

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF ARTS DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

The contribution of the Education Transition Fund (ETF) towards ensuring the attainment of basic Education for all in Umguza District

By

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Declaration

I Thembela Mbengwa (registration number R12888E) declare that, this research is a result of my work and all other sources are duly acknowledged. It has not been submitted anywhere before for any degree purposes or examinations in any other university. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors Degree in Development Studies, in the faculty of Arts at Midlands State University

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student Thembela Mbengwa Dissertation entitled, "The contribution of the Education Transition Fund (ETF) towards ensuring the attainment of basic Education for all in Umguza District" which is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Bachelor of Arts in Development studies.

Supervisor.....

Date.....

Chairperson.....

Date.....

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All glory goes to God, who is able to keep us from stumbling, and who will bring us into His glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy thus I thank God Almighty for giving me the opportunity to do an Honors Degree in Development Studies .Secondly, much gratitude goes to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Mbengwa, my family, friends and to Siphosenkosi Rejoice Mpofu. Thank you good Lord for surrounding me with helpful people throughout my academic journey. I would like to acknowledge and express my sincere thanks to my research supervisor Mr. R Sillah who is a lecturer at the Midlands State University, for his expertise and professional encouragement and mentorship. Thank you for sacrificing your time. May the Good Lord abundantly bless you!

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DEDICATIONS

I would like to dedicate this piece of work to my parents (Mr and Mrs Mbengwa) and my siblings Hazelet Mandipa Mbengwa and Sithabisiwe Mbengwa. I also dedicate this research to the Almighty God whose grace and abundant love kept on restoring my faith and hope that im a winner in life.

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ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe's education system has encountered a number of challenges in the provision of basic education as one of the children rights that every state has a mandate to provide. This loophole has been highlighted by high drop out rates and low pass rates nationwide. The government of Zimbabwe after encountering an economic lapse from 2005-8 which also greatly affected the education sector, came to terms with the international donor community through UNICEF and the Education Transition Fund was launched in Zimbabwe by the government of national unity (GNU) in 2009. The ETF had a mandate to resuscitate the education sector. The research entitled, "The contribution of the Education Transition Fund (ETF) towards the attainment of basic education for all in Umguza District" was aimed at assessing the impact of ETF towards school attendances and performance. This research was also aimed examining the implementation and programming aspects that surrounded the project and how best were they encouraging basic education for all in the area under study. It should be noted that the continued existence of drop out cases from mainstream school and even from the project was one of the challenges noted as the major findings of this research. Thus this research provides possible solutions to the challenges encountered during the course of the project as well as solutions to other factors that the researcher noted to have received less attention from the programming nature of the project.

ACRONYMS

UNICEF- United Nations Children Emergency Fund

ZALP- Zimbabwe Accelerated Learning Program

ETF- Education Transition Fund

WEI- World Education International

ORAP- Organization of Rural Associations for Progress

MoPSE- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

ESAPS – Economic Structural Adjustment Program

OVC- Orphans and Vulnerable Children

HDI- Human Development Index

HDR- Human Development Report

EFA- Education for All

BEAM- Basic Education Assistance Module

IGP- Income generating Projects

USACF- United States for African Children’s Fellowship

SHED- Shooting for Education and Development

CPC- Child Protection Committees

DEO- District Education Officer

DLLC- District Lifelong Coordinator

RDC- Rural District Council

SPNE- Special Need Education

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Zimbabwe has suffered a down turn in performance of the education sector especially primary schools, in terms of pass rates and completion rates due to unavailability of trained teachers , which left Zimbabwe during its economic lapse. Education being a fundamental aspect in Zimbabwe's socio-economic, technological and political development discourse, initiatives has been put forth to the problems that have undermined the attainment of quality education and achievement of universal primary education in the country. The country has faced a worrying increase in dropout rates of pupils in primary level and again a decrease in the completion rates. Zimbabwe has a fairly 12.6 million population and an adult literacy rate of 90.7%. 6% of Zimbabwe's children are considered vulnerable and about 500000 are estimated to be out of school (www.undp.org)

The UNCEF fund for education projects, the Education Transition Fund has been a pool of resources needed for back to school initiatives for primary school dropouts so as to complete their universal primary education. The Zimbabwe Accelerated Learning Program (ZALP) was one of the initiatives that came as a result of the Education Transition Fund. This initiative was meant to increase the literacy rates in rural Zimbabwe through the attainment of basic education for all thus in collaboration with the Millennium Development Goal #2.

Umguza District being under Matebeleland North Province, has recorded the lowest literacy rates in Zimbabwe, with a 94, 7% and a very dismal performance in primary education results, with a 19% pass rate. (ZimStats Report 2013). School dropout rates and pass rates are a huge worry in the provision of quality education in rural Zimbabwe thus ETF aimed at reducing and increasing these two respectively. UNICEF worked in consortium with World Education International (WEI) together with local NGOs such as the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP) and the ministry responsible for the provision of Education in the district, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) Umguza. Key stakeholders in the provision of the Zimbabwean child's rights were also encompassed in the running of the project. These include the local traditional leadership (chiefs and herdsman), Councilors, Rural District Councils and parents as well.

