in a degree, because 'poverty' exceeds material well being and greediness might compensate for the lack of i.e. affection. But what makes the situation complicated is that the temptation of the wants crosses the lines between the haves and have-nots creating division, fanning crime, and the exploitation of the 40% of the poorest of the poor. Exploitation is twofold, firstly the thrust response to the temptation forces people into a heavy loan dependency. Secondly, the artificial stirred up wants of the industrialised world are almost always at a cost to some one else and might deprive people in the non-industrialised countries from having access to the fundamental human needs. This situation is well known in South Africa.

"People become self-reliant", "it can be learned, but it cannot be given" (Burkey, 1993: 50-1). This indicates that self-reliance is a process in which learning is central. What is learning? Would it be necessary to facilitate the learning process that people help to learn? What are the learning

³ Bernard Connor OP

opportunities of people in rural areas? Do people have access to the range of knowledge, skills, technologies, resources and services necessary to be instrumental in their own development? What learning skills are necessary to make a difference in the lives of people? Those are questions which need to be asked when I think of areas such as Namaqualand and The Karoo. What I have stated before is that the first and foremost asset are the people and their wide range of experiences and this needs to be respected and utilised as the basis on which further developments will be built. People's own experience need to be the stimulation to add new meaningful learning that is becoming conscious.

But what is learning? Learning is often seen as a strictly, limited period in one's life, mostly from 6 years till an average of 16 years and happens at an official institution such as a school. But learning goes beyond age and formality. It is a lifelong process for all to self-development and self-enhancement. However, some conditions for learning needs to be in place, or at least are to be changed for 'learning' to be fruitful. My reason for stressing this is due to the fact that many people have had negative experiences while they were in the 'old' learning phase in life. Allow me mention some reasons not susceptible for learning: too big and/or double classes; incompetent teachers; corporal punishment; 'die dom kinders' were in a separate group from the so-called 'slim kinders'. Children, who were not able to learn the subjects due to a learning disability or for other reasons, were stigmatised for life. Thus their experiences were often traumatic and the impulse to learn was nipped in the bud. Therefore, I repeat the question 'what is learning?' It needs to be an experience, which gives pleasure, satisfaction and challenges to explore new learning. Learning must be a pleasure, and this is the reason which Schumacher reasoned in *Small is Beautiful* that education is the greatest resource. He continues as follows "the essence of education is the transmission of values, but values do not help us to pick our way through life unless they have become our own, a part, so to say, of our mental make-up" (1973: 82). What Schumacher really means by this is that through the learning process people get 'ownership' over a certain standard or set of values of doing things, of how they conceptualise their world and how they act accordingly. This is important because the accepted 'set' of values decides how people deal with life in general, with their fellow-men and women and environment. Schumacher continues "...what they [the 'learners'] are really looking for is ideas that would make the world, and their own lives, intelligible to them" (Ibid. 84). Schumacher talks here about consciousness and he meets

Paolo Freire who distinguishes degrees of consciousness. The statement of Schumacher is not only valid for young learners, but is certainly the case in relation to adult learners. When people become conscious something is understandable and perhaps more easily explainable; people are more prepared to take risks and become creative, resourceful and participatory. What needs to be learned must be meaningful for the 'learner'; it must be reliable and must help people to become independent to a degree. If the process of understanding is neglected people might feel excluded; they might feel alien too because it is unfamiliar. I will give an example. In the case of a development plan where the vision behind a plan is not a shared vision - people will not participate. Therefore, to omit the phase of understanding might cause cynicism, apathy, indifference, resentment and even obstruction. Thus the process of contextualisation, making understandable what is to be learned, is crucial in mobilising, involving and motivating people to participate in development activities. Paolo Freire distinguishes 3 levels of consciousness. The first level is *magical* consciousness and is when a person experiences things but does not have the influence to change it. The second level is *naïve* consciousness, which is when a person knows the reality and thinks that it is acceptable. And thirdly, *critical* consciousness that includes an 'activity' such as contextualising, questioning and acting, resulting in independence⁴ (Ervarend Leren, 1978: 10). Critical consciousness helps people to decode situations that were previously unintelligible into intelligible, thus creating awareness. It mobilises people and enables them to act actively and effectively. Learning takes place by way of dialogue and the problematising of situations they want to analyse or research and address. This manner of learning is based on values such as *love*, for people you work with; *humility*, be equal as human beings; *belief* in people; *trust*, which needs to be on both sides; and *hope*, that things can change and that people can influence a situation⁵ (Ibid. 30-31). Learning is thus a process where values are prevalent, a process in which people actively participate. They decide what to learn and when and in conclusion learning is a ongoing cycle or process of becoming conscious: than act and than reflect, and so on.

Would it be necessary to learn people learn? Burkey conceives that to learn people *how* to learn is fundamental to self-development. It is meaningful to help people to think differently about themselves; they need to acquire a *new*

⁴ Magisch bewustzijn; naïf bewustzijn; kritisch bewustzijn

⁵ Geloof, vertrouwen; hoop

self-knowledge so that they can judge what to learn and how. By *new* self-knowledge I mean that a person who has learned to become conscious is able to take up other attitudes and can be more positive. This is what Burkey means when he says, "it is more a question of attitudes." Included in this process is that people discover a different picture of the world around them, that they learn to communicate and learn to be constructively critical, and this enables them to make a fair choice. To encourage people to learn is to shift the attitude from being passive learners, as it was in the past, to active learners who decide what is to be learned and that learning is a constant and on-going transformative process (Mehrtens, 1999: 50). Thus, learning is transformative when it changes something radically, and remodels something into a new shape. Something is transformative when it contributes positively to the course of life of an individual and thus it helps to build on self-confidence, self-esteem, and on creativity. In this way the learning is enhanced and the learners are challenged to do things for themselves because they are now able to make choices. Mehrents says the learner is in some way permanently changed (Ibid. 50). It is in other words a process of self-development leading towards independence and self-reliance.

What are the learning opportunities of people in rural areas? With 'learning opportunities' I do not mean the formal or the pre-designed manner of learning. What I mean is an alternative way of getting access to knowledge that is meaningful for people in order to make choices, which improve the quality of their lives. It is useful to look briefly at the formal education opportunities of rural people. The report of the Ministry in the Office of the President RDP of 1995 *Key Indicators of Poverty in South Africa* states "about 50% of the poor have no education or only incomplete primary education, and only 7% have completed secondary or higher education. In contrast, among the richest quintile, 62% have at least completed secondary education." The report continues "[thus] the rural poor have considerably lower educational achievements than the urban or metropolitan poor. More than half of the rural poor, 53%, have less than primary education, compared to 41% for the urban, and 31% for the metropolitan poor. Conversely, a much higher share of the metropolitan poor have some secondary education" (59% versus 41% in rural areas) (1995: 20-21)

Why is the problem that few people in rural areas can accomplish primary education? And how does it affect the informal education opportunities and

achievements? Since 1994 in some aspects the situation in rural areas has improved, but what are the effects on formal and informal education levels? Many more people in rural areas have access to basic commodities such as electricity, sometimes supplied by solar energy, more and accessible clinics, free health care for pregnant women and young children, clean water and sanitation programmes, telephone connections, and more access to television. South Africa has reached a 58% electrification level in 1998; 1,3 million South Africans are supplied with clean and accessible water; a Rural Housing Loan Fund has been established; (Government's Report, 1998). In spite of these improvements rural areas still find themselves isolated and cut off from resources and services. Relatively few NGOs exist in the rural areas, and the NGOs and CBOs which are there, are often under-utilised and/or they are not always doing what such organisations are expected to do. Relatively few NGOs operating from the urban areas have outreach programmes; those that do are far away and are only able to come a few times a year. Therefore, when taking into account the poor formal educational achievements and the few opportunities available for informal education, it would be necessary to focus on alternative ways of learning, with the emphasis on 'learning is a life-long process for all'. This means moving away from the 'chalk and talk' style of learning to a free-style learning where the people decide for themselves what they want to learn because it makes sense for them. It is important to create the right incentives which help people to become part of the on-going learning process, such as respect, going at their pace, listening to their concerns and needs. An alternative way of promoting life-long learning is the establishment of community learning centres in which ECDs could become instrumental.

Does the scarcity of the supposed learning opportunities, as learning was understood, indicate that people in rural areas are much more dependent of their inner circle of contacts and social networks? This is where a crucial phenomenon comes in which is the 'kernel' of learning: *interdependence*. People become people when values become prevalent, such as compassion, empathy, tolerance, respect and sharing. Burkey says that the interdependence between people and communities is essential (1993: 51). Human Scale Development understands self-reliance [and stresses the importance] in terms of a horizontal interdependence and in no way as an isolationist tendency on the part of nations, regions, local communities or cultures" (Max-Neef, 1991: 58). I agree with what Max-Neef tries to say as I consider the horizontal interdependence to be the relationships within a certain

community and beyond. In its turn the isolationist tendency I would explain as being a vertical interdependence. I consider it as being part of the formal and informal social network within a community. If self-reliance is successful, it is important to stimulate the individual by way of development activities, to participate and co-operate in community actions, and share their experience and resources in a balanced way. Through such actions the horizontal interdependence can develop, grow and become a building block to increase the establishment of a healthy society.

Interdependence must be understood in terms of a variety of relationships on different levels within a community and wider society; this is on a macro level. The same can be said of the micro level when Dusseldorp refers to "the set of inter-personal relations an individual has is called his social-network" (1993: 51). Max-Neef refers to the different domains of dependency - economic, financial, technological, cultural, and political - which cannot be viewed in isolation from one another, since the power of one is derived from the support it receives from the other domains (1991: 56). This stresses the horizontal character of interdependencies when and Dusseldorp says "the actors have an equal social status and economic and power position, it [the relationship] becomes vertical when their status and position are unequal" (1993: 51). The interdependencies ought to be useful and developmental. It is because of these multiple dependencies that development geared toward self-reliance and the satisfaction of human needs is inhibited. In the South African context the relationships were through its policy of Apartheid completely distorted and mutilated, where possibly otherwise a 'natural' flow of relationships would have been in place. People feel alienated from other community members and to force separation physical barriers were erected by way of the Group Areas Act, divorcing people completely from one another. People were put in compartments without visible links and if links did exist they were unbalanced and very frail. In rural areas the situation was more heartfelt and 'relationships' were often one of 'master' 'slave' relation.

After the political change in 1994 South Africa moved from a dictatorial state towards an emerging democracy. Relationships urgently need to be rebuilt, communication between the different population groups needs to be stimulated and restored to help the country to overcome its previously isolated situation. But more important was to rebuild the country as one nation and the striving after nation-building is a process of healing, reconstruction and transformation,

helping to recreate healthy interdependence of individuals, communities and even in the wider context to be a focal point such as national and even global relationships. This process is seen as crucial if development and social upliftment is to be successful. But how self-reliant are people likely to be in a situation of a weakened economic base causing a high unemployment rate, and when people are considerably dependent on welfare payments i.e. child maintenance, disability, old age pensions? Such a position is in itself unsustainable and creates a 'negative' dependency on all forms of external supports such as health, education, and welfare. It will be very important, especially in rural areas, to explore new and alternative ways of accessing the assistance people need. To enhance the process of healthy interdependence as part of being self-reliant, it is necessary that people organise themselves, or become part of associations or networks which help them to access the necessary requirements for development. It is therefore indispensable to put self-reliance at the centre of development. Max-Neef explains and understands self-reliance to be a process capable of promoting participation in decision-making, social creativity, political self-determination, fair distribution of wealth and tolerance for the diversity of identities (1991: 58). Self-reliance becomes a turning point in the articulation of human beings in nature and technology, of the personal with the social, of the micro with the macro, of autonomy with planning and of civil society with the state.

Colin and Hines argue that "self-reliance should be a goal for localities within countries, and regions of countries, allowing them to meet the maximum possible number of needs and services from within their boundaries" (1993: 126). They also emphasise the interdependence by saying that meeting of the needs and services could come from within their boundaries. This point brings me to the ECDs that fulfil certain functions and provide services for the immediate community.

To summarise the most important points for people to become self-reliant are:

- It is more a question of *correct* attitudes than of money and materials.
- Self-reliance can be learned, but not given.
- Learning processes need to empower people so that they can have access to the knowledge and skills to satisfy their fundamental human needs.
- Levels of interdependency enhance self-reliance.

2.3 Development

"Positive development is defined as a change, or a set of changes, in an existent situation leading to a new situation, more in line with the goals, objectives, and targets of individuals or groups in a society, at a specific point in time" (Dusseldorp, 1993: 3).

Dusseldorp points out in the definition that *no* blue print concerning development programmes or projects can be provided, each one needs to be looked at individually. Also he says that what is presently 'positive' development, might not be tomorrow. Therefore, development needs to be participatory, flexible, well thought through, and carefully executed.

Development refers to a continuing set of processes in which different 'sections' in society more or less participate. The sections cannot be divorced from each other as each section influences the others. In a way development needs to work as a water mill, the scoop wheel brings the water up to stimulate the mill to work, so enabling and providing the intended product. The different sections in society such as, for example, the economy, need to convert a non-desirable situation into a more desirable one. The economy needs to grow, which should imply job creation, therefore is necessary political and socio-economic transformation, this in its turn should improve the living standard of all people. Development was previously paternalistic and often a top-down activity with the principle of 'doing for', creating more dependency instead of progress and independence. Presently the development process has grown into a participatory approach of 'doing with' and 'doing by and for themselves', of which Burkey says "participation of the rural poor in their own development has been measured as a key factor in the success of projects" (Ibid. 56). In other words, people have the ability to decide upon their own development processes affecting their lives and this helps them to widen their life choices. This is in line with what Burkey further says, "this process [of participation], whereby learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems, is the essence of development" (Ibid. 56). To create and to facilitate the opportunities for people to make choices needs more emphasis.

Firstly, widening choices does imply that development activities need to include the learning of new abilities. This can be learning every thing that is relevant to enhance the process and the acquisition of knowledge. Secondly, widening choices does imply awareness of the different options, and therefore

available information about a certain issue affecting the choice is important. Thirdly, widening the choice involves respect for people even if the choice might be wrong, as this is part of a process of growth on the part of the individual as well as of the group involved. Lastly, widening the choice stimulates ownership of the development process and its outcomes.

Participation is a prerequisite - the essence of development - especially when is aimed at satisfying fundamental human needs. Griffin says "the ILO has always stressed that: a basic-needs policy implies the participation of the people in making decisions which affect them" (1989: 173). In its turn this implies that people organise themselves and implement what Burkey promotes concerning 'to learn the four major issues'. Participation has according to Griffin a number of instrumental values and I quote them fully as I regard them to be highly valuable concerning the organisational set-up of ECDs and the high degree of parental participation it demands, but does not always acquire. The points are:

- 1) Participation in community-based organisations can help to identify local priorities, to determine which needs are essential or basic and which of secondary importance, and to define the content of development demands.
- 2) Having identified priorities and designed the programmes that incorporate them, participation in functional organisations can be used to mobilise support for national, local policies and programmes and local projects.
- 3) Participation can be used to reduce the costs of public services and investment projects by shifting responsibility from central and local government to grassroots organisations" (1989: 174).

The 3 points are valid and imply that parents and other interest groups should organise themselves around the issue of ECDs, as this is an issue of community concern. It is necessary to empower people by creating consciousness - to understand their present situation and how to improve it - by teaching them new skills and encouraging them to participate.

Ethical aspects are included in a development process; they should play a prominent role and may certainly not be neglected. Development unfolds an ongoing transformation, preferably well considered from a present non-

desirable situation into a better order where the present takes care for the future. This connects with the 'moral commitment' Achterberg talks about (W. Lafferty & J Meadowcroft, 1996: 163). The prevailing values might need to be challenged and revised to enhance the introduction of new understandings and concepts in such a way that it is benefiting disadvantaged people. Therefore, in a transformative development process there is almost always a degree of courage and sacrifice included in daring to reach out to the limits that could mean to say 'no' to the established economic order.

Before I look at the development situation in South Africa, I would like to clarify my understanding of the argument of Achterberg when he says the following: "taking sustainability [or, sustainable development] seriously means a moral commitment". Goulet and Haq talk about *genuine* development. I consider both expressions crucial to help to understand 'what is development'. Secondly, it is important to look in depth at what Achterberg tries to say. Therefore I want to look into the implications of moral commitments that are intrinsic parts of development and can therefore not be divorced from the understanding of development. Which of the values, principles and consequences are included in a moral commitment and if development is looked at seriously as a genuine dynamic process of empowering, affirming and of interaction between people? Do they enable them to make the choices they consider to be valid at a certain period in time and in a certain environment? Goulet says that 'genuine' development is a "social change process" (1995: 8). It involves transformation, it includes conflicting values, and is therefore, a matter of moral choice. He adds that the main criterion of development is the *qualitative human enrichment*, (Ibid. 9). It is what I consider to be the ultimate purpose of development. Goulet continues with saying that the ultimate goals of development are *to provide all humans with the opportunity to live full lives* (Ibid. 7). This is exactly what Max-Neef intends to say in Human Scale Development 'adequately satisfy their human needs' (1991: 16). And what Pope Paul VI mentions in his book *The Development of Peoples* in which development is defined as "the promotion of the good of people, every person and the whole person" (Byrne, 1983: 6). All have in mind the participation of each and every human being in his/her growth to full potential. People are the centre of development, in harmony and peace with all other life, nature and environment.

The focus of development generally has shifted towards the human centredness, as said before, or in other words development has become more 'human friendly'. The process contains a waking-up and moving away from a 'top-down' development approach to 'participatory' development process. A participatory process is important as it structures the different ways of dependency, or interdependency leading to self-reliance. All different 'stakeholders' within the process and areas of society need to find new ways to co-operate, to express, to defend, and to share their interests and capacities. Max-Neef points to this important interaction: "it is because of these multiple dependencies that development geared toward self-reliance and the satisfaction of human needs is inhibited" (1991: 56). It refers to the horizontal interdependencies. People, previously disadvantaged, get the opportunity to become equal partners in the process of development, improving the quality of their lives. The process is not easy and demands courage, persistence and perseverance. It is thus a difficult step to take, and constraining factors need to be bridged.

I explain *moral commitment* as creating the basis, or the basic values and principles which motivates and drives development action. The question could be posed 'what is good development?' Values and principles are essential 'ingredients' to enable and to facilitate the process of change, together with people to meet their fundamental human needs to improve their quality of life. To create the *basis* will require certain 'unpopular' decisions causing conflicts in the varying sectors of society. It affects the antagonists, but the same decision might become empowering for people who will benefit of the process in the long run. This can be conflicting and the interests of the one may prevail above those of other people, as development does entail conflicting interests and different understandings. In every decision some people benefit, and some people do not benefit and this cause tensions. Conflicting interests are involved in each and every development attempt and process. Goulet says "the conflicts are found in four different areas: debates over goals; competing political systems (power); competing economic systems; and between modern modes of living ...and traditional ways of life" (1995: 8).

The *basis* is also to listen to the people, their experiences, the stories they have to tell and, which may not be forgotten, the people must be taken seriously. The *basis* is therefore to build and establish a relationship of mutual respect and trust. The *basis* is a change of attitude on the side of the

developer. In a way he/she needs to get out of the customary kind of life he/she was used to and needs to become more and more part of the people he/she works with.

Briefly I will come back to and deal with the four conflict areas Goulet points out. All four areas can cause conflict on local, regional, national levels and also in the global context.

Debates over goals: development means different things for different people, and the understanding can be very diverse and therefore more debates among people will be a necessity. For that reason it would be in the interest of all people that a shared vision can be reached as a result of consultation and communication. The shared vision, than is reflected in the planning and outlines of the aims and objectives.

Competing political systems: conflicting interests in the political arena come to the front when certain decisions need to be taken. An example affecting South Africa is the fact that the ANC Government abandoned the policy of nationalisation before the 1994 elections under pressure of World Bank and IMF. The ANC made a major policy shift to abandon the RDP and to accept GEAR, and thus by doing this, favouring the World Bank and IMF, to the disadvantage of the many poor people in the country. The effects of such decisions can be disastrous, as writes Ebrahim Harvey "if the ANC continues with the GEAR policies, this country could be reduced by the 2004 elections to a wasteland of poverty, hunger and despair, similar to the situation in many African countries" (Mail & Guardian, Oct.29/Nov.4: 42). This is a very gloomy picture and refers to the next point.

Competing economic systems: leaving the RDP policy for GEAR entails a clashing shift within the approach and execution of the economic policies. Presently the economic system in South Africa is based on capitalism and focuses on the economic improvement of the few, leaving many behind in relative poverty. Social justice seems to be swopped for economic growth. The ways that growth is achieved and the conditions that satisfy it are now being questioned by, among others, UNDP. In South Africa, an example of choosing for growth is the fact that Telkom has announced that its 1998 profits were R2,3 billion, but at the same time they are planning to cut their work force by 10 000 people (ESSET, July 1999). Thus, a competing political system, as

stated in the previous point, can negatively affect the choices, which need to be made on economic levels.

Competing between modern modes of living...and traditional ways of life: this also can be seen on local, regional and national levels and it can have positive as well as negative effects. I will refer to 3.3 *Objectives of ECD sites*, where I stress the importance of the amalgamation of the prevailing culture with traditions of communities into the modern way of teaching.

An example of the four conflict areas on global scale is the problem of the eradication of debt, keeping in mind the following data published by SACBC Parliamentary Liaison Office that only 60% of the world's population [the poor] now shares 5.6% of global income. 85% of the poor live in the South (1999;1). The same document states: "Naom Chomsky puts the global debt problem in clear perspective when he says that debt is just another mechanism for transferring wealth from the poor to the rich (Ibid. 1).

I explain the term *facilitate* to be inseparable from creating the *basis* or the conditions that are necessary to meet to enable people to accept the challenges of a perhaps unknown process. It is 'creating' incentives on which people can act to address and change something. Also it is helping people to understand their own situation, possibly to contextualise it and how to search for feasible solutions. To *facilitate* the process might also be with a certain outcome in view such as the start of literacy classes, or a particular training.

The mistake many developers and development organisations make, and I will include my own experience, is that the process of creating the *basis* or the groundwork for development action is very often overlooked and neglected. This is because such a process takes time and the results of the development action need to be seen in a short period of time. This hurried action might result in little participation. It is crucial for people to take time to contextualise their present situation, for otherwise their lack of participation soon brings apathy. Freire describes the process as: "to be conscientised is to take possession of the reality, to have a critical approach to it, through which the reality is unravelled and exposed."⁶ (Hamman-Poldermans, 1975: 43). Not going *together* with people through the de-mystification of their lives produces

⁶ Consciëntisatie is daarom het in bezit nemen van de realiteit, een kritisch benaderen daarvan, waardoor de realiteit wordt uiteengegraven en ontmaskerd

short-term results, but on the long-term it will be unsuccessful and causes so-called development projects collapse and/or become white elephants.

2.3.1 Development in South Africa

Democracy will have little content, and indeed, will be short lived if we cannot address our socio-economic problems within an expanding and growing economy. President Nelson Mandela, 1994

These wise words were expressed in the preface of the book on the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in which the President stresses the prerequisites for democracy to really take root in South Africa. This programme therefore became the cornerstone of the new democratically elected government in 1994. President Mandela stated "the RDP was drawn up by the very people that will be part of the implementation. In other words the RDP was a people driven and people centred process, which was a totally radical approach in comparison with the development approaches of the previous government. A people driven development model reflects the values of people owning, deciding, and actually working with government to deliver what the community needs. The payoff of this approach is sustainability and empowerment (Economic Justice Update, 1997; vol.1).

The RDP can be understood as follows: "the RDP is an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework. It seeks to mobilise all our people and our country's resources toward the final eradication of apartheid and the building of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future" (RPD, 1).

The RDP invites people to participate in transforming and addressing the imbalances of the past and to focus on the realisation of political and socio-economic justice. The main tasks of the RDP is to enable not only the process of change and the delivering of the most basic needs, such as fresh water, sanitation, housing, education and jobs, but also to address the sensitive issue of land reform. The basic needs include urban and rural development. Further, three other key programmes drive the RDP: human resource and capacity development; democratisation of the state and the economy, and institutional reform; lastly, economic restructuring and growth.

The RDP is based on six principles: an integrated and sustainable programme;

a people driven process; peace and security for all; nation building; linkage between reconstruction and development; and finally, democratisation of South Africa. One of its goals was quality and equal education. The main purpose of the RDP is to transform the South African society into a *just* society, which looks after the well being of *all* its residents. The RDP has become the tool to move away from a society that was unjust for the majority of its population towards justice, equity and redistribution.

In 1996 RDP is abandoned and is replaced by a new programme of Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR). What is GEAR? It is essentially a programme which moves away from *people centred* development to a strategy, which in essence, is "a private sector driven growth strategy" (Barberton, 1998: 5). Further Barberton argues that the "old elite" together with the "new elite" pressured the new government into the abandonment of the RDP, taking away people driven initiatives and replace it with GEAR.

People centred development is replaced by the input of experts and consultants. They decide what the needs of the people are and how to address problems such as the high rate of unemployment and the access to social services. GEAR has three main objectives: to cut government spending; to focus on an export-driven national economy; and to promote foreign investment. In order to be able to realise these objectives some conditions are "non-negotiable", such as trade must liberalise; reduce deficit; lower the inflation; price increases; lower wages; and privatise services (The Great Debate, 1997). GEAR also would generate 600 000 new jobs between 1996 and 1998, but about 500 000 were shed (Sunday Independent, Jan. 9 2000;2). Through GEAR South Africa has become a 'fully accepted' partner within the [First] world economy order, but can the country afford to play such an international role without neglecting the fundamental economic needs of its population? The internal needs are so huge, the unemployment rates so high and neither will be solved through exporting goods. Paul Tillich sends a warning "one should remain aware of the fact that often more destruction and suffering is produced by economic than by military battles" (1960: 123). How true this is. Look at the results, not only the economic position of South Africa that swapped the RDP for GEAR, but also the overall situation of the states around South Africa, which became the victims of the 'destabilisation policy' of South Africa whose actions were both on economical as well as military levels causing problems which are still not yet solved.

The GEAR strategy is based on economic growth, in its turn creating jobs and in such way that redistribution or the 'trickle down of wealth' will take place, but Mahbub ul Haq says: "It has often been observed that in many societies, economic growth does not trickle down" (1993: 14). Griffin adds "[economic] growth was not eradicating poverty..." and further he quotes Mahbub ul Haq: "In country after country, economic growth is being accompanied by rising disparities, in personal as well as in regional incomes. In country after country, the masses are complaining that development has not touched their ordinary lives. Very often, economic growth has meant very little social justice. It has been accompanied by rising unemployment, worsening social services and increasing absolute and relative poverty" (1989: 166).

GEAR is not doing what Goulet and Griffin urges. I reflect again what Goulet says "... the priority task of development thus becomes neither to maximise nor to optimise aggregate growth, but rather to satisfy a cluster of basic human needs felt by the poorest segments of the nation's population, those lying under some poverty line" (1995: 87). Economic growth is minimal and does not positively affect the job market, but it widens the gap between the rich and the poorest groups of the population. Employment, which is so necessary, is not created. The opposite happens and more and more people in the lower echelons of the labour market are retrenched (i.e. 1999, Transnet, and in the Gold Mines). The series of retrenchments cause a chain reaction as access to basic services become even more difficult because people cannot afford them without having an income to meet the cost of living. Joblessness and the realisation that one is making no contribution to the economy causes desperation, loss of perspective and further impoverishment of the majority of the population in two ways. Firstly, the material poverty of not being able to satisfy the fundamental human needs; secondly, the spiritual or moral poverty, damaging people's principles and values. This causes a disintegration of social behaviour such as the increasing crime rate, the increasing disregard for human dignity and life. Blake therefore suggests "the poor are not being heard; they will have to make themselves heard. For this they need to be organised" (1998: 59).

Economic growth, when applied rightly, ought to reach the less affluent people in society and doing so it contributes to the national wealth of all its people of which Haq says, "the use that people make of their wealth, not the wealth itself, is decisive" (1993: 15).

Has GEAR become the symbol of how development needs to be seen? Is it desirable to imitate the lifestyles and cultures of America and Europe? Is the country developed through this imitation, or does South Africa need to strive for its own 'development identity'? President Mbeki stresses the importance of an own identity not only for South Africa but also for the whole Continent of Africa. He says "...the extraordinary integrated cultural heritage which both captures our African past and is an important factor that will contribute towards the recovery of our pride and dignity" (Opening of Parliament, 1999).

2.4 Sustainability

The World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 has developed a definition: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition is based on the idea that continuing economic growth is a condition. Soon, this definition showed deficiencies and ambiguities. Denis Goulet refers in his book *Development Ethics* to the economist Paul Streeten who argues that the constituents ought to consider their health, welfare and prosperity (1995: 126-127). In other words, he is saying that people need to be the priority.

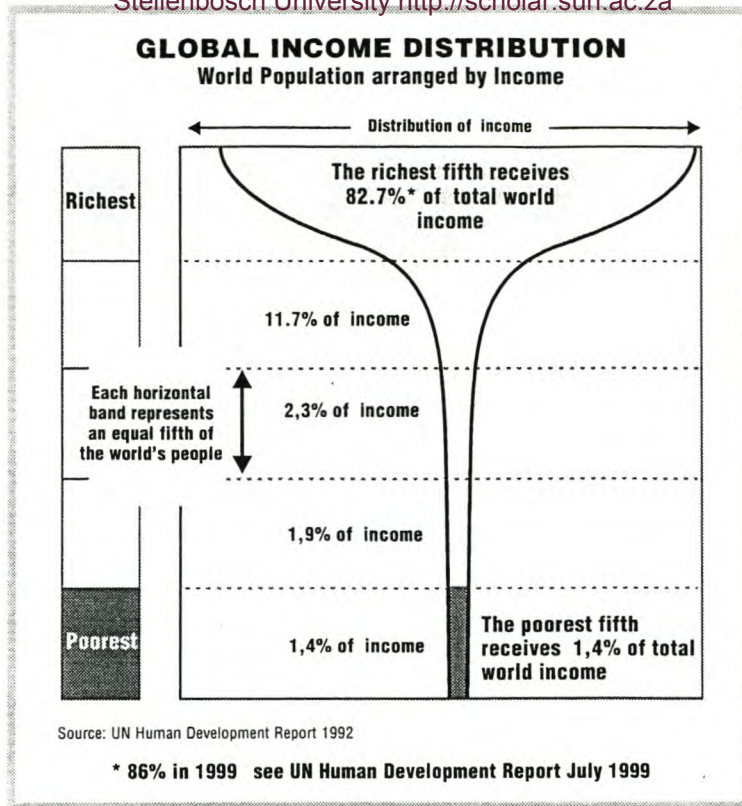
Streeten adds that the term "sustainable development" has at least six different meanings: 1) "maintenance, replacement and growth of capital assets, both physical and human". People in rural villages with a weak economic base, high unemployment plus considerable dependency on welfare payments i.e. child maintenance, disability, old age pensions, cannot fulfil this. In such an environment human resources are habitually not regarded or considered to be an asset. Through their circumstances people lack self-confidence, have a low self-esteem and a low self-image, they see themselves more as a burden than a value. This fact in itself is unsustainable and such a society can hardly exist without external support systems. It cannot be emphasised enough that

President Mandela when he introduced the RDP stated "...the belief that the people of our country are indeed its greatest asset".

2) "Maintaining the physical environmental conditions for the constituents of well-being". How much of a say or choice do people have who are in a dependency position concerning the health threats in their environment? The Northern Cape is known as the "welfare province", and has a higher rate of people on disability and pension than any other province. A contributor to this was the operational technology of the mines!

3) The "resilience" of a system, enabling it to adjust to shocks and crises. What is the resilience of a community struck by an extreme unemployment rate of about 93% as in Carolusberg, Namaqualand? The same can be asked in regard to people who were historically and structurally oppressed for many decades. Do people who were in such circumstances and who were treated as 'waste' that can be dumped have the ability to keep going when daily life is even now an ongoing struggle to survive? It takes time to heal and to overcome the pains of the past. Some people will go into denial about what has happened, other people become extremely depressed. Both reactions are not conducive for being resilient. In the South African context, it is necessary to strengthen the ability of resilience and to help people to restore their self-image.

4) "Avoiding burdening future generations with internal and external debts". This is a macro economic aspect of sustainability, but affects on micro level how people in poor stricken areas are forced to enter debts without knowing how to erase them. The Jubilee 2000, Occasional Paper 2 of October 1999 states 85% of the poor live in the South - the "Third World", the decolonized world. The South now faces a form of neo-colonialism. Then, "from 1981 to 1991, the Third World had paid a total of \$1662bn in interest and capital redemption...and still remained indebted by \$1419bn!" The urgency for global action to address the imbalances between the North - the "rich" part of the world and the South - the very poor part can be seen in the following picture:



South Africa is vexed by apartheid-caused debt "our efforts to reconstruct our country from the devastation of apartheid are severely restricted by our obligations to pay 22% of our national budget on debt servicing - the highest item on our budget together with education" (Ibid. 3).

5) "Fiscal, administrative and political sustainability. A policy must be credible and acceptable to the citizens, so that there is sufficient consent to carry it out". Much has changed on this level in South Africa: from an oppressed, consciously silenced society, only leaving room for compliance or resistance, to a country that has become a democracy with an active civil society and where its citizens initially were invited to actively participate in the processes of development.

6) "The ability to hand over projects to the management by citizens of the developing country in which they are carried out, so that foreign experts can withdraw without jeopardising their success". This must be one of the main objectives of donor organisations: to help a project and the people involved until they reach a point where they can help themselves without the interference of a third party. This is what capacity building is: people come to trust their own abilities in such a way that they are able to learn consciously of the past experiences and those of others, and to use these for further practice.

People will then be able to practice the four elements necessary: action, reflection, learning and planning, to carry forward development and to help the growth of projects and stimulate governance in civil society.

The question can be asked 'what is required to become sustainable?' Goulet provides a first and provoking answer. He says: "sustainability requires simple living in which consumption is limited" (1995: 128). Haq says the same and considers restructuring of consumption patterns and he adds that restructuring of the world's income is a necessary precondition (1995: 79). Pope John Paul II characterises consumerism as "...is at the root a form of social pathology, which derives from modern culture imposing a system of satisfiers that do not really meet fundamental human needs" (Source: B. Connor OP). Their starting point is based on finite economic growth, which opposes the previous vision of ongoing economic growth. Consumption is a well-thought through manipulation of people's desires by the industrial world to enable them to produce more and more, exacerbating inequality and unbalanced economic growth. The UNDP report states "the world's dominant consumers are overwhelmingly concentrated among the well-off, but the environmental damage from the world's consumption falls most severely on the poor" (1998: 4). Such a finding asks for drastic change as the pattern of consumerism affects the stability of the world powers negatively. Therefore if sustainability is taken seriously it demands moral commitment, ethical investment, and transformation of attitude of not only the individual but also of governments. This can mean taking unpopular decisions, some of which are initiated from within a society, some initiated by the Government of the day; looking at alternative solutions and restricting unlimited production and consumption, or putting a stop to unlimited growth.