During the process of asset mapping and ward mapping there was a realization that Nyamandlovu cluster in Umguza West had more primary school dropouts than other clusters thus three schools from that cluster were selected to be sites (ZALP sites) that were to host the project, namely Zimdabule, Deli and Mathabiswana Primary Schools. The continued existence of dropouts and issues such as absenteeism due to factors such as illegal gold panning, long distances to school and child laboring hindered the progress of the project. ETF's main objective being to reduce poverty through assisting rural population attain basic primary education and improve the literacy levels, the project employed three teachers at every site and a supervisor in form of a school head, to prepare the back to school pupils to be ready to be reintegrated into mainstream learning.

The project ran for 2years (01/06/13-31/05/15) with a goal to support MoPSE by preparing at least 40,000 out of school learners through accelerated learning programs for re-integration into the formal system nationwide and with a 150 pupil target in Umguza District. A cumulative 161 pupils, 115males and 46 females, was reached in Umguza District. The project also targeted pupils from 7 years of age to 18 years thus assumingly that this age group could possibly be still fit for primary education. The project did not only prepare pupils to be reintegrated into mainstream learning but also prepared them to proceed to the next level of education, thus secondary education. There is a dire need to find out whether the project was a success or not.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

School dropouts and failure to complete basic primary education has been a common phenomenon in Zimbabwe's rural setup and Africa at large. According to Zimbabwe statistics agency, 9.6% of children aged between 5-14 have left school in rural Zimbabwe were as 6.8% in urban areas and 6.7% of the same age group have never attended formal school were as only 3.7 in urban areas of Zimbabwe (www.zimstats.org) . Only 24.4% of pupils completed primary education nationwide in 2012. Poor implementation of projects and programming has also been a major reason or cause of failure of proper weaning procedure and continuity after withdrawal by partners and donors. In a bid to solve the high dropout rate the ETF was initiated. There is need to find out the extent to which the ETF managed to solve the high dropout rate in Umguza District

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 1 To assess the impact of the Education Transition Fund on school attendance and performance in Umguza District
- 2 To examine the implementation and programming aspects that surrounded the running of ETF back to school program
- 3 To suggest possible solutions to challenges succumbed during the running of the project

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Did ETF have an impact on school attendance and performance in Umguza District?
2. Was the implementation and programming of ETF sustainable for continuity of basic education in Umguza District?
3. What can be done to improve the challenges succumbed in the programming of the back to school program?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study seeks to come up with solutions and ways in which to reduce the continued existence of school dropout scenarios and to improve the realization of the Zimbabwean child's right to basic universal education. Education in Umguza district has been undermined by socio economic activities such as illegal gold panning amongst others thus due to the prevailing condition of poverty in the area, failure by parents and guardians to pay school tuitions has resulted in dropping out of school. The study also seeks to uncover and as well come up with possible solutions to other reason for dropping out of school in Umguza District. The study is also intended to reveal the social impact assessment of the education based project, that is assessing

what has changed in the livelihoods of the community and the beneficiaries during and after the Education Transition Fund in Umguza District. The study also has the mandate to improve the methods of programming from an academic dimension through possible solutions to challenges encountered during the running of the program, thus these solutions can act as a benchmark or points to consider when conducting an education related program. This will improve the programming of education projects and avoid doing harm instead of good during the implementation of a project. The study will also assist development students in understanding the concept of education and development in developing countries. Furthermore the study will reflect the negative and positive impacts of Education Transition Fund on the school attendances of children in primary school. This study will also reflect the progress on the millennium development goal number 2 in Zimbabwe, thus will uncover the extent to which basic education for all was attained on typical rural Zimbabwe by ETF

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Education being one of the fundamental factors of development it has to be handled with caution and be addressed carefully. In order to achieve sustainable development, nations should embrace and invest in human capital through partnering with other stakeholders in the provision of this service. Thus the study is based on the Systems theory of development. This system is based on the importance of the findings that is, it can be termed as a conceptual integration that renders the map of knowledge from partners for a certain cause. The concept of the study is also based on the idea that partners come to terms with their expertise to address certain and arising need. On the context of the study, ETF came into action as a result of an arising problem in the education sector which the government could not address to without external assistance. Laszlo (1996)

defined a system as a complex of interacting components together with the relationships among them that permit the identification of a boundary-maintaining entity or process. Russell Ackoff's also suggests that a system is a set of two or more interrelated elements with the property that each element has an effect on the functioning of the whole and each element is affected by at least one other element in the system then lastly all of the possible subgroups of elements also have the first two properties Ackoff (1981) in Laszlo (1997)

Coupled with the two definitions of a system it is clear that the systems theory in the field of humanities and social sciences clearly articulates that there is need for common partners come together to address an arising problem or crisis. With regard to the subject under study there is a perception that systems theory can be a model of complex intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, and the human nature interactions without any decrease in the perceptual phenomena to the level of individual stimuli. It capitalizes on the emergence of parallelisms in different disciplinary interpretations of reality and consequently provides a platform for the integrated study of complexity in the human experience. Laszlo (1997) noted that it is a field inquiry concerned with the holistic and integrative exploration of phenomena and events