What Goulet motivates is the fact people freely make the choice of a life style of "voluntary simplicity". People can make the choice of voluntary simplicity, by limiting the influence and intimidation consumerism is imposed on them through advertisements and the media in general. People can choose a life style that implicates sharing, caring and is based on the principle 'I have enough'. Such a life style requires courage, as it is being 'different' from other people around you. It requires maturity, the willingness to change and move away from greediness. It asks self-knowledge, self-command; but it also requires compassion, commitment, dedication, and a degree of sacrifice.

Achterberg motivates in *Democracy and Environment* the following: "it might imply a more equal distribution of income and thus measures to secure such a distribution. The pursuit of sustainability also gives us an instrumental reason to pursue a more equal income distribution. For, with a high uneven distribution of incomes, how can the less affluent be expected to contribute actively to, or to make sacrifices for, the pursuit of sustainability?" (1996: 164). This statement tables another requirement for sustainability that is at the root of the problem: a more equal distribution of income. Presently, in South Africa the lowest 40% of households earn only 9.1% of the total income, while the top 20% of people have an income share that is 19.2 times more than the bottom 20% (UNDP, 1996: 170). The figures resemble the Global Income Distribution (Ibid. 1999) and demonstrate that the gap between the haves and have-nots have not decreased in spite of the new democracy. New and relatively small groups of the Black population have joined the group of 20%, but for the majority the situation is not differently from the times under Apartheid. Some questions could be posed such as: are people who belong to the upper 20% prepared to sacrifice the high living standard they possess presently and/or would they be willing to share? Such a sacrifice will require a different life style and consumption pattern, but would a more equal distribution of income stimulate a simple living in which consumption is limited, or would it do the opposite? Or would a more equal distribution of income create a more balanced consumption where demand and supply are in harmony? All questions need to be carefully considered as the concept of 'simple living' is not easily to sell to people who have already so much! Further, we must look at alternative solutions and at restricting unlimited production and consumption, or we must consider putting a stop on unlimited growth, certainly when the growth does not create the much needed job opportunities. These are the steps necessary to be taken if genuine change will take place.

The socio-economic circumstances in which people find themselves in are decisive and often require transformation to stop the damaging effects on people and the environment. The fact that people experience an unemployment rate on such a large scale, averaging 50% which is plunging them into extreme poverty, mainly because the mining sector is in long-term decline, due to the exhaustion of minerals and the less profitability of the mines, is exploitation of people at its worst.⁷ The 1990 World Development Report (WDR) defines poverty as "the inability to attain a minimal standard of

⁷ CSIR, 1999: 7. in Namaqualand district.

living" measured in terms of basic consumption needs or the income required to satisfy them. Further it says "poverty is thus characterised by the inability of individuals, households or entire communities to command sufficient resources to satisfy their basic needs" (Barberton, Blake, Kotzé, 1998: 23). The inability to satisfy their basic needs may lead to exploitation of i.e. the environment by overgrazing of the fields and migration to the towns. Treurnicht puts this social decay as follows "sustained poverty may lead to sustained exploitation of natural resources" (Kotzé, 1997: 86). People are through their circumstances disempowered, they have become excluded from the process of decision making and therefore they become limited in their choices, ending up being silenced. The pressure from the 'other' world to which they do not have access, of which they are not part of is overwhelming and forces them into a process of total alienation. Results are a seemingly apathy, a tendency to fatalism, and a degeneration of humanity often leading to abuses such as of women, children, alcohol, and now the increase of HIV/Aids. Paolo Freire calls such a process of human decay 'culture of silence'. He says that it only exists in physical life. The body executes the orders that are given from above [the 'other' world or the world of the abuser]. "Thinking is difficult, to speak out forbidden".⁸ I would argue that 'human decay' as well relates to psychological life and is frequently manifested by apathy and lethargy. To radically transform such a situation obliges us to invest in restoring human dignity; renewing, enlarging and widening their human capacity in such a way that they are able to influence their future in a durable way, now and on the long term. People are to be the main and first partner in the process of sustainable development. Or as the UN Human Development Report puts it "to invest in human potential and to create an enabling environment for the full use of human capabilities" (UNDP, 1993).

Other factors influence and contribute to sustainability, and which can not be seen as entities in themselves, such as ecological, technical, financial, economic, social, institutional, judicial and political (Dusseldorp, 1993: 115). All these factors are indissoluble, the one claims the other. To radically transform an oppressive situation necessitates a political climate that is dedicated, tolerant and stimulates the transformation. The political climate needs to be sustainable, is willing to be part of democratisation, and create the susceptible environment wherein people could participate fully. The political

⁸ 'In de "kultuur van het zwijgen" is bestaan alleen fysiek leven. Het lichaam voert bevelen uit die van boven worden gegeven. Denken is moeilijk, spreken verboden (Hamman-Poldermans, 1975: 31).

climate might provide the financial resources to carry through and execute the planned programmes. It might assist with the acquisition of the necessary technical skills and equipment and it might help to build a strong basis from which to operate through organisational skills development. The judicial factor is important because it legitimises through giving or prohibiting certain rights of the citizens, i.e. the right to possess and access land, to prevent the dumping of chemical waste. The process is taken forward through policy decisions.

A requirement for sustainability and development philosophy is that people are at the centre of the processes of development, as I have said before. Max-Neef in *Human Scale Development* imposes an even stronger presumption, he says "development is about people and not about objects" (1991: 16). In 1967 Pope Paul VI writes the same in his book *The Development of Peoples* in which he defines development as "the promotion of the good of people, every person and the whole person" (Byrne, 1983: 6). The Pope stresses the development of *people*, not of things like buildings and projects. I assume that with projects is meant the 'top-down' attempts to 'develop' people by i.e. oppressive governments, foreign agents who dictate and put people in a strait-jacket by attaching heavy strings to their involvement, not leaving much choice. Development of the whole human being that includes material as well as spiritual development. This is a major shift from the thinking of a person in compartments to the person in wholeness. The relationship between physical, spiritual, material development is interwoven with and becomes an intrinsic part of nature or the ecology. If development is seen from this perspective the human being will be able to make choices, which can be acted upon and will be able to accept responsibility for what results from the choices made. Byrne calls this *integral development*, which helps people to reach the point of being able to influence and decide upon their own destiny in a well planned process. Integral development implicates a high degree of sustainability, as the development process will take place with responsibility and value is thus added.

Mahbub ul Haq says "...[the people centredness] or the human development paradigm has four essential components: equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment" (1995: 16). Haq regards these to be conditions. With equity Haq means: equal before the law, equal distribution of resources, education, access to health care and all aspects of life which might offer a free choice to people to improve the quality of their life. For sustainability, he says

"it is the sustainability of human opportunities that must lie at the centre of our concerns". This means as he says, "the only viable strategy for ... is to replenish and regenerate all forms of capital." Productivity, "... requires investment in people and an enabling macro-economic environment for them to achieve their maximum potential." Investment in people is putting people first and is a capacity building process. With empowerment Haq means "that people are in a position to exercise choices of their own free will" (Ibid. 17-20). This in its turn is integral development where the human being is the central focus.

The African continent has become the victim of colonisation through the ages. Nowadays it is 'neo-colonialism' that rampages the continent. Before that, development was centred on tribes and villages and could be considered to have had a degree of sustainability. The 'high times' of colonialism were at the middle and end of the 19th century and brought new developments by the many missionary organisations - something that may not be overlooked. Boudewijn Wegerif⁹ says as follows "the missionary churches offered a new economy and the necessary, supportive education and religion for that, as an intermediary step along the way to the integration of the village and tribe into the new regional-cum-national economy of the colonial power". This process that brought positive things such as education, had also many negative implications such as the adoption of the cultivation of mono-cultural crops. It was often attended by force and certainly by exploitation in one way or the other, and gradually alienated many people from their own culture and land. In South Africa, the process was accelerated and intensified when in 1948 the Nationalist Party took over government and introduced an enforced a political system of separation or Apartheid of the population groups. During the Apartheid era, the autocratic government kept people away from reaching the point of being able to take responsibility for the choices made, if choices could be made! Not only the black and coloured population groups but also the majority of the white population were affected by this policy. I was told by a government official "doen liefdadigheid, en maak hul nie wys nie!", indicating that development, or investment in people was considered to be a 'subversive act'. Development was wilfully restricted in compartments and people were not allowed to indulge their creative initiatives to look for possible solutions and new ways of doing things for themselves. Not only through the introduction of the Group Areas Act, but through the organisation of society as a whole,

⁹ Monetary Studies Programme, Vardingeby Folkshogskola, Sweden. November 1999

people were denied to develop their full potential, their rights as citizens of the country, and were denied to exist with dignity. Development initiatives undertaken by the state were far too much controlled and initiatives undertaken and supported by NGOs had often to work underground and frequently in secrecy which affected the transparency and accountability. Both ways of operating, the oppressing and the underground way, often prevented projects from being transparent and accountable. In both cases people were obstructed from taking responsibility for what they were involved with. 'Responsibility' means the ability to respond (Mehrtens, 1999: 34). To be responsible is valid on something already done, or is in action and on something that needs to be done. To take away the ability to respond is excluding people from being creative, innovative and resourceful. It is like cutting off the wings of a bird to prevent it from flying away. It cages people and this is what apartheid has done to *all* people. The injustice done to the majority of its population was reflected in the ruling minority. It is what Paul Tillich writes in connection with what individuals can do to each other, but it is also applicable in the plural sense, he says "injustice against the other one is always injustice against oneself" (1960: 78).

People need to acquire, and in some cases, to receive the capacity and ability to do things for themselves, or in other words 'make choices' through training and education. Free choices must be made in consultation, in consideration and co-operation of other people. Such actions are called a 'democratic' process and are in my opinion a third requirement for sustainable development, but I would argue that another aspect needs to be added. As I mention above 'to accept responsibility for any action or choice' is an ultimate dimension leading people to a degree of freedom. Never will a human being have full freedom, because he or she acts in a context with boundaries, such as being part of a family, particular community, or organisation. People mobilise themselves and decide on what is good for them to fulfil their needs and this might include difficult decisions such as going against the interests of the constituted order of things, i.e. an oppressive government, the multi nationals, and others as I have said before. This process has taken root and has developed a new way of thinking about development. Max-Neef refers to this process as a paradigm shift moving from a mechanistic to a more humane approach (1991: xii).

To conclude I will summarise what I consider to be the prerequisites for

sustainable development:

- It requires simple living where consumption is limited.
- To pursue an more equal income distribution.
- People must be the centre of participatory development.
- Development needs to be a democratic process.
- People are empowered by consciousness to take responsibility for their choices and the actions followed.

3.

Early Childhood Development

3.1 Introduction

"We must bring the child back to the centre of our care and concern. This is the only way that our world can survive because our children are the only hope for the future. As older people are called to God, only their children can take their places". Mother Theresa - National Prayer Breakfast, February 3, 1994, USA

The Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development composed after 1994 accepted the following definition: "An umbrella term which applies to the processes by which children from birth to at least 9 years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially."

I refer to ECD in terms of the above stated definition and when I mention an individual site and to ECDs when I use the plural form. EDC contains all care and education programmes for children from 0 to 7 years olds and thus including the Reception year, Grade-R or Grade-0. If special attention needs to go to education I will mention ECD education, the same concerning ECD care.

This chapter aims to explain the importance of ECD, leading from the historical context to the present-day situation in South Africa. Further I look at the Government policy since 1994, which is subdivided into the National ECD Pilot Project for children aged 5 and 6. It is followed by ECD for children of 0 - 5 years old, and lastly Existing Gaps.

3.2. Historical Overview

Throughout the ages children are an integral part of the society. The perception of how a child developed and behaved according to established customs varied considerably. Children were regarded to be an adult in pocket-size, they were considered to be their parents' riches, or seen as a "social-insurance" for the parents' old age, and through their labour they contributed to the income of the family. In short, children were not children as we expect to

value and cherish the children nowadays. In those days they were expected to be seen, but not to be heard and there was little consideration of the wishes of the children and of their special needs. In the 19th century in Europe some people involved with education observed the play pattern of children and 'discovered' the importance of play-play. The main certainty they learned from the children was that children learn the best *through* play-play, by doing things and exploring their environment. The importance of opportunities to play and playgrounds can not be stressed enough. As Carolyn Hooper of the New Zealand Playcentre Movement says "children's work *is* their play. Children learn from everything they do" (Dryden, Vos, 1994: 255-261).

In Germany at the beginning of the 19th century, a pioneer Froebel started the *Kindergarten* (garden of children) where children were allowed the freedom to explore. This was completely different from the established schools in those days. In other words the school environment of the young child became more child-friendly. In the 20th century, Maria Montessori, the first Italian woman doctor, contributed hugely to the understanding of the child by working mainly with the 'intellectually handicapped children.' The method Montessori developed is to approach the world from the children's perspective. She exposed the child to concrete experiences that enable her/him to develop the 'motor' and other skills that lead to self-discovery (Ibid. 255-261). Montessori influenced the establishment of pre-schools, playgroups, day-care-centres and the current ECDs all over the world. She also played a major part in developing and establishing methodical models to help the child learn better and to enable the child to develop its full potential.

The influence of Western educational systems in South Africa has been strong. Methodologies and ways of educating children were literally copied without taking into account the cultural background and the special needs of young children in South Africa. The majority of young children never had the opportunity to attend formal or informal education before entering the primary school. In South Africa the care for small children was mainly initiated by communities, churches and by individual initiatives. From as early as about 1940 a difference was made between child-minding centres allocated to the Department of Welfare and centres allocated to the Department of Education. The welfare subsidies were available for all race groups, but this was not the case with the subsidy of Education.

From 1948 onwards and under Nationalist Party Government rules the society was organised along segregation of the different population groups of which the whites were highly privileged, causing an unequal access to services, opportunities and creating great disparity of financial resources. This affected drastically *all* children of *all* colours and *all* races as can be stated "the quality of life they [children] have experienced has been profoundly influenced by their statutory group classification and that of their parents" (Owen van den Berg, Tania Vergnani, 1987: 1). Both groups, the privileged and oppressed as it can be stated in the South African context, are disadvantaged, both suffer from alienation, division and from the possibility of developing their full potential. Paolo Freire says as follows: "dehumanisation, which marks not only the people whose humanity has been stolen, but also (but in a different way) those who have stolen it, it is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human" (1989: 28). And how true this is and how it underlines the words of Tillich, and I quote "injustice against the other one is always injustice against oneself" (1954: 78). Further, van den Berg and Vergnani say, and I quote: "Divisions run deep within and between the different segments of the society: *apartheid* has not simply divided persons of one racial classification from persons from another, but has also rent asunder individual communities on a scale that has become increasingly endemic and cataclysmic" (1986). In the Apartheid Era from 1948 till 1969 the government policy discouraged the development of early childhood services. Only service provision was made for 'poor white' children and the welfare subsidy disappeared for African children. The training for White teachers continued while in 1958 the training courses for African teachers were forced to close, as part of the policy to eliminate the mission schools. The Roman Catholic (RC) Church always considered education to be a priority from an early age onwards. In 1957, after the R.C Church wrote the first principal theological rejection of apartheid putting it as "waaragtig kwaad", the Nationalist Government considered them to be the "rooi gevaar" (Rothe, 1986: 69).

In 1969 the ECD services expanded considerably due to the National Education Policy Act of 1967. From then on only the services for white children were fully subsidised. In 1980 when the tricameral parliament was introduced, or 'own affairs' dispensation as it was called, the services and subsidies to the other population groups were remarkably reduced. The subsidy was calculated according to the race group the educare centre serviced. In 1979 the Department of Education and Training was authorised to

register and subsidise pre-primary schools. Mid-1980s when a number of African community schools reached the stage to qualify for the subsidy, this form of support was frozen in 1988 (NEPI, 1992: 14). Nowadays the dilemma of state-subsidy for ECD is relevant as many ECDs battle to survive financially, affecting the need for sustainability of ECD provision and services. Or, should the financial burden be borne only by the people who benefit from the services?

The legacy of the Apartheid period is still palpable in the present-day situation and the imbalances of the past, doing psychological damage and causing educational deprivation, are not easily lifted. The problems many ECDs experience are due to the previous government policy, it is therefore necessary to find a way to restore the equality. Mahbub ul Haq shows a way to follow and he points out the four essential components in the human development paradigm: equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment (1995: 6). All four components if properly applied, will help ECDs to deliver balanced services and to operate on community development based principles. As van den Berg and Vergnani argue "to improve pre-school provision cannot be regarded as separate from attempts at political, social and economic transformation". This statement is not out of date, but is still very relevant and needs to be interwoven with the four components mentioned by Haq.

Nowadays the well-being of the child and that of the mother needs to become a prime focus as the Bernard van Leer Foundation argues "since child development begins at conception, the needs of the mother and child cannot be separated" (1994: 21). South Africa recognises this as it provides free medical care for pregnant women and children till the age of 6 years. Secondly, ECDs need to be seen as partners in the integral community development approach. The Interim Policy for ECD says "it is proposed that early Childhood Development form part of a comprehensive, national community development strategy linking economic and social development which will include housing, health, welfare and education, planning, safety and security" (15).

3.3 The Present Situation of ECD in South Africa

"Putting the children first in the reconstruction of the nation. A community that does not care for their children, do not deserve its future...." ECD Pilot Project Northern Cape Province

In 1994 the RDP propose the following statement: "educare, which introduces an educational component into child care, must be an integral part of a future education and training system. The provision of educare for young children is an important step toward lifetime learning and the emancipation of women. We must expand early childhood educare by supporting an increase in private and public funding; institutionalising it within the ministry and the provincial departments, and raising national awareness of the importance of such programmes. The democratic government also bears the ultimate responsibility for training, upgrading and setting national standards for educare providers, with the assistance of civil society" (62: 3.3.8).

ECDs are considered to be crucial to enhance the growth and development of children, aged between 0 and 6 year olds. The children are thus the main and most important role players in relation to ECDs. Young children go through phases of life in which they learn the most and in a way can be stated 'learning and development begins at conception'. Learning continues by interaction with people, his/her environment and learning like the ongoing waves of the sea, does not end. "Child development is multidimensional, integral and continuous. It involves physical, mental, emotional and social dimensions. These dimensions are interrelated: a change in one both influences and is influenced by changes in the others" (Bernard van Leer Foundation, 1994: 18). Children grow from a helpless, dependent little human being into a personality that has learnt to speak, to walk, to eat, and to ask for attention. Also they learn to express his/her own feelings, wishes and opinions, and become more and more independent: "fifty percent of a person's ability to learn is developed in the first four years of life. Another thirty percent is developed by the eighth birthday" (Dryden, Vos, 1994: 223). In other words the first years of the child's life are fundamental for his/her further development, as Coles says "the child has learned to oblige the world in important ways" (1997: 105).

I will add the importance of the development of a positive concept of self to enable understanding of the self and of other people. Certainly children coming from disadvantaged communities should be able to attend an ECD to help the child to develop that positive image of self. It is the basis on which the future relationships and attitudes are built and on which relationships repeat themselves positively or negatively. The Bernard van Leer Foundation says "early childhood development needs to be holistic development (1994: 61). This applies on two levels. The first is the holistic development of the child, including health, nutrition, motor skills, socialisation, and emotional and cognitive development. The second level helps the child to see him or herself in the immediate community and the wider global society". The training of practitioners gives sufficient attention to the content of the first level of development of the child. Thus it may be expected that when the child visits an ECD the aspects of holistic development be taken into account. The second level receives much less attention and is seemingly taken for granted. The importance of it is not yet recognised.

The plea of the young children is heard, but is it really so? "A recent survey showed that about 21% of all children [in South Africa] under six years old are in out-of-home care of some kind. In 1994 one in ten (10%) black children had access to formalised ECD projects, while one in three white children had access. Children in poverty-stricken rural areas have fewer ECD services than children in urban areas. Most provision is for children over 3 years old. There is almost a total lack of ECD facilities for African children with disabilities" (The South African Children's Budget, 1998). And the Bernard van Leer Foundation states "while African children constitute about 10% of the world's children, fully one third of the 40,000 children world-wide who die every day are African" (1994: 10). The situation in which children find themselves in is delicate, and the early years of each and every child are crucial for his/her further development.

3.4 Government Policy since 1994

Early Childhood Development is defined as follows "... an umbrella term which applies to the processes by which children from birth to at least 9 years grow and thrive, physically, mentally emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially". (White Paper 1995, 33, par. 73).

"The current education policy of South Africa accepts the fundamental premise that every person - child, youth and adult - should have access to basic education, because basic education is a common and universal human responsibility, a right of citizenship, and essential to self-reliant development." This statement is one of the resolutions of the World Conference on Education for All held in Thailand 1990 (Transcending the Legacy; Children in the New Southern Africa, 1995: 45).

In 1992 the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) gave attention to and reported about education planning, systems and structure. In part NEPI focused on early childhood development and brought out a report with policy options with the main focus on the provision of educare services before entry into the formal school system (1992: 7). I will briefly quote what the NEPI report has brought forward: "there are strong moral, social, political, economic and programmatic arguments for increased support of early childhood care and education. In situations where initial schooling is of poor quality, it is essential to adopt a combined approach of upgrading primary schooling and providing for the healthy development of children before they go to school, to ensure continuity in the learning environment. Early childhood programmes are likely to be most effective when they have a broad development focus which meets the needs of the whole child in an integrated matter." Further, the NEPI report says "there are two central problems in policy development for young children. Firstly, the need to co-ordinate education, primary health care, social welfare, housing and development programmes to meet the needs of children in an integrated way that strengthens the family. Secondly, ...is the tension between the need for effective family and community participation in educare provision, which is an important community development strategy, and the need to promote national unity and to redistribute resources to redress the inequities of apartheid in terms of an overall development plan" (Ibid. 94-95). Future ECD policy needs to comprise multiple and integral components and needs to transform the allocation of resources.

The RDP policy mentions in the chapter *Human Resources* the following about ECD and I quote the full paragraph:

"Educare, which introduces an educational component into childcare, must be an integral part of a future education and training system. The provision of educare for young children is an important step toward lifetime learning and the emancipation of

women. We must expand early childhood educare by supporting an increase in private and public funding; institutionalising it within the ministry and the provincial departments, and raising national awareness of the importance of such programmes. The democratic government also bears the ultimate responsibility for training, upgrading and setting national standards for educare providers, with the assistance of civil society" (1994, 3.3.8: 62).

This statement expresses the right intentions and would bring ECD as full partner in the 'circle' of education. It introduces a new paradigm of learning including all key-role players. It was the most inclusive and hopeful message delivered ever. But in 1996 the RDP was replaced with GEAR. What is its vision on education and its influence on the policy of education? In a document published with assistance of the Development Bank of South Africa and Applied Marketing communication, *no* reference to ECD can be found.

GEAR has a Janus-faced approach as it is stated in Economic Justice Update: on the one hand "... sustained improvements in the quality of public schooling available to the poor and greater equity ... are central to the Government's approach." On the other hand, GEAR is stating "...there is a need to contain expenditure through reductions in subsidies of the more expensive parts of the [education] system and greater private sector involvement in higher education... Spending on education, health ...should not be raised, but kept constant in 'real' terms" (1998, Vol.2, No.3). This is a strong contradiction and affects not only higher educational institutes, but ignores ECD completely. The down sizing of the budget allocated to education certainly trickles-down the whole system and affects all levels of ECD. I would interpret 'real terms' as the way the National Department of Education applies affirmative action to redirect the inequity within education. Secondly, what is the influence of GEAR on the policy formulation of ECD on national and provincial levels? A policy communicates what is valued, directs decisions and is the guideline for transparency, this must be kept in mind.

Before the statement "spending on education...should not be raised, but kept constant in 'real' terms", the White Paper of 1997 outlined the policy of the National Government. Entirely in line with the RDP the policy indicates the government's commitment to include a reception year to its 10 years of compulsory schooling. The national policy seems not to be attainable in the framework of GEAR. The question can be posed 'and what is the position of

the provinces?' They have a degree of autonomy concerning provincial policies and priorities. Therefore the Northern Cape Province commits itself to the National policy and introduced the ECD Policy Guidelines, and states: "Putting the children first in the reconstruction of the nation... A community that does not care for their children does not deserve its future." The effects of GEAR have become tangible as the Department of Education in the Northern Cape in its guidelines states: "the Department will not be able to pay teachers/ECD practitioners salaries in about 300 private church and community-based ECD sites in the province from 1 April 1999. The parents are supposed to pay the salaries...".

In 1998 the training of practitioners has started in line within the framework of the National Pilot Project. The Northern Cape Province was in the forefront of this training programme.

In the coming part I will mainly base my information on the official documents of the ECD Policy Guidelines of the Department of Education, Training, Arts and Culture in the Northern Cape Province and on the Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development of the National Department of Education. If other sources are used I will indicate so. Presently the ECDs can be divided into two groups according to the ages of the children, for the 5-6 year old children Grade-R or Reception Year and are allocated to the Department of Education; and for the 0-5 year old children, who are allocated to the Department of Social Welfare. This division might be a heritage from the 1940s when there was a distinction made between nursery schools and crèches.

3.4.1 National ECD Pilot Project for 5-6 Year Olds

The government policy is in an interim phase and focuses on the Reception Year class or Grade-R. The White Paper of 1997 indicates a new approach in its policy towards learning and states "The first year of the foundation phase is the Reception Year and should not be understood as an institutional year of instruction in the primary school at this stage". The current context requires indirect preparation for the Reception Year to be introduced in the future as the first introductory year of an integrated four-year Foundation Phase programme. Reception year programmes need not only take place in a school, they can take place in other locations such as community based centres and homes" (1997: vi). The Reception Year could become the platform for ECD education

and primary school education to come together on the basis of equality in status and indispensable community activity.

The following key principles guide curriculum development for ECD: integration; holistic development; relevance; participation and ownership; accountability and transparency; child-orientated approach; flexibility; critical and creative thinking; and progression. I will deal briefly with the key principles. Integration: Grade-R as part of ECD and primary education, co-operation between the different state departments, and inextricably bound up with community development. Holistic development: aiming at the full potential of the child. Relevance: fit in Outcome Based Education. Participation and ownership: parents' involvement, all educational institutions need to have a GB and need to be community based. Accountability and transparency: governance of schools needs to be in place, well trained and able to produce financial and other reports. Child-oriented approach: all learning must be in the interest of the child and adjusted to enlarge his/her capacity. Flexibility: refers to the curriculum and its application. Critical and creative thinking: promotes the ability of the child to express his/her own original thinking and recognises the individuality of each and every child. Progression: the child needs to be stimulated to learn new knowledge and skills. The ECD and school also need to move with new developments.

It is the commitment of the National Government to include a Reception Year class as part of the 10 years of compulsory education in a most equitable, efficient and most cost effective way. Therefore, a National Pilot Project for ECD has been developed to introduce Grade-R within the compulsory schooling system. It focuses on poor community based ECDs from 1997 to March 2000. "This project aims to create and test innovations relating to the development of interim accreditation and standards for ECD practitioners, building capacity in provincial governments, the formal training sector and non-governmental organisations, developing interim policy for ECD and establishing sustainable subsidies for community-based ECD programmes" (Interim Policy for ECD, 2). A main goal of the Departments, National as well as Provincial, is to promote equal opportunities to all children (5-6 year olds) to attend ECD at Grade-R and has thus arrived at a uniform policy for funding for ECD sites (Grade-R) which came into effect from 1 April 1999.

To *participate* in the ECD National Pilot Project the outlined criteria are

mandatory and non-negotiable. The Project especially reaches out to the Grade-R or Reception Year children and requires the following:

1. The site must be community-based and not private.
2. It should not be receiving any subsidy of any state Department at this stage.
3. It should have an adequate financial system to account for the allocated funds. It should have reliable records.
4. It should have a maximum ratio of one adult to 30 children.
5. It must have a minimum of 15 (5 - 6) year olds in one class to one ECD practitioner.
6. The site should have been in existence for at least one year and prove that it can sustain itself financially.
7. The ECD practitioner in charge of the (5 - 6) year olds must be willing to be trained and to participate in the interim accreditation. She must attend all the training sessions and complete the course arranged by the Department of Education. Should the practitioner break this contract, she will pay the training costs involved.
8. The parents must be prepared to pay the fees charged by the ECD sites (negotiated with them by their elected committee). (The ECD Pilot Project, NC)

The participating practitioners receive the following training that has different levels and the training stretches over a period of time:

Level 1., mod 1.:

orientation to the training programme; how adults learn; our educational goals and beliefs; physical development theory; relating to the above theory in concrete ways to outdoor play and art; practically experiencing art activities; health and nutrition; social and emotional development; daily programme and routines; mental development and how children learn; behaviour management.

mod. 2

discussion of participant's tasks; review and discussion on topics from m.1.; discovery activities; trips for young children; book area; block area; field visit to local ECD or home programme; educational toys; books and toy making; make-believe play theory and discussion + making of equipment; story telling; music for young children, parent involvement.

Level 2., mod. 1

orientation and how adults learn; educational goals and our beliefs about young children; how children learn and develop; health, physical, social, emotional, mental; physical layout workshop; daily programme and routines; team teaching art activities, discussion and workshop; planning and record-keeping; administration.

mod. 2

group skills; helping children control their behaviour; human relations; make-belief play + making equipment; blocks; educational toys + making of it; books and making.

mod. 3

discovery activities and practical experiences; health and nutrition, health and children with special needs; health; safety and first aid; outdoor play.

In *Level 2., module 2.*, parent involvement is mentioned. This course could be extended to 'community dynamics' in which the identification of possible projects could be a part of.

All the subjects of the modules are relevant for ECDs, but still a considerable aspect has been left out: a module about management or governance and business principles. Such a module that would be very helpful as the present economic position of South Africa does not yet include, and perhaps even allow integration of ECD in its financial portfolio. It should be an obligation to add a more sophisticated approach concerning the financial viability of ECDs. The criteria for *qualifying* for a subsidy from the Department of Education, Training, Arts and Culture in the Northern Cape:

1. The centre (ECD) should have been in existence for at least 3 years. 2. It should satisfy all the regulations set by the Department of Health and Welfare. 3. The following recommendations which should be decided upon by the parents could be applied: - the parents should be prepared to pay a nominal fee (R10 - R50), per month to pay for the salary of the Grade-R ECD Practitioner; - the contract should include an agreement between the parent and the ECD site that should the parent fail to pay the required fees, the money may be directly debited from place of employment; - those parents who are not employed could be involved physically at the ECD site; - the amount of physical work should be equal to the amount owed by them. 4. ECD sites which charge parents more than R50 a month will not qualify for the subsidy from 1 APRIL 1999. 5. There should be a minimum of 15 (5-6) year old learners to one practitioner and a maximum of 35 (5-6) year olds to one practitioner. 6. If there are more than 35 learners to a practitioner in a class the parents must hire a class aid/assistant. 7. An equal subsidy per child per day for 200 days in a year will be paid to qualifying ECD sites. Proof of age of each (5 - 6) year old (birth certificate) and attendance will be required before any payments made. The subsidy will be paid quarterly to the ECD site. 8. The ECD sites must send the proof of the ages of children, each pre-primary must send a list of (5-6) year old with copies of birth certificates at the beginning of every year, at the end of January. A list of all (5-6) year olds must be sent to the Department of education at the beginning of every term/quarter thereafter. 9. The priority use for the subsidy should be to buy educational toys, learning material, playground equipment and fencing of the ECD site for security. 10. The ECD Practitioners responsible for the (5-6) year olds Grade-R class must be prepared to be trained by the Department in OBE [if she] is already qualified or in everything if unqualified. 11. ECD Practitioners could sign a contract or agreement of at least 5 years with the Governing Body of the ECD site subsidised and trained by the Department of Education. This could ensure that ECD practitioner does not trot from one site to the other;. 12. ECD Practitioners who are permanently employed by the Department of Education at these Primary Schools will be deployed to formal schools. It is not justifiable that the Department should pay salaries for some and not for all. *NB* This policy is based on the National Interim Policy for Early Childhood development. The policy will be enforced from 1 April 1999 and will be later amended when the National ECD Policy is finalised.

Several regulations regarding the use of money and keeping of financial

records are in place. An ECD has to have the following: a separate bank account to receive subsidy; a ledger to record all income and expenses. The invoices need to be kept and to be sent to the Department each month; an inventory book; a list of all 5-6 years old and a copy of the birth certificate of each child. And; 3 signatories to authorise payment: two members of the GB and the practitioner.

On national level the financial costs involved in ECD are huge and one of the reasons is the still existing inequality within education. The Department of Education's duty is to introduce a new policy and its main goal is to be equitable, efficient and cost effective.

In the budget 1996/97 pre-primary education received only 0,44% of the education budget. The national education budget allocates R6,907 million (0,13%) to ECD for managing the development, evaluation and maintenance of education programmes. In addition the National Education Department allocated R50 million as a start-up fund for an ECD Reception Year Pilot Programme.

National Province	Allocated amount R000s	% of national/province education budget
Northern Cape	46	0,01%
Western Cape	18 355	0,58%

In the past alternative funding of ECD has come from: IDT, R70 million in 1991 (fully used by 1996); R35 million from the corporate sector; about R12 million from foreign donors (The South African Children's Budget, 1998).

The Departments of Education and Social Welfare in the Northern Cape reached an agreement that the Department of Education will subsidise the (5-6) year olds in Grade-R classes while the Department of Social Welfare subsidises (0-5) year olds in the ECDs. The ECDs need to be registered with Social Welfare and must apply for the subsidy (0-5) year olds in their sites from the Department of Social Welfare. From 1 April 1999 the ECD institutions will be subsidised at R2.00 per day per (5-6) year old child for 200 days per year 1998 and 1999. This money is *not* for *salaries* or *food*. It is also *not* for transport costs of practitioners or GB members (The National Pilot Project). I

mentioned before: "the Department will not be able to pay teachers/ECD practitioners salaries in about 300 private church and community-based ECD sites in the province from 1 April 1999. The parents are supposed to pay the salaries

3.4.2 ECD for Children of 0 - 5 Year Olds

In South Africa the ECD field concerns not only children from 5-6 year olds. It concerns children from a much younger age and I include them in the term 'ECD'. ECD stretches over two Government Departments in the Northern Cape: Education, Training, Arts and Culture for the 5-6 year olds, and Developmental Social Welfare takes responsibility for the 0-5 year olds. The NEPI document mentions the division as one of the differences existing between educare and the school system. It states "early childhood educare requires far greater co-ordination between education, health and welfare because it needs to include education for all children, full-day care for children of working mothers, and primary health care and supplementary nutrition..." (1992: 8). At this stage *all* Day Care Centres, Nursery Schools, Aftercare Centres and Educare Centres are obliged to register at the provincial Department Developmental Social Welfare. The following documents need to be submitted to be eligible for subsidy:

1. Application form for registration from the Department of Developmental Social Welfare.
 2. Social Worker's evaluation report.
 3. Environmental Health Inspector's report.
 4. Daily programme for children.
 5. A sketch plan of the building.
 6. Constitution of the Management Committee.
 7. Menu - if food is provided.
 8. Audited financial statements of the Centre, if applying for state funding.
 9. Fund-raising number.
 10. Deed of lease if building is rented.
 11. Registration as business (approval of RCS).
 12. Zoning document (approval of the Town Clerk).
 13. Approval (written) of the neighbours permission.
- (Department of Developmental Social Welfare, NC)

3.5 Existing Gaps

To consider the possible sustainability of ECDs, it is necessary to look at the gaps existing between the different role players in the ECD field. The gaps restrict and prevent the ECD to function at its full potential. Before I touch the

aspect of 'sustainability and ECDs' it is useful to look into the gaps.