The study is also supported by this theory on the aspect of the idea of having UNICEF Zimbabwe as the overseer, fund disbursement and management organ and the existence of a number of implementing partners as well as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education as the government representative is evidence of the existence of a number of partners in problem solving. This supports the assertion by the systems theory that problem solving cannot be addressed by a single unit but rather a number of partners coming together for a certain cause.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section creates a co-relation between the variables of the study. This will fore see the indicators of successes or failures of the ETF. These indicators will assist the researcher to assess the extent to which ETF managed to attain basic education for all in Umguza District. The conceptual framework will out pin issues such as reduced school dropouts, the textbook ratios, targeted number of second chances, literacy rates, improvement in pass rates, increase in promotion rates, increase in completion rates, conducting of community awareness campaigns on the back to school program as well as supporting of established sites on operations with key stake holders in the second chance education and creation of a succession and weaning process of the project beneficiaries

ETF being a multi-donor funding mechanism, it was launched in 2010 in Zimbabwe by the then Ministry of Education Sports and Culture in partnership with UNICEF. The initiative was a bid to close up the loop holes and gaps in the education sector during the transition period of the country's economy that is from the emergency state (after ESAPS) to recovery. ETF was in a three system form which is participation, protection and provision of the child's right to education. ETF was divided into two phases and the first phase was on provision of core text books in primary schools around the country and thus reaching out to millions of primary school populations and again managing to provide one of the tenants of quality education by doing so. This was a great boast to the education sector and was aimed at attaining the 1; 1 pupil text book ratio which was part of the national action plan for Zimbabwe's education sector.

The ETF had a main objective supporting MoPSE to preparing at least 40,000 out of school learners through accelerated learning programs for re-integration into the formal system by the end of the project in May 2015. The second phase of the ETF was meant to revitalize the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) in providing equitable access to quality education for the less privileged pupils, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) amongst pupils with challenges to attain basic education all over the country. This would fore see a decrease in the dropout rates nationally, which one has already mentioned that it has been a prevalent scenario in Zimbabwe after the ESAPS.

ETF falling under the national action plan also had a secondary objective increasing intake of 6 year olds into grade one from 50% to 70%, increase net enrolment ratio at primary level from 94% to 100%, increase the completion rates for the primary cycle from 75% to 90% and lastly reduce the national dropout rates. The second phase was based on access, equity and quality of basic education in Zimbabwe. This program had an estimated cost budget of USD\$85 million (www.unicef.org/zimbabwe). ETF had a donor pool inclusive of individual business tycoons and governments abroad. Australia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, USA and the European Commission are amongst the donors of this fund, with UNICEF managing the funds at national level.

Therefore to sum it up, the following indicators were supposed to be visible as a sign of the project's success:

- Reduced number of school dropouts

- Increased promotion rates
- Improved pupil textbook ratio
- Improved pass rates
- Increased school enrolment
- Increased literacy rates

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research is a logical and systematic search for new and useful information on a particular topic (Slife and Williams, 1995) Research methodology is described as a collective term for the structured process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making a decision. There is a wide range of methodologies used in various types of research. The term is usually considered to include research design, data gathering and data analysis. Research methodology is also referred to as a systematic way to solve the research problem. It is commonly understood as a science of studying how research is done in a scientific manner and a specific approach is used.

The research approach is defined as a plan and procedures of research that creates the steps from a broad assumption to the more detailed method of collecting data, analyzing it, interpreting and coming up with a solution to a problem at hand. The study seeks to gather and analyze information through a qualitative method of research. The research method employed allowed the researcher to collect data through observing a setting of the case study. Qualitative research will help the researcher explore and understand the social or human challenges that have resulted in the persistent drop out scenario in Umguza District and as well be able to assess the social

impacts of the ETF funded ALP in their community. Qualitative research will also open room for participants to share their views about the project being assessed. Facts and figures provided concrete evidence and a better understanding of the research process. The researcher assessed the impact of ETF as a development initiative using the data triangulation method.

The researcher used the evaluative research design since the study is an assessment in nature. An evaluative research is a systematic assessment of the operation and outcomes of a policy (Weiss 1972). This has a mandate of improving a program or policy being assessed. The chosen research design resulted in increased validity and minimized possible errors within the research. Evaluative research design also assisted the researcher in evaluating the programming aspects of ETF and was useful in coming up with a verdict on its usefulness in the attainment of basic education. Weiss (1998) states that an evaluative research assists in the fulfillment of grant requirement, record program history and to make a decision on whether the program should continue or not. The evaluative research design can also be used to determine the impact of a social intervention. The case study research design chosen also required less financial cost as the researcher focused only at Umguza District were as the ETF funded ALP was being hosted by 600 schools nationwide

The study population consists of three schools from Umguza district Matebeleland North Province. These schools were the hosts of the ETF in the area under study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010:129) noted that a study population is a collection of units that is individuals, objects or events, that are in line with a specific criterion and to which results are intended to be

generalized and extracted from for the research purposes. Beneficiaries of the project both male and female students from level one to level three and those that have been reintegrated into mainstream learning are part of the study population. Implementing partners, that is ORAP, WEI and Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) also fall in the category of the study population. The study also seeks to encompass guardians and parents of the pupils who part of the back to school program

The study used different sampling procedures to conduct the research. Snowballing and purposive sampling procedures were employed in the assessment of ETF towards the attainment of basic education for all. The sampling methods enabled the researcher to get different views from people on the subject under study. Snowballing sampling was used by the researcher in the selection of both beneficiaries and non beneficiaries of the ETF on back to school program. Snowball sampling is a type of non-probability sampling technique. Non-probability sampling focuses on sampling techniques that are based on the judgment of the researcher. Denscombe (1998:16) notes that “snow balling is an effective technique for building up a reasonable-sized sample...” Snowballing is the process of references from one person to the next. The advantage of snow balling sampling in the study was that it assisted in the accumulation of numbers and was quite quick, using the multiplier effect of one person nominating two or more others. The researcher was also able to infiltrate the private sphere in the process and uncover hidden elements in the society that are associated with the school dropout phenomenon. So as to enhance credibility, the researcher used one person to talk to the new person rather than approach the new person. This allowed the researcher to get information on the whereabouts of beneficiaries and non beneficiaries of the back to school program.

Purposive sampling was used on the selection of the Education Transition Funded ZALP stakeholders at District and provincial level with regards to implementing partners in Matebelaland North province and Umguza District in particular. With purposive sampling the sample was handpicked for the research (Blaxter et al 2006). “The advantage of purposive sampling is that it allowed the researcher to home in on people or events which there is good grounds for believing will be critical for the research” (Denscombe 1998). In this case District Education Officers (DEO) and their education officers (EO), officials from the implementing partner (ORAP and WEI), beneficiaries and non beneficiaries were important in the research for the researcher to get the best information. The researcher opted for this sampling design mainly because it is not time consuming when carrying out a study on a particular subject and instead of interviewing the whole Ministry or the implementing partners (NGOs) only a reasonable number of personnel were handpicked.

The study encompassed primary sources of data such as interviews and personal observation as data collection methods for the assessment of ETF. The study also gathered data through secondary sources which are inclusive of text books, journals, reports, articles and internet, magazines, and newspapers. Interviews were done to gain information on a particular topic or a particular area to be researched. The researcher interviewed the facilitators of the project so as to find out the challenges they encountered during the project. Interviews were also fruitful to the study as the researcher managed to interview the project coordinator from the implementing partner (ORAP and WEI). This assisted the researcher to accumulate information on the programming aspect of the project, thus information is vital on the analysis and assessment of the project. The nature of interviews being a source of acquiring firsthand information became useful

as this permitted the exchange of ideas and information with the beneficiaries, their guardians, implementing partners and the ministry. The conducted interviews managed to collect data through direct verbal interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee, thus the researcher had the feel of the reality of the study.

Personal observation reinforced interviews in the data collection process. Blaxter et al (2006:13) notes that “observation method involves the researcher in watching recording and analyzing events of interest.” Personal observation enabled the researcher to collect data directly that is, providing a means for collecting unlimited amounts of data in a short time span and effectively eliminating any form of bias from the current emotions or personal background of the observer (Denscombe 1998). The researcher used this method to observe the general behavior of the pupils who are beneficiaries of the project. This helped the researcher realize that there are other factors that might be resulting in absenteeism and absconding resulting in dropping out. Through observation the researcher got first hand information and the actual reality of the situation on the ground as compared to conspiracies and self made conclusions by teachers and the school authorities.

Secondary sources allows the researcher to collect data from research subjects or experiments from readily available sources such as textbooks, websites, journals, newspapers and reports. It can therefore be treated as the most convenient starting point of an academic research. The use of secondary sources gave the researcher access to the already collected and analyzed statistics on the project beneficiaries. Secondary sources of data were critical in this study as they set a base

in the preliminary stages to inform research design and the researcher on the new available information. This was inclusive of reports from the implementing partners, district offices and school heads as they were the site supervisors

Data analysis was based on the findings of the research. This is highlighted by the use of figures of pupils who benefited from the ETF. The researcher grouped the findings as the successes and failures of the ETF. Narrative analysis was also used for the findings from personal observations and interviews and these were presented as factual data and views from the interviewees. The analysis of the findings assisted the researcher to come up with conclusions and recommendations to the loopholes encountered during the running of the project.