The *first gap* is the separation existing between the age groups of the children. The 0-5 year olds: the Department of Social Welfare to request for subsidy. The 5-6 year olds: the Department of Education to request for subsidy. This division causes unnecessary tensions between the two bodies of which the first has a more informal set-up. The other group has a much more formal character and belongs to the primary school set-up. The co-operation between the two parties is unbalanced and some barriers need to be overcome. A barrier is the difference in status: qualified teachers often look down upon informally trained practitioners. The last are often skilled and devoted women who care for the children as if they were their own. Another barrier is the position of dependency of an ECD to get handouts, such as the remainders of paper, glue, pencils and other materials. The working methods are different between ECD and primary school: for 0-5 year olds play-play is important and an informal style of learning of which the child is very much the centre focus of learning. At primary schools the curriculum needs to be followed in a more strict way; it is more formal and the child is expected to adapt to the programmes. The White Paper indicates a new approach in its policy towards learning Outcome Based Education (OBE), and the materials and methodology have become more child-friendly. It will be here that ECD and primary school are able to find one another as OBE is child-friendly. It is advisable for ECDs and primary school to tie the knot more intensively and ECD practitioners can certainly help many a teacher to understand the new curriculum.

Tensions about issues such as titles, accreditation and salaries are other hassles to overcome. People working in ECDs are called practitioners and the term refers to all ECD education and training development practitioners. This encompasses the whole spectrum of ECD educators, trainers, facilitators, lecturers, caregivers, development officers, etc., including those qualified by their experience, and who are involved in provision in homes, centres and schools (Interim Policy for ECD). People working in primary schools are called teachers.

Practitioners who have successfully completed the National Pilot Programme receive only a partial qualification. The Interim Policy for ECD does not state clearly who needs to be involved in the accreditation process. The Education

Departments - National and Provincial - could consult a wide spectrum of people and as the questionnaires indicate the GBs certainly could become involved. ECD - formal and informal - should become a fully accepted part of the whole education system and curriculum. Interim guidelines are proposed and will be applied specifically to accredit providers outside the formal schooling system (Interim Policy, p.19), but the process has not been taken forward.

The Department of Education pays the salaries of teachers attached to a public primary school. The parents pay the salaries of the practitioners at ECD sites not belonging to the official structures of the State Departments.

A *second gap* as I notice can be found in the training modules of the National Pilot Programme. Modules dealing with leadership and management or governance of the ECD are lacking. Within the management module I should include the basic requirements of entrepreneurial skills. I would argue that such skills needs to become compulsory for all practitioners including the GBs.

The *third gap* is between the State Departments and the ECD concerning obtainable subsidy. At the moment the requirements many for ECDs are almost impossible to achieve, especially in rural areas where resources to collect the information are scarce. Documents are sent forwards and backwards, discouraging many good initiatives. To be at the mercy of the social workers and inspectors who need to deliver reports to the Departments is a big frustration.

A clear gap is between the requirements and the person(s) who have to fulfil the tasks of collecting all data. The problem lies in the procedures, which are for people in the deep rural areas difficult to complete. People might lack the knowledge of where to go for help, and besides, to ask for help might be a psychological barrier as it could indicate 'dom te wees'. It would therefore be advisable to develop a pamphlet or brochure that explains step by step the procedure to follow. The brochure could indicate which resorts in the community are able to assist, such as the Local Government officials, ministers of religion, and teachers. The requirements outlined by the Departments are mainly based on ECDs situated in urban or semi-urban areas. It would be necessary to develop a set of requirements for ECDs in rural areas, based on what could be attainable and at the same time provocative, so that the ECD is

challenged to conform.

A *forth gap* can be found in the approach of the 'reality' of Department policy concerning ECDs. The Department of Education in the Northern Cape prioritises educational toys above the provision of a basic salary for the practitioners who are pivotal in the sustainable operational activities of the ECD. Are educational toys really a more desired commodity than a basic security – ie. a salary - for the practitioners? On the other hand the 'reality' is that the Department does not have sufficient financial resources to provide a salary for all practitioners. I would argue that it would be better that the Department redirects its attention to the provision of specific training needs. Courses in creating alternative income for the ECD to attend by practitioners, governing bodies and parents. The training could include the production of educational toys locally.

The *fifth gap* exists on local government level: 1) local government is not actively involved in ECD despite the fact that ECD delivers valuable services to the community. Local government forums could put ECD on the priority list of the agenda and include it in its activities. 2) People involved with ECD do not have the capacity and ability to advocate their interests and problems in a sufficient and satisfying way. If they were empowered to do so ECD interests would become part of the agenda of local government. New ways need to be learnt to present their case and which also enables people to explore other possible financial means to support the ECD.

A *relation gap* is existing between the churches and ECD sites. This might arise from the different interests both have. The churches focus on the spiritual needs of people divorcing sometimes the fundamental material needs. The ECD fulfils a basic and fundamental need of people by caring and educating the children. Do churches realise sufficiently the importance of children and the contributions they make within the church structures? Traditionally children were sidelined, but in future the children need to be accommodated as 'partner' of the church community. Almost all parents belong to a church group or denomination and accordingly contribute financially to the church. On the other hand, parents with the help of GBs and practitioners need to advocate a new and increasing participatory role for the churches within the ECD set-up.

A *more threatening gap* is rapidly rising between the more affluent communities, mostly urban based and the poor, economically under-developed communities, mainly in the rural areas. This gap is a world wide problem of which ESSET states "the gap between the rich and the poor grows more and more rapidly. In the 1960s, the wealthiest one-fifth of the world's population received 30 times more than the poorest 20%. By 1991, the wealthy were getting 61 times more than the poor" (1999, September).

Increasing unemployment, lack of equal and adequate distribution of resources, are some of the contributors to the impoverishing of many a community. There is a down-wards movement from symptoms of poverty becoming the causes of continued poverty (Burkey, 1993: 8). When poverty reaches that stage, and it does in many rural areas in South Africa, poverty has become a stumbling block. Poverty incapacitates people from improving their situation and this is often accelerated by lack of training and education facilities. The feeling of being powerless to change their own living situation is the main stumbling block. Burkey says "the first step in assisting people onto the path of development must therefore be an analysis of the causes of poverty affecting a particular people in their own particular situation" (1993: 12). I think it would be stimulating for people to address poverty and to start development with the analysis of available assets. People themselves are the main assets: the Human Resources. But, what is perceived to be real material poverty and what is culturally perceived to be poverty? Between the two perceptions can be a big difference. Rural people particularly have a very fine tuned feeling for cultural poverty, which they might see as a more dehumanising society than not having material goods. Goulet tells how Native American societies consider "to be poor is to be without family, without a tribe - without people who care deeply for you" (1995: 129).

4.

ECD-Sites

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained what ECD is and its importance for the holistic development of the child. The historical background was etched and how ECD became rooted in South African society where it was struck by racial disparities; its further evolution and policies were discussed and I ended with the existing gaps.

This chapter deals with how communities evolved throughout the years, requiring adjustments in lifestyle, working conditions and education. The changing circumstances in society influenced the need for ECD education and care and more and more ECDs were established. ECDs therefore need to meet basic requirements formulated in a clear set of objectives strengthened by a shared vision and a clear mission statement. Furthermore, ECDs could and must fulfil a multiplicity of functions within a community. The most important function is to be the 'substitute' of the parents as they are mostly not able to facilitate further education beyond ECD (time-wise and educational). Outcomes of the research will underpin the importance of the objectives and the fact that ECDs need to widen their functions.

4.2 Objectives of ECD

If ECD is to be effectively promoted in South Africa local effort is needed to supplement the present shortage of Government resources. In this section I look at the objectives of an ECD, or the ECD project, in relation to fostering ECD services *and* the ability to mobilise the resources needed for long-term operation.

The Bernard van Leer Foundation focuses on several important issues when it comes to objectives of ECD (1994: 38). It states "the objective of ECD programmes is to support parents, families and other caregivers." The Foundation looks, above, all to the needs of the children of Africa in particular and it recognises the following main points. Firstly, to support mothers and children so that they are well nourished and healthy. Secondly, "Early childhood development needs to be holistic development", says the Bernard

van Leer Foundation (1994: 61). Further: the holistic development of children requires environments in which children feel secure, are stimulated, and have opportunities to explore, to question, to experiment, to play and to symbolise (1994: 17). Thus, it concerns the child in his/her wholeness including his/her environment and the interrelationships the child encounters in the course of life. In other words holistic development helps the child to reach his/her full potential; helps him/her to understand the world around. Dinah Zohar and Ian Marshall say: "[it is] the ability to grasp the overall context that links component parts" (2000: 60). 'Holistic' means the wholeness with feeling and attention for the different details which forms the wholeness. It can be approached from micro to macro levels. Micro: the child as wholeness; and macro: the relationships between the person and his/her world. Later the persons become mature, and responsible adults later in life. These are universal objectives and exceedingly applicable to South Africa. If, ECD practices the holistic approach in the up bringing of the child, it is a reflection of their perception of the world around the child. The child learns to relate to the different aspects and experiences the world offers and expose.

Another objective considered to be important is the amalgamation of the prevailing culture and traditions of communities into the modern way of teaching. This point I consider as being of great importance for South Africa as it is one of the ways to heal and revive people's cultural identity previously denied under the old dispensation. So many communities were uprooted and alienated from their land, customs, traditions and even from their language. Amalgamation in the South African context means to recognise and respect the identity, the diversity of culture and traditions of the ethnic population groups. Further it means that each ethnic group helps to build the nation, as bricks help to build a house.

Further, we need to consider the objective of school readiness when the child reaches the age for formal education. Parents and practitioners regard this objective as important. Besides, it is a reflection and a measurement of the quality of education offered at the ECD. The perception exists that when a child has reached the stage of school readiness this ushers in a successful school career. Faber and van Staden say that there are a variety of perceptions concerning school readiness, but they argue that it needs to include 3 aspects: school maturity; social maturity; emotional maturity. I would add 'physical maturity' to accentuate the holistic vision of the educational and

developmental approach. An interesting question is posed by Faber and van Staden "school readiness or [must the school be] a ready school?" (1997: 176). It needs to be a cross-section. The child needs to have reached a certain age and inherent in it a certain stage in his/her development. The school needs to be able to accommodate young children who are on different levels of school readiness as children cannot be 'standardised'.

Lastly, I would like to add the objective of accessibility of all children to an ECD education and facilities. ECD is after the family circle the second social, educational and forming environment. Nowadays, the majority of families, and I mean the nuclear family as well as the extended family, have undergone a drastic change, which could be called a 'devaluation' or 'disintegrating' of the traditional family composition. Family life falls apart for which several reasons can be referred to. Some reasons are urbanisation; the migration to town to find work depopulates rural areas; both the parents need to go out to work to earn an income, because of the high demands to provide a living; migrant labour, the work in mines and the decreasing job opportunities in rural areas. The alarming and daily increasing rate of HIV/Aids, wipes out whole families and leaves behind many orphans who need to be cared for. Further the introduction of TV and videos not only absorbs time, it draws away attention from the children and many of them have become addicted to the TV. Lastly, the changing demands in relation to education, cause some parents to feel alienated to new approaches within the curriculum.

The fact that both parents need to work to supplement income affects the mother twofold: firstly, seen from a positive side. The mother has the opportunity to develop her potential and to find satisfaction in working outdoors. She spends intensive and sufficient time with her family and shares the household tasks. Secondly, negatively, as the mother has already more than a full-time job. She is the main income-generating source and beyond that she cares for the family, doubling her tasks.

All the facts mentioned above contribute to the essential role an ECD has to accomplish to be a substitute for the family educational care. Consequently, ECD needs to be accessible for *all* children and affordable for the parent(s). The financial cost aspects of ECD have to be a shared responsibility of the community - parents as well as the wider community. The Government shares by allocating sufficient financial and perhaps alternative resources to enable

tan ECD to provide the services in a responsible way.

To conclude I would like to state that the financial viability of ECD is a necessary requirement to fulfil all above mentioned objectives. I repeat briefly: to support mothers and children so that they are well-nourished and healthy; to enable the amalgamation of prevailing cultures and traditions of communities into the modern way of teaching; to stimulate school readiness of the children as well as the readiness of the school. To end with, ECD needs to be accessible for all children and it needs to be affordable for the parent(s).

4.2.1 Research Findings

Each and every ECD ought to have a realistic and practical development plan. It should state the following: the vision and mission statements; the aims and objectives the ECD strives for; a flexible curriculum; plan of action with parents, what courses will be offered; the projects the ECD is involved in or wants to initiate; training of the GB and practitioners. The development plan needs to contain a step by step plan of action on how the ECD will function in a particular year, or spread over a few years, to benefit the education and bringing up of the children. Or as the ECD Pilot Project Northern Cape states: 'putting the children first in the reconstruction of the nation... A community that does not care for their children ...does not deserve its future...'.

The following question was posed: **How would you vision the ECD you are involved with in 2005:**

Table 4.1

Children	
have well educated and developed children	2
day- and after care for the children	2
the number of children will double	2
a better future for all our children	1
a better place for our children to be	1
•Practitioners and GBs	
the number of practitioners will double	2
has a second practitioner	1
more independent within GB	1
committed parents and GB	1
Attitude	
the ECD improves and becomes a model school	7
better prospects, be sustainable, independent and self-reliant	15
to become a well-organised project	1
has self-confidence	1
be successful	2
be progressive	1
be able to support other ECDs	2
high standard of training	2
Financial	
Dep. of Education doubles the subsidy and cares for ECD	1
funding is sufficient to provide a salary for staff	2
salaries that are guaranteed	1
Material	
the availability of more equipment, well equipped	8
to have an own building (if funding is found within 3 years)	3
a kitchen, more classrooms and outdoor equipment	1
Other	
a place where organisations are involved: youth, community	1

GBs, parents and practitioners need to formalise their vision together, it needs to be collective and thus shared to enable them to set clear objectives. An

ECD site starts from that particular vision - that is where we want to be and so ...(step 1., step 2., etc.) we are coming there. A shared vision should become part of the whole set up as it is an expression of common values. Davidoff and Lazarus say that "building a shared vision should be a creative process which includes (a) sharing values, hopes and dreams, (b) understanding environmental trends, constraints and possibilities, (c) looking at the human resources available in the [ECD], and (d) integrating all of this into a colourful tapestry which expresses who we are, what we can bring, and what we believe in" (1997: 46).

15 ECDs envision 2005 as having better prospects, and being sustainable and independent, *if* the necessary funding is found within the next 3 years. If funding is understood to be state subsidies it will be necessary to look at some points: the equal distribution of the financial resources and the interest of all citizens need to be equally met. In other words the imbalances of the past must be rectified, a striving very valid within the Department of Education.

Realisation of the vision is where all strive for, but something needs to be done to reach the goal such as to look for resources, take action, change attitude, and work together. **What would be the main resources to realise that vision:**

Table 4.2

Attitude	
the love the practitioner gives the children	1
Practitioners and GBs work hard	2
Commitment	1
Community services, involvement and co-operation	13
Involvement of parents, responsibility	7
Involvement of colleagues	4
Involvement of GBs	3
Involvement of church	1
Involvement of business sector	1
Involvement of State Departments, finances	8
Involvement of Local Government	2
Involvement of NGOs, local organisations	2
co-operation between ECDs in region	1
co-operation of department concerning salaries	2
co-operation and teamwork	3
Financial	
more income/funding by donors, sufficient funding	5
short term finances	1
Finances to build ECD	1
fund-raising activities	2
Activities	
to write requests/petitions	1
Training, workshops	6
draw up an action plan	1
Provision of the necessary equipment	2
the creation of jobs	1
Other	
Sustainability	1
the children	1

A mission statement goes further, it expresses the identity of the ECD, why [the ECD site] is in the community; and "describes the purpose of an organisation and the actions or activities needed to be performed for constituents [parents]" (Yuki, 4th ed.). Davidoff and Lazarus put it as follows "a mission statement is a written verbalisation which captures and draws together all the strands of the vision... expresses the will and intent of the [ECD]. It is the visible what, how and why of the vision.....this is what we believe in, or stand for, or are building towards; these are the values that inform this; this is why these values and intentions are important to us; and this is how we intend to accomplish our aims" (1997: 47). Further, "the mission statement must be understood by all; easily remembered; constantly challenged; owned by the organisation; acceptable to all; and feasible in implementation. It should have the following: inspiring; clear, challenging; makes sense; stable but changeable; and prepares us for the future" (Ibid. 63-64). Much more time and energy should be spent with practitioners, GBs and parents to work through the process of creating a vision and composing the mission statement as such an activity stimulates 'ownership'

The **mission statements** were reflected as followed and no numbering is given due to the fact that almost each mission statement was an individual expression of the participating ECD sites. The answers reveal that the majority of practitioners and GBs do not understand the concept of a 'mission statement':

Table 4.3

Educational
development and safety for the child
to provide education and development of the children, training for personnel and to be sustainable
to prepare the child for primary school, and to help the child to develop holistically
to care that the child physically, social and emotional develops
Attitude
to be self-reliant, to involve children of farm workers and to create jobs
to care for the children when parents work
to assist in general health and upliftment of the rural community
to accommodate all children between 3 and 6 years of age and to create a solid foundation
to promote development and progress in the community
to provide accommodation for each and every child and to nurse responsible parents and community
Other
a few ECDs strive to become model ECDs
5 ECDs did not answer the question

An ECD needs to have a development plan, which comes from the mission statement, but only 11 of the 31 participating ECDs indicated that they have such a plan. This might have several reasons, such as not being familiar with a development plan; or insecurity about how to realise the objectives. Another reason might be a communication gap between the different role players in ECD; a fourth reason could be that the ECD is not fully part of the curriculum and is mainly informal and therefore in a way considered to be "inferior" to formal education.

It is necessary to go back to the objectives of the Bernard van Leer Foundation and the other objectives to see if they are reflected in the answers of the research.

Objective 1.: to support mothers and children so that they are well nourished and healthy. This would indicate the involvement of the mothers in the process of preparation of the food; the composition of ingredients and those of the menu. Also if the mothers eat nutritious food, or to support mothers in order to help them to feed the children adequately. The last is not

mentioned at all in the answers. The majority of ECDs (28 out of 31 ECDs that participated in the research)) cannot afford to provide food for the children and are dependent on the food brought from home. The subsidy provided by the Department of Welfare of R2.00 per day is *not* for food.

When the question was asked: **what skills do parent(s) receive?** 10 ECDs had offered a course in nutrition. Only one ECD mentioned the possibility of starting a vegetable garden, but this as an income-generating project and to provide vegetables to the ECD. To add a vegetable garden to the ECD could include learning new skills as there are many ways to grow vegetables.

Objective 2.: of the Bernard van Leer Foundation: the holistic development of children requires environments in which children feel secure, are stimulated, and have opportunities to explore, to question, to experiment, to play and to symbolise, is the best answered by the following question. What is the main purpose of an ECD:

Table 4.4

Educational	
educate the child for the future/a better future	6
the holistic development of the child	15
the development of the child	3
equip and prepare the child for the Primary School 7	7
the provision of the right education for the children	3
Group's discipline and stimulating environment	2
Other	
the safe guarding of the children	3
create jobs for the unemployed	1

The stress is on development of the child as well as on the wholeness or holism. This needs some attention as we keep in mind that wholeness is inclusive and it can be understood to be attunement of mind and body. Zohar and Marshall identify 3 basic human intelligence's: rational, emotional and spiritual; 3 kinds of thinking: serial, associative and unitive; than there are 3 levels of the self: primary, secondary and tertiary (2000: 124). The characteristic groups need also to be seen in a wider circle of wholeness and I would add an essential aspect: the community as a whole of which the child is part. An ECD has a much more important role within a community than it

places itself in. The ECD should be in fact at the centre of the community and in such a way that it fuels change and therefore helps the community to grow. The child is of course the central focus of the ECD, the 'ripple effects' are the parent(s), families and other caregivers, the neighbourhood and, in such a way, the circles widen: the stone in the pond idea! ECDs could take up this model as children firstly reflect the home situation, its habits, its language are met at the ECD where the child learns new things. A positive relationship develops at the ECD and in such a way an exchange takes place. Nayak argues as follows 'the children could equally reflect the new values of school in the homes,' (1992: 12). This model offers first and for all optimum development opportunities for the children.

Objective 3.: the amalgamation of the prevailing culture and traditions of communities into the modern way of teaching. The situation in South Africa is complicated as through its previous political system all forms of education were strongly determined by racial division, which penetrated all layers of society. Depending on ethnic classification the quality of education was determined without taking into account existing and prevailing cultures and traditions. Up till 1999, a bit more than 5 years after the first democratic elections, the division is still very distinguishable and visible. Not one of the participating ECDs had a representation of all population groups, who were indicated by Coloureds, Afrikaners, and Xhosa's, Nama's, Whites and of Portuguese origin.

In Namaqualand there is a striking example of a culture oppressed by the previous government: the Nama population. The Nama has its own language, presently spoken in only a few places and mainly by the older generation in that region. Nama is more widely spoken across the boarder in Namibia. Nama is a language threatened with eradication due to the fact the language has been forcibly taken out the curriculum of the schools in the 1950s by the Nationalist Government to promote its Apartheid Laws. In a time when Nama was still widely used a campaign was launched to degrade Nama to the status of an 'inferior' language, resulting in the fact that nowadays many people feel ashamed to speak publicly this remarkable and beautiful language. ECDs can become involved in the revival of Nama by involving grandmothers and grandfathers who still speak the language to sing songs, to tell stories and to name the direct environment, for example all things in the house, the animals known to children and more.

How far has the changing family structure influenced ECD? As I have noticed before, the traditional family - father, mother, number of children, grandparents, uncles and aunts and more - has changed drastically. In the research, the chapter 'Parents' indicates a radical shift within the nuclear family set up of being part of and functioning within the extended family. The following question: **How many is a single parent?** It shows an average of 43.8%. Only two of the ECDs mentioned a rate of 0 and 1%: Klipdrift Kleuterskool, a farm school near Graaff-Reinet and Wiekie Wessie (the only so-called 'white' ECD site which participated in the research) in Victoria West. 'Oestergaard estimates that, at any point in time, one-third of the world's households are female headed, either temporarily, due to a male partner's migration, or permanently, due to separation, abandonment, divorce or death' (1992; 107). This study shows an average rate of 10% higher than the average mentioned above. The high degree of migrant labour in Namaqualand could be the main reason for this, but Quinta Jonas points to another major reason. Many young women go to town to look for jobs, there she meets a man who makes her pregnant, he disappears and she has to go back home with the child and without a husband, as any income and waiting for a maintenance grant to be allocated. The ECDs in The Karoo indicate figures of i.e. 85/90%, 30%, 60%, of single parent(s) presumably the same reason Jonas offers. This might provoke some questions, such as, what is the status and concept of 'the family'? Or, is being a single parent the only guarantee to have some income, such as a grant? Must the concept of family be 're-classified', or has the phenomenon 'single parent' another meaning? How does the rural society look at women as mothers? How are women valued who do not have children and are also not married? Are attempts made to accommodate the phenomenon of single parent, by way of informative parent meetings, courses or even by putting it forward as a 'point of discussion'?

Objective 4.: School readiness is reflected quite frequently in the research indicating the importance of it for the practitioners as well as for the parents. It is reflected in the question: **what services do the ECD offer:**

Table 4.5

Children related	
education and social development of the child	16
provide food for the child	2
provide safety for the children	4
preparation for primary school	4
keep the children off the street	1
Parents related	
assist parents, help develop self-confidence + offer information	1
Other	
offer no specific services	1
not filled in the question	2

2 ECDs filled in more than one service, such as safety and food

Apart from school maturity also the social development of the child has been noticed as being an important contribution to the well being of the child, and also as being a guarantee for success at primary school. Social development teaches the child to relate with his/her environment and how to responds to it. Emotional development is not often separately mentioned, but it is an inherent part of all developmental aspects. It can be accommodated within the holistic approach of the development of the child.

Objective 5.: the accessibility and affordability of ECD for all children refers immediately to the financial viability of ECD. This objective is far from accomplished as I have mentioned earlier that only 21% of all children under six years old are in out-of-home care of some kind (The South African Children's Budget, 1998). Accessibility and affordability are both questionable as not all communities have ECD facilities, certainly not in rural areas. Secondly, the financial factor is decisive. Therefore the first question, which needs to be asked is: what financial resources are involved, contribute and add to the viability of the ECD? A variety of income sources are given as indicated in the following question posed: **How does the ECD receive its income:**

Table 4.6

Subsidy from Department of Education	13
Subsidy from Department of Social Welfare	4
From another Government Department	1

From school fees	30
From fund raising functions	22
From local donations	15
From outside funding bodies	15

To obtain funding from one of the State Departments is a long and discouraging process. Ulukhanyo ECD in Rosmead (Karoo) is in correspondence with the Department of Welfare of the Eastern Cape since 1996. Klipdrift ECD site (Karoo) confirms this and adds that they have sent out many requests for a subsidy. It is a difficult and complicated process that frustrates and disillusions many a GBs and staff members resulting in many losing courage. Some participants in the research expressed it as follows "....en, so sukkel ons maar aan!" Many ECDs do not have access to a supporting centre or an umbrella body that is able to help them in this process.

A micro funding programme such as DOCKDA is, fulfils a role in empowering existing and regional NGOs by offering and/or financing training to equip them to train ECDs which apply for funding. Training helps to narrow the gap existing between ECDs and the Departments so that those departmental requirements can be satisfied. This is a step-by-step process: where to get information and assistance, how to fill in all documents, writing funding proposals and in learning advocacy. Secondly, to prevent duplications.

30 Out of the 31 ECDs indicate that parents pay a school fee. The amount of the school fee is varying, depending on the number of hours a day the child spends at the ECD and if food is provided. The majority of the ECDs experience problems with collecting the school fee of which the main reason is unemployment. **Only an average of 33.3% of parents do have employment**, and only 1 ECD site indicated full employment: Wiesie Wessie in Victoria West; 1 ECD mentioned mainly men have work; and 2 ECDs did not answer this question. The employment rate is generally low among the parents of the participating ECDs. The low rate might be imputed to several reasons, such as the closing of the mines in Namaqualand. As a committee

member of Harlekyntje Kleuterskool in Carolusberg states "we experience an unemployment rate of an average of 95%, it is a small percentage who still works". The down grading of railways badly affects towns in The Karoo, Rosmead has an unemployment rate of an average of 85%. Also the towns in the vicinity are affected. In other parts of the Karoo the employment rate seems to be affected by the new Labour Relation Act and the fact that the subsidy for the farmers stopped, which caused farmers to dismiss labourers. The low employment rate is an indicator of the level of poverty. Oxfam states: "we can distinguish between absolute and relative poverty. Absolute poverty refers to some absolute standard of minimum requirements, while relative poverty refers to falling behind most others in the community" (1997: 2). Due to the lack of an adequate social system in South Africa, many people will fall in the first category of poverty.

The employment rate of the single parents is low: **of the 44.9% single parents only 22.9% is employed**. We need to look into the work that is done by the single parent, who mainly belong to the 'economically non-active' and the 'informal work' category. The single parent encounters many problems such as the full care of the children - being both parents at the same time as well as the income generator. The Department of Social Welfare launched and leads the Flagship Programme for unemployed women with children under the 5 years old. This support programme shows the link between income generation and childcare programmes. It is intended to build women's capacity for economic independence and empowerment, as well as provide appropriate education for very young children' (The South African Children's Budget, 1998).

Unemployment of one or both parents might lead to that no fee could be paid. The problem becomes more severe when parents *will not* pay the fee, because this will demand action in one way or the other of GB and practitioners. There is an ambiguity how to deal with parents who cannot pay and who will not pay. If the high percentage of unemployment all over the areas involved in the research is considered, it is of no surprise that the payment of school fees is going to suffer. Naidoo argues that it is basically a question of inequality in society - more than 50% of the population in South Africa lives on R300 per month. To address the issue Naidoo would like to see a state policy in place where it is compulsory for children at the youngest possible age to receive education.

Alternative ways to contribute to the paying of fees need to be in place. Attempts are made to assist parents, but still there is an underlying frustration and desperation. If the unwillingness to pay a basic school fee is a result of the attitude that everything needs to be given, then we are on a wrong track, for parents have certain obligations financially or in an other way towards their children and the schools their children go to. It would be worthwhile to argue that 'nothing to be given for free' (Nayak, 1992: 12). The following finding motivated Nayak to make this a condition for development. 'The mothers noticed how the creative abilities of a child could blossom, they began to enjoy their children, began to realise that education was worth some of their hard money and began to see they had a part to play in making or destroying the child' (Ibid. 12). The impact of ECD on the individual child needs much more attention and consciousness needs to be raised. It demands an open communication between parent(s) and practitioner and a perhaps more accessibility of the ECD.

22 ECDs generate income through fund raising locally, but only one ECD site seems to be successful. The generally high rate of unemployment affects the local fund-raising and it is not sufficient or profitable enough. But are the GBs and practitioners adequately trained in organising fund-raising events and in writing the 'right' proposals or business plans? Do GBs know how to investigate the criteria set by donors, or what they like to read in a business plan? Do the GBs know how to report the successes and the mistakes they made? Emotional requests are often immediately set aside and therefore ECDs need to know how to promote their particular needs to funding organisations as well as to State Departments. In their turn, funding organisations and Departments need to become more understanding and adequate with their reply on a request for funding.

4.3 Functions of ECD Sites

An ECD fulfils a multidimensional function reaching out to some more aspects than only being a place where young children are cared for and educated. This section looks into broader scenery of functions an ECD can facilitate within a community. The ECD can, if it explores its different and several functions, become a 'change agent' in own community.

1. Function of Learning

The main focus needs to be the child and the learning processes involved with his/her development, helping the child to perform better in his/her scholastic career. The learning interventions need to help the child to reach school-readiness and to experience that learning is a pleasure. Learning is not necessarily restricted to the child who attends the ECD site, but an ECD needs to be the symbol of lifelong learning for all, involving the wider community. Learning does not stop when young people leave school and as it was in the past when they got a job that almost always took a lifetime. Nowadays young people need to prepare themselves for more than one job or career. It might require a total career change including more training and learning of new abilities or skills.

An ECD site could be pivotal in this process of change and could offer training sessions for parents to learn new skills, in other words 'build capacity'. The parent's experience is the ground on which to build new skills. To unite the two (experience plus new skills) brings about a new, and often powerful, sets of skills. Nowadays people can not wait till a job comes to them. Those who have the ability and the necessary training could become self-employed and find new ways to improve their living circumstances. The Interim Policy for ECD (9) states "an adequate ECD infra-structure that can free parents, especially mothers, to take up employment and further their education will enable women in poor families to break out of the cycle of poverty, illiteracy and economic dependency".

2. Childminding Function

Being a 'safety buffer': the child who is entrusted to the ECD is relatively safe. The parent(s) at work can be free of anxiety since their child is in a secure and caring environment. Childminding includes a child-friendly environment that is tuned to the needs of the children. An ECD also needs as well as to be parent-friendly. Parent(s) can bring their children at a time that suits them the best, if it is necessary. However I would add that parent-friendly also suggests that parents can come forward with their problems, although an ECD should not become an office for marriage counselling. Childminding is far more important and fulfils a much more 'rich' function than in first instance is perceived. It is loaded with values, principles, dedication and commitment of people who often do not receive any reward for the work they do.

3. "Wealth Creator" Function

Or put into other words, an ECD site can become a resource generator and it accumulates value that does not necessarily needs to be expressed in financial terms. The 'wealth creating' function can contribute to growth and increase of abilities, skills, social justice, cultural integrity and also spiritually. When it comes to the financial aspects, an ECD needs to be run on business principles and an entrepreneurial approach in a two-folded way. The ECD site delivers a service and these services when consumed or used need to be paid for. Consequently management and staff of an ECD ought to provide quality services: quality care, quality education and optimum security for the child. A financial system needs to be in place to control income of fees and other income. Alternative strategies and possible solutions need to be in place if parent(s) cannot meet the financial duties to prevent the services from being available to a select group only. The second way is for the ECD to create training and education programmes for parents, including the teaching of entrepreneurial skills. This could perhaps be done in co-operation with other ECDs and the primary school. Together they become the drive of several income generating projects enhancing alternative income and stimulating the sustainability of an ECD. The function of 'wealth creator' is often neglected. The empowerment of parent(s) is not seen to be the task of ECD. The function is important as parent(s) could become partner(s) in programmes to initiate 'job creation'. They could be motivated to share jobs and in this way more people could be provided with an income. Empowerment needs to go further than management only, it needs to enrich people so that they have control over their own destiny.

The Northern Cape ECD Pilot Project adds another dimension to the function 'wealth creator' when it advocates: "A proper community building project should be aimed at empowering the parents for some time until the parents can take over the management. The parents must be allowed/trained/empowered to become self-sufficient." This includes an effective and efficient management, governance and leadership. In *Full Range Leadership Development to transformational leadership* Avail and Bass refer to maximising development of the team [of the ECD] and not only their performance. Development must be seen as consolidation of the ability, motivation, attitudes and values. This is in an ongoing process of growth and self-development (1990: 4.6:4.7). They consider the 4 *Is* to be essential to lay

the foundation for efficient management, governance and leadership. I briefly mention the 4 Is: 1. *Individualised Consideration* - represents the empathy a leader shows for associates' [the principal for her colleagues and GB for the staff] needs and desires on a personal level. 2. *Intellectual Stimulation* - represents the problem-oriented aspects of leadership, i.e. to enhance associates' capabilities for solving the current problem as well as future problems [i.e. what to do when parents will not pay the fee]. It helps being smarter and more creative. 3. *Inspirational Motivation* - represents the energy, the initiative, the perseverance, and the ability to envisage the future that so often differentiates the exceptional from the ordinary leader. It also represents the leadership qualities that move associates to achieve extraordinary levels of accomplishment on personal and performance levels. 4. *Idealised Influence* - represents the highest level of transformational leadership in that the associates have trust in such leaders who have a high degree of credibility. In the ECD field there are only recently a few courses now available to develop leadership that is prepared 'to promote the acceptance of responsibility and change'. In order to enhance the transformation to a high quality system [a functioning ECD] staff members and GB need to co-operate and actively become involved in order to address the increased leadership demands. They need to operate as a *team*. The characteristics of a good functioning team are: A shared purpose and high levels of cohesion; a clear vision of the future; a willingness to examine problems from all angles to generate innovative solutions; a concern for continuous improvement and individual development; a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities and; high levels of trust and support (Ibid. 4.9).

The wealth creating function is not only dependent of leadership that is in place, but also it can be seen from micro and macro economic perspectives. The presently high rate of unemployment leaving many families without regular income, hinders the financial blooming of many ECDs.

4. Service Providing Function

An ECD site fulfils the function of 'service provider' of very specialised, crucial and 'sensitive' service: the care for and education of the children from a very young age onwards. The period in which the child is most susceptible to learning. The period lays the foundation for his/her set of values. The provision of services thus needs more attention and requires to be clearly formulated in the mission statement of the ECD and reflected in its aims and

objectives. An ECD delivers important and fundamental services, which need to become the main characteristic throughout the whole school system. The Interim Policy (3) restricts ECD services to "... those programmes offered directly to young children by practitioners...". I fully subscribe to this, although I would like to add services offered to parent(s) and even beyond the scope of the ECD.

5. Job Providing/Job Creating Function

This function can be observed as being employer, job provider and even of job initiator. Firstly, adequate trained and competent staff members need to be employed to run the ECD in a professional way. Staff members comprise practitioners, cooks, administration and cleaning personnel. The Interim Policy for ECD formulates it as follows: "the term refers to all ECD education and training development practitioners. It encompasses the whole spectrum of ECD educators, trainers, facilitators, lecturers, caregivers, development officers, etc., including those qualified by their experience, and who are involved in provision in homes, centres and schools." This includes *all* people who are actively involved in the functioning of the ECD. *All* staff members' need to be professional, well trained and equipped for the tasks they are allocated to do. Maria Montessori focuses on rules for the teacher of young children and she asks the question "what is it that teachers [practitioners] must do 'actively' to refine their way of serving and developing human life - in the environment that has been created and adapted specially for children" (1989: 18). Montessori demands an excellent professional attitude; a dignified, mature person; and she continues with "the teacher must be everything that is perfect" (Ibid. 18).

Some questions need to be considered: does the present financial situation in South Africa allow ECDs to appoint and employ the necessary *professional* staff? It can clearly be stated: *no*, the financial means are not sufficient. Yet, it is of importance for *all* children that we strive for excellence within the teaching profession. This is firstly, to overcome the educational arrears many children suffer from due to the previous education system and dispensation, secondly, to provide the best opportunities for all children to reach their full potential, and thirdly, all investments (including all aspects) in the present young generation are an investment in the future. This in its self contributes to sustainability. I will argue yes, professional staff needs to be appointed. I refer to *professional* staff members who conduct their profession responsibly, respectfully and are

prepared to follow the necessary training.

What are the criteria to become a practitioner, and what needs to be done to protect the interests and to preserve the quality of ECD? The first part of the question can be answered that each and every GB should decide upon a set of criteria, they regard to be important for their specific needs and requirements.

A practitioner needs to have a set of beliefs, values and skills contributing to a professional attitude. Next, she needs to be able to teach the children in a proper way. Further, practitioners need to attend training programmes in line with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) so that the training can be officially recognised. The NQF in its turn presents a standard accreditation for all staff members of ECDs.

6. Relationship Building and Relationship Maintaining Function

An ECD relates to different 'layers' within the community and the wider society as a whole. Those relationships are called interdependencies and are according to Stan Burkey, essential (1993: 51). Therefore and lastly, an ECD site has the function of building and maintaining relationships that at the same time influence the different aspects of interdependencies. Max-Neef understands interdependence as "an inter-connection between the different domains of dependency - economic, financial, technological, cultural, and political. Since the power of one is derived from the support it receives from the other domains and these multiple dependencies are the driving forces that development geared toward self-reliance and the satisfaction of human needs is inhibited" (1991: 56). An ECD networks with several 'domains' as it relates to different official, semi-official and informal institutions and organisations. It also stimulates and instigates correlation between the variety of groupings. The degree of networking, communication, collaboration and functioning decisively affects the survival of the ECD. The nature of an ECD is after all to be community based and supported. The ECD needs to be aware of the importance of the interdependencies and should be actively involved in building a set of healthy alliances. It is necessary to bring forward some relationships influencing the different interdependencies, these in their turn influence the sustainability of the ECD.

4.3.1 Research Findings

1. Learning Function

The importance of the learning function the ECD could fulfil can be divided into several sectors: a) concerning the children; b) GBs; c) parents; d) the practitioners; and lastly, e) how does the learning function influence the wider community. The research left out a few important questions, such as 'what is understood by learning?' and 'when takes learning place?' And, has the concept of 'learning is a lifelong process' rooted?

A) *The Children*: is best expressed by the answers to the following question **what are the main tasks of the practitioner:**

Table 4.7

Concerning the children	
involved with education and development of children (holistic development)	27
prepare children for primary school (with help of parents)	4
to keep the children busy	1
teach the children	2
be responsible/care for the children	7
to put the children first	1
care for safety and health of children	4
reception and supervision of children	2
Teach children to develop skills, develop good foundation	2
Concerning attitude	
for discipline	2
attend training and implement training	2
Organisational	
keep register, do administration, receive school fees	3
the organisation of the ECD	3
do cleaning	1

Through involvement in the education and development of the child the great majority of the practitioners indicated specifically the educational aspects to be the most important task. Therefore the conclusion can be drawn that the 'teaching or learning' of the children is highly valued. The children are thus the focal points.

B) When it comes to the GBs, the training offered is limited. Only 15 out of 31 ECDs have GBs received some training and GBs are in need of training. The main focus is on financial management and secondly on fund-raising. Harlekynjtjie in Carolusberg adds 'roles and responsibilities of GB members'. NAPE offers training for GBs, among others in general and financial management, including bookkeeping; to write funding proposals; administration; teamwork and conflict management. NAMKO adds the very useful course of the 'roles and responsibilities of GB members'. This course helps the GBs to understand *why* certain responsibilities need to be done, *how* they need to be done, and *whose* task it is. This certainly will contribute to the smooth functioning of the ECD and will help it to reach a level of self-reliance. But, this will only take place when the training in itself is sustained. Thus, what is learnt is carried forward to new members of the GB. Ulukhanyo Educare Centre in Rosmead received training from PLOEG. This organisation had a regional office in Rosmead, but has since closed down restricting training opportunities and adequate assistance to projects in the area.

C) To extend the learning function to the *parents*. Relatively few ECDs seize the opportunity to offer skills training and the majority of ECDs spend time on training in the discipline of the children. I would suggest that much more attention needs to be given to what extent parents to gain from involvement in ECD. What is the personal gain parent(s) received when they attend courses offered by ECD? The following **training subjects** were offered:

Table 4.8

Nutrition	10
Health care	15
Discipline	20
Discipline	20
Stimulation	11
Other	Training in fund-raising, home care programmes; to apply the education at home.

The last note, 'to apply education at home' refers to the practicality of the training. It offers something that parent(s) can apply immediately and, in such

a way, they personally gain from attending certain courses. But is the message 'to gain' from involvement clear enough? The applicability is crucial and helps the parent(s) to understand his/her child much better, but also to get a better understanding their own reactions, actions and behaviour. The accessibility to parents, of a 'learner's group' within the community should facilitate the philosophy of 'learning is a lifelong process for all'. As is mentioned before, ECD education needs to become partner in such an awareness campaign.

The Northern Cape ECD Pilot Project indicates involvement of the parents, when it states: "a proper community building project should be aimed at empowering the parents for some time until the parents can take over the management. The parents must be allowed/trained/empowered to become self-sufficient." This statement includes reaching out to the parents in a wider context, but does this happen sufficiently enough to stimulate a degree of self-reliance? To my perception more attention needs to go into 'life skills' for parents, enabling them to sustain themselves in a rapidly changing society and, at the same time, the world is widening for them. Life skills could be training practical and transferable skills such as how to chair a meeting, how to take minutes, how to do accounts, but also skills in how to run a small business, how to avoid living on credit, how to negotiate and mediate. Another important category of abilities should be part of the learning programme: to extend the personal competence of the parent(s) in the way in the 'soft' options, such as empathy, listening skills, communication and other abilities

D) *Practitioners* need to be the forerunners when it comes to practicing the lifelong learning concept. To educate and teach children is one of the most dynamic professions and very much subjected to ongoing change as can be observed in South Africa with regard to Curriculum 2005. The National ECD Pilot Project is in line and is part and parcel of this curriculum. The criteria to participate in this project and the training programmes are laid down in chapter 3. Government Policy since 1994: part 3.4.1.

To receive training is dependent on the availability and proximity of training centres such as NAPE. Too many ECDs do not have access to training in and information about new developments in the ECD sector. The need for training is widespread, not only to improve the personal skills of the practitioner but also to be able to meet future requirements when education and the processes

involved will be based on excellence. NAPE adds the following concerning training: the practitioner has a much better understanding of the child; she has gained self-confidence and this is carried over to the child giving better learning results; the practitioner is focused; communicates better; is enthusiastic about the work she does. In short the practitioner delivers qualitative education, but she feels that it needs to be reflected in for example accreditation and/or in the provision of a basic salary.

The implementation of training, or of what is learnt is the most challenging and at the same times the most difficult phase. During the training the practitioner is with colleagues and this is stimulating; the necessary equipment is available and occurring problems are quite easily solved. At home, the practitioner is mostly alone and lacks the support of colleagues; equipment is much more difficult to obtain, and problems are not so easily solved. Often the practitioner has to care for great number of children of different ages. She has to deal with parents who do not always show sufficient interest in their children and do not always show understanding of the problems she encounters. NAPE visits the practitioners in their own environment on a regular basis to offer on-site training and guidance, an activity they consider to be an essential part of their work. It stimulates the practitioners, it offers the opportunity to solve problems they encounter and to meet with GBs and parents.

E) *The wider community.* As is shown in a), the practitioners express that their main tasks are totally restricted to ECD inherent activities. It does not go beyond the involvement directly related to the children. Contacts with the parents have not been mentioned as being a component of their task. Some ECDs expressed eagerness to become involved with other activities possibly involving the wider community. It is striking that not one ECD site is physically and actively involved with ABET. Only a few ECDs have or plan income-generating projects. It seems as if the ECD may not be concerned in alternative activities. **What else, other than ECD does the project hope to achieve?**

Table 4.9

Developmental activities
some mention to be involved with the LDF
a few are involved in existing projects, such as a spin and weave project
one would like to start a job creating activity such as a vegetable garden
one is involved in a piggery
involved with the local church
2 mention a health and sanitation project
Other
7 ECDs are not involved, or do not have projects
several ECDs mention they would like to start a project
8 ECDs did not fill this question

Since the beginning of 1998 NAPE, in co-operation with the ECDs, explores new ways to involve the community. Some projects are identified, such as a bakery, pottery, and salt refinery. This will enhance the viability and self-reliance of the existing ECDs and perhaps bring some relieve concerning the high unemployment rate existing in the areas. This initiative can certainly be extended in co-operation with other existing NGOs in Namaqualand, such as NAMKO and NCC. It will be important to observe whether community development is real local development, and thus benefits the immediate community by the improvements.

An ECD in itself is a community building project, but it must not be left there. Possibly all ECDs need to become involved with other community building projects, activities generating alternative income, and with activities helping the community develop. No blueprint of projects can be provided. Each ECD and community is unique and need to look at ways to develop projects individually. Charmain van den Heever states 'community projects need to be identified with and within the communities ... also to look at how communities can help themselves ... but it must be in her/his language so that it can be understood.'

To become involved in development programmes the ECD site needs to have access to general information about the community and if possible to its Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Only 9 ECDs confirmed that there is an IDP; 3 did not know if such an IDP was drawn up; 3 did not answer this question; and the remaining communities do not have an IDP. The research shows that some **training opportunities or capacity building programmes**

are available:

Table 4.10

Providers	
Bloemfontein College (De Aar)	1
PLOEG	1
Diamond Funding Trust	1
NAMKO	1
Department of Labour & Transport	1
courses by Government when necessary	2
Courses:	
ABET	4
courses, workshops: spinning, domestic science, needle work, making of clothes, domestic work for B&B, forestry, health & sanitation, security, PC, drivers licence, masonry, carpentry, entrepreneurship, housing, catering, engine mechanics,	11
workshops for mentally retarded people	1
Other	
no opportunities	6
not filled in	4

But are ECDs active partners in existing programmes, or are they initiators of new development initiatives? Before it could be read that the majority of ECDs are not involved in any new initiatives. Yet, a nice example of a new and even entrepreneurial approach is 'Bimbo' Pre-Primary in Okiep, which has started an ice-lollipop income generating project and aims to provide some towns in the vicinity with ice-lollipops. The scarcity of jobs in areas in Namaqualand and Karoo has a restraining influence on the self-image people have. It also affects new initiatives, as if people who are already disillusioned, become more hesitant to start something new. Another constraining force is the lack of cash flow within a community that affects the purchase power, and hinders new small business activities and also limits the availability of credit. But, **what job opportunities are available:**

Table 4.11

civil service	
municipal jobs	3
professional jobs: police, post office, teachers, clinic, old age home, and farmers	1
CBOs	
different projects, courses: welding, needlework, PC course, building project, brick making, cleaning project, short term projects	12
private sector	
business sector	2
seasonal work, labour on farms: i.e. vineyards, irrigation works, fencing	6
the mines: diamond and copper mines	3
Fishing	1
labour work: all varieties	2
Other	
no opportunities	9
not filled in	1

In South Africa one of the main sources of income generally has become tourism and certainly Namaqualand and also The Karoo are part of this process. In spite of the positive expectations the tourist sector is for many people in South Africa a 'foreign' experience, as the majority were affected by the Apartheid laws and were even not allowed to be tourists in their own country. The tourist industry has for many people therefore negative connotations; firstly, as being a service for only the white population and foreigners; secondly, it is related to a subservient position. Due to these perceptions it will be necessary to overcome the hesitant and even reluctant attitudes. Hence the focus must be on the variety of opportunities which can be utilised. Only Klipdrift Kleuterskool near Graaff-Reinet indicates that workshops are held to learn to do domestic work for B&Bs. Thus to learn new aspects of service delivery, *but* in a subservient position. Many communities, and GBs, could challenge the opportunities for tourism in Namaqualand and in the Karoo and challenge themselves not to approach it from the subservient side *but* straight into the service delivery part of tourism. Hand in hand with such an approach entrepreneurial skills and all its financial aspects will have to be learnt. We can add the marketing of the tourist attraction or (their own)

B&Bs; how to deliver and maintain quality services; how to do research on new opportunities and if possible training in more South African and foreign languages. The Information Document for Development Planning in Namaqualand stresses this point and I quote "training and education in business and commercial skills are generally lacking in the region. In order for small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) to succeed in Namaqualand, skills training needs to be more accessible, especially in rural areas" (CSIR, 1999: 12). This statement is also valid for The Karoo. Are SMMEs the way to go when not only training is to be considered, but also at the availability of credit as well as competitiveness? It might be advisable and even better to study, to explore and to promote LETS, of which the abbreviation stands for Local Economic Trade Systems. This could open up many more new entrepreneurial opportunities as especially the local economy could benefit from it, and it immediately affects the lives of people.

It would be in the interests of rural communities to find ways to become involved in tourism. Tourism is part of the job summit where the growth of jobs and the creation of job opportunities are discussed. Therefore, some ECDs could become involved in the tourist sector, certainly in eco-tourism by building relationships with different National Parks, such as Hester Malan near Springbok and the recently opened "Namaqua National Park" in Skildpad near Kamieskroon. It might be in the interest of many an ECD site to research how to create income-generating projects from tourism.

Another very important sector to improve the socio-economic situation is access to land. No ECD, either in Namaqualand or in The Karoo, make mention of the right of access to land. In Namaqualand historically people possessed communal and private land: the reserves. In May 1999 land was returned to four villages in Namaqualand, Steinkopf, Concordia, Leliefontein and Springbok (Gariep News, May 1999: no.2). In spite of this some questions are worthwhile asking, such as, do women have access to land, or have they ever tried to get access? Would access to land help to address or solve the problem of unemployment? What type of agriculture - beyond keeping sheep or cattle - could be explored and practised particularly by women? These questions could be forwarded to the GBs and become a pivotal part of the learning function of the ECD site. Women could be stimulated to attend courses about, among others, 'how to access land' and 'how to utilise the land.'

The learning function of the ECD site is certainly not fully explored. On the contrary, ECDs are far too little aware of the crucial role they could fulfil. ECDs could help to establish community learning centres where in an informal, but also in a formal way, education is offered to all interested in variety of programmes. The wisdom and experiences of people from the community could be utilised, and thus it would enhance their functioning as community members. It would be necessary to include activities, which would improve existing employment, and it could explore new job opportunities

2. Childminding Function

Children need to have access to places of safety where they can spend time in a child-friendly and caring environment. It is also for the peace of mind of the parents, so that they can spend their attention fully on the work they do without having to worry. Maria Montessori described as follows a child-friendly environment in which the practitioners contribute remarkably "[the practitioner] must do something that is almost mystical and attract this little soul [the child] and be part of attractiveness of the environment." Further Montessori added "[the premises] must be clean, light and well ordered" (1989: 14-18). This indicates that dealing with such young children requires a set of regulations where the safety of the children is carefully looked at, and that they are well cared for in a child-friendly environment. What I saw it at the Lukhanyo Crèche in Victoria West can not be allowed. 150 children of varying ages shared one classroom with one practitioner attending to them. Other staff members were preparing the meal for the children, but this does not justify leaving one practitioner with all the children. In order to offer childminding services in a responsible way it is crucial to look at the number of children attending an ECD and the number trusted to a practitioner. The research shows that it varies from 150 to 12 children, and is mainly depending of the number of the population of the community. **How many children are in each group:**

Table 4.12

A variety of factors decide about the number children in a group, such as
the number of children attending
the number of practitioners
the availability of sufficient classrooms
the training of the practitioners

In future it would it be necessary to focus more on smaller centres where the child will be able to receive individual attention. The minimum number children in the Reception Year should be 15 and may not exceed the ratio of 30 to one practitioner. The Interim Policy for ECD (17) puts it "the recommended ratio is 1:30 and in instances where there are more than 30 children, it is recommended that an additional practitioner be deployed in the programme". The same number of children or even a few less would be the ideal for all ECDs. The younger the child the more individual attention it needs, just as children coming from a disadvantaged background do.

Childminding includes the word 'minder' of which the Cambridge International Dictionary of English says " ...is someone who protects another person". Such a person is the practitioner. She cares for, protects and educates the children, she fulfils an extreme important function. As can be seen before the love for children and the ability to work with them was one of the main criteria set to be appointed as practitioner. What does the practitioner consider to be **the most important incentives to work at the ECD:**

Table 4.13

Attitude	
love for children and like to work with them	22
to be patient with children	1
the children, have interest in them	2
Educational	
for the development of children	7
to improve the level of school readiness	1
to get self-confident, self-reliant children in the future	1
the ideal for the children of today to become self-reliant, disciplined, mature and secure people	1
the importance for children who were deprived before	1
Offer services	
the parents	2
offer service to community	1
Personal gain	
security of having a job	2
the salary	2

To work with children asks for special abilities, not highly sophisticated skills but a warm, natural and spontaneous feeling for the child. Van den Heever and Jonas both explain this when they talk about the practitioner of Harlekyntjie Kleuterskool in Carolusberg 'she is an ordinary woman but she has the natural abilities and the willingness to do it. Her special skills can be better utilised with the training she receives from NAPE, for two things goes together: naturalness and training.' The naturalness just must not be a motive to keep the practitioner on the level of a semi-volunteer employee: if financial means are available to pay the practitioner, than she will receive some income and next month 'it depends on'! Only at two ECDs was it indicated that the practitioner works for a salary. All people want to receive payment for the labour and input they give; it is a general intention of all work done. Yet, to work with children necessitates value-added dimensions, such as love, patience, serving the community, and working with parents, which is not always an easy task.

Something which can be overlooked is how does the **practitioner value the work she does** as this reflects her self-esteem and self-confidence:

Table 4.14

Value to attitude	
consider this work as a vocation	1
feel good and happy to work with children	4
I fully value my work / enjoyment/job satisfaction	3
by acting motivated/ to do the work at my utmost best/enthusiastic	5
our feelings for love for the children	2
Value to education	
the results are very good	1
is good appreciated/valued*	1
to educate the children/offer quality program/important for future	4
by the result shown/progress of children	5
Value to work	
to work extra hours	2
to do the work respectfully	1
value the work due it is a community service	1
enjoyment and feel relaxed being with pupils	1
by being regular at the school	1
by the implementation [of training]	1
by seeing that the foundation is laid, bears fruit	1
enjoy work, but set-up is dissatisfactory no own classroom, etc.	1
Other	
the fact that I received the special service from the Lord to help the child develop and the love and appreciation daily engaged between the child, the committee and me	1

Lack of experience and knowledge is the only disadvantage.

A wide range of values has been displayed and that tells us about *why* people act as they do or not do. A value system of a society, and that can be any society, is based on the understanding of their social knowledge, their beliefs and experiences, their emotions, culture and traditions, and their institutions a society has created over the years. The values stated above affirm that values are or become the driving forces of actions people undertake. This conclusion is pivotal at this time for ECD: the work is still very dependent on women and they regard the children of their community as more important than any thing

else. The childminding function is rich in value and is determined by attitudes of people and by the choices they make. To enable the childminding function to thrive it is of importance that **the practitioner feels appreciated by the parents and GB:**

Table 4.15

Yes	23	No	6
Yes/No	The involvement of parents is not satisfactory. The GB let us feel positive. Co-operation of parents is dissatisfactory, the GB is not up to performance needed for the activities of the ECD, is not very active but improves by day.		
Attitude			
by offering co-operation/ show interest and acknowledgement			6
parents are very grateful and express this, give presents			4
parents send their children to us and say Thanks			1
by being grateful and compliments are made			3
parents' daily or regular visits to the ECD and chat			2
by talks/communication/performance			4
GB expresses their appreciation			1
Financial			
the bonus at the end of the year/if finances allows			5

To be and feel appreciated for what one does work-wise is an incentive to improve, to perform and to strive for excellence. Appreciation was strongly expressed in the interviews where the positive differences were often mentioned between children who attended an ECD and children who did not. The importance of an ECD in a community was stressed. Some remarks: [at the ECD] 'the child starts to develop its leadership initiatives; prepares the child for primary school; the child adopts the learning process much better; the first seven years of the development of a child is crucial; we talk about future generation!' All these positive 'messages' need to become known in a community, for far too often the ECD is still seen to be a place where the child can be dumped. The child is in a phase of ongoing development, inherent is the growth of awareness and consciousness of the world around him/her, and needs to be upheld. It is a very important phase of which Margaret Visser said 'it is a preparation for life!'

3. *Wealth Creating Function*

Where does an ECD get its income from? In order to create a degree of wealth, income needs to be generated to stimulate certain activities. Income comes from school fees; sometimes by way of state subsidy; donations; fund raising events; or by foreign or national funding organisations. Presently the ECDs do not fulfil the function of 'wealth creator', - on the contrary. To collect sufficient income is a battle and beyond this, the majority of ECDs are not involved in any income generating projects as shown above. The present income is not sufficient to cover all the running costs. The following question demonstrates this: **Does the present income cover all running costs:**

Table 4.16

Yes	2	No	29
If NO, what is not covered			
Salaries	23	Electricity and water	3
Food for the children	14	Maintenance	2
Equipment	3	Rents	2
Cleaning materials	1	General services	1
Toiletry	2	Telephone services	1
Stationary	2	Fence	1

Most of the ECDs run at a loss and can hardly keep the head above water. This affects directly the provision of food for the children, and the salaries and benefits of the practitioners. The salaries of the practitioners are the 'Cinderella' of the education environment! As van den Heever mentions 'the salary of the person who works at the ECD must not be a trouble for her.... often she is the breadwinner ...she cannot work in such insecurity.' The insecurity affects the ECDs in more than one aspect. Many practitioners who have received advanced training and who's care and teaching the children have become used to, are obliged to look for work somewhere else due to the stress it causes when she has no income for long periods of time. Therefore the conclusion can be drawn that the key role players in ECD - the children and practitioners - are the victims of a poor financial situation. This might bring the functioning of a local ECD in jeopardy. The worst scenario is that children do not receive education at the youngest possible age; children are not properly fed, which affects their capacity to learn optimally, and a great turn over of practitioners. All in all this results in instability for the children. What needs to be done to solve these problems positively?

Firstly, the financial position of an ECD is of extreme importance and necessitates the implementation of business principles at an ECD. Entrepreneurial characteristics do exist in ECDs; such as being creative, fundraising and organising meetings. It would be an advantage if a GB could manage a workable and easily understandable financial and administrative system. For people involved, such as parents and practitioners, it would be necessary to understand the financial processes and how to exercise a healthy financial policy that would enable all parents to send their children to an ECD. Sound financial management contributes towards self-reliance. Is such a management in place? The answer must be *no*, but I express it with hesitation and I will say why. Several factors influence a sound financial management such as sufficient financial resources - parent contributions and State subsidy included; adequate and ongoing training in financial and general management and training of GBs. Further I would add a clear vision and the right leadership qualities.

Secondly, all ECDs need urgently to become initiators and participants in projects that generate income and at the same time bring the community together. Since the beginning of 1998 NAPE explores new ways to involve the community which will enhance the viability and self-reliance of the existing ECDs. NAPE needs to look into possible alternative ways to help ECDs to raise funding, such as how to involve local business, if existing. Another necessity and possibility could be to teach GBs and practitioners to lobby, which is a group effort with the purpose of quietly advocating the interests of the group: in this case the ECD. Key elements on how effectively to advocate:

1. Form coalitions or groups - i.e. the Association - they will have the greatest effect.
2. As group, develop a plan.
3. Identify the issue or problem you will address, i.e. transport costs to attend training is very high.
4. Define your goal clearly i.e. twice a year the practitioners of ECDs go for training to Khokela Early Learning Centre in Cradock.
5. Collect and get the facts.
6. Develop a strategy: how and whom to approach.
7. Learn to know the person(s) or firm, business you go to approach.
8. Broaden your base of support, i.e. get people in the community who share your concern.
9. Ongoing evaluation of the goals set. (Fair Share, Cape Town).

In this way the GB can improve its relations with for example Local Government, District Councils and in case of Namaqualand, the Area committees set up by the Diamond Trust. Margaret Visser of the Trust states 'if the people involved with ECDs co-operate with the area committees and explain and motivate their problems, they can get financial support.... it depends of *how* the needs are presented.' In short, if a local ECD set-up can advocate its interests the area committee will put it on their priority list, which could mean that the ECD site gets access to an additional source of income than school fees.

Thirdly, How to raise funds successfully needs to become a priority. The research shows that it is a difficult matter. **How successful is the fund-raising:**

Table 4.17

Very successful	1
Good	4
Reasonable	11
Variable	1
Insufficient	1
Weak: reason: due to unemployment	7
Not successful	6

Fund-raising will become more and more difficult especially when available foreign funding is drying up and is channelled to the Government. It is thus necessary that the focus needs to be on local attempts and this needs to be done in a smart way! Further, it needs to be done as a group effort in an attempt to get all involved and certainly the parents. Lastly, Naidoo notices the following 'you need the state to take some of that responsibility, either [some] funds for teachers, basically to provide some kind of consistent income that sustain these [ECD] activities.' But the ECD policy guidelines for funding of church, private, NGO and community ECDs of the Department of Education in the Northern Cape Province indicates that they cannot go on paying salaries of practitioners.

4. Service Providing Function

The services an ECD provides are very special services, because those services need to have 'class' with specific characteristics, such as humbleness,

sincerity and others. As Montessori stated " what is it that teachers (practitioners) must do 'actively' to refine their way of *serving*.....(1998;18). She put it simply practitioners and all involved in ECD: *serve*. "A service is a system or organisation that provides for a basic public need", is what the Cambridge International Dictionary of English tells what a service is (1995;1297). Important is the remark "basic public need" which indicates two interpretations: the essence of such services; and in a way "normality" and availability of the provision of it. Therefore it is useful to find out if such a need is existing and a first question needs to be asked: **why is this service provided?** Some of the remarks are:

Table 4.18

Focused on the children
for the development of the potential of the child
for the development and education of the child
to keep the children of the street
to prepare the children for primary school
Other
it was a need in the community
it was a need in the community

All reasons to provide the service are valid, but immediately the following question can be asked, **who identified the need for a ECD:**

Table 4.19

Mainly it was recognised as a need by the community:	15
Individual community members (parents included);	
Church leaders and organisations such as Child & Family Welfare (CFW), Afrikaner Christelike Vrouevereniging (ACVV).	

Interesting is the fact that communities recognise the need for childcare services. Still, the provision of ECD is a service only provided for a relative small number of children leaving out many children who would need such a services the most. About 21% of all children under six years old are in out-of-home care of some kind. In 1994 one in ten (10%) black children had access to formalised ECD projects, while one in three had access. Children in poverty-stricken rural areas have fewer ECD services available than children in urban areas have. Most provision is for children over 3 years old. There is

almost a total lack of ECD facilities for African children with disabilities." (The South African Children's Budget, 1998) Communities often do have to overcome issues, which constrain development. The main problems are the high unemployment rate and the poverty inherent to this. The above problems distract the attention of people and often such serious issues need to be solved or being addressed first before people in the community are able to start an ECD. A few of these problems need elaboration.

Unemployment is an abuse coming from by certain factors. One of the factors results of leading a destructive economy, sometimes imposed by the conditions outlined by IMF and World Bank. This forces countries to spend less on education, health care and social services. Further to focus on and produce for the export markets instead of on own local markets. In South Africa, GEAR is enthusiastically welcomed by the world institutions, but up till now more jobs are lost than created. Another reason is artificially keeping a national currency undervalued, such as the Rand is at present. To address the unemployment economical transformation needs to be equivalent to all other measures and steps, for example a citizen income for *all* people, and the transformation of tax.

In spite of the fact that *alcoholism* has been notified as a problem only 9 times the abuse of alcohol is widespread among the communities. "The Northern Cape has a serious problem of alcoholism, with police estimating that more than 90% of crimes are related to alcohol consumption. It is also estimated that the costs of alcohol (e.g. health, welfare, legal costs) may be up to 45% of the value of the province's production". Alcohol abuse not only affects the parents but also has enormous implications for the children especially when the mother abuses alcohol during pregnancy. The stress on the practitioner increases when children who are affected for life by the foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) enter ECD. FAS causes mental impairment and the average IQ of a child with FAS is 70; language delays and severe learning difficulties and behavioural problems are experienced (Foundation for Alcohol Related Research, Cape Town). South Africa has the highest number of children with FAS in the world. ECDs and schools in general could deliver a very special kind of service in co-operation with local clinics to help to prevent alcohol abuse by becoming involved in campaigns to inform parents of the devastating effects of all kinds of alcohol. Such campaigns will enhance the learning capacity of the children and this is what the White Paper (1997) spells out to

be fundamental: that all learners engage successfully with the new curriculum.

5. Job Providing/Creating Function

It is useful first to look at the job providing function and later to the job creating function as an ECD site not only supplies jobs as well as it has the capacity to create new jobs.

Job Providing

Maria Montessori asked "what is it that teachers (practitioners) must do 'actively' to refine their way of serving and developing human life - in the environment that has been created and adapted specially for children?" (1989: 18). This question stresses the importance of the people whose occupation it is to work with children at ECD sites. Montessori talked about "developing human life", which if one realises the depth and responsibility of it, only asks for silent but critical respect. The responsibility of having such an influence on the development of the children is immense. Do people realise the weight of the responsibility? Montessori talked about "to refine their way of serving", which asks the practitioners to consider critically how they visualise and value life, their behaviour and relationships. It asks for humbleness, dedication and reflection on the beautiful but difficult task practitioners have to fulfil. The expression of Montessori implicates professionalism and dedication, therefore we need to see, **what criteria are set?**

Table 4.20

Competence	
love for children, to be able to work with them	18
to accept conditions set by the GB	2
be experienced, have capacity	17
be prepared to be trained and implement	5
be literate, certain level of education/qualifications	9
Attitude	
good example/pattern in community	2
be properly and disciplined	2
a good personality/trustworthy/reliable/patience	5
Other	
be prepared to work hard, be sober/alcohol free, encouragement, good communication skills with children + community, by voting and no criteria at all.	1

Love for children is a precondition highly valued, but also the practitioner needs to know how to work with children, which can be translated in having the capacity and competence to educate the children up to a certain level. In ECD education it is crucial to have a practitioner who has a natural ability to understand the needs of the child, to enable the child to develop to its full capacity. This is what Montessori stresses. Only a mature and balanced person is able to do so. To be the educator of a number of children of different ages, characters and abilities, demands several characteristics: being firm and reliant, have sufficient energy, have patience, have respect for each individual, and last but not least, love. Love and respect not only for the children, but also for the parents. A practitioner needs to be able to set a personal conflict aside, she needs to be tactful in addressing the parents and the problems encountered. All other criteria mentioned above are valid.

Most practitioners are appointed by way of advertisements and announcements, some are selected, interviewed by the GB before being appointed. Only a few are elected and/or are asked by the parents and/or by way of a community meeting.

The practitioners from 15 ECDs received a job description or a letter of appointment. Relatively few benefits are included such as sick and maternity leave; 13th cheque/bonus; annual leave; UIF; accident insurance; pension or an annuity. This leaves the practitioner in a constant state of insecurity. Firstly, this often concerns the monthly income, whether available or not, and secondly of becoming ill or unemployed.

The average salary a practitioner receives is low, only 4 ECDs indicated that the salary received was more than R750,00 per month. A decent salary provided for by the State Department would be the best solution. I repeat the questions: 1. Does the present financial situation allow the payment of a decent salary? 2. Are ECDs in the position to appoint and to employ the necessary *professional* staff? The answer again is ambiguous: No, not yet, when I consider the 'salaries' paid presently. It will be difficult to raise the necessary finances for paying the wage that meets the standard of living. Yes, when I consider the influence ECD has on the future generation and in the community. Surely, professional staff is a need and necessity. A possible solution could be a basic citizen's income for all people in South Africa. This would allow parent(s) to send their children to an ECD and the practitioner has

some income and is not dependent on school fees.

Not only practitioners are employed at ECD sites. Depending on the number of children and the financial position of the ECD, sometimes a cook and an administrative person are employed. They often work on a voluntary basis, as do a number of practitioners. **What volunteers are involved:**

Table 4.21

all involved are volunteers	1
GB members	8
(some) parents	9
members from community	3
the cleaner/members of personnel	2
no volunteers at all	6
not filled in	3

It is interesting that many **volunteers** do have important and responsible **tasks to fulfil**, such as:

Table 4.22

Education	
replace practitioner when away for training or workshop	1
assist with progress of ECD	2
Administrative	
assist with functions, fund-raising	5
is part of committee	1
do cooking and cleaning	6
has executive function, supervision	6
assists with administration	1
Other	
make educational equipment	3
not filled in	6

The issue of volunteerism needs much more attention and perhaps, in the case of ECD, more research. Volunteer workers in ECD are dedicated and very suitable persons who fulfil their task to the best of their capacity. But, is this an ideal situation, and/or would it be an improvement to be able to appoint 'professional' people? Is the situation, as it is now a result of the status of women in society, and is the bringing up of young children a 'woman's issue'? The importance of the first years of education and upbringing of children really needs to receive much more respect and attention as it lays the foundation of self-awareness and self-image. Therefore I briefly want to refer to 'professional' people. When is somebody professional in his/her execution of profession? A practitioner reaches the highest degree of professionalism when she has the natural competence to work and communicate with children and adults. As is stated 'attitudes can be learnt', which indicates that abilities can increase in quality.