As part of the ethical considerations of the study, the researcher got permission to conduct the study in Umguza District from relevant stakeholders. This included Umguza Rural District Council, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and local leaderships (chiefs and headmen). Permission from the implementing partners (ORAP and WEI) of ETF which was also required as they have statistical evidence from the onset of the project was acquired. The researcher also assured that public trust was attained through this research, using ethical considerations such as trustworthy, voluntary participation, protection of participants and confidentiality. This enabled the building of a social responsibility on the research. Sumner (2007) states that there should be a moral imperative which should inform development studies researches and thus one should “do no harm” in the process

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review is referred to as the connotations of conceptualizing, justifying, implementing and interpreting the research objectives. This allows the researcher to identify areas of weaknesses and address them in the field which is understudy and as well as focusing on avoiding those weaknesses. The research looks at the literature on previous researches on assessment of education projects funds and development of rural Zimbabwe and the country's education quality at large. Literature review also looks at the historical context, purpose and criticisms, as well as an initial consideration of its applicability to developing states. William (2011) articulates that the objective of the initial review of literature is to discover relevant material published in the chosen field of study and to search for sustainable problem area. As the assessment of ETF seeks to empower and capacitate the population of Zimbabwe through improving their access to education and literacy rates, literature on capabilities approach and the human development index theory will be reviewed in this section. Education quality and economic development will also be reviewed as this will outline the trend and co-relation of education and economic development of a nation

Human development as a subject is said to have emerged from the 17th and 18th Centuries. Rayner et al (2005) states that the study of a "person's individuality" may have taken root in the western world during the renaissance period and was seemingly centered in Italy. This phenomenon however developed in the years and spread all over the world. Alkire(2002) postulates that human development is a multi dimensional subject which encompasses areas such as poverty, cross-cultural psychology, moral philosophy, quality of life indicators, participatory development and basic needs. Alkire's perception of human development coupled with Amartya

Sen's capabilities approach creates a strong basis for poverty reduction which is human centered. Bronfenbrenner (1979) also describes the human development as a concept of a "set of nested structures...." which can be decisive for development. He furthers this by giving an example that, "the ability to learn is determined by what is taught". This leaves the researcher with a verdict that for quality education to be attained there should be a good curriculum that is the one with a philosophy.

In the socio economic discourse modernization has been addressed to as the new human development process that is, it comprises of socio economic enhancements which contribute to people's capabilities to act according to their choices. The Human Development Report (1990) states that human development is a way to enlarge people's choices and emphasize the freedom to be healthy, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living. In a way this broadens the range of capabilities of a human life thus inclusive of political freedoms, human rights and self confidence (empowerment and participation). This also reflects that education is a key element in capacitating the human life for development of any nature. HDR (2010) also furthers the description of human development as the expansion of people's freedoms to live longer healthy and creative lives (that is advancing other goals they have reason to value) so as to engage actively in shaping development equitably and sustainably

The philosophy behind the HDI was partially inspired by the work of Amartya Sen. Although Sen, amongst others, has argued that index is a somewhat crude measure of human development; he argues that it is less crude than a simple, single indicator, measure such as GDP or GNP. However, it should be noted that due to the extreme complexity of the human experience, no

single figure could ever represent the true conditions that people face in their lives. According to Sen, although the HDI has its flaws, it is concerned with the “basic development idea: namely, advancing the richness of human life, rather than the richness of the economy in which human beings live, which is only a part of it. Sen in his speech noted that, ‘the difference that basic education can make to human life is easy to see. It is also readily appreciated even by the poorest of families’.

Sen (2002) uncovered the ideology that basic education and human security are inseparable. He notes that human security can be understood as the protection and preservation of the human race’s survival and daily life that is against the massive handicap of illiteracy and premature death amongst other factors. Sen also notes that literacy and basic schooling are central to the expansion of human capabilities as mentioned earlier. The focus on human security should not only be based on the need for societies to seize their mandate to correspond with human rights, but instead Sen alluded that there should be focus on avoiding downside risks. He also states that the obligation to provide basic education is to assist the human being satisfy one’s right to security through reducing their exposure to illiteracy and innumeracy.

In his work Sen also acknowledges that social responsibility is not for the state alone but rather all other institutions and agencies that can assist in promoting human rights and reduce human insecurity. This signifies the need for a functional system in the provision of education as a human right. In Sen’s paper, he only made emphasis on India as the host country of the conference they had on, thus leaving out the plight of other developing countries. He however

notes that basic education is the foundation for humans to get jobs and gainful employment that is income secure and ability to live with relative poverty rather than absolute poverty.

Sen also states that education helps the human being in having the ability to understand legal rights that surrounds their existence, thus showing that when one knows his/her legal rights, participation is increased and equality is attained thereby showing a link between education and development. There is however the realization that Sen's work is much derived from the East that is Asia and the Middle East. Therefore this study will come up with concrete evidence that basic education may be successful as a tool of economic and social empowerment in Zimbabwe and Africa at large

HDI does not clearly outline how exactly basic education plays a fundamental role in the development process at individual level. Another weakness of the literature on education by the Human Development report is the aspect of educational project funding. There is no clear basis on how educational projects should be handled so as to be sustainable. The First Vice-President of ECOSOC, Mr. Milos Koterec, "Education is a human right; it is the heart of sustainable development of any country", emphasized "It is critical to the development of individuals and societies, and it helps pave the way to a successful and productive future" But these writings are missing out the aspect of how quality education can be attained in the developing world. This study seeks to fill in the gaps left out on the already published scholarly review on education programs.