Job creating

This part of the function becomes prominent when an ECD is involved with other projects, such as income generating activities. As mentioned before only a few ECDs are actively involved in projects other than ECD, or they use their capacity in a more creative way. The socio-economic situation of the communities is negatively affected by **restraining forces**:

Table 4.23

Main restraining force	
frustration among people due to <u>unemployment</u>	18
Attitudes possibly resulting from unemployment:	
alcohol abuse	9
drug abuse	2
the immorality	2
child abuse, molestation	1
violence in community	1
community breaks down issues; no co-operation	1
Consequences of unemployment	
the famine	1
poverty within community	6
division within community	1
sickliness within community	1
Causes of restraints	
no electricity	2
no shopping centre	1
the far distances	1
Illiteracy	1
lack of recreation	1
the drought	1
Other	
community does not realise the importance of an ECD	1
the white community (Loxton)	1
no restraints	1

Job creation needs to be looked at from two echelons in society. From the government side could come public works activities to provide people at least with some income, but this is not the solution. The private sector is the second echelon which involvement needs to be stressed. This sector has to promote and initiate new initiatives. More research needs to be done on new ways of creating income, moving away from the prevailing money market towards alternatives where monetary rewards are replaced by something else, specifically stimulating the local economy. The research shows **what solutions are proposed:**

Table 4.24

Employment creating activities	
job creation (long term planning)	14
socio-economic upliftment	2
more recreation and sport opportunities	3
get necessary help	1
funding to uplift community	2
start women's organisations	2
promote importance of ECD within community and development of the child	2
start better projects which secure monthly income	1
building activities and electricity	1
Attitude change	
promote self-esteem, self-respect	1
to regard each others problems and to co-operate	1
Involvement of	
the Government needs to come to talk/to consult with community	2
more involvement with churches	1
policing	2
Education and training	
projects are in development	1
capacity building workshops and ABET	2
Other	
no solution possible	1

ECD sites should become involved in job creating efforts as they have access to and the possibility of reaching out to an important part of the community: the group of parents with young children who are at an age too young to feel lost. The involvement could have a two-fold purpose, firstly to help generate extra income for the ECD site and jobs for unemployed parent(s) and other members of the community.

6. Relationship Building and Relationship Maintaining Function

An ECD site can never be 'an island' within the community it serves. As described before an ECD builds and maintains many different relationships. Sometimes relationships are established purposefully and more often they are existing as a result of traditionally and culturally established levels of respect and communication channels. Relationships exist with a distinct number of people, organisations and institutions leading to a variety of levels of

interdependence of each other. To stress the importance I attach to the relationships, I will refer to chapter 5.

5.

Holistic Perspective on the Sustainability of ECDs

5.1 Introduction

"Early childhood development needs to be holistic development". (Bernard van Leer Foundation, 1994: 61). So the ECD needs to radiate a holistic character not only towards the children, also towards its own environment. This attitude is mainly reflected in the variety of relationships the ECD maintains. The ECD should be one of the fundamental components of the community. The community in its turn is a 'composition' of different groups each with its own dynamics and in one way or the other the groups are interrelated. This chapter aims to deal in depth with the interdependencies or relationships an individual ECD-site maintains within its community. Some relationships are very close and affect individuals, some are specific with a close section of the community, such as the parent(s). Special focus is on the role of women and the ECD. Some interdependencies are more removed from the 'inner-circle', but play nevertheless an important part in the education of the child and in the functioning of the ECD. Some interdependencies are remote; they cross social and geographical boundaries. All relationships are worthwhile exploring as they could contribute to the sustainability of the ECD. The process of globalisation contributes to a wider outlook; it penetrates and affects each and every community; it is demanding and competitive. Lastly, it necessitates an adaptation within the education field. ECD cannot stay behind. The child of today awaits a complex future of 'global citizenship' that rises far above the immediate community. The chapter will be concluded with research findings.

5.2 Interdependencies

Starting from a desirable position: an ECD is vibrant and is figuratively the central point within the immediate community causing a positive ripple effect towards the wider society. Consequently the ECD has a wide spectrum of interdependencies. The opposite is also possible, which is a less-desirable situation: an ECD site fulfils a marginal position within the community with a limited number of interdependencies and relationships. The wide spectrum of

relationships requires much from all the people involved and thus I will deal with them individually.

1. Parents

"Your attitude influences your child's self-esteem" (Khokela, 1999)

Parent(s) have the most important relationship with the ECD. Before the child enters the ECD the parents and family are the prime social, educational and overall forming environment. The assumption is that parent(s) do their utmost best to bring up the child, they have the best intentions for their children, want them to have a better life and future. Sue Trefferson says "all parents want to be good parents. But most parents just don't have the information that they need to know how their children are growing and developing" (Dryden, Vos; 1994: 248). The ECD is one of the extended environments offered to help parents to educate their children. It is thus important to provide information about what is done at the ECD and this educational approach so helps the parents to understand better the growing-up of their children. Parents need to know what is going on in ECD. The way information is passed on and how it comes across, means that the language used needs to be tuned into the literacy level(s) of the parent(s). The information can be formal and informal, courses for small interest groups can be organised, topics at parent evenings, home visits, and by way of individual contacts.

The increasing complexity of society has led to the fact that the majority of parents are not able to offer their children all aspects of upbringing and education, they need 'assistance'. Therefore parents send their children to ECDs and later in time to school. This fact should stimulate the parents, and preferably mother *and* father, to become closely involved in the education process from early on. The ECD has the opportunity to reach out to the parents and to help them to become more responsible parents by way of 'information' and by way of active parental involvement. McGivney adds, "parental involvement has a positive influence on the children's development and achievements" (1998: introduction). The considerable influential role of the parents can not be stressed enough, as the family is the natural 'community' of the child. The 'follow-up' and the first beginning of exploring the wider world is what Robert Coles states "the school is a place where a child first joins a particular community outside the family as a participating citizen -

acquires knowledge...and also assumed responsibility" (1997: 101). Thus co-operation and interaction between parent(s) and ECD is desirable, stronger expressed 'it is a must!'. In 1998, McGivney shows the different opportunities when parents interact actively in ECD. It widens the social interaction between the parents; it increases confidence in parenting; skills become transferable; and the application of skills increases (1998: 44-45). The importance of personal gain parents receive from being actively involved, attend courses or workshops is considered to be important. Personal gain or growth must be understood, for example, one becomes a more responsible, understanding parent and learns new skills. The skills can be practical skills, emotional and social competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (Goleman, 1998: 320). Thus in such a way involvement adds value to the lives of individuals: to the children and their parents.

Parent(s) have a two-sided relationship with the ECD. Firstly, to be consumers of the services the ECD delivers; secondly to be contributors by paying fees and providing voluntary services. How can the contributory elements be strengthened? Quality services should be in place to help and stimulate parents to strengthen their side of the relationship. Since Max-Neef says "...the power of one is derived from the support it receives from the other domains ..." (1991: 56). Practically it is reciprocal: parent(s) need to be empowered to enable them to offer support to the ECD site. Both sides give and receive and in such a way both get stronger, substantially benefiting the children who attend the ECD. The support can be otherwise financially and/or by participating through voluntary services. A third way of support is active participation in education and training programmes offered by the ECD. Then, the parent(s) could stimulate involvement of other service delivery organisations more optimally, such as NGOs and the local library.

The parent(s) with the ECD principal compose the GB which have managerial and financial responsibility for the ECD. Plus the GB is the intermediate with the local and wider community and beyond. An ECD has an educational task to fulfil within a community and further maintains different levels of interdependencies and relationships. The educational function the ECD fulfils is focused on the children and at the same time on community building. This helps us to understand that an ECD is a community-based project. The empowerment of parent(s) and practitioners contributes to the strength of the

ECD or community project. It helps to put in place correct leadership and governance. In this framework, the Northern Cape ECD Pilot Project advocates: "A proper community building project should be aimed at empowering the parents for some time until the parents can take over the management". This should thus be a priority and ongoing activity as GBs regularly change and the recently learnt skills need to be transferred to the new GB members and parent(s).

1.1 Women

"An adequate ECD infra-structure that can free parents, especially mothers, to take up employment and further their education will enable women in poor families to break out of the cycle of poverty, illiteracy and economic dependence" (Interim Policy for ECD; 9).

Gender refers to the social differences, or inequalities between *men* and *women*, which are learnt, might change in time and vary within and between cultures. Gender inequality is an issue that may not be overlooked as it plays a crucial role in the education of the child. Children are often socialised and programmed from a very young age into a certain expected role pattern. It starts with baby-girls wear pink and baby-boys blue colours, girls play with dolls, boys with cars. This pattern is carried forward in unequal status, education, job opportunities, and earned income (Bernard van Leer Foundation, 1994). But women play an incisive role in the upbringing and education of the child and within the society and *they* can influence the role pattern *if* empowered to do so. Visvanatha in Women, Gender & Development Reader says, "within the developmentalist framework women are seen as the most valuable resource in achieving sustainable development" (1997: 60). This stresses the importance of involvement and the role of women in the development processes among others of the local ECD. Over and above it is a unique opportunity to create new ways of helping an ECD site to sustain itself. Secondly, the fact that women can learn to sustain them as the new skills learnt at ECD are transferable. The opportunity to empower women is often underused and neglected. To ensure success, something needs to be done first: what are the specific needs of women, their concerns, interests and problems they encounter, to what do they aspire, what binds them together and more especially, how can the social status of the women be improved? The Bernard van Leer Foundation argues that gender inequalities need to be

addressed from childhood. Further it states "increased attention to the health and education of girls to literacy among women can yield extraordinary benefits in terms of their own futures, the enhanced contribution they will make to society, lowered birth rates, and the health and education of their children" (1994: 12). This statement affirms the conclusion of Visvanatha and is in line with McGinvey concerning the personal gain the parent(s) needs to receive from involvement. I would like to add the significance of the implementation of activities or actions that brings deeper insight, which the women choose themselves and which, are adjusted to their needs and interests.

We may not overlook the position of the father in the upbringing of the child and I fully endorse the following remark. The van Leer Foundation argues "to ensure balanced development, both male and female children need the presence of, and interaction with, adults of both sexes" (1994: 31). Too often it is accepted uncomplainingly that father(s) do not attend ECD activities as child rearing is a 'woman's affair'. It is therefore necessary that practitioners and GBs become more assertive by pointing out to the father(s) and men in general that they too have an active share in the bringing up of their children. Further, to address the gender issue will only be successful if both sexes are involved and are part of the process of change.

I want to detail the relationship of women and ECD. It is a 'characteristic' that women play a most prominent role in the overall organisational aspects of the ECD. The practitioner is almost always a woman and women mainly compose the GB. At this stage it is useful to look more in depth into the position of women in South Africa. Altogether the position of women is unfavourable due to two reasons. The first is the great number of single parents in a mainly patriarchal culture. Secondly, women often belong to the poverty-stricken group of the population mainly due to unemployment. It is estimated that over 21 million people in South Africa live on less than R301 a month. Women and children make up over 67% of those who are poor. About 75% of the poor live in rural areas (RDP Report, 10/95). Additionally, "female-headed households have a 50% higher poverty rate than male-headed households, and ... over 45% of the poor are children below 16 years" (Key Indicators of Poverty in South Africa, 1995: 4). The fact that so many young children belong to the poorest group in the South African society places an extra burden on the women as young children are dependent of the care of the mother. It would therefore be necessary to strengthen their position through training and

education to enable them to build strong relationships with other available and existing structures essential for sustaining the ECD.

Women got voting rights in 3 stages: 1930 - the Whites, 1983 - Indians and Coloureds and only in 1994 - Africans. The women's share of the work force is 36%, this might be different in rural areas where women often have to participate in subsistence agricultural labour. Another fact is that women receive lower wages, fewer benefits than men do. They have to pay higher taxes, have less job security, and women have more often part-time than full-time work. The literacy rate among women is 70% and among men is 70%; this might drop to 50% in rural areas. The average number of children is 4.0 and the maternal mortality rate is 230. In 1996 the South African Parliament accepted the world's most liberal abortion laws, permitting abortion on demand during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, financed by the state if the woman is not covered by private medical insurance. The life expectancy is for women 67.9 years and for men 62.4 (Naomi Neft & Ann D, Levine, 1997: 400-412). The life expectancy will drastically change through the rapid increase of HIV/Aids. The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) adds the following "according to the CGE fact sheets, one in eight South African adults have HIV/Aids and there has been a 65.4% increase in infections among women between the ages of 15 and 19" (Reconstruct, 8 August 1999: 3).

HIV/Aids is rapidly increasing and will affect all layers of society in the coming future, and women will feel this problem the hardest. Because the threatening facts of HIV/Aids which are spreading so 'invisibly' and are often still unnoticed, might demand a complete revision of South Africa's approach to development. A moral commitment to prevent this illness to wipe out complete communities will urge the mobilisation and involvement of its entire people. I will only quote two statements, both from Prodder Information (1999:no.119-121). "South Africa has one of the fastest growing HIV epidemics in the world. The 22% infection rate based on an antenatal clinic surveys in April 1999 represents a jump of more than half over the 14% estimate of late 1997. Infection levels are even higher in smaller neighbouring countries, but South Africa, with its total population of 43 million, is the first large nation where the disease has spun out of control." Further is mentioned "South African Department of Health estimates that at least 20% of the work force will be infected by the next three years, and this include many young women. The annual death toll will be 250,000 leaving behind almost 600,00 orphans. The disease is projected to

cut average life expectancy by 20 years, and to shrink economic growth by 2%."

Some action will be necessary to mobilise the women without excluding the men as both sexes are inextricably bound up with each other. To empower women can take shape by helping them to understand and analyse the society they live in: Understanding of the dynamics; exploring and understanding their capabilities; the transference of newly learnt skills and certainly, learning the 'correct attitudes' such as self-confidence and a positive self-image.

2. Local Churches

The role of the churches in South Africa has changed since 1994, moving away from a political dimension towards a learning dimension of how to deal with the new democracy. When I mention 'churches', I include all Christian denominations and religious groupings mainly represented in the rural areas of this study. The churches need to focus on the provision of new and other services, such as how to address the increasing crime rate, HIV/Aids and street children. ECD should be added to the list of 'new' interests and involvement of the churches.

The relationship of the ECD site with the local churches needs some attention and can be autonomous. It can be a church-run ECD site and a third option is that the ECD has access to church premises and uses existing facilities such as the Sunday school rooms, sharing the costs involved and maintenance.

The churches are the most numerous voluntary bodies within a community. And secondly, the churches have explicit human resources concerns, although they often focus only on the spiritual needs of their members and neglect the non-spiritual ones. The spiritual needs belong to the learnings of the church, such as the explanation and interpretation of the Bible, and how it fits within the particular society of faith. In line with this we can ask: what are the social practices of a church and how far do they want to be involved in a community beyond the 'church' level? Taking into account the enormous problems ECDs encounter such as the high rate of unemployment weakening the financial position of the ECDs, what role could the church fulfil? The church is expected to bring a message of Hope to people who are desperate due to the social insecurity many people have to deal with. The church is expected to

interrogate the reality about the root causes of the unemployment and related poverty's and to help people to cope with their problems. Almost all parents belong to a church group or denomination and consequently contribute financially to the income of the churches.

Another point of interest is, how do churches value young children and are they included in the church community? Do ECDs and the churches corporate in the religious education that is it tuned to the level children can understand and makes sense of? The child, at ECD-age, is very susceptible to religious and spiritual impressions. I make a division between being religious and being spiritual as a connection between both is not necessary. Zohar and Marshall put it as follows "conventional religion is an *externally* imposed set of rules and beliefs. It is top-down, inherited from priests and prophets and holy books, or absorbed through family and tradition. Further they say: "[spirituality] is an *internal*, innate ability of the human brain and psyche, drawing its deepest resources from the heart of the universe itself. It is a facility developed over millions of years that allows the brain to find and use meaning in the solution of problems" (2000: 9). I add this because religious education and spiritual exploration, are part of the holistic perspective of the individual child as well as of the community the child grows up in. Religion *and* spirituality need to be an intrinsic part of formal as well as of informal ECD education as both 'dimensions' contribute to the search for meaning and values. After all, ECD education lays the foundation for all further development of the child and influences in such a way the present and future community. Further, it helps the future generation decide whether it will belong to a church and/or religious group. Thus the churches as institutions can contribute positively to the upbringing of the children and help them to develop into responsible and respected citizens.

3. *The wider community*

The varying relationships of the ECD and its wider community are important. The ECD, as could be seen before, is an integral part of a community to whom it delivers very specified services. The reciprocal relationship - ECD and community - raises expectations from both sides. The community expects the provision of excellent services and at the same time, the ECD expects to receive financial support from the consumers as they will have to pay for those services, or voluntary contributions can be made. But the relationships as

posed are not that simple. Much tact and understanding of 'community dynamics' is necessary to maintain the multiplicity of interdependencies with which I try to deal from a holistic perspective. To make it clear I repeat what Zohar and Marshall mean with holistic: "An ability to grasp the overall context that links component parts" (2000: 60). It will be useful to look first at the different components to understand the whole picture. An ECD needs to keep in mind the following aspects of interdependencies and all of them include a high degree of social abilities and skills such as empathy; good listening skills and being able to communicate:

- 1) The physical, the material and spatial relationships. Physically: where within the community is the ECD established, in what area of the town, the building, the outdoor area, and does it rent or own the premises. Material: this can be the financial aspect, the equipment, the premises itself and the access to local resources. Spatial: the size of the ECD site, the number of classrooms, the outdoor area, and accessibility.
- 2) The interpersonal, social and attitudinal. This includes the personal relationships maintained with the different role-players over a certain period of time. This can be variable as there is a coming and going of different people involved, such as parents, practitioners, government officials and others.
- 3) Emotional relationships. The feelings involved in the operational aspects of the ECD and by becoming 'visible' contribute substantially to a high standard of the ECD. Feelings such as feelings of trust, respect and security. This corresponds with the following point.
- 4) Ethical relationships are based on a set of principles and values, which are decisively affect how the ECD functions, such as mutual respect between practitioners and parents, but also in a wider context. Values such as love, commitment, dedication, responsibility, trust, security, and others are highly important. A value system of a society (that can be any society) is based on the understanding of their social knowledge, their beliefs and experiences, their emotions, cultures and tradition, their institutions society has created over the years.
- 5) The spiritual and philosophical relationships. What are the 'inherited' beliefs in respect to the meaning of one's personal life, the fellow human beings and

nature? What are the attitudes, aspirations and the perceptions? What is the behaviour and what is said and what is done? I briefly touch on the aspect of spirituality in the section 'local churches'. This would need much more attention as in many rural communities a deep spirituality is existing but it is mainly expressed through the conventional religious groups often causing division and misunderstanding.

4. Organisations/Networks

A fourth relationship is with ECD related organisations, support structures, associations and networks, which in one way or the other exercise an influence on the functioning of the ECD. This can be service, training and education organisations and also structures providing the ECDs with financial support. The Department of Education, Training, Arts and Culture in the Northern Cape Province is very much against organisations and Trusts that want to keep parents dependent on them without training them to run their own affairs. This is a very valid statement made by the Department as it is a situation we need to guard against. The focus needs to be on organisations and NGOs that empower and build capacity within their constituency. Secondly, share the possible advantages they are able to provide, such as knowledge and information.

A local ECD is expected to relate with local organisations, such as church groups, CBOs and possibly others. However, outside organisations might influence the functioning of the ECD site as well and I will mention foreign and nationally based donor or funding organisations. Before 1994 their influence on primarily informal ECD education was considerable. The financial and physical supportive input of donor organisations facilitated many training courses, provided educational equipment and sometimes cared for the running costs of an ECD. Since then the situation has changed; funding previously channelled directly to NGOs and projects dried up and/or went to the new elected democratic government. New ways of support and continuation of ECD services need to be explored. One way is to find new ways to co-operate with the still functioning donor organisations and to negotiate partnership.

In rural areas ECDs have a tendency to feel isolated. To prevent this, an alternative is that ECDs organise themselves perhaps locally and certainly regionally. It is essential to be part of a bigger set-up such as a network, an

association or organisation. Achterberg says the following "voluntary associations of citizens [ECD practitioners, parents] co-operate to promote shared interests and participate in the determination and implementation of goal, priorities and policies" (1996: 167). An association can be voluntary, but it could become government-sponsored, for example to receive a subsidy to run training needed in a certain field of experience or in a region. The association will be able to lobby and advocate the specific interests of ECD, and can absorb and distribute all available new information. A network can be described as 'a set of social objects which has mapped a set of relationships or "flows" not necessarily in a 1:1 fashion' (Fogelman, 1994: 210). I would add 'A set of relationships' that they have 'a common interest'. The 'set of relationships' for ECDs is: The parents, the community, and the State Departments. The practitioners and the children form the most intense and intimate relationships. This brings me to the 'common interest': the children, the care and education of them.

An ECD in its own right is an 'organisation' where people need to work together to perfect the task they have to fulfil. At the same time the ECD is a community project as the ECD needs to be carried by the community; parents need to have access to information and to the source of knowledge and new skills.

Thus interdependencies go beyond the immediate community and could need a different level of communication. An example is the contact with officials of state departments. To bridge a communication gap the ECD receives assistance from the network/association as they offer specified services. At the same time the association helps the ECD to improve its services and communication level. To become a member of the association the ECD fulfils certain requirements and maintains educational and hygienic standards mutually agreed upon. It is what Max-Neef says, "in its turn [the ECD's] derives its power from the support it receives from the other link of the network, but this is not a one way relationship but it needs to be an exchange of mutual experiences so that both benefit of the interdependency" (1991: 56). I will stress some opportunities a network or association could explore in its role as 'service provider' between state departments and individual ECD. The following could be thought of: partnership and teamwork with the government structures, possible use of state vehicles; training of government officials; sharing of facilitation skills; training for Grade-R practitioners. Lastly, as result

of the Pilot Programme the service providers are in a position to influence government decisions.

5. Government structures

A fifth relationship is that with the official government structures, on national, provincial, as well as on local levels. As stated above the relations with the different Departments could be explored. At present, the existing relationship, which regulates the more official and juridical sides involving ECD, is not on standard. The aims of the Departments ought to be: to deliver integrated, accessible services, to co-ordinate the several aspects inherent in the ECD; and to check on quality ECD services. The information in writing provided by the Departments should be easily legible and applicable. Up till now this is certainly not the case, but it would be ideal if ECDs by way of its service providers could enter into partnership with government departments concerning basic services, training and equipment.

Since 1994 the National Department of Education had many difficult barriers to overcome. It is regrettable that ECD education is not on the priority list as this is the most crucial part of the educational career of the child and lays the foundation for lifelong learning. Moreover, in the first years the child is exceptionally susceptible to all learning impressions.

The age of entering formal education is fixed, the child has to be 7 years old, leaving 'fruitful' years 'underused'. Many children especially in rural areas are in a disadvantaged position as they all do not have access to informal ECD education. ELRU estimates that only 11% of children have access to organised programmes.

The Provincial Departments of Education have the autonomy to allocate a budget to ECD education and to decide how the amount will be spent. The Department of Education of the Northern Cape Province has put educational toys as number one on its priority list. I doubt if this is the right choice!

No reference is to the relationship with local government neither in the White Paper nor in any other policy paper. In future, local government will have to play a more prominent role concerning compulsory education of which ECD is an essential part. Local government needs to support ECDs in one way or the

other. In its turn the role of ECDs is to advocate their interests and to make local government aware of the importance of ECDs for the young children of the community.

5.3 Research Findings

If the situation were ideal, the ECD site would be the vibrant 'heart beat' of the community it serves. It is necessary therefore to look at the results of the research and I will deal with the same sequence of all role players the ECD interrelate with.

1. Parents

The family, and it might be the traditional and even the extended family, is the prime social, educational and overall forming environment in which the child develops during the first years of life. Thus the ECD site is for most children the second environment or the first 'community' beyond the family where the child usually spend a few hours a day without one of the parents present. This puts the parent(s) in a position of consumer of the services offered by the ECD site and becoming a contributor by way of paying a fee. Parent(s) thus make a decision to send the child to an ECD or not to do so. It is therefore important to know more about **why parent(s) send their children to an ECD site**

Table 5.1

For education and self-reliance	19
For preparation primary school	8
For safety	5
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to learn to communicate with schoolmates and practitioners - to keep the child away of the street - to get a disciplined child - to allow the child to develop holistically

Education and self-reliance are unanimously seen to be important. This includes the shaping of attitudes as can be seen in 'other'. Further, Carolusberg¹⁰ expresses that the child discovers him/herself, learns routine

¹⁰ parents of C. and L. attended a specially organised parent meeting where some issues concerning ECD sites were raised

and that the child is safe when the parent(s) work. Loxton indicates that the child learns to share and not to be selfish; learns what is right and what is wrong; and learns about the Word of God. Parents highly value the education of their children and they feel that it needs to help the child to become independent and to get self-confidence. Education must offer the child the opportunity to discover itself, and through this the child grows and prospers. No mention is made of sending the child to an ECD because the child receives a meal, which could have been an important incentive. It might be imputed to the fact that many parents care for the 'kospakkies' as the ECDs do not have financial resources to buy food.

If services are provided the quality and degree of delivery become relevant. It raises expectations as may be supposed that the consumer [the parent(s)] cannot provide those services themselves more efficiently and adequately and thus need to call on 'outsiders'. A *need* for a particular service has been located and requires being satisfied. In this case, the ECD site becomes the 'outsiders' or the provider of the services and as such the role the practitioner plays can be assumed to be crucial. She is *the* service provider and in a way responsible for the quality of delivery. Therefore, **what do parent(s) hope to receive:**

Table 5.2

Attitude improvement	
to receive a child who is self-reliant/confidence	5
a child that is motivated	1
a child that is responsible, with sense of duty	2
a child that is disciplined/skilled	6
Educational gain	
good education and good results of it	10
progress reports	6
a child that is good developed	2
preparation for Primary School	2
a higher literacy level	1
Services	
safety for child	2
good care for the child	5
the best of the ECD	1
respect in recognition of parent(s)	1

The questionnaires show less unity in the answers, but parents seem to expect good education and positive results. Carolusberg indicates among others that the ECD needs to be a 'safety haven for the child'; focuses on the practitioner who needs to be a 'mother' for the child, a trustworthy relationship needs to exist between child, practitioner and parent(s). Loxton adds that the practitioner needs to be a person who is kind to every one within the community; needs to love children and she needs to be a person who is always prepared to listen to the child. The attending parents hope their children will have a better chance in life and a better future than they had.

Would a rural set-up need a different approach towards ECD education, as resources are limited and at the same time so abundant? With this question I want to highlight the problems a rural community has concerning identification and application of internal and external 'resources', and with the mobilisation of those resources. The development of a particular curriculum should be needed that invites the 'discovery', the depreciation and the application of all available local resources. I am certainly convinced that this is a must as [rural] people often exclude themselves of being a resource and a source of experience and of wisdom. In fact people *are* the main resource(s). By failing to recognise their own wisdom, energy, abilities and other skills to be of ultimate importance, people make themselves dependent on resources from outside, thus weakening their efforts and position.

Parents who attended the workshops focused much on the attitude of the practitioner and the skills or characteristics she needs to have. They pointed out: kindness, patience and tolerance, be constructive, maintain a healthy understanding between her and the parents, and loyalty towards the children and the parent(s). Parents regarded the main value: the *love* for children. 'She [the practitioner] needs to be a mother for the children!' "Love" is the most essential ingredient in ECD (Dryden, Vos, 1994: 247). The parents connected the attitude and the abilities of the practitioner very clearly to the

outcome or 'end-product'. It can be stated that her influence is decisive. This led to, **what do parent(s) value the most in ECD:**

Table 5.3

Values practised	
love children receive	1
self-reliance	1
discipline	1
Services	
the attention/supervision children receive	2
to receive a good progress report	1
the care and how children are treated	5
safety for child	3
Educational gain	
the education and development	6
the stimulation children receive	1
the progress of child in its benefit	1
the preparation of child for primary school	2
what the child learns	1
that the child learns to play with other children	1
the art works children bring home	1
Other	
destination [of the child]	1
the parents are glad	1

A variety of valuable items are expressed and the most value is contributed to the educational gain the children receive at the ECD. Further, the stress is on 'the care of the child and how the child is treated': again, parents highly value the positive relationship between practitioner and child. The parents express the same: Carolusberg adds the holistic education and the self-confidence children develop; Loxton values that the interests of the child come first.

The parent(s) become contributors through paying fees and providing voluntary services. To keep services on standard and going, it needs to receive a return by way of payment for the delivered services. Thus a monetary value is attached to it. So, parent(s) are expected to pay a fee, mainly paid monthly and often depending of the income of the parent(s). 30

ECDs receive income, or a part of it, by collecting fees without being able to cover the expenses. A problem arises when the parent(s) do not pay and it is useful to make the discrimination between *cannot* and *will not* pay the fees. **What is done in case a parent(s) cannot pay the school fee:**

Table 5.4

Affecting the child	
child will be dismissed after 3 months if no attempt to pay has been made	1
the parent(s) normally withdraws the child	1
Parent(s):	
do work for neighbours such as to do the washing and ironing	1
offer voluntary or alternative services at ECD, such as cleaning	8
Negotiations	
call parent(s) in and negotiations will take place	4
attempts are done to accommodate the financially weak parent	1
parents are advised to settle or to contribute to fund-raising functions	6
offer subsidy or look for a donor	1
Other	
we did not have this problem	1
not answered the question	1

Not being able to pay might have several valid reasons. The rural areas are the hardest hit by unemployment and the possibility to find replacing employment is very difficult if not impossible. The high rate of dependency on disability grants in the Northern Cape Province are mainly related to health problems caused by working on the mines. Another aspect that needs attention is the psychological pressure the inability to pay causes parent(s). It might be very humiliating for parents to have to acknowledge they cannot pay for the education of their child and therefore they take the child out the ECD site to prevent confrontation. The psychological effects on parent(s) as well as on the children are far more reaching than in first instance is acknowledged. I will stress the fact of not being able to pay needs the utmost tactful approach, but at the same time it needs to become an issue for discussion at parent meetings without blaming or pointing finger at the parents concerned.

It becomes more complicated when the parent(s) refuse to pay and in such a situation clear and strict measures need to be in place. **What is done when a parent(s) will not pay the school fee:**

Table 5.5

Affecting the child	
ECD requests to withdraw the child/ child is not accepted any more	6
practitioner pays for the child	1
temporary access refused	2
up till now nothing has been done, but plans to send the child home and to urge the parents to pay because it is the right of each child [to attend an ECD]	1
Parents	
stern talk with the parent(s)	2
parents are individually visited	3
Negotiations	
ECD urges the payment of the fee and summons regularly	3
we consider every time a workable solution	1
Other	
let go; no steps are taken; no solution; we cannot do a thing, we don't know	6
not yet experienced; don't have such a problem	2
no answer	4

The answers of both questions show an ambiguity how to deal with parents who *cannot* and who *will not pay*. If the high percentage of unemployment is considered all over the areas involved in the research it is of no surprise that the payment of school fees is going to suffer. Naidoo argues that it is basically a question of inequality in society - more than 50% of the population in South Africa lives on R301 per month. To address the issue Naidoo would like to see a state policy in place where it is compulsory for children at the youngest possible age to receive education.

Alternative ways to contribute to the payment of fees need to be in place. Attempts are made to assist parents, but still there is an underlying frustration and desperation expressed by many ECDs. If the unwillingness to pay a basic school fee is a result of ignorance and parent(s) do not understand the importance of ECD education, then the GBs and practitioners need to explain it better. This comes forward from the attitude 'everything needs to be given'. Mind change needs to take place from this 'culture of dependency'. "If we believe in free education then why should we expect the parents to have

certain obligations – either financially or in any way involving education and schools? It would be worthwhile to advocate the point of view of 'nothing to be given for free' (Nayak, 1992: 12).

The following question can be related to the two previous questions. Have ECDs alternatives in place, which are acceptable for parents who *cannot* pay and might urge parents to pay who *will not* pay the fees? But, **what is the alternative?** The answers are much the same as can be seen in the tables 4. and 5. Generally a desperate tone is palpable and no alternative has been proposed. The fact that 10 ECDs did not answer this question offers an indication of the problems they encounter when parents do not pay the school fees for one or other reason. It is a moral dilemma and each possible solution brings into play an ethical decision forward, for example, to dismiss the child? Why 'punish' the child when the parents, if they cannot pay, are already put in a painful and difficult position. The same can be considered for children of whom parent(s) will not pay! The child never may become victimised. It is a vicious circle that will be created through this problem: '... in fact these are the children that require this kind of education due to the existing deficiency in their lives. Those are the children who come from a totally 'disadvantaged social economic background' (Naidoo). Other questions can be raised, such as what will be the effect on the payment of other parents if we allow them not to pay? What to do when there is too little income to sustain the ECD? A wonderful example is Harlekyntjie kleuterskool in Carolusberg that has an unemployment rate of 93%. The ECD closed down due to lack of financial means and the practitioner left accordingly. Anna who was the cleaner, took on the challenge and with perseverance she kept the ECD going. In the meantime Anna received some training and support from NAPE. The community expressed their gratitude and helped with cleaning the building and the grounds. Anna is highly appreciated by the parents as she has also shown to have a natural ability to work with children

Not all these moral problems are solved in such a way and it is necessary to deal with the social inequality within South Africa first. The future government policy for education must make room to focus on these important issues. On smaller scale such dilemmas should be on the agenda of GBs and perhaps be reflected in the constitution of an ECD.

The financial contribution to the ECD parent(s) pay is certainly not the only

financial commitment they enter into. The parent(s) have other contributions that might be voluntary or obligatory and might affect negatively the payment of the ECD fees. The amount of income parent(s) earn is a private matter and it is not the task of the ECD site to interfere how private income is spent. Yet, it could be useful for the ECD to have some information about the incomes of the parent(s), and to know which financial commitment parents have to pay as it might be a proportional part of the weekly or monthly income of the parent(s). This should also enable the GB of the ECD site to act and respond adequately when fee problems should occur. **What other financial commitments do the parent(s) have:**

Table 5.6

Towards the Church		31
Towards other organisations		22
Other commitments	School	5
	Municipal services	6
	Local shops	1
	Funeral society	1
	Irrigation rights	1
	Other	1

The church and the ECD could agree to enter into an alternative relationship. An ECD could work in partnership with a local church, although it will not be able to pay salaries, but a contribution can be done in a different way. Perhaps an agreement to share facilities, or even possibly income. This idea should rise in church communities taking into account the importance of the ECD in their community. I will deal with the interdependence between churches and ECDs in the subject *Local Churches*.

One of the concerns of the ECD is to help the parents to strengthen their side of the relationship. It might not be possible to do this alone, but to which services of existing NGOs and CBOs could the ECD turn to do so? Another thought is the 'investment' financially and time-wise the ECD site puts into training and education of the parent(s) will have a ripple effect. It will affect the willingness of parent(s) to contribute financially, but as earlier stated, relatively few ECDs seize the opportunity to do so (see: 4.). Learning Function, c.).

The GB is composed of parents plus the ECD principal; together they care for

the managerial and financial well functioning of the ECD. This puts parents in the position of almost becoming a Trust with specific tasks, such as to maintain the quality of education and services; and to be the 'watch dog' to keep the finances balanced. **What is/are the main role(s) of the GB:**

Table 5.7

Organisational	
take and execute decisions	3
maintenance and control of ECD	4
handle the administration and correct management	12
appoint staff/personnel	2
start other projects	2
organise meetings and functions with parents and community	6
organise transports	1
overall involvement, responsibility	3
Financial	
care for well being, progress and finances of ECD	2
provide, handle, and secure financial growth	3
care/provide salaries	1
Attitude	
co-operation	1
motivate parents	2
to care that ECD becomes self-reliant, that all go well	1
supervise that obligations are obeyed	2

The number of roles is numerous, which demands a high degree of leadership ability as well as organisational and financial skills; the GB also has to convince parent(s) to become involved. A GB which rotates on a yearly basis, needs to receive training to enable them to acquire the skills and abilities to run the ECD in a satisfactory way. If GBs are trained to do so, it is important to guarantee three things. Firstly, that the responsibilities belonging to the roles are spelled out and properly divided among the members; secondly, that the acquired knowledge and skills can be applied. Thirdly, the training needs to be 'preserved' so that when rotation takes place the change goes smoothly and without shock effects. Therefore, **what is done to sustain the training received?** A few of the answers were as follows: through meetings; information is offered to new members; handouts and training-the-trainer method is used.

Are the above answers sufficient to operate an ECD efficiently and to fulfil the different responsibilities belonging to good governance and management?

The responsibilities of the GBs are:

Table 5.8

Fund-raising	11
To organise meetings + functions	12
Other activities	financial management the administration the overall functioning of the school, day-to-day responsibilities
One ECD mentioned things + functions not to have a single responsibility	
Added can be that at all ECDs the secretary keeps the minutes	

The responsibilities indicate a variety of leadership and management abilities, but *all* parent(s) need to play a role within the ECD. Parent(s) involvement in education and certainly in the ECD sector is crucial. To conclude this part concerning the parents, the following question presents what the practitioners would like the roles of the parents to be. **What is/are the role(s) of the parents:**

Table 5.9

Attitude	
positive co-operation/support and active involvement	19
good communication	1
support practitioner and encouragement	2
Children	
give children healthy food	1
to send the children to the ECD and regular attend	8
that the child attends ECD clean and neat	1
offer a home and good bringing up	2
discipline the children	1
Financially	
contribute to functions and income of ECD	10
Actually	
assist with making of equipment	2
offer voluntary services	1

The practitioners express 'low level' expectations! Still parent(s) should have a special and particular interest in the ECD as it is their children who benefit from attending the ECD. But, parent(s) seemingly do not play such a prominent and active role in the ECD generally and this fact is of great concern. Much more attention needs to go to helping parent(s) to understand the importance of ECD education. Further parent(s) need to be spurred on to become actively involved in offering training courses in leadership qualities and good governance. Involvement of parent(s) is reflected by the percentage that attend meetings. The percentage of **parents that attend parent meetings** is 53.2.

Of this percentage 26 ECDs indicate that *mothers* attend in the majority, as can be seen below. Only 1 ECD indicates that fathers sometimes attend, and 5 ECDs indicate the attendance of both parents. The ECD sites stated this information as the majority keeps an attendance list. In percentage this is as follows: Mothers: 84.4%; Fathers: 1.8%.

1.1 Women

The above percentage speaks for itself! The role of women in ECD as mentioned before is crucial and women have different levels of involvement. The Bernard van Leer Foundation categorises the involvement of women in ECD in four groups: directly involved; as result of their work; indirect role; and through more indirect influence. The first two categories of involvement are noticeable in the research. The woman as being the mother and has thus *direct contact* with one or more children, she is an "official childminder" as van Leer states (1994: 28). The woman is consumer of the ECD site services and she contributes to the fees. Some are members of the GB and thus have a leadership and management function to fulfil, bringing her in contact with the children on a different level than as a mother. A woman is almost always the practitioner and thus the caregiver, as *result of her work*. The question was asked **how many members [of GBs] are women, how many men:**

Table 5.10

At 13 ECDs only women compose the GB
206 women: 30 men = @ 6.6 women: @ 0.96 men
14 X a male is the chair or the vice-chairperson.

The GBs of the ECDs, which participated in the research, are mainly composed of women. Males dominate when it comes to the position of chairperson: of the total number of 30 men who are part of a GB, 13 times they fulfil the function of chair- or vice chairperson. It will be therefore necessary to focus much more on the women and ECDs can play an important role in doing so. Hendrik Visser states the following "the main important role of the ECD is, beyond the education of the child, to motivate and activate especially the mothers. Her role can be extended by not only being involved with the ECD but to organise them in other aspects." It would be important to look into the different roles, and responsibilities women have in the rural societies, and to look at the driving and restraining forces they encounter. A mainly negative influence on family life is the fact of migrant labour in Namaqualand and it affects many a family, as Visser states 'the role of the father in this stadium? ... they are mainly migrant labourers.....' This fact for sure influences the social relations between men and women and further it contributes decisively to responsibilities of the woman. If this is so, what is the self-image women have, how is it reflected in their communities and broader society? The social contacts women have in the community are crucial as well as the fact of being part of a particular community. Women need to have contacts beyond the own family. At the moment many more women get the opportunity to play an active role by becoming part of local government, by fulfilling a more decisive role within the church and by becoming members of GBs.

Women play prominent roles, roles very often undervalued and underestimated, mainly by themselves. Many women do not see themselves as a valuable resource within her family and community! All she does is often taken for granted: her work within the family is not paid for, sick-leave is not existing, and if her husband is at the mines she has to take over his tasks too. The great number of women who attend the parent meetings exceeds by far the number of men. This could be an incentive and challenge for NAPE to utilise the opportunity to explore and to address the specific concerns and interests women have. Together they could develop programmes accordingly, keeping in mind what Visvanatha argues, when she says, "within the developmentalist framework women are seen as the most valuable resource in achieving sustainable development" (1997: 60).

One of the reasons women will indicate why they attend parent meetings might be that it benefits the child. Yet, it would be very interesting to dig a bit deeper

into this subject. This research has not done this, but some reasons could be such as, the opportunity to meet socially; to share problems, to learn from the meetings; to learn to be a better parent, or improve certain abilities and skills. Therefore the personal gain for women by enhancing personal growth may not be overlooked and should need more attention especially in regions with limited resources for capacity building.

2. The Local Churches

The nature of churches is expected to be one of compassion, understanding, concern, and certainly of speaking out against injustice. Also of practising social equity and stimulating the upliftment of the weak within their community. The involvement of churches needs to be an expression of their assumed social practices and the education of their children and youth needs to be of great concern and interest. ECD belongs within the field of education and the questionnaires indicate that a variety of churches have involvement, or perhaps only contact with ECDs. This conclusion can be drawn from table 10.

Involvement does not indicate *active* involvement. Some church leaders identified the need for ECD services and they were instrumental in the initiation of it. Some church leaders helped with the drawing up of the constitution. A further 8 ECDs state that they are housed in church owned buildings that are also used for several other church purposes. 6 ECDs indicated that they belong to the church and to church organisations; only one church offers training for ECD purposes. 'Our religion', or 'the church', are named twice as being the driving force in the community. When the question was asked **what are the relations with the local churches**, the following was answered:

Table 5.11

Very good, good and reasonable	13
Good co-operation	1
Rent premises from church	1
A weak relation	2
Offers donations	1
No relation or involvement	2

Not all ECDs answered the question.

The questionnaires show that the churches are relatively seen as a minor role player. In rural areas the church has often been seen to be a totally different

dimension of the society, and its main role is restricted to religious teaching. Another reason could be the fact that the church and its leadership are not to be challenged or criticised in one way or the other. The 'infallible status' of the church and its ministers within particularly rural communities might play a role. Before, all 31 ECDs indicate that parents contribute financially to a church. In spite of this the question above indicates that only 13 have a positive relation with the church. In the interviews the church is only mentioned twice as a possible role player, and 7 times in the questionnaires.

A gap exists between the churches and community projects and interests, as if two different worlds are spoken of. A church, by way of its leadership, ought to practice a holistic approach in its relationship with the community it serves. They need to find a balance between the spiritual and material needs people have. The churches ought to be more in the forefront of assisting communities to overcome and tackle the problems they struggle with, such as unemployment and the related poverty by interrogating the reality about the root causes. In such a way the churches help people to understand their problems and to deal satisfactorily with them. The spiritual as well as the material aspects relate to ECD: the germinating spiritual needs of the children - as they are very susceptible for spiritual development; and, the material needs and requirements of the ECD. A local church cannot pay the salaries of practitioners, but the financial contribution people make to the church could be ploughed back in the community by supporting the ECD in one way or the other. For example, to make provision so that all parents are able to send their children to an ECD site. Volmer, a church worker, argues "churches need to be prepared to offer access to facilities such as opening the doors of church premises, to use photocopy machines, or allow them to have functions in the church hall". Not only the churches have duties towards the ECD site, the opposite is also true: the ECD can initiate and negotiate effective co-operation and support between them and the churches.

3. The Wider Community

The services that are provided by an ECD site, are seen to be closely connected with its community. The concept of 'what is a community' is complicated and in case of the ECD services it could be the members of a church, a particular part of a town or township, the private sector, or a farm community. It all depends on where the ECD site is established. In the case of this study, all involved communities are situated in rural areas bringing along

its particular set of problems, such as the huge distances between towns and the restricted socio-economic prospects. Also there is diversity on different levels of which Stan Burkey says "rural communities are composed of individuals and groups with different and often opposing interests" (1993: 41). Further Burkey says "every rural society has some form of socio-economic class structure". This is in the South African context even so more visible due to Apartheid rule of the Groups Areas Act which divided people not only physically but also certainly socio-economically and psychologically. The deep-rooted division fuels opposing interests especially when a community is struck by feeble socio-economic prospects. But, **what is the socio-economic situation of the community(ies):**

Table 5.12

Attitude	
capability to maintain life is average	6
alcohol abuse	3
drug addiction	1
violence	1
different population groups have different status	1
very feeble/weak, immense poverty, underprivileged	6
Income related	
unemployment	18
professionals (nurses, teachers, etc.)	1
employment opportunities are rare	2
not able to maintain the ECD	1
migrant labour: work at mines	2
seasonal work	1
pensioners mainly	1
Other	
nothing	1
ECDs not answered	1

The fact that 18 ECDs indicate that the unemployment rate dominates the socio-economic situation of the community stresses the seriousness of conflicting interests. Again, in Namaqualand notice must be taken that the mines are part of the problem and it seems that no adequate social responsibility system is in operation. and very few alternatives are in place or possible. Keith Griffin says the following about unemployment "in most Third

World [I prefer to say 'non-industrialised'] countries today the poor are free to go, but unlike the nineteenth century Europe, there is nowhere for them to go to. Most must stay at home. They have no choice" (1989: 7). The fact of 'no way to go', together with the migrant labour which is the lesser of a choice, causes serious destabilisation within a region affecting communities negatively. In addition, as mentioned before, the great number of disability grants in the Northern Cape Province, due to the great number of people involved with the active working in the mines, aggravates the problems

The participants in the research consider the wider community to be the 'ultimate' factor responsible for ECD. It is therefore useful, to look at **what is/are the main role(s) of the community:**

Table 5.13

Actual	
overall involvement (i.e. attend meetings)	12
co-operation and support	13
overall responsibility	1
assist and guidance offered to committee and practitioners	1
assist in maintenance of ECD	2
assist in making of equipment to provide a well equipped ECD	2
execute tasks given by committee	1
supervise that correct education takes place	1
more openness towards ECD	1
Financial	
financial and moral support	2
fund-raising and helpfulness	4

Some ECDs gave more than one answer.

As a community consists of several groups with different interests and roles, one of the groups needs some attention: the private sector. Naidoo refers to it as: "... is not seen as the only factor [to support ECD sites], it is a force that should be utilised where it exists, but where it does not then we have to look at the state, the community and other forces". An ECD which would utilise local businesses for the purpose of funding or other favours needs at the same time to be on guard to prevent them from taking over by being forced to display advertisements or to promote products and services. The advantages for the ECD could become a disadvantage for parents.

The community mainly identified the need for an ECD, but **who initiated the ECD** as this might indicate the degree and variation of interdependencies as 17 times is indicated that the ECD is initiated by the community and community members (parents included). A few times the ECD is Church inspired and once is mentioned 'a group of women'.

If the wider community is considered to be the 'ultimate' factor responsible for ECD, thus is the main role player, **what [than] is the most important contribution the ECD makes in the community:**

Table 5.14

Concerning education	
care and education for the children - holistic development	11
community sees the children develop	1
that children come first	1
to motivate the children	1
the foundation has been laid of a better future of the child	2
the children are better prepared for primary school	4
at the benefit of the community and its children	1
create a healthy and safe environment for growth and development	5
teach the children skills and discipline	4
upliftment of education, consciousness of importance of education	2
create safety for the street children	1
Concerning parent(s):	
peace of mind for working parents	2
make parents conscious concerning their responsibility in education and development of their children	1
Actually	
create jobs	1
nation building effort	1
deliver community services: co-operation; visits the old aged	3
organise educational trips	1
promote inter-church co-operation	1

The answers refer to the important function for various reasons an ECD fulfils in a community. The interviewees subscribe these reasons and some answers will be quoted. A vital role is to facilitate children's learning. The difference in positive learning results at primary school between children who attended

ECDs and who did not is so noticeable! Another role is to motivate and activate the mothers by not only involving them, but by organising them on other levels. An ECD is not only a preparation for the primary school, but it is a preparation for life. It raises a level in the community, for in the future we will have less people who are illiterate. NAPE adds that it opens a way to create belonging and confidence in one another.

There are dynamics between communities and ECDs that have an influence on the functioning of the ECD, which contribute to a growth of self-reliance. Thus, when a [wider] community is involved, it is useful to look at the degree of inter-relationships. We need to see if these are provoked voluntarily or in a way forced upon the ECD. Therefore I will follow the same interdependencies as before.

1) *The physical, the material and spatial relationships:* an ECD-site is direct within the community it serves. The premises often are within walking distance from the homes of the children to the ECD. Children of such young age need the security of their own environment and neighbourhood: it needs to be familiar, recognisable, and offering safety. The indoor and outdoor areas need to be 'child-friendly', clear and neat. All are preconditions Maria Montessori highly regarded to be in place. An ECD can be housed in church halls, in or near local primary schools, in detached premises, and in private houses. The parents seldom have ownership of the building as the following question points out. **Who is the owner of the building in which the ECD is housed:**

Table 5.15

community owned	7
ECD owns building	1
church property	8
organisation owns property (ACVV- C&FW)	2
Diamond Trust	2
local government/ Municipality	8
Owned by private person	2

Where in the community the ECD site is established is significant. Further, how the outdoor area is maintained, whether the ECD site is easily accessible and at the same time a safe haven for the children. This all helps the

parent(s) to decide to send their children to the ECD. When premises are rented, borrowed or even given for free, certain responsibilities and obligations concerning the venue are attached to the use of it. The attractiveness and tidiness of the ECD is very important, but **what are the responsibilities of the ECD concerning the premises:**

Table 5.16

care for the safety of children	2
keep area and building clean	12
develop the premises	1
maintain building and area	15
pay rent	1
no responsibilities	2

If the building is not owned, but rented, or the ECD site may use the space for a number of days and hours, it is likely that the **building is used for other purposes too:**

Table 5.17

Yes	10 for church purposes, ABET courses, community purposes, such as functions, dances, meetings, when pensions are paid.
No	12

Nowadays, buildings cannot stay empty for too long during the day and the evening for several reasons. The multi-functional purpose of a building is advisable due to the cost-effectiveness. The accessibility of certain premises for purposes benefiting community members will contribute to community building and unity. It stimulates a stronger sense of ownership and it helps people to accept responsibility for maintenance. Lastly, it might prevent vandalism. Multifunctional use has also disadvantages such as: ECDs housed in community halls complained about the necessity that the hall was needed for community functions, which often left the hall dirty, equipment stolen or destroyed. This is a great problem and discourages the practitioners and GBs in displaying materials for the children. All stakeholders will have to look into possible solutions. ECD staff wants to have a clean hall, without property

damaged or stolen after the community has used it. ECD, the community and the owner(s) of the hall. can become 'shareholders' of the building, or at least a partnership could exist between the different stakeholders. Mutual and shared responsibility grows from it and might prevent damage.

Children learn the best by play-play and therefore, firstly they need physical space such as classrooms and outdoor areas. **How many classrooms does the ECDs have?** The number of classrooms an ECD has is not always related to the number of children attending, but to the historical and socio-economic situation of the parents and the community the ECD site is situated in. Let me provide an example: In Victoria West are 2 ECDs: Lukhanyo Creche has the availability of one hall in which a number of 140 children are housed. Wiekie Wiesie, with an average of totally 20 children, has the availability of 3 small classrooms.

The physical aspect has to do with availability and accessibility of financial and material resources. The socio-economic aspect, is in this case mirrored by the historically unequal distribution of the land, other material and financial resources. Of great importance is the available equipment as this helps the children develop and learn. Equipment includes furniture, educational toys and outdoor equipment, **but what furniture and equipment does the ECD have:**

Table 5.18

Tables + chairs together	20	(mentioned as one item, but also in the singles	
Tables, for the children single	7	Chairs, single, for the children	8
Desk + chairs	11	Book shelves	3
Cupboards	10	No furniture at all	5

Educational indoor equipment	17	Tape recorder	4
TV	3	Video	1
Piano	1	Doll-house + furniture	2
Art equipment	1	Outdoor equipment	3
No equipment	4		

Kitchen equipment	4	Stove	7
refridgerator	4	Sink	1
Cutlery	1	Kettle	1
Heaters	2	Lock-up store	1
Typing machine	1	PC	2
Telephone	4	Photo copier	1

Not filled in	3
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The outdoor areas, playground and sandpit are on the whole not seen as belonging to 'equipment'.

The majority of ECDs are poorly provided with educational equipment and furniture. So are the kitchens, which severely hinders the preparation of food and the hygiene of keeping it. The South African climate urges that each ECD should have a refridgerator to keep the food, milk and cool drinks. Certainly when an ECD provides meals access to cooling is a necessity.

No ECD mentions the availability of a first aid box. Small and bigger accidents frequent happen at ECDs, it hardly be prevented. All practitioners, as the training curriculum points out receive minimum first-aid training. An adequate first aid box is absolutely essential equipment.

Each and every ECD site needs to have access to a telephone. Preferably a private telephone at the premises, but a public or community telephone in the near vicinity will also do. In case of emergencies such as accidents, illnesses the practitioner ought to be able to reach out for assistance so that problems can be solved quickly and safely.

2) *The interpersonal, social and attitudinal relationships:* ECD in general is clearly a social entity. The interpersonal and attitudinal relationships are influential and even can 'make or break' the site. The interpersonal abilities,

such as the social attitudes and behaviour of the several role players within the inner circle of the ECD towards the outside world becomes the 'picture' people have of the ECD. Within the inner circle are observed several ways of communication and interaction: children with children; practitioners and children and vice versa; the practitioners among each other; and with the GB. Respect needs to be shown and used towards the parents. The outside world observes the relationships with the parents, possibly with colleagues of the primary school, and the church. The attitude of the practitioner is observed carefully by parents and therefore, as could be seen, criteria are set which the practitioner needs to meet.

The younger the child the more she/he is influenced by the people the child associates with. The child observes behaviour, attitudes and actions and through its play the child imitates what it has seen and has experienced. The practitioner, as interacting closely with the child, has a great influence on the child, an aspect not sufficiently regarded which is frequently overlooked. Thus the attitude and behaviour of the practitioner is pivotal as a part of her acting might be internalised by the child and the impressions the child gathers stay, often for ever. It is as Quinta Jonas argues "jy as VKO onderwyseres het 'n groot invloed op daai kind want as jy vir die kind sê doe so dan word die mami vertel die volgende dag, 'nee, maar dis so' [want juffrou sê so]."

Relationships can be unbalanced due to barriers such as the 'informal' and 'formal' ways of teaching children. Then relationships can become problematic. But, **how are the relations with the local Primary School:**

Table 5.19

Attitude	
a healthy, good relation	14
good co-operation	4
an average relation	2
a weak relation	2
offer help/assistance advice and information	4
offers stationary, make photocopies	3
Other	
good communication	1
committee member of ECD is pre-primary teacher	1
not answered	1

Several ECDs described more than one way of relationship.

Primary schools are a continuation of the learning process started at the ECD. It is in the interest of the primary school that the ECD it relates with and from which the children come to Grade-O, is doing well. With doing well I mean, offers child-friendly educational programmes and that it has access to basic resources. Personal contacts and contacts on professional levels are on the basis of mutual respect and appreciation. **How often does the ECD meet with the Primary School**, is varying. Only 9 ECDs meet on a regular basis; 5 meet never; 1 on a daily basis, 1 ECD meets once a year and 1 during events; and lastly, 4 ECDs meet seldom and 4 meet once in 3 months'.

Primary schools generally express the great progress children have made in learning if they have the opportunity to attend an ECD. Thus the effects of ECD education is measurable as it is demonstrable on the overall ability of the child to progress and to perform better. Still the co-operation between the two parties is very unbalanced. Only 14 ECDs mention a good healthy relationship, and only 8 have regular contact with the neighbouring primary school. ECDs have the tendency to be more informal in their approach to learning; many primary schools much more formal. The last will change as Curriculum 2005 that initiates Outcome Based Education (OBE). It is positive, innovative, flexible and promotes more personal interaction between learner and learners. The philosophy behind it is that all learners can learn and it is what learners are to learn; to know; to do; to value and to like (White paper, 1997: vi).

The following key principles guide curriculum development for ECD education: integration; holistic development; relevance; participation and ownership; accountability and transparency; child-orientated approach; flexibility; critical and creative thinking; progression (White Paper;1997: xiii). Altogether these principles are already part and parcel of many ECDs. Therefore it would be advisable for ECDs and primary schools to tie the knot more intensively. ECD practitioners are certainly able to help many a teacher to understand the new curriculum which is subjected to and a continuation of the above mentioned key principles. Both, ECD practitioners and teachers of primary schools, should become 'facilitators' of life-long learning for all

3) *Emotional relationships*: Interwoven with the interpersonal, social and attitudinal relationships are the ones based on emotions. Children need to

learn how to deal with, interpret and express relationships based on emotions. They need to become emotionally literate, or as Daniel Goleman puts it "...cultivating emotional competence" (1998: 313). It is not part of the above-mentioned ECD curriculum, but it should be part of the basic educational programmes. Some competencies, mainly based on deep feelings, should need to get attention, such as sympathy, empathy, anger, understanding, listening skills and communication.

The most powerful and sensitive emotional loaded situation can be provoked when practitioners and parents discuss the children. Emotive language used by the practitioner could demotivate the participation and active involvement of parent(s). Communication, if started on the wrong foot, can become very emotive and irrational. Tact, honesty, willingness to listen and respect are a few of the characteristics or abilities a practitioner needs to own. The level of communication of the practitioner needs to be attuned to the parent(s), she needs to listen carefully and weigh her answer, comment or advice. Olifantjie kleuterskool in Loxton specifically pointed out that the practitioner needs to be able to set personal conflicts [with community members] aside, she needs to be tactful and be able to handle problems.

An indicator of such abilities could be the percentage of parents attending the meetings. Why do parents attend, or what keep them away? Parents are far more inclined to attend and to meet with the practitioner when they feel listened to and understood. A reversed indicator could be how **the practitioner feels appreciated by parents and GBs**, when **23** say **yes** and **6** say **no**. Emotional relationships are two-way relationships and inter linked with point 4.

The training programmes quoted in the research do not offer training to empower the practitioner in personal development. Of course most training contributes to improvement of the trainee, but the aspect of personal growth and enrichment would need more attention. The answers on the question mention about the criteria of abilities the practitioner is regarded to be skilled in, the following: [the practitioner needs to be] a good example, a pattern in the community; be properly and disciplined; a good personality, trustworthy, reliable and patient. The following - the ethical - relationships can be considered to be a continuation of emotional relationships, as both are inseparable and both comprises and requires values.

4) *Ethical relationships*: principles and values are inseparable in the totality of ECD as it concerns the bringing up and education of the young people in the community. The principles and values children are confronted with and introduced to are formative and lay the foundation on which children are able to build on their future; they can refer to and, in their turn transfer them to their children. Principles and values are something to go by, are stable and flexible, are protecting and respecting tradition, and are at the same times transformative. It is a cycle that sustains the community and society.

ECD education is, after the family, as shown before, for many children the second social and educational environment. This indicates the importance of the role of the practitioner: she is influential, she is a role model, her behaviour and the children often imitate attitude. Parents look up at her, observe her actions and attitude, as do other people the practitioner interacts with. She needs to possess certain characteristics as stated before and for sure she needs to have self-confidence, a positive self-image, the ability to be firm, and to be true to her own values. The practitioner also needs to have a good understanding of the community dynamics, how to manage and to facilitate change. All this makes it necessary that the practitioner firstly values the work she does. The answers, given before, offer a broad variety and if I read well between the lines it would be advisable to help practitioners to grow personally. Different options are available such as training in attitudinal aspects, counselling, concerning leadership and other life skills. The ethical aspects inherent in ECD can not be divorced from all participants, be it the caregivers as well as the people at the receiving end of it.

5) *Spiritual and Philosophical relationships*: are difficult to measure, are very much inherent in the tradition, and culture, and influence the attitudinal aspects). These relationships demand a mode of intelligence, which indicates a good understanding of one self. One should be able to reflect critically on one's own actions and attitudes, and that helps one to adapt to change. Further, it determines personal behaviour, a perception of the meaning of life in the broad context - included are the environment, flora and fauna, and all human beings. It is about how life is perceived, how resources are used, why are things done in the way they are done, what are the motivations, intentions and actions. All people have concerns, aspirations, and interests, have to make decisions influencing their lives and the future of their children.

Therefore people need to have at their 'disposal' certain abilities to react on events happening in the life course of each individual. All people need something 'Higher', what is beyond their physical being and to which they can turn to something beyond themselves, where they can turn to for guidance, protection, and affirmation. At this stage I want to quote Zohar and Marshall as they explain so clearly what spiritual relationships are, or as they call it "spiritual intelligence" is "... with which we address and solve problems of meaning and value, ... with which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning giving context, and with which we assess that one course of action or one life-path is more meaningful than another" (2000: 3-4). The abilities can be learned and are interrelated with the emotional and ethical relationship abilities.

The 'Higher' people turn to is religion and spirituality. Purposefully I put both, religion and spirituality as both can be related but the one is not consequence of the other. Religion plays a convincing role as a substitute and fulfilment of spirituality in rural communities, as all questionnaires indicated that the parents belong to a religious group or denomination.

All interdependencies and relationships within a community are varying from the one to the other depending of its seize, number of residents and socio-economic circumstances. **Other main role players** identified are:

Table 5.20

training centres, NGOs	5	medical doctors and clinics	4
primary school	1	local government , LOF	11
Business sector	3	farm owners	1
library services	1	Alexor Foundation,Diamond Trust	3
Churches	7	Nat. Council for C & F W	1
support groups	1	ECDs not answered	10
South African Police Services	2		

The fact that 10 ECDs did not provide an answer leaves much to be desired. Is this the result of ignorance of not knowing other possible community services that could be 'partner' the ECD; or that such services do not exist. The other answers are dependent on the individual situation of the ECD involved in the research, such as Klipdrift Kleuterskool near Graaff-Reinet that refers to the farm owners due to being a farm-ECD. Some community services

are not in the picture at all. Library services are not seen as a partner. This might indicate two reasons; no library services are available and/or no relationship has been established between an ECD and the library. To conclude I would like to stress that no uniform picture can be provided about the different relationships ECDs experience as considered each community has its own context and particular needs.

4. Organisation/network relationships: firstly, I will come back to the fact that an ECD site is in itself an organisation. Davidoff and Lazarus talk about "the school is an organisation, a system of interweaving parts, linking together in particular ways" referring mainly to high and primary schools (1997: 5). Yet, an ECD site belongs to this category especially when it has more staff members, a number of parents, a GB, and sometimes an umbrella body, and when it has a constitution. To have a constitution is regarded to be important for its legal status. 28 ECDs indicated that they have one, 2 only do not have one and one ECD did not answer.

An organisation has characteristics, has been established for special purposes and delivers a specific 'product'. An ECD is a community based organisation whose purpose is to offer 'good' education, which is the 'product' of the organisation. The site needs to be managed in a correct way to guarantee its smooth functioning, which indicates that the 'product' goes beyond the education of the children. The successful functioning in its turn results in a regular income that needs to be spent in a responsible way: accountable and transparent. The ECD site has collective values which it shares with the 'consumers' of the 'product' and which are implied in its mission statement and constitution. To have collective values is another characteristic of an organisation.

The ECD functions as an organisation with a special purpose: 'to help the children learn'. This asks for a follow-up as ECDs need to receive organisational, and leadership development training to execute their tasks. Too often the emphasis of training is only on how to help the child learn and how to lay out a classroom. Less attention is paid to organisational and leadership development, and hardly any or no attention is paid to the personal competencies of the practitioners and GBs. A balance between the two needs to be found, as they are reciprocal. This brings me to the importance of support structures as can be an association, a network and NGOs operating in

the region. The Oxford dictionary describes an association in two ways: 1) a group of people joined together for a shared purpose: an organisation; 2) a link or connection between people or organisations. A network is described as a closely linked group of people (1995: 780). Much difference has not come forward, but in a geographical region with a scarcity of resources that provide specialised services, networking is a prerequisite. The focus needs to be on co-ordinated networking on different levels such as on local, regional, provincial and national levels.

Namaqualand has a few NGOs operating very well, which offer training and support to the different ECDs in the region, such as NAPE and NAMKO. Since NAPE has been established in 1989 the number of ECDs, or affiliates, has grown from 15 to now 34, and will grow in the future. This in contrast with the Karoo, where also such an organisation was established but due to misappropriation of funding the association closed down. The result of the closure is devastating as the number of ECDs dropped drastically over time. Many children do not have the opportunity any more to attend an ECD, which decreases their success in primary school and affects in a way their whole life. NAPE fulfils a pivotal role in the region especially in the fields of training of ECD related issues and offers overall educational support. The existence of several ECDs are very dependent of the mainly moral support NAPE offers them. The growth of NAPE is an indicator that changes and the need for change in a rural area such as Namaqualand is strong. In its turn NAPE and other NGOs involved in development needs support on all levels, including financial support to enable the organisation/association to maintain their particular tasks and to extend those tasks. The closure of many ECDs in the Karoo is obviously due to the fact that they lack the support, training and the network which was a stimulating factor for many. As stated before, NAPE offers training for practitioners, GBs and parent(s). GBs certainly need to receive special attention as Davidoff and Lazarus say "the governing body of the school is the legal body responsible for the overall school policy, ...the vision and mission ...financial management and fund-raising..." (1997: 165).

ECDs cannot function in isolation and require relationships with other structures. **To what network or organisation does the ECD belong:**

Table 5.21

Service providing organisations	
Khokela Early Childhood Educare	2
NAPE	15
PLOEG	3
State Departments	
Department of Education	3
Department of Welfare	1
Welfare Organisations	
ACVV, C&FW	2
Other	
Church + church organisation	6
Part of community	1
Local network: Abantwana, Kheis Development Forum	3
Part of a Trust	1
No affiliation or relation	3

To be affiliated with another structure does not make any sense if the relationship is not correct. Therefore the next question to ask was **what are the relations with the network:**

Table 5.22

Training and support	
training purposes, meetings and visits	7
co-operation	2
affiliation	4
assist with the establishment of ECD	1
organises management of ECD	1
to socialise with	1
Financial	
for financial support	4
to assist with raising funds (to report overall activities and problems)	2
Other	
communication is weak	2
a good relation	6
not filled in due to not being affiliated	3

Two ECDs gave more than one relation.

The affiliates need to decide what services the network should deliver and on which basic concepts the relationship is valid. The research refers to expectations, such as to receive training, meetings be organised and be visited. All three are incentives to promote communication and they offer moral support for practitioners and GBs. NAPE considers a network not only with existing ECDs in the region, but also with other NGOs and State Departments. In that capacity 'cycle-development' is created: training, assessment, fuelling of subsidies to ECDs, follow-up training and evaluation. The training process is as much informal as it is formal, and all training is of a high quality. The possible allocation of a subsidy should be considered as recognition or a form of accreditation for the training received, which adds the 'formal' touch and which stimulates the ECDs to participate. DOCKDA identified another aspect of the financial side within a relationship with a network: the *distribution* of funding money.

How a network is perceived, can be seen in **what is the importance of the network:**

Table 5.23

co-operation, the interest, new ideas, information and advice	10
the feeling of belonging; be part of regional and national development	2
to learn from, training and assist in new developments	6
communication also between ECDs; consideration for the language	6
the support offered	3
the control exercised	1
to assist with fund raising	2
not answered	3

Two ECDs indicated more than one item.

All points are expressions of the need for a network and if it is not existing such as in the Karoo it would be necessary to look into what other way the ECDs can establish one. The feeling of belonging, being part of regional and national development inspires, motivates and encourages practitioners and GBs to persevere. NAPE draws attention to the point of prevention of duplication of services, which is always costly. NAPE therefore stays in close contact with other NGOs, development and funding organisations, and State Departments.

If ECDs are affiliated or are members of a structure/network, certain formalities are anticipated, and both sides have to fulfil certain obligations. The umbrella structure expects for example a subscription fee, but **what is expected from the network?** The answers are in line with the previous question. **23 ECDs** mentioned **the supportive and advisory roles of the network** and these roles are considered to be the most important. Training, education and the care for the financial aspect received less attention. 3 ECDs did not fill in the question.

There is a tendency here of insecurity about what to expect and what could be demanded of a network. NAPE could take up the challenge to spell out in depth the mutual responsibilities by offering workshops about this subject with all its affiliates facilitating clarity for all stakeholders.

Relationships on local level with organisations or service providers are so important and therefore **what are the relations with Welfare Organisations and CBOs?** Only **8 ECDs** have a good relation with CBOs and the same number have a weak relation. 4 ECDs did not answer the question. The conclusion needs to be that the relations on all levels should be improved.

The need for CBOs will grow strongly in the near future and an ECD falls within the concept 'CBO'. It will become more and more difficult to operate as an individual person, or as an individual ECD. To belong to an organisation, or interest group, or association will become essential. The CBOs will fulfil the functions of advocacy, offering protection, be the 'voice' of the stakeholders or clientele and fulfil the function of representative of... Therefore it is an urgency that ECDs become part of such structures, or even take the lead in this process.