UNICEF came up with human rights based approach to education for all, and this came as a legal framework in the process of the realization of children's rights to education. This approach was intended to guide Education for All partnerships in trying to breakthrough from the oratory of the right to education and rather to concrete and accelerated interventions for the attainment of EFA goals and the MDG#2. The key strength of their literature was its focus on primary basic education. Their literature also heavily drew to its key points from *The Manual on Rights Based Education*, by Katarina Tomasevski (1998-2004). This UNICEF document states that education is a fundamental right to all human beings thus it is universal and inalienable thereby should be enshrined in several international and national laws.

The Human rights-based approach to education for all states that there is need to provide access to education for traditionally marginalized groups inclusive of girls and women, indigenous populations, remote rural groups, migrants, people with disabilities as well as linguistic and cultural minorities. This supports the framework of the ETF as it also had the mandate to encompass the above mentioned groups that are mostly isolated in most development activities in the developing world. The approach also states that education is a primary driver in which the economic and socially marginalized adults and children should and must lift themselves and use education as a way out of poverty thereby capacitating themselves with abilities to fully participate in the communities they survive and live in.

In the document's foreword the United Nations Special Reporter on the rights to Education, Vernor Munoz, noted that schooling should be respectful to all human rights that is, it should be

conducive for the learning process. This gives a clear guideline to basic tenants of quality education. However this approach considers the negative aspect in their findings that international target for access will not be met. They acknowledge that challenges in achievement of quality education are even greater. However this study will out pin other challenges that have been encountered in the process of attaining education for all but have not received much attention. This will assist policy formulation and implementation at national level to come up with pieces of legislation that will curb unaccounted for challenges to the education sector. The study has also derived one of its objective from the approach's finding that there has been neglect on what happens to those that have been put back to mainstream learning and how they can be kept in school and not drop out again, but instead much emphasis has only been put on bringing the children back to formal school.

CHAPTER ONE

Basic Education for all in Zimbabwe -: An Overview

Background of Education Sector in Zimbabwe

This chapter will focus on the statistics surrounding Education in Zimbabwe, the trends of the sector, past interventions to the education sector, the historical background and the trend of education in Umguza District. That information will be assistive in analyzing and assessing the efforts made by the project to attain basic education for all.

Pre Independence Era

The Zimbabwe's education system was merely adopted from the colonial inception period from 1890 up to the birth of Zimbabwe in 1980. Earlier before Zimbabwe gained its independence, Rhodesia's education system growth and development was dominantly characterized by influences from foreign curriculums and the philosophy of education was also derived from the foreign influence. It is however paramount to note that Rhodesia's education system was firstly and exactly extracted from South Africa's curriculum and the philosophy of education. This was because Rhodesia was controlled by British South African Company. As times past by the system gradually developed and the system's influence shifted from South African curriculum influence to the United Kingdom influence. The same system was also characterized by inequalities and restrictions on the natives and was inclusive of segregation along gender, race and economic lines.

This left out most ethnic groups heavily marginalized and thus resulted in undermining of their rights and solely responsible for their underdevelopment. This biased system by the colonial regime had been designed to, by no means allow the black majority to ever realize their capacity but instead, the system made them believe that education was for the whites and the rich, and far worse for boys and leaving the African girl at the bottom the structure Zengeya (2011) states that though development has been noted when tracing the history of Zimbabwe's education sector, the system has had continued strong challenges related to policy formulation and implementation. This leaves the researcher with the realization that without proper policies, financial assistance is bearably of no use. He further notes that the education curriculum debate has not been a new phenomenon but rather has been raging for over 100 years from previously Rhodesian up to present day Zimbabwe.

The growth of Zimbabwe's education was also surrounded by a neglect kind of attitude towards the provision of this service in the early years. The system was designed in a way that only rich parents could afford to send their children to schools. This made the attainment of basic education for the native population impossible since they could not afford due to the racial discrimination that was prevailing at that time. With the focus on United Kingdom on education systems there was the provision of examination boards in Rhodesia and this was an achievement in the country's developments on education. Though this system still had a great challenge as it fore saw an estimated 70% of dropout rates at primary level of Africans due to continued racial barriers. With the attainment of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe came with a number of drastic changes in policy formulation and implementation around all ministries. There was the

establishment of a ministry responsible for education and thus its key responsibility was to empower and improve the livelihoods of the previously marginalized blacks.