The role of donor or funding organisation was an essential part of the research as it was DOCKDA, a Micro Funding Programme with a strong rural component, which commissioned the research. An appeal to a funding organisation could become necessary when no sufficient local funding can be raised and applications for a state subsidy were not answered. It is important to know what impact or **difference did the funding by DOCKDA make:** The practitioners received training and are now qualified; the ECD functions again; municipal services, telephone and rent can be paid for; educational toys and

equipment for the kitchen are obtained.

DOCKDA facilitates a crucial process: training of practitioners which enhances the progress of the ECD and the quality of education. The practitioners expressed that they feel better equipped to do the tasks and through this their self-confidence has grown. It was ECDs supported by DOCKDA, which see themselves become model schools now and in the future: St John's Mission and Olifantjie Kleuterskool. Khokela Early Learning Centre refers to St John's Mission as an example of implementing the training and that is growing into a model school.

An important question was, **what do you expect from a donor organisation:**

Table 5.24

We expect that DOCKDA helps us more and shows interest
To meet with DOCKDA representatives, continuous interest and involvement
First to train the committee in how to spend the money
Salaries of two practitioners, to pay for own building, food for the children and to show interest
Money (more funding), lots of interest, advice and report back

A few ECDs express gratitude for receiving financial support. The expectations overall imputed to a funding organisation are too high concerning 'taking over responsibility' as is stating in 'paying for salaries, an own building, and so on. A funding organisation never should do so as the wider community needs to accept the ultimate responsibility. It seems difficult to understand that DOCKDA is by nature limited in offering financial assistance and that it is bound to the criteria outlined in its policy. One of the policy conditions is the obligation to spend a percentage of the allocated amount on institutional capacity building. Yet, there is a tendency of 'we are entitled to funding', 'it has to be given', and 'next time again'. *It* refers to funding for all expenses without any conditions, but as earlier quoted nothing should to be given free. In general the funding provided by DOCKDA did not help raising more local funding, although the reason for this is the high rate of unemployment among the parents. Another aspect that was stressed is the communication with the donor organisation, which is strongly regarded as important.

The psychological impact a donor organisation makes may not be neglected or belittled. The fact that an organisation such as DOCKDA shows interest in

rural areas and particular in 'their' ECD seems to be an 'eye-opener' for the people involved. Firstly, practitioners and GBs express astonishment that they are seen! They are astonished that they themselves and the work they do are 'important' enough to receive attention. In short, it makes them grow as human beings, feel appreciated and acknowledged, which is crucial for further development and progress. The finding is in contradiction with the tendency of entitlement to funding, which might come from despondency.

5.Relationships with Government Structures: the word 'relationship' needs in this case to be replaced by 'correlation', as the contact between Government Departments and ECDs has a wider understanding. The overall position of the Departments is to exercise supervision; influence the different curricula; set a standard of requirements for subsidy; and decide whether an ECD should receive a subsidy. The relationship as it stands now puts the ECD sites in a much more dependent position. They are dependent of the allocation of subsidy that is ascertained by department officials. The State Departments have set out certain requirements and regulations, which ECD sites need to meet before any allocations will be made. Yet, the ability of Government Departments to provide financial resources for ECDs would uplift the whole ECD field. The idea of 'the State needs to provide' - subsidies and salaries for practitioners - is not applicable in South Africa. First the National Government has to correct the imbalances of the past. This puts severe stress on spending and it has to weigh carefully where state-money will be invested in. To acquire state subsidy the GBs have to apply. **What efforts has the GB tried to access state subsidy/funding:**

Table 5.25

The majority of the ECDs have approached one of the Departments for subsidy, only a few receive funding from:	
the Department of Education	13
the Department of Social Welfare	4
In Namaqualand the majority of schools participate in the National Pilot Programme what is subsidised by the Department of Education Arts and Culture in Kimberley.	

ECDs that participated in the research generally express little confidence in National and Provincial Departments. Several questions of the research could indicate the important role(s) of the Government, but on the contrary, impotence and despair was shown. Individual ECDs are not able to influence

positively the decision-making processes of the Departments. Moreover, the impression is that the Departments are a more alienating factor than a binding and constructive factor that would be desirable.

I will briefly quote some questions and answers concerning the positive influence a State Department could exercise. The majority of the questions will be quoted in other parts of this study. **What does the practitioner think needs to be done concerning accreditation:** only 5 ECDs name Department of Education as being the main influential factor.

What would be the main resources to realise the vision [of the ECD]: involvement of State Departments has been mentioned 8 times. The expectations concerning the influence State Departments have on the possible sustainability of ECDs is considered to be minimal. Yet, the Government has to play a role and **what is/are the main role(s):**

Table 5.26

Training/education	
provide training	9
Financial	
provide at least a salary of practitioner	3
subsidies, provide and increase	7
subsidise children in deprived communities	3
at the moment nothing, only subsidise salary	1
Support	
needs to become involved and supportive	2
recognition [of ECD]	1
policy formulation	1
provide equipment	2
Other	
its role is important	1
do not play a role at all, not any involvement	4
not answered	5

A variety of answers are provided. Yet again, the insecurity of ECDs about government involvement is visible. An important message coming through is the decision the National Department of Education took about the decrease of subsidy to 'rich' schools and the channelling of it to the 'poor' schools. But will

the ECDs be on the receiving side, this due to the importance of ECD on the further course of life of the children? Up till now this has not happened.

In future the ECDs need to contrive close ties with regional and certainly with local government structures, and **what are the relationships with the Local Government?** 12 ECDs indicate to have a (very) **good relationship**. Some mention good co-operation, 5 ECDs have a not-good relationship and 6 have never or no contact.

In future the Local Government will have to play a more prominent role concerning compulsory education of which ECD is an essential part. Neville van Wyk states that local government needs to support ECDs and needs to provide a building for free or for a nominal rent if nothing else is available. Strong co-operation with structures and creating an understanding of the importance of ECDs for the young children of the community cannot be stressed enough. It is a priority! NAPE needs to take the forefront and should assist ECDs in the campaign that the ECDs become the mutual interest of the whole community.

The possible sustainability or a degree of self-reliance of ECD in general is dependent of the understanding of the impact ECD makes on the life course of the individual child. As becoming self-reliant is more a question of attitudes than of money and materials, it is a process. It is necessary to include a set of values reflected in the mission statement. The values help define the attitudes of all people involved and are at the basis or are the core principles behind the running of the ECD. It is crucial to maintain and to enter positive relationships with key-people from State Departments and other organisations. An ECD needs to be an integral part of the community it serves.

6.

Sustainability in Relation to ECD Sites

"Education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues it is also critical for achieving environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behaviour consistent with sustainable development." (UNESCO, 1996)¹¹.

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters it could be seen how important the process and growth of 'learning' is to enable sustainable development. In fact education, and I include ECD education, is at the basis of and the *key* to sustainable development. It is an indication that sustainability, just as self-reliance, can be learned. This strengthens the concept of 'lifelong learning for all' as development is never a static situation but a moving entity. It (lifelong learning) constantly reflects on the past, develops new insights, new steps to be taken, new decisions and new convictions. It reflects upon the way chosen – whether it is the right or not. Processes need to be responsible and one of such processes is to strive for sustainability.

In the chapters 4 and 5 could be seen the importance of clearly spelt out functions of the ECD and its interdependencies. For an ECD it is necessary to become integral part of all other local developments in the community. This chapter will decide upon the question: can ECDs become sustainable or, is to strive for a degree of self-reliance the best that can be reached? Which factors in reality contribute to the process towards sustainability or self-reliance of ECD?

6.2 Sustainability or Self-Reliance?

Certainly it is not a choice at random between becoming sustainable or becoming self-reliant, it is not that easy! Yet, I want to state that a conscious choice can be made concerning the process to be followed to enhance self-reliance and from there towards sustainability. Such a process is certainly not

¹¹ Footnote OXFAM, 1997: 24

arbitrary. It should follow a democratic manner and it should be participatory, leading towards self-reliance, evolving towards sustainability by carefully outlined aims and objectives. In this respect is it a *process* of growth of social justice, responsibility, respect, spirituality and principles that add value to the life of the human being in his/her environment. In such a way it is a holistic and unifying process and as stated before the concepts self-reliance and sustainability are difficult to separate. Each step of development towards the growth as stated, evolves from another and previously taken steps. A degree of self-reliance proceeds sustainability, or as Richard Douthwaite puts it "there is a close link between local economic self-reliance and sustainability" (1996: 58). And this is when the ECD comes in as being a part of a community and being part of a local economy. The ECD can become a centre of *local* economical activities where parent(s) feel free to participate. Where there is an opportunity to use their own skills and abilities to generate income, but on the basis of what is locally available and usable. Therefore I will say again that a community needs to know its potential or resources, and even more important is it that a community needs to know its limits. To be able to operate within the parameter of both is what Douthwaite calls sustainable: living within its limits is what is sustainability (Ibid. 58). Self-reliance promotes living within limits as less outside input is necessary, but the process to reach that point is crucial.

The *process* needs to aspire after excellence and includes three characteristics that enhance interaction between the service provider and service consumers: demand for the services on offer, sufficient financial resources and institutional capacity. ECD services and education need to strive for the best possible results and ought to interact with the several echelons of the community and beyond. The process encapsulates that what Stan Burkey says "self reliance never can be fully self-sufficient as always interaction with others will be necessary" (1993: 51). Yet the process ought to concentrate on local needs, expectations and resources. Further, it ought to stimulate participation, openness and accountability.

'Self-reliance' emphasises a *process* of education or learning that is the main component for each and every development. As could be read before, Stan Burkey¹² emphasises the importance of learning as self-reliance requires a wide variety of knowledge, abilities and skills. Max-Neef talks about

¹² 1993: 50-51

empowering people, further he stresses this even more when he talks about "... it [self-reliance] must become a process of interdependence among equal partners so that it forms a solidarity that prevails over blind competition" (1991: 64-5). This all includes learning: the correct attitudes to enable interdependencies, to respect each other values, to enhance consciousness and quality of life. Yet Max-Neef adds a very valuable aspect: solidarity. This demands a high degree of personal quality, willingness and commitment. All learning concerns the individual as well as it has a collective impact. It is developmental if it can be categorised 'participatory', and the ultimate aim is development that can be sustainable. Education and sustainability are linked and intertwined components starting at ECD as being at *the root* of the culture of learning. Oxfam advocates for a culture of "education for sustainable development" (1997: 26), something to aspire after.

Where does ECD fit in? The first response is: ECD is at the basis of lifelong learning for all. Moreover, consciousness needs to be generated and aroused that positive competencies such as attitudes towards life and the environment are shaped at a young age and stay forever. Learning life skills at a young age and developing abilities to handle life positively contributes to the personal quality of life and it might even stabilise one's course of life. Thus, the impact ECD makes on the life cycle of people is beyond doubt. But is the understanding of the importance of ECD carried forward and supported by the government policy? Certainly, not, as ECD is not one of the priorities and rather it can be said 'ECD is the Cinderella' of the whole education field. The second part of the answer is as stated before, ECD needs to be a vibrant centre of a community and in such a way be part of a local economy and be supported by the community.

Whether an individual ECD reaches a degree of self-reliance depends therefore on several things. Purposefully I write 'reach a degree of 'self-reliance' if the things I consider important are in place: things such as sufficient human resources; community support and thus being a community project; sufficient financial means; institutional stability and accountability; available premises and educational equipment. I understand "support" to mean general co-operation and involvement of the broader community, the private sector, if existing, of churches and CBOs. That ECD is not only the responsibility of the State is of general concern. A valid question is thus 'what are the social responsibilities of the existing corporate sector and industrial enterprises?

Namaqualand as well as The Karoo has not an extensive private sector at its disposal thus narrowing the availability of financial resources. The limited resources decrease the opportunity to reach a level of sustainability, but in spite of this ECDs could reach a degree of self-reliance.

A natural flow of social relationships enhances self-reliance and thus sustainability, and such a flow exists within a community. The natural interdependencies might fuel or hinder development. Positive and negative factors contribute to the degree of wellbeing. In particular negative factors such as migrant labour and unemployment influence relationships within communities and families and cause fractured images of self-concept and self-confidence. It restrains people from creating visions in life, which is an essential part of living. A definition of a vision can be as follows: "a vision is a compelling picture of a preferable future which inspires us to perform." (Chris Kapp footnote). Personal or individual development in the context of holistic and transformative development is fundamental and links up with Max-Neef when he says that people are the main role players in development, because it is about themselves and not about objects. What applies for an individual also applies for the ECD as it needs a natural flow of relationships and a vision. This in its turn stimulates and motivates action, something that is necessary for self-reliance and, at a later stage, sustainability.

The involvement of the State Departments is obscure. The ECD field expresses a loss of confidence in the ability of the State to be a partner in the process towards self-reliance and sustainability probably due to this obscure role. State Departments should support, stimulate and help to create a solid foundation on which to start and to run an ECD. The Departments need to be an active contributor to training and active in building positive relationships by setting reasonable standards and make requirements feasible.

Finances provided for by way of subsidies and fees play an important role, as they promote self-reliance and help growth towards sustainability. Yet, the right entrepreneurial principles and well-organised governance need to be in place. This all requires in the first place responsible leadership, correct financial management and discipline. The GBs together with the parents are responsible and the available finances should provide for training; for the purchase of equipment, provide salaries; and care for the maintenance of the building.

The establishment of a regional umbrella body or ECD-association is advisable. Firstly, to assist GBs and communities to keep the standard of governance high and in place; secondly, to learn to master new skills and to process information concerning new developments in education.

New opportunities to help ECDs to become self-reliant must be explored and tested. It would be of help if workshops could be held with all stakeholders and key-role players, ECDs, GBs, parents, community members, officials of Departments to work around relevant themes. What does self-reliance and sustainability mean for the different key-role players? What are the steps to be followed to reach the goal, keeping in mind what the van Leer Foundation says "Early childhood development programmes are not a luxury. and should be seen as the basic underpinning for society's future and the foundation of a healthy, prosperous and creative nation" (1994: 61-62).

Finally I will affirm that sustainability is a spectrum of meanings and understandings for different people in different circumstances. For ECD no single and simple conclusion is possible. It is important to become successful in reaching a degree of self-reliance, which enhances further development in order to become sustainable. As said before, it is not a random choice that can be made between sustainability and self-reliance, as if the one is better than the other. No, it is a well-considered argument based on research findings that helped me to decide that ECD is able to reach a degree of self-reliance. Yet, the following statement should urge us to persuade the National Department of Education to declare ECD priority number one in the process of learning. Correct attitudes promoting self-reliance and thus sustainability, need to start from as early age as possible:

"Education for sustainability is not something that is handed down from above; it is essentially about participation, and people learning from their own experience. It involves them questioning and deciding on their own values and practices, in order to sustain human and natural systems in their own environments. Such learning should be a life-long and basic component of education and training, and the right of every citizen" (Ibid. 26).

6.3 Research Findings

Self-reliance is when there is sufficient funding available to maintain the standard of ECD education to assure the ECD continues to exist. NAPE, 1999

The questionnaires deal specifically with questions about sustainability as this is the aim ECDs strive for. Self-sustaining development should start on the basis of local resources, knowledge and technology (Burkey, 1993: 180). Development starts as near conception. **When do parents expect the education of the children:**

Table 6.1

Parents see the education/bringing up of their children as a task of the practitioner
Some consider it the task of the ECD and (therefore) send their children to ECDs
Some consider their task to keep the child clean and neat
Some show interest in the activities of the ECD
In co-operation with practitioners to education of their children can improve
Parents are satisfied with the way they grew up and many of them still live with their own parents (read: not much change is happening, a certain apathy prevails)

The above answers indicate the fact that the parent(s) consider themselves to be the first 'educators' of their children. The answers show more a shift of responsibility to the ECD, hence parents purposefully send their children for education and [becoming] self-reliant. In practice parent(s) consider and experience that the ECD substantially contributes to the education of their children. Parents even regard ECD to be crucial, so they will support the ECD site their children visit in one way or the other. **What do parent(s) do to sustain the ECD?** 7 ECDs mention the payment of fees; other ECDs indicate functions as dance, raffles and only 2 mention to make a vegetable garden. And, **what are the contributions made by parent(s):**

Table 6.2

School fees	30
Make of apparatus	17
Involved in Educational programmes	13
Involved in workshops	21
Access to State fund/subsidy	5
Other activities: fund-raising efforts	4
parents send what ECD asks for	1

Not only the payment of school fees can sustain the ECD, other sources of income need to narrow the shortfall. A factor that negatively affects the sustainability of ECD sites is the chronically financial shortfall and thus **what needs to be done to sustain the ECD:**

Table 6.3

Attitude	
motivate and involve parents and GB	6
conscientise and involve the broader community: the businesses	6
support of community	1
general co-operation (all involved parties)	12
Organisational	
organise more functions	3
organise workshops how to implement sustainability	1
raise funds/more funding/ be sparing	10
increase the monthly school fees and regular payment of fees	4
school fees to be spent for salaries + administration costs	1
to work very hard	7
start own projects	7
teach children to be responsible	1
to have an own building so that equipment is not destroyed	1
State support	
obtain state recognition and subsidy	9
policy on education needs to be changed	1

A wide range of answers is provided for. General co-operation is seen to come from the community at large, the Departments, businesses, churches, parents and they all are considered to be the contributors to the process of becoming self-sustaining. Sustainability or self-reliance needs to be seen in its integrated position in a community, thus its totality and inter-relatedness.

The interviewees add some conditions for sustainability or self-reliance. The participants express the complexity of the image, but some suggestions that should contribute were expressed: sufficient financial resources, hard work and sacrifices; parents need to see their contribution as an investment in the future of their child. Other remarks are: involvement in income generating

projects is necessary; the ECD needs to be supported by the whole community on a basis of co-operation; the insight needs to take root that education is an integral part of the child's whole life; management and leadership training are necessary; education of the whole community is needed; it has to do with the inherent values; better utilisation of resources such as buildings and equipment. Naidoo says "specialisation within education needs to be utilised more effectively through developing a cluster method linking the privileged schools with the less privileged, so that there is a movement or circulation of expertise and equipment."

Other requirements could be: transparency concerning local-ECD policy; transparency in financial management; networking; consultation with parents and key-role-players; utilising available local resources; marketing of ECD and local projects; and eradication of poverty.

GBs should spend more time on fund raising and should start their own income generating project.: becoming part of the development cycle within the community. As could be seen before, sustainability is not only a matter of finances, but it is an all-inclusive concept or holistic concept. GBs could go further and beyond starting projects. They could take into consideration starting a consciousness-expanding campaign to promote locally a more equal income distribution system. Within the development cycle could fit a 'local currency' which would pay for goods and services within the community, such as ECD. Such a system certainly would fuel small business initiatives, stimulate the cash flow and more important it would uplift the spirits of many people, thus it would help to 'correct attitudes'.

Also the practitioners present a spectrum of answers when was asked, **what does sustainability of a ECD mean to you:**

Table 6.4

Attitude	
uplifting parents and children	1
it made me a more mature person	1
peace of mind	1
it will be a healthy, growing project, a pride for all	1
a functional ECD, be independent, self-confidence	13
progress/ building capacity	4
Financial	
that income covers all expenses	1
provide salaries, security, and job security	4
State	
the state should take responsibility	1
Practical	
the provision of food: provide for physical and psychological needs	3
a safe and secure place for children	1
involvement indicates [sustainability]	1
an ECD that provides own needs, and can maintain	4
an ECD that is community based	1
is important for ECD, availability of every thing	3

The variety in answers is also an indication that there is no unity in understanding of the concept within the ECD field. What is understood by being *independent* as 13 ECDs mention? The answer is perhaps the following: an independent ECD can cover all running costs on its own, as income exceeds the expenses. To reach this point the ECD needs to be seen as one of the important key-role players in a society receiving possible interference and co-operation of other role players. It would therefore be necessary to look at the community as a whole, taking into account the socio-economic situation, future prospects, entrepreneurial spirits and opportunities - a holistic identity where all aspects are considered from a sustainable-enhancing point of view. In the case of the Karoo and Namaqualand communities they could become much more attentive about solar energy instead of other 'commercial' energy sources. Sustainability or self-reliance awareness needs to come from within the community by responsibly making

optimum use of natural resources. They also should use available information about the basics of the local and regional economical 'household'. People should be exposed to opposing options and outcomes, and to short and long term consequences. This creates awareness so that decisions can be taken in a responsible way. A community that reaches this point, can make difficult decisions, or choices. They also can accept and challenge the consequences of the choices that are required to work towards sustainability.

What are the **requirements for your ECD to become sustainable**. Mentioned is the following:

Table 6.5

Attitude/involvement	
state	1
support of community/ parents/ GB	11
co-operation and commitment	5
practitioner who loves children and has patience	1
Educational	
training	3
good trained and paid practitioners	1
Financial	
funding/finances, financial support	15
correct management, financial discipline	2
Organisational	
organise functions	1
initiate projects successfully financing of income generating projects	2
Material	
well equipped classrooms, an own building	3

The human aspects are very prominent. Support, co-operation and involvement of the community and parents are considered to be important. The fact that so many parents are unemployed influences the financial sustainability. Finance play for many ECD projects a decisive role as it allows them to be sufficiently equipped and even supports basic salaries. It has been clearly put forward that the present situation of ECD leaves much to be desired, but **what [should] need to change to sustain the ECD:**

Table 6.6

Attitude	
create understanding by parents	2
advocate the importance of the education of the child	1
we need to conscientise the State of the existence and understanding of ECDs	2
advocate a change in policy to recognise ECDs	6
Educational	
training, workshops for practitioners and GB	4
guarantee and supervise quality, holistic development and education	9
Financial	
tariffs and number of practitioners	1
funders need to be prescriptive	1
Practical	
department must support ECD	1
support and co-operation of community and organisations	3
work hard	1
to implement and supervise health care and care in general	3
a healthy, safe environment	1
provision of equipment	1
Other	
not answered the question	5

Consciousness of the importance of ECD and the contributions it makes for the future - the children of today is the generation of tomorrow - ought to take place in all tiers of Government Departments, public sector, corporate sector, in short the whole society. It would need a 'national' drive or action to declare each and every ECD to be a priority. If so, **who needs to contribute to the sustainability?** Many ECDs offered more than one answer:

Table 6.7

Government	
the Government/State department(s)	3
local government	3
Community	
community (broader + businesses)	19
parents	16
GB	9
personnel of ECD	3
the children	2
NGOs/CBOs	
training centres and organisations	1
local organisations	4
Other	
all involved parties	1
not answered	2

The answers show that the broader communities are to be expected to contribute substantially to the sustainability as do the parents. It is striking that not one questionnaire coming from Namaqualand made notice of the social and other responsibilities the mines have towards the communities which provide them with a labour force. Hendrik Visser states that the mines are only interested in their labourer, not in his family or the conditions the labourer lives in. The interviewees make note of the public sector, but focused mainly on local businesses which are considered to have a moral duty towards institutions such as an ECD. Some observations made by interviewees: "... the private sector is due to the increasing technology urged to become involved to benefit ECD". The Diamond Fund Trust provides bursaries for students and finances some buildings for community use where ECDs are housed. A suggestion was that the private sector ought to take care of the transport of children to schools to guarantee safety. Another remark is: foreign funders are seen to be part of the private sector and therefore they are included. Naidoo firmly stresses the role of the private sector: firstly they need to provide crèches at the workplace. Secondly, rather than spending so much on sport, some of the funding should go to actually to fundamental levels of the building blocks of society and children.

As is said in the very beginning 'the concept of sustainability is complex,

difficult to capture and several factors influence the degree of being sustainable. It is useful to decide upon **how sustainability can be measured**:

Table 6.8

Transparency/involvement	
by public involvement and sacrifice	2
co-operation	3
Growth	
growth, progress and development of the ECD, not only to be a playgroup	5
independence of ECD	1
fieldworkers who motivate growth	1
through growth and progress in community	3
when goals and objectives are met	1
when ECD is able to function without the help of donations and donors	1
to start projects and its progress	5
Financial	
when income is higher than the expenses	3
by a sensible spending of funding	1
if we are assured of teacher-salaries	1
on regular donations and maintenance	1
a good financial picture	1
Evaluation	
to evaluate the quality of ECD	1
Other	
parents do not yet understand that the ECD belongs to community	1
not answered	5

Questions have to be asked, standards set, requirements fulfilled, opportunities explored and tested. 'By public involvement', will this indicate transparency? It is not considered to be an incentive of accountability by the participants in the research. Also the fact that only one ECD proposed to evaluate the quality of the ECD is quite alarming. As being a community project and an organisation the ECD needs to be evaluated for several purposes: financial status; the standard of services, care and education; the implementation of training; the functioning of GB; and the premises. A mechanism needs to be put in place of internal and external evaluation so that ECDs are able to improve their functional and institutional capacity. Also, the fact that evaluation is not a 'normal standard' might indicate that there is a lack

of know-how about public processes, which in itself is a matter of concern and a reason for creating awareness. It would be of help if workshops could be held with all stakeholders to create interest and public accountability.

7.

Conclusions and Recommendations

"Far more important than a programme plan, for the success of a development intervention, is the quality of the change agents and the methodology of self-reliant participatory development. No amount of blueprints and master plans will change this fact. Ultimately, it is the people themselves who must produce results, and this requires a belief in people's own capabilities..." (Burkey, 1993: 124)

7.1 Introduction

The above statement refers to the 'change agents', the people who are involved in transformative action to reach certain outlined aims and objectives. The 'change agents' do this by way of qualitative leadership; good guidance, positive intentions, and all interventions are value-rich. Their way of operating is co-operative and participatory. ECDs, by way of its practitioners and GBs, could fulfil the role of 'change agents' by the position it takes within a community, its programmes and projects. Yet, up till now many of them are not sufficiently conscious of the roles they could play, as they are not empowered to do so. Thus intervention from outside might be necessary to help people to fulfil such a particular role. But certainly such a role can be fuelled from inside as many abilities are not yet sufficiently explored and unveiled. Yet, people in both situations need support, encouragement and evaluation of what is done.

This chapter offers me the opportunity to add to this study some conclusions and recommendations relating to informal and formal ECD education and what might challenge them to become 'change agents' in their communities.

Many issues and subjects concerning ECD are important, influential and interesting. At the dawn of the 21st century education in general is concerned with great changes and ECD is part of the changes. The first principle that needs to stand out is that *all* children need to have access to ECD and further basic education. Therefore, I would like to refer to the introduction of this study when I quote 'the Freedom Charter 'education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children.' I will briefly analyse the statement, as it

should influence future policy formulation.

Free education implies that *no* costs or fees are attached to the basic education, including Grade R till Grade12 (or 9). My first question is 'free for whom?' The pledge is idealistic, well meant, but is it feasible? The transformation of the education field and the enclosed financial input are weighty on the shoulders of the government. Then, an aggravating task is to include informal and formal ECD in the curriculum as education needs to start at the youngest age possible.

Compulsory: yes, education needs to be an obligation for *all* children as this is a prerequisite for *equal* opportunities in life. All children have to be exposed to learning abilities and skills beyond the basic educational curriculum. Skills such as mediation, conflict resolution and entrepreneurial skills should be included in the standard programme.

The term *universal*, I would interpret that educational institutions are attuned in such a way so that a child can continue its education in each and every corner of South Africa. Perhaps I need to add in each and every corner of the world.

The terminology *equal* is much more discriminating and it is closely related to the concept of *free* education. My interpretation of the term *equal* is *practising* 'socio-economic justice'. Thus based on equity what at this stage could mean 'free education' for the children of the previously disadvantaged groups within society so that they can make up the arrears of the past. It is also an increase of educational opportunities implying reallocation of public resources to especially the rural areas, where the majority of the poor and needy people are living. Thus, to do so, the proposition 'education shall be free' needs to be remodelled to enable the realisation of the "needs and desires of poor people" (Griffin, 1989: 172). After all, parents want their children to have a better future and chances in life than they have had and this is certainly a need and desire of people who have never had educational opportunities. This desire could be an incentive to foster a culture of learning, what needs to be done by investing in education that is accessible for all. Further, all people who earn an income should pay a basic supplement or levy for the education that is provided by the government. Also I am of the opinion that all parents have to contribute some towards to the education of their children, but in such a way that education is affordable for them. Only an educated Nation can participate in the rapidly

changing times of knowledge and technology.

In this section of the study I look into desirable changes and what could be done to implement these. It is certainly not my intention only to sum up what is wrong or to blame the present-day Government Departments. It is public knowledge that they inherited a situation of great disparity where the White population group was highly privileged above the other population groups. The imbalances need to be rectified in the most positive way and this complicated process asks for persistence, determination and empathy of all people who are involved as many hiccups need to be overcome. I aim therefore at alternatives, ways of possible co-operation of key-role-players that could positively contribute to the processes necessary to improve ECD structures in rural areas of South Africa.

Firstly, I give a brief overview of the observations and recommendations stated in the final research report and presented to DOCKDA at the meeting in April 1999. It presents a reflection of the multiplicity of the problems and at the same time throws it light upon possible solutions. For that reason I did not change any of the findings and recommendations, and no comments are added.

The presentation of the overview is not sufficient for this study. I feel challenged to highlight some issues that I think are important and can be addressed from different angles. Of course all issues are important and relevant and not one can be seen in isolation. The following task is thus to analyse some findings. Lastly, I will refer to the follow-up actions on the research report by DOCKDA committee.

7.2 Summary of Findings and Recommendations of DOCKDA Report

7.2.1 Findings

- The concept of 'sustainability' is complex, difficult to capture and many factors influence the state of being sustainable or self-reliant. Although the school fees are considered to be the main contribution to sustainability, serious problems arise when parents cannot or will not pay. Also the high unemployment rate affects the possible sustainability. Secondly, the wider community is regarded to be a key-

role player.

- Standards of high values are involved in the ECD: i.e. love, care, commitment, vocation, holistic development, striving for excellence, and transparency.
- The opportunity to reach out to women! A great number of women are in one way or the other involved with a ECD, many of them are breadwinners, many of them are poorly educated and many of them are unemployed.
- The gap, which exists between State Departments and ECDs concerns the obtainability of state subsidy in spite of the recent simplification of the requirements.
- A gap exists between the status of ECDs and the status of primary schools hindering a healthy relationship.
- A growing gap (nation wide) exists between the more affluent communities and the poor communities, due to unemployment, lack of equality and an inadequate distribution of resources.
- A gap exists between the relation with local churches; all parents contribute to a church and little comes back in form of assistance.
- An ECD has a 3 dimensional function: 1. the learning function; 2. the 'safety' function; and 3 the 'wealth creating' function.
- The importance of regional training and support centres (i.e. NAPE) and other NGOs (NAMKO; NNC) and the multi-functional task they fulfil.
- In future the education of a child will require financial investment and this consequently will widen the gap between the have's and have-nots!

7.2.2 Recommendations

- The importance of establishing 'networks' or 'associations', which can have a local and/or regional function with tasks: lobbying and advocacy of shared interests; offering relevant training; being a support system and being participatory in development.

- Develop courses or training manuals in 'how to lobby' and 'how to organise'!
- Support networks or associations financially and otherwise to enable them to be functional, to be effective and to maintain and extend the work they do. The networks and associations need to become the 'stimulator' to help ECDs to reach a certain degree of self-reliance.
- Empower existing NGOs by supporting them financially and by offering relevant training to enable them to bring about social change.
- The opportunity to empower women by offering specific programmes and training.
- Encourage and explore partnerships within communities, between different role players i.e. businesses and ECD; local government and ECD.
- ECDs need to become initiators and partners in community projects with the purpose of generating income and becoming part of the 'development cycle'.
- ECD needs to be run as a 'business' (with a very human dimension), and training needs to be extended to 'small business' skills.
- ECDs need to be encouraged to become 'change agents' and motivators of 'lifelong learning', and possibly initiate community learning centres.
- A degree of social security for practitioners is crucial and will have 'a ripple effect' in the community, such as improvement of standard of education.

7.3 An Analysis of Some Conclusions Followed by Recommendations.

To create an understanding of priorities related to ECD education, it is desirable that I address some issues related to education in general. I aim at getting clarity concerning what action would be in favour of enabling all children to attend ECD. Some issues will overlap others and/or are connected with one another, as no issue can be seen in isolation from the other. The following issues will be considered: education and the culture of lifelong learning for all; the role of women in ECD in particular; the role of the local

churches; the role of donor or funding organisations; and the role of the different tiers of Government Departments. At the same time I want to keep in mind the four goals of this study. The goals are interwoven in my findings and recommendations. The aims are, and I will repeat:

- 1) What is ECD and why is it important in the life course of an individual.
- 2) Under what conditions do we need ECDs, and what are the functions, objectives or characteristics of ECDs.
- 3) What are the features, socio-economic, constraints and driving social forces of rural areas.
- 4) What is the meaning of "sustainability", and how can sustainability of ECDs be enhanced.

7.3.1 Education - the culture of lifelong learning for all

Why I present this topic first is that, as I understand it, education is one of the most important and the most influential of all activities, people and nobody is excluded, get involved with in life.

- Learning is an ongoing movement of widening the horizon, acquiring new knowledge, abilities, and skills. Learning contains growth that is transformative and enhances fundamental changes. It also leads to an understanding, challenging and acceptance of the consequences proceeding from actions, choices and experiences.

Learning is a life-process indicating that it begins or needs to begin at the youngest possible age. I will argue that it needs to start at conception when the mother adapts her lifestyle because of her pregnancy, for example, not to drink alcohol to prevent the influence of it on the foetus - the so-called FAS child. This is the beginning of indirect and unconscious education or learning for the child. From here onwards the process of learning or the culture of learning is born and is not ending. The culture of learning is a concept that needs to find its roots in a society and that is represented in all informal and formally structured education, and in all available training facilities. A culture of learning stimulates participation and in this way brings about social

transformation and change encapsulating an urge for sustainability and development.

I will argue that ECD education has the opportunity to play a major role in establishing a culture of lifelong learning for all which is a pleasure to be part of. Local ECD sites can become 'change agents' as having the best opportunity to introduce and practise the culture by opening up the site for learning and information events, besides the parent meetings to discuss the financial issues of the ECD site. To motivate this, I refer to the development of the young child which goes through phases of being very susceptible to certain areas of proficiencies, offering an opportunity for optimum learning in that particular period. If such a phase or period is neglected so that it could not develop to its full potential, it is much more difficult to learn such proficiencies, attitudes, skills and habits at an older age. **Therefore, ECD education and local ECDs need to be at the forefront of learning opportunities in a community, not only for the young children but also for the wider community.** ECDs, its GBs and practitioners, need to receive substantial support from the local as well of the provincial and the national governments to initiate the culture of lifelong learning for all within their communities so that they are enabled to carry these ambitions further. The device to promote the understanding of the process of lifelong learning for all could be the following Dutch proverb, 'jong geleerd is oud gedaan.' Practically, this brings some consequences along such as which financial implications are involved? Would it be possible to add on the already heavy workload of the practitioners? Yet, they can become 'learning facilitators' and initiate the philosophy and paradigm of lifelong learning for all, so that the community is participatory in their own 'development cycle'. But ECDs cannot do it alone, it is a joint effort and the ultimate responsibility for this process needs to be carried by the wider community; local churches; funding organisations; and certainly by the Government of the day.

7.3.2 Associations or Networks

Rural ECDs often have to operate in isolation mainly by being the only ECD in the community, secondly, by the huge geographical distances. It is felt as a need they should be part of a broader set-up that offers assistance, training and ongoing support enabling ECDs to be local 'learning facilitators' and 'change agents'. The associations or networks have a crucial role to fulfil in facilitating training for good governance and leadership of ECDs. If both

qualities are in place and are stimulated by way of input of new knowledge and ongoing information, the ECD can grow towards self-reliance. Beyond this the ECD can become instrumental in enhancing other developmental activities. In turn, associations and networks ought to have sufficient personnel and financial capacity in place to assist ECDs in the process of growth.

7.3. 3 Women and ECD

The research demonstrates that women are the main role-players in ECD care and education. Women truly fulfil a central role on different levels of involvement⁹. Beyond the levels of direct involvement in ECD, in *5.1 Women* Visvanatha (1997: 60) has expressed it more stringently "women are the most valuable resource in achieving sustainable development". This statement may thus not be underestimated and needs to receive all attention possible. Many women involved in ECD are single parents, itemising the following:

- a) She has to care for the child(ren), has to be both parents at the same time.
- b). She has to generate income for the family.
- c) She keeps the household running and family ties together.
- d) Plus she often plays a 'shadow' but time-consuming function in a local church, or organisation.

In short her task is multi-functional! Therefore my question is, 'may more tasks be added on an already heavy load?' In first instance my answer is *no*. Yet, if involvement on ECD level empowers women, and they individually *gain* something from being involved, the answer can be *yes*. 'Personal gain', or personal empowerment is in fact what McGivney points out in *Adults Learning in Pre-schools*. She says: "Social interaction, which is very important for a single parent increased confidence in parenting, for example, sharing of experience with other parent(s); transferable skills such as better social and communication skills, but also practical new skills; finally, application of skills, which are learned to use at home, on community level and eventually could increase job opportunities" (1998: 44-45). Personal gain is not an end in itself, but taking into account the disadvantaged position of especially rural women, it is essential. The results of the research do not indicate personal gain.

⁹ Bernard van Leer Foundation 1994; 28-29

- Training organisations, associations and the Government of the day should take care that 'personal gain' be one of the components of all training and support programmes.

7.3.4 The Role of Local Churches

My motivation to highlight the role of local churches is twofold:

1) Churches fulfil an important and influential role especially in rural areas. The influence a church exercises in a community may not be underestimated and it can be reflected in activities employed within a church community. Yet, it might be necessary to help the church community to understand that their commitments surpass the Sunday church service.

2) Churches have to have a commitment to social responsibility within its own community. The social responsibility role of a church surpasses its direct number of members, which represents a broad scale of ages, incomes and different levels of education. The social responsibility of a church I consider to be the realisation, stimulation and enlarging of the horizontal interdependencies existing, or newly created within a community. Another aspect of social responsibility is the 'watch-dog' function, which, if positively applied, should promote social justice to be inclusive of all people. A final reason why I consider the social responsibility role of the church important is the fact that the majority of parents contribute financially towards the activities of the church they belong to.

Churches and ECD

The following reasons will affirm my motivation in general and with reference to ECD: it is the intrinsic task of churches to look after the poor and needy and the people in rural areas who live below the breadline are numerous.

1) The children belong to the church and should be considered to be full members in their own capacity. Most churches have certain structures already in place useful for ECD education, which, if only used on Sundays, are uneconomical. A better usage can be planned. The research shows that some ECDs are dependent of church initiatives, their benevolence and the availability of premises. Some ECDs receive limited financial and other

support. Often ECD is an activity in the back ground 'under the show that keeps some women busy!' Yet, ECD education needs to be the real concern of churches and/or church groups.

2) The majority of local churches and church groups are often part of an umbrella body or a wider structure; in such ways they have access to resources from outside their community. These possible resources can be applied for all its members and beyond the own community.;

3) Almost all parent(s) are member of a church group or denomination and thus contribute financially. One special reason I will mention: women mainly carry many rural churches, but they do not have leading functions within the church structures. The women could be the above mentioned single parents and this fact alone should be a driving force of the church to become active partners in ECD education

Social responsibility

The churches have to consider the function of interdependencies within the community, as this is an important part of their social responsibility role. To empower the social responsibility role of the rural churches, I would suggest the following:

1) To understand that social awareness is 'widening the horizon'. In other words: moving beyond their own church members and taking into account the community in its whole.

2) To learn to use their potential which is 'learning new knowledge, skills and how to apply them.

3) To learn to take responsibility for actions undertaken which is 'accepting and challenging the consequences' of their actions.

Rural churches encounter many problems hindering the essential role they have to fulfil. I will briefly mention some as they have an overall disempowering trend: splitting up in various small groups due to disagreements about interpretation of Bible texts; misunderstanding of leadership responsibilities and qualities; too high expectations causing confusion and 'lame' activities; lastly, family feuds.

A last point I will make concerning the church. Women contribute generously in more than one way to the 'well-being' of the church. Women therefore need to be part of courses in leadership and interpretation and application of the Bible from a 'woman's perspective' which will give a new perspective of the tasks of the church.

7.3.5 The Role of the Different Tiers of Government Departments.

The research shows that GBs and practitioners have little confidence in the National and Provincial Departments. They even have an alienating tendency instead of a binding effect. Yet, I will try to be as constructive as possible concerning the co-operation between ECD and the government structures for the following reasons:

Firstly, in 1994 when the new Democratic Government came into power the National and Provincial Departments of Education were confronted with a totally unbalanced situation within the overall spectrum of education. Therefore their first commitment was to rectify the imbalances and at the same time to keep up and promote qualitative education for all.

Secondly, ECD was never a priority within the policy of Departments of Education in the times of the previous dispensation and also not presently. ECD was mainly carried for and supported by church based groups, NGOs and community initiatives, depending of the involvement of parents and immediate community.

Yet, realising how susceptible the very young child is towards learning, and the impact ECD education has on the individual child, **the focus and priority of the Government should become ECD education.**

The two points, focus and priority, shed a light on difficult tasks the ECD field has to overcome. A main task is to advocate and to become *the* priority within the policy formulation, followed by the execution of the policy by National as well as by Provincial Departments of Education. I will not only refer to the Departments of Education, but will include the Departments of Health, Housing and other relevant departments for ECD promotion. Integral services need to be in place, which are accessible, transformative, transparent and focused on

quality-care and education. Inherent to ECD that is integrated in the overall educational system, an overall cost aspect should be attached. Neither the State nor the parent(s) can bear these costs alone. From Government's side it would be desirable to put in place a financial policy concerning the provision of ECD education and that would enhance a 'school savings system'. Such a policy should service two reasons:

- 1) Investment in educating from the youngest possible age creates a basis for the 'culture of learning' which has an enduring component and thus is a 'chain reaction' for education for sustainable development.
- 2) It addresses the present inequality within the educational field. The inequality can be tackled most effectively and successfully at the foundation of education: *ECD*.

A joint attempt by Government and parents could be proposed by way of introducing a 'new' culture: 'the culture of financial investment in the education of their children'. Such a culture could start with the principle of 'stokvel' or any other small-scale school-savings system for *all* parents, that also could serve as an 'insurance' so that basic and further education become accessible and affordable *for all* children.

The practical side of such a policy is not easy and will need some research as well as careful preparation and planning. Yet, if all parents would contribute to such a savings system the Government will be enabled to materialise one of its priorities: "improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training". No mention at all is made of ECD. Much is dependent of the future national budgets, that tells us the following: "the 3-year national spending estimates for Education for 1999/00 R 47.8 billion and 2001/02 R50.7 billion. In reality it is a decrease of 1.6%. The amount in 2002/3, if increases keep up with inflation, would be R53.7 billion" (Economic Budget, 2000/2001: 2-8).

In spite of the fact that the budget does not refer to ECD, the young children of South Africa are the special concern of *all* people and other possible solutions could be:

- Add a proportional levy on all incomes that is considered for income tax.

- A second idea would be to add a levy on all house and property owners so that they should have to pay according to the dimension or volume of the property.

Next to the 'school savings system' the last proposal could be realised. Beyond it might help prevent tax avoidance and the search for possible loopholes. Such an initiative would put a heavier tax on the more affluent part of society and would begin to narrow the gap between the haves and the have-nots. At the same time it should protect the poorest section of the population. Their children should be able to attend all education institutions, as the parents are part of the 'school savings system'. This reminds me of the following expression: 'a successful country invests in its children'.

7.3.6 The Role of Donor or Funding Organisations

Before 1994 foreign development organisations were very active in channelling financial and other resources to South Africa mainly to fulfil tasks the government of the day was not doing or denied the execution of. One of the areas of support was ECD, individual ECDs as well as training opportunities for practitioners. Donor organisations supported several NGOs and CBOs, which in their turn offered services and operated mainly in the previously disadvantaged communities. In many ways they promoted community development projects that often included ECD facilities. Since 1994 the situation has drastically changed when donor organisations withdrew funding swiftly from NGOs and channelled it towards the new democratically elected government. The change of policy affected many individual ECDs, as well as service providers. A substitute was not in place and besides, ECD was no longer considered to be a priority within the developmental set-up of the day. Moreover, the new government was expected to take on the responsibility for, among others, ECD provision that did not materialise.

At present, too little state funding is coming forward and many, particularly rural ECDs, have become fully dependent of voluntary input, grants and handouts. Now and then an ECD receives some contribution from a donor organisation, but this is not sufficient *and* it is not the solution. Local fund-raising, in spite of the well-intended attempts often inefficient, and the collected income from it is seldom enough to cover the running costs and other related expenses. The struggle to survive is critical and affects many ECDs,

and this alarmed DOCKDA. When the subject for possible financial support was raised, not only a sympathetic ear was reached, but DOCKDA also took the plea of rural ECDs further.

In response to the political transformation of South Africa the role of donor organisations has thus changed and so did the influence they exercised too. All in all, the situation was critical as it not only affected the functioning of NGOs, but it also affected a wide range of activities of civil society. The financial withdrawal of foreign donor organisations went perhaps too fast, causing a feeling of abandonment and creating a financial gap for many NGOs and CBOs, and I include ECDs. The ripple effects are divergent and some NGOs had to be dissolved, or had to curtail their services and staff. Others transformed their organisations and looked for new ways to perform their tasks. I consider this to be a development of concern, but it can be positive as it offers new opportunities to be explored. In my comments I will focus on the field of ECD, but it can be applicable to other projects:

- 1) To restructure the role of donor organisations from 'donor' to 'partners' in development.
- 2) To focus on particular aspects of projects involved in a programme, for example, support for the establishment of ECD Associations and its training programme.
- 3) To create an awareness of being responsible for their own development and the activities necessary to reach the goals and objectives set before.
- 4) To promote the idea and culture of learning, this would include financial sacrifices of local community specifically concerning educational initiatives.
- 5) NGOs, CBOs and/or projects have the opportunity to build new relations with the government of the day.

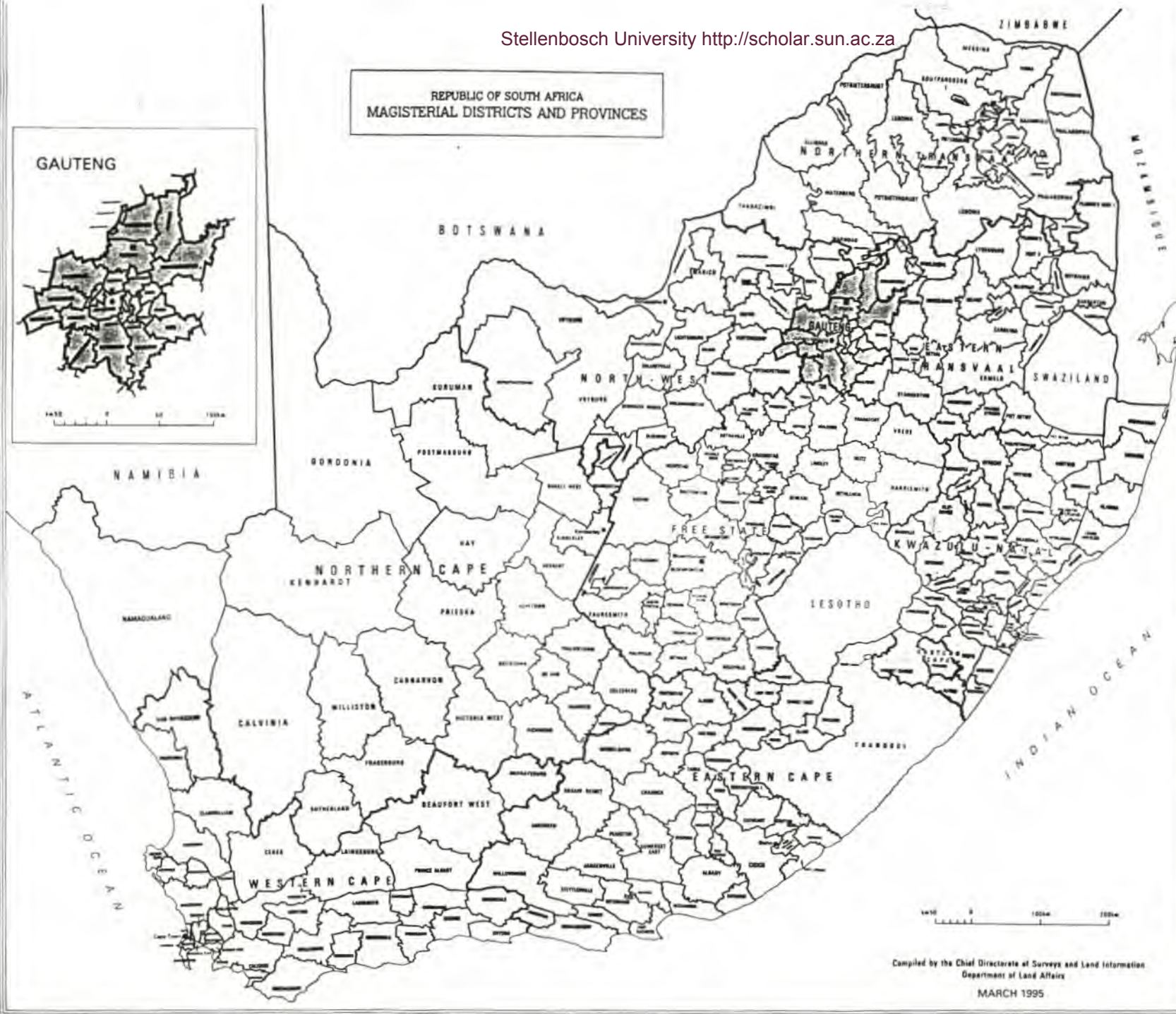
DOCKDA as a Rural Development Agency and with a funding programme has chosen the way of partnership with ECD service providers, to empower ECDs in rural areas to become self-reliant. The modus operandi will be the focus on personal development, governance and leadership abilities of practitioners and GBs.

7.4 Closing Remarks

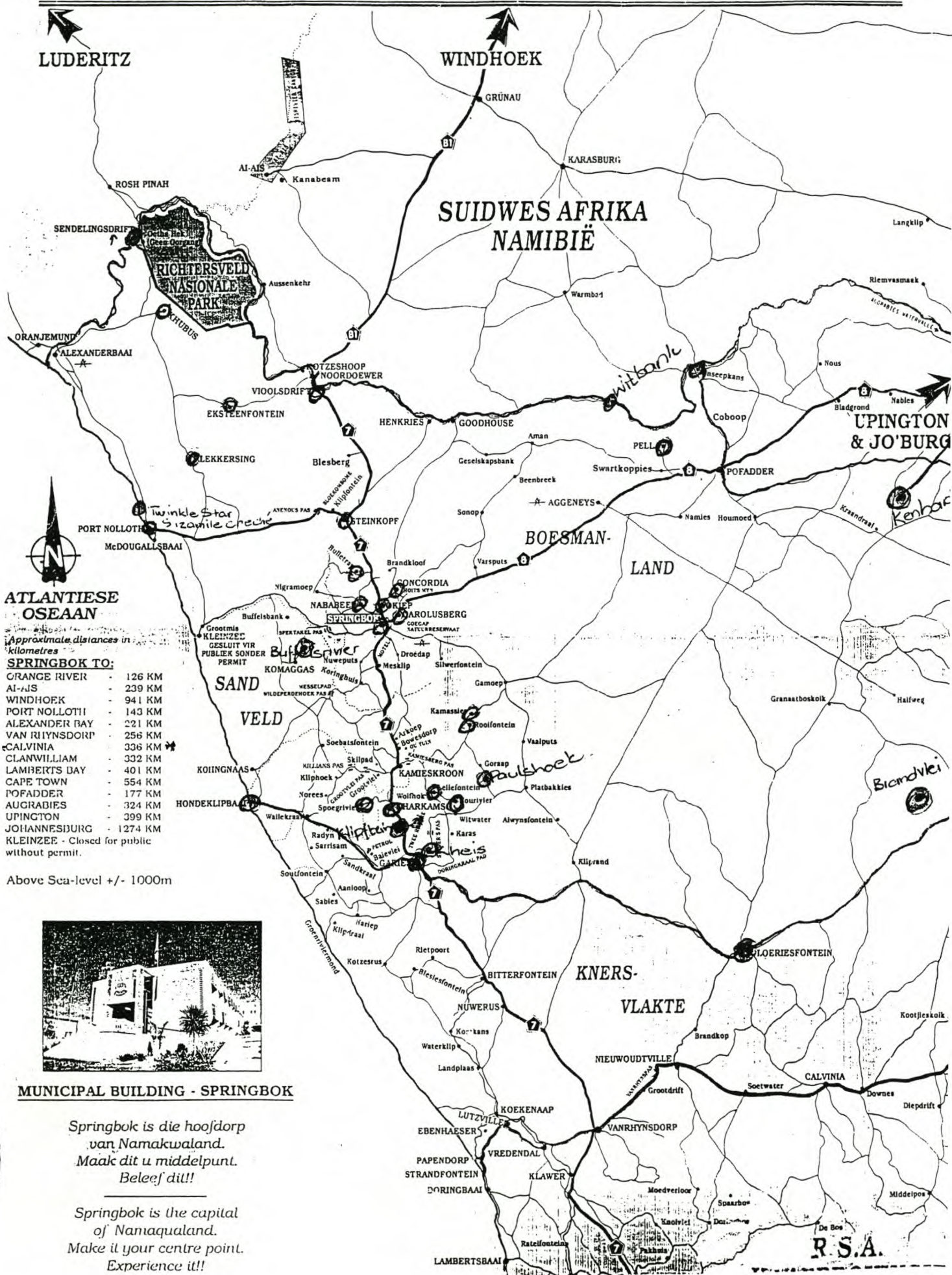
The final word about ECD has not yet been said. This study has made me very aware of the enormous complexity of the ECD field, its problems and certainly its mission. ECD needs to be at the heart of all of us as the young child represents our future. It is what the Bernard van Leer Foundation states: "Concentrating on young children and their environments will have a preventative and lasting effect, and will generate tangible benefits"¹⁰. This statement confirms that involvement in the overall education and upbringing of young children enables them to have a better future, and thus has a sustaining effect, as it will have positive effects on the children, their parents, the communities and the society as a whole.

For me, this study has provoked many more questions than answers. At this stage only suggestions what to change or what to contemplate could come forward. The existing huge socio-economic contrasts should be taken into consideration; on the one hand can be found underdevelopment; on the other side are in place the standards and requirements of the developed countries. A 'meeting point' needs to be found so that life for *all* people can improve and education from an early age will contribute to the creation of equal 'playing fields'.

¹⁰ Source not dated



NAMAKWALAND — NAMAQUALAND



Annexe 1 - ECD sites

1. List of participating ECD sites funded by DOCKDA:

St. John's Mission	De Aar	Karoo
Olifantjie Kleuterskool	Loxton	-
Wiekie Wiesie	Victoria West	-
Lukhanyo Creche	Victoria West	-
Ulukhanyo Crèche	Rosmead/Middelburg	-
Klipdrift Kleuterskool (farmskool)	Graaff-Reinet	-
Kabouterland	Victoria West	-
Harlekynjtjie	Carolusberg	Namaqualand

2. Participating ECD sites in research:

Sonneblommetjies Kleuterskool	Eksteenfontein	Namaqualand
Jakaranda Kleuterskool	Kamieskroon	-
Klim en Klouter	Kuboes	-
Feetjieland Kleuterskool	Pella	-
Eerste Treedjies Bewaarskool	Kommaggas	-
Twinkle Stars	Port Nolloth	-
Leliedal Speelkring	Kamiesberg	-
Veilige Voetjies	Buffelsrivier	-
Tweespruitjies	Tweerivier	-
De Kleine Bewaarskool	Steinkopf	-
Sonskynhoekie	Klipfontein	-
Goudvissie Kleuterskool	Pofadder	-
Vinknessie	Kenhardt	Karoo
Pret en Plesier Kleuterskool	Hondeklipbaai	Namaqualand
Lambs Kleuterskool	Kheis	-
Loerie-Vinkie	Loeriesfontein	Karoo
Dolphina Speelkring	Garagams	Namaqualand
Doringrosie Speelkring	Kamieskroon	-
Haasbekkie Kleuterskool	Lekkersing	-
Goeiehoop Môrewag Bewaarskool	Calvinia	Karoo
Kleinbegin	Onseepkans	Namaqualand
Kokerboompie Met. Bewaarskool	Rooifontein	-
Babbelbekkies Kleuterskool	Nababeep	-

Annexe 2.

Introduction letter

September 1998

On behalf of DOCKDA I will invite you to participate in the research on the sustainability of Early Childhood Development sites (ECDs). Allow me first to explain who DOCKDA is.

DOCKDA stands for Dioceses of Oudtshoorn, Cape Town, Keimoes/Upington and de Aar. It is a micro funding programme and delegates funding from Bilance (The Netherlands) and Broederlijke Delen (Belgium). DOCKDA supports development and capacity building in mainly rural communities in the areas of the above mentioned Catholic Dioceses.

The need for the research has grown out of requests for financial support from ECDs sent to DOCKDA. The issue of sustainability of ECDs has become relevant and DOCKDA is in search for possible ways to assist ECDs to become sustainable.

The outcome of the research will benefit DOCKDA. Also Training and Service Organisations and ECDs will benefit of the information and recommendations. However, I will also use the collected data to complete my study.

I am assigned by DOCKDA to do the research. Since the inception of DOCKDA I am a committee member due to my involvement in rural areas.

I will guarantee confidentiality concerning the information you individually provide me and also when you participate as team member of a Training and Service Organisation.

May I thank you for your willingness to participate,

Annexe 3.

Instruksies

Beklemtoon die vertroulikheid van die vraelys en dart alle informasie sal gerespekteer word.

Gee elke sentrum 'n afskrif van begeleidende brief.

Gee voldoende tyd om die vraelys in te vul.

Verduidelik woorde en help alleenlik indien regtig noodsaaklik.

Plaas ingevulde vraelys inmiddele in koevert en plak koevert toe waar deelnemer(s) by is. Dit benadruk vertroulikheid.

Vertel deelnemer(s) dat DOCKDA, NAVO en direk die sentrum gebruik sal maak van die resultate van hierdie ondersoek.

Verklaring van enkele woorde:

Staatsbefondsing/susidies	alle finansiële bydraes gedoen door enige staats departement
Geletterdheidsvlak	die gemiddelde formele onderrig ouers geniet het
Die Missie	die besonderheid/hede van die spesifieke VKO
Netwerk	met wie die VKO samewerking het, opleiding van geniet en met wie die VKO verbonde is
Akkreditering	offisiële erkenning van die werk en opleiding van praktiseins
Sosio-ekonomiese situasie	lewens en werksomstandighede
Kapasiteits opbou	die vermoë van 'n persoon te vermag .b.v. opleiding sal vaardighede vergroot

Annexe 4.

Questions for 'outsiders'

- 1a. What is the impact NAPE makes in the ECD field in Namaqualand?
- b. What are the indications? Give examples.
2. What is/are the key-role(s) an ECD site has in a community?
- 3a. What are the values belonging to an ECD site?
- b. How are the values reflected? How do you recognise the values? Give examples.
- 4a. What do you consider to be the prerequisites/requirements for an ECD site to become sustainable?
- b. Who are concerning you the main role players?
 - The Government
 - Education Departments
 - NGOs/CBOs
 - Churches
 - The community
 - The parents
 - The District Council
- c. Who has the utmost responsibility?
- d. What role should play the private sector?
5. What needs to be done to enable all children access to an ECD site?

Questions posed to Derrick Naidoo

- 1a. ECD is very important, but up till now it is hardly accessible for children who need it the most. What are the main reasons?
- b. What should be done to enable access to ECDs for *all* children in the community, certainly keeping in mind the situation in rural areas?
- 2a. ECDs need to become sustainable, what are the main prerequisites?
- b. How would you describe the concept of sustainability?
- c. What values are inherent or belong to ECDs that justify the importance of ECD?
3. Who are the main role players in this process to sustainability? Who is responsible?
- 4a. What are the influences of the IMF, World Bank and IFIs in SA?
- b. Is for example education and health care already affected?
- c. Is the gap between the poor and the rich fast widening in SA?
- 5a. How would it be possible to "break out" of the tentacles of those institutions?
- b. What crucial changes should need to take place to balance wealth or resources in the world and SA?
- c. Has in SA socialism become powerless?

Annexe 5.

Workshop with Parents

- 1. Harlekyntjie Kleuterskool Carolusberg**
- 2. Olifantjie Kleuterskool Loxton**

Introduction

It is important to know how the parent(s) value the upbringing and education of their child(ren). The informal education offered at ECDs is in most cases an intermediate environment between that of the family set-up and that of the primary school: a child learns. The child is at an age of optimum susceptibility to impressions and learns the best. It is therefore important to know how the parent(s) value the ECD site and how they consider the potential sustainability of the ECD site the child attends. The parents and GBs are invited to participate in the following programme.

Overall Aim

To illustrate the potential sustainability of an ECD site from the perspective of parents. What is understood about the concept and the responsibilities concerned?

Aims

1. To get parents to think and talk about ECD.
2. What motivates parent(s) to send their Child(ren) to an ECD site?
3. To reach a mutual understanding concerning the concept of sustainability of an ECD site.
4. To decide upon the main role players concerning sustainability of an ECD site.

Questions

1. When do parents consider the education of their children starts?
2. Why do parents send their child(ren) to an ECD site?
3. What do parents receive from an ECD site?
4. What do parents value the most in regard of ECD?
5. Who is responsible for the sustainability of the ECD site?

Annexe 6.

Work Session NAPE

Overall aims

To learn to know how a training and service organisation helps an ECD site to grow towards self-reliance and sustainability.

Specific Aims

1. To learn about the relevance of a rural based training and service organisation in connection with the possible self-reliance and sustainability of an ECD site.
2. To come to mutual understanding concerning the following: the concept of sustainability and the values that are characteristic to ECD.
3. To understand what are the prerequisites of becoming sustainable.
4. To determine who are responsible.

Questions

The following question will be dealt with. Staff members and some members of NAPE will participate in the process.

- 1a. What is the overall impact NAPE has in Namaqualand? Give examples.
- b. What are the criteria to measure the impact of training on the performance of the practitioners?
- c. How does the training affect the relationship with the children?
- 2a. What are the driving forces of NAPE?
- b. How does NAPE see the way forward?
- 3a. What are the restraining forces experienced?
- b. What solutions are found?
- 4a. What are the development objectives of NAPE?
- b. What does NAPE want to achieve?
- c. Who will be the beneficiaries?
- 5a. What are the main values involved in ECDs?
- b. How are those values reflected?
- 6a. How would you describe the concept of sustainability of an ECD site?
- b. What are the main prerequisites for sustainability in the ECD field? Focus on the rural setting and circumstances.
- c. What is the influence of the values on the sustainability of an ECD site?
- d. Who are the main role players in the process?
- e. Who is ultimately responsible?
- 7a. How does the training an ECD site helped it become sustainable?
- b. What specific training will be necessary?

Annexe 7.

Questionnaire

The questions are reflected without the spaces and frameworks to fill in.

GENERAL INFORMATION OF ECD SITE

Name of ECD site :
Physical Address :
Postal Address :
Principal :
Practitioners :
Date :

1 BOARDS/COMMITTEES

1. Is there a committee (from now onwards called 'governing body' (GB):
2. How long has the GB been established:
3. How often does the GB meet:
- 4a. What training has the GB received:
- b. To sustain the training received:
- 5a. How does the GB function:
- b. What are the responsibilities:
- c. Who keeps the minute books:
- 6a. How many members does the GB have:
- b. How many members are women, how many men:
- 7a. How is the GB elected:
- b. When:
- 8a. What efforts has the GB tried to access subsidy/funding:

2. PARENTS

1. How is/are the parent(s) represented:
2. How often do parent(s) meet:
- 3a. How often do the parent(s) meet with practitioner:
- b. Meet with practitioner individually:
- c. What is the percentage of parents attending parent meetings:
- d. Who mainly come to parent meetings:
- e. Is an attendance list used:
- f. What percentage mothers and fathers attend:
4. What are the contributions made by parent(s):
5. What do parent(s) to sustain of ECD:
6. What skills do parent(s) receive:
- 7a. How many of the parent(s) do have employment:
- b. How many are self-employed:
- 8a. How many is single parent:
- b. How many are employed:
9. What is the average literacy level of the parent(s):
- 10a. When do parents expect the education of children starts:
- b. Why do parent(s) send their children to a ECD:
- c. What do parent(s) hope to receive:
- d. What do parent(s) value the most in ECD:

3. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

- 1a. Since when is the ECD established:

- b. Why is the service provided:
- 2. Who identified the need for an ECD:
- 3. Who initiated the ECD:
- 4a. Has the ECD a constitution:
- b. Who was involved with the drawing of the constitution:
- c. How does the constitution function:
- d. How is the mission statement of the ECD:
- e. Does the ECD have a development plan:
- f. What else, other than ECD does the project hope to achieve:
- 5a. What model does the ECD belong:
- b. What services does the ECD offer:
- 6. What is the length of a ECD-day:
- 7. When does the ECD have holidays:
- 8a. How many classrooms does the ECD have:
- b. How many children attend the centre:
- c. How many children are in each group:
- d. What are the ages of the children:
- e. Are the ages mixed in the classroom:
- 9a. How many meals are offered:
- b. Who prepares the meal:
- 10a. Who is the owner of the building in which the ECD is housed:
- b. What are the responsibilities of the ECD concerning the premises:
- c. Is the building used for other purposes:
- 11. What furniture and equipment does the ECD have
- 12a. To what network or organisation does the ECD belong:
- b. What are the relations with the network:
- c. What is the importance of the network:
- d. What is expected of the network:
- 13a. What are the relations with the local Primary School:
- b. How often does the ECD meet with the Primary School:
- 14. What are the relations with the Local Government:
- 15. What are the relations with the local churches:
- 16. What are the relations with the local Welfare Organisations and CBOs:

4. FINANCES

- 1. How does the ECD receive its income:
- 2. Does the present income cover all running costs:
- 3. How successful is the fund-raising:
- 4a. Has the ECD an own bank account:
- b. Who is responsible for this account and for the bookkeeping:
- c. Who of the GB signs the cheques: (functionaries)
- d. How many signatures are needed on a cheque:
- e. How are parents informed about the finances at the ECD:
- f. Is an annual audit of the books done:
- 5a. Who is responsible for the administration of the ECD:
- b. What are the tasks:
- 6a. Who is responsible for collecting the school fees:
- b. What is done in case parent(s) cannot pay the school fee:
- c. What is the alternative:
- d. What is done when parent(s) will not pay the school fee:
- 7. What other financial commitments do the parent(s) have:

4. PRACTITIONERS

- 1a. What is the procedure to appoint or to elect a practitioner:
- b. What criteria are set:
- c. Does the practitioner receive a job description or work contract:

- d. What benefits are included in the contract:
- e. What are the main tasks of the practitioner:
- 2a. How are the practitioners paid:
- b. What is about the amount:
- 100 - 250 250 - 500 500 - 750 750+
- c. Is payment connected with training level:
- 3a. What training level does the practitioner receive:
- Level 1: Level 2: Level 3: Other:
- b. When is last training received:
- c. Who offers the training:
- d. Was training applicable:
- e. What problems were encountered:
- f. How is training reflected in performance:
- g. What are the overall qualifications of the practitioners:
- 4a. What are the most important incentives for the practitioner to work at ECD:
- b. How does the practitioner value the work she does:
- c. Does the practitioner feel appreciated by the parents and GBs:
- 5a. What does the practitioner think needs to be done concerning accreditation:
- b. Who needs to decide upon the accreditation:
- c. How would the practitioner like to see the accreditation reflected:
- 6a. What needs to be done to sustain the ECD:
- b. Who needs to contribute to the sustainability:
- 7a. Is there a principal/supervisor:
- b. What are the main tasks of the principal/supervisor:
- c. Who provides the salary of the principal/supervisor:
- 8a. What volunteers are involved:
- b. What are the main tasks of the volunteer:
- 9a. How often do the team meet:
- b. Who is involved in the planning of the daily programme of the ECD:
- c. What is the programme:

5. GENERAL

- 1a. What are the present needs of the ECD, prioritise:
- b. What action is taken to fulfil the needs:
- 2a. How would you vision the ECD you are involved with in 2005:
- b. What would be the main resources to realise that vision:
- 3. What is the main purpose of an ECD:
- 4a. What does sustainability of an ECD mean to you:
- b. What do you consider the main requirements for your ECD to become sustainable:
- c. What need to change to sustain the ECD:
- d. How can sustainability be measured:
- 5a. What is/are the main role(s) of the government:
- b. What is/are the main role(s) of the parents:
- c. What is/are the main role(s) of the practitioner:
- d. What is/are the main role(s) of the GB:
- e. What is/are the main role(s) of the community:
- f. Other main role players:

6. COMMUNITIES

- 1a. How is the community composed:
- Is there a community profile or Integrated Development Plan:
- b. What is the socio-economic situation of the community:
- c/d. Which non-governmental and community-based organisations are existing:
- e. What are the main political groupings in the community:
- f. What job opportunities are available:
- g. What are the training opportunities or capacity building programmes:

- h. What languages are used in the community:
- i. What cultural groups are in the community:
- 2a. What is the driving forces in the community:
- b. What is the restraining forces in the community:
- c. What solutions are proposed:
- 3. Which churches are involved with ECD:
- 4. Is alternative childcare available:
- 5. What is the most important contribution the ECD makes in the community:

7. FUNDED BY DOCKDA (only)

ECDs, which received funding:

- 1a. How did you hear from DOCKDA:
- b. What were the reasons to apply by DOCKDA:
- c. Where else did you apply:
- d. How did you raise funds locally:
- 2a. What difference did the funding by DOCKDA make:
- b. How did you apply the funding of DOCKDA:
- c. How else did DOCKDA help:
- d. Did the funding of DOCKDA help to raise local funding:
- e. If funding was received for training, what is the content of the training:
- f. What were the effects of the training:
- g. Who offered the training:
- 3a. What do you expect from a donor organisation:
- b. How would you like to communicate with the donor organisation:

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