Post Independence Era

Zengeya (2011) postulates that the new education system that emerged at independence was mainly focused on decolonization, abolition of racial barriers and provision of democratic system of access to education as well as provision of a local curriculum that could suit the needs of the economy. Zvobgo (1994) states that this move was more of a promotion of socialism and social systems transformation to equality. During 1980 to 1990 period known as the socialism decade in Zimbabwe, donors assisted the government in facilitating free basic education and learning facilities rapidly increased and this fore saw an increase in primary schools by 51% and the enrolment increased by 94% (Government of Zimbabwe 1998)

The doubling up of enrolment compared to the increase of number of schools was succumbed by the “hot seating” system also known as the double session. This system managed to accommodate about 40 times the enrolment of pre-independence era. (Government of Zimbabwe 1987) Promotion rates from primary to secondary to secondary are said to have increased by 100% within a year after independence. This growth was also supported by the 245 % increase of secondary schools. The overall growth of primary school enrolment remained positive up to 2000. However analysis have shown that from 1996 and onwards, signs of slowing down of the system’s growth became visible. The major reason for this slowed growth was due to the economic meltdown that the country was going through after the failure of the USSR, abolition

of the socialist system and the coming of the ESAPs (Zengeya 2011). In the 90s the government of Zimbabwe reintroduced the concept of tuition fees in urban primary schools as a cost recovery measure after the economic lapse due to the previously mentioned ESAPS. In a way this move opposed the policies they had brought to the table during the early years of independence which were clearly suitable for the attainment of basic education. However they had ignored that though Zimbabwe had been independent there was still a continued economic barrier in most households thus the newly introduced system was possibly going to be an economic recovery but a heavy blow on the social well being of Zimbabwe and affect attendances of primary schools.

However some scholars postulates that primary school sector showed resilience most probably due to donor support especially UNICEF (Ministry of Education Sports and Culture 2010). Zinyama (2009) suggests that with the analysis on the research on the socio-economic challenges that Zimbabwe has encountered from 2000 to date has resulted in a serious impact on its education system and the provision of quality education. He further suggests that the decline in the provision of quality education was an attribution of hyper inflationary economy, the crippled and falling budgetary allocations, the departure of teachers and other education personnel to greener pastures outside the country and the political instability that the country was facing, which was also responsible for even challenges in local examination boards in relation to curriculum review. This resulted in an increase in national dropout rates and enrolments lowered too. Zengeya (2009) furthers the assertion by stating that the falling enrolment also led to serious underutilization of education as a means for human development. Coltart (2011) stated that the ability of the Zimbabwean government to provide quality education was seriously compromised. He noted that the national pass rate in Zimbabwe drastically deteriorated since 2006 to its peak in

the country's worst economic era of 2008. This is believed to have been due to the poor curriculum, unavailability of teachers and the other factors that came forth due to the prevailing economic hardships that the country was facing, which also undermined the proper budgetary allocation to the ministry. Coltart further acknowledges that textbook supplies, which parents largely financed from their own pockets, had deteriorated. This was now almost similar to the colonial era where by the rich only could afford to provide quality education for their children, that is undermining the attainment of basic education for all.

UNICEF estimated that about 15 children in primary schools in Zimbabwe shared one textbook in core subjects. The unavailability of adequate resources also had an impact on the enrolment and attendances in primary education. The decrease in the government's funding of the education sector left schools with no choice but instead to rely on tuition fees and levies to supplement salaries and use for infrastructure development as well as daily operational costs. Thus this fore saw an increase in these fees and extensively being an economic barrier on the poverty stricken population in rural areas and even the whole of Zimbabwe. Coltart (2011) noted that the disproportional unavailability of resources always affects the marginalized and at the end of the cycle and gender inequalities amongst other challenges is fore seen.

Past Interventions encouraging Basic Education for All

Brown (2003) made an observation that up to the date of his publication in 2003 there as an estimated 100 million children who had never attended school at all worldwide. He states that some do start school but later drop out due to reasons mostly associated with economic issues

and financing. These economic and financial hardships are what Fay Chung the former Minister of Education in Zimbabwe (1988-1993) articulates that the government of Zimbabwe could only abolish through provision of free basic education for all because they have played a fundamental role in the rise and increase of dropout figures. Therefore it is important for the researcher to find out on how best the government of Zimbabwe together with other non state actors has put in the education system after the abolishing of the socialist systems in the first decade of Zimbabwe.

After the abolition of the socialist approach to education development in Zimbabwe the government of Zimbabwe introduced an economic blueprint known as Zimbabwe Program for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST). This intervention and initiative was put to action between the years 1996 to 2000. ZIMPREST advocated for the decentralization of certain functions to local authorities. This made the service provision of the education sector better since provincial and district personnel were now conducting the academic business of their schools. This also fore saw the infrastructure development of schools and an increase in the number of primary schools. It is however important to note that financing of the sector was at a high risk due to the economic instability of the country. Forojolla (1993) articulates that priorities in aspects of development have resulted in seriously improper allocation of resources in third world countries. He states that despite the promises made by the international community (UNESCO/UNICEF), about 97% of the education budget came from the national budget of developing countries and only 3% was from the international community

The little effort by the international community to address the school dropouts' cases which had been largely as a result of economic factors, the Government of Zimbabwe introduced the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM). This initiative was meant to pay levies, school and examination fees for children from disadvantaged families as well as orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). This initiative was put to action in 2001 by the government of Zimbabwe. As the economy become even more crippled with the years from the 2001 and onwards this initiative became hard to complete because the government at some point had no money to cater for those under this scheme. There was also the realization of unavailability of resources for the learning system there by during the Government of National Unity (GNU), a call for international partners to assist was made.

The Education Transition Fund was launched in 2009. The first phase of ETF focused on the emergency revitalization of the education sector which had turned sour after the 2008 era. UNICEF recorded that about 94% of schools in Zimbabwe were closed during this worst economic meltdown. This initiative came in to address the issue of availability of resources and the distribution of essential school stationery and core textbooks for primary and secondary schools. The fund was subdivided into two phases thus leaving second phase with a the transitional nature of the second phase which fore saw the program proceeding under the direction of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

This shows that the second phase adhered to the Strategic Plan of the ministry and focused more on the systems and structures that provides education and as well had the mandate to build the capacity of MoPSE, including Zimbabwe's teachers to deliver quality and relevant education for

all. The program focused on investing resources at the school level across the country through the development of a block grants initiative with the aim of reducing user fee costs for all learners. This was the right kind of initiative that the country needed after a long economic struggle that strangled its provision of education as a right. The study will assess if possibly this initiative and intervention managed to open door for basic education or not and if so, what could have been the possible reasons for failure

School Dropout Statistics in Zimbabwe's Education Sector

The population census (2012) states that 6717229 persons were of the school going age and of this population 49% are males, leaving 51% as women. Statistics have shown that nationally children who are aged 5-9 years who have never been to school dropped from 39% in 2004 to 26% in 2011. This reflects that the portion of children who never attended school decreased as the ages increased. ZDHS (2012) also notes that the primary school going age (5-14years) that were in the school in 2011 were 78, 9 % whilst those that dropped out were 1.7 % and the rest that never attended school at all were 28, 4%. These alarming figures resulted in the implementation of back to school programs under the ETF such as ZALP amongst others in Umguza District.

School attendance in rural areas is even worse than in urban areas which clarify why ETF targeted rural schools at most though it was also hosted by urban schools. 91, 76% of primary school children were attending school in rural Zimbabwe in 2011 whilst 94, 15 % of the population in urban areas were in school. 3, 35% had dropped out of formal school in rural

schools whilst 2 % in urban areas had dropped out. 4, 8% of the population in rural school has never attended school at all whilst only 3, 5% is recorded in urban areas of Zimbabwe. This trends supports the assertion that the researcher pinpointed earlier that poor education reforms usually affect the access to basic education for the marginalized populace. ZDHS also states that 69, 4% of the national population attained a bit of primary education but did not complete whilst only 24, 4% completed primary level. This shows that a decrease in promotion rates is a result of failure to complete basic primary education.

Overall there was the realization that as the grade improves the number of dropouts increased. However in 2012, ZDHS states that 9, 1% of children were not making it to grade 2 whilst 7, 3% of the population dropped out before sitting for their grade seven local examinations which are a benchmark for the completion of basic education in Zimbabwe. These statistics shows that there are a lot of loopholes in the education sector that need to be addressed so as the state to attain basic education for all.

Education in Umguza District

Umguza district is situated in Matabeleland North which is in the lower south Western parts of Zimbabwe. Parts of this district are peri-urban as they are situated at the outskirts of Bulawayo Metro. Umguza district is also well known for its vast mineral deposits and a number of agricultural activities that could possibly sustain the livelihoods of its population. However besides these added advantages it has been recorded to have the worst poverty rates in Matabeleland North as well as very dismal pass rates. The availability of resources even from

remittance flows from neighboring countries such as South Africa and Botswana should be a reflect that the District's education related problems have little to nothing related to financing. However it should be noted that education in Umguza has been undermined by factors such as long distances travelled to school, poor infrastructure for both learning and housing the teachers, availability of teachers and the remoteness of some of its schools.

As a province Matabeleland north enrolled 177527 pupils at primary level in 556 schools in 2011. These figures show that an average class in one of the province's school would have approximately 47 pupils. In an evenly distributed main power system the teacher pupil ratio is not so far from the recommended standard by the UNICEF but once again, the availability of trained personnel. In the findings of the study, the researcher noted that Deli Primary School had only 6 trained teachers including the school head. This is a reflection that without paying attention to the tenants of quality education, basic education for all cannot be attained.

As mentioned in the introduction of the research, Umguza District schools are clustered and special attention is paid to the Nyamandlovu cluster which is in Umguza West. This is where higher primary school dropouts were recorded than in other clusters thus three schools from that cluster were selected to be sites (ZALP sites) that were to host the project, namely Zimdabule, Deli and Mathabiswana Primary Schools. A GIZ back to school pioneer pilot project was also hosted by one of the schools in this cluster. However it is noted that even with the existence of such programs school attendance has remained low. Accumulative figures were noted during the running of the project but it also faced a number of challenges in keeping the pupils in formal

school due to contributory factors such as illegal gold panning, cropping season effect, neglect from parents and guardians and other psychosocial support related issues that will be uncovered in the next chapter.

Chapter Summary

This chapter gave a detailed background of the education sector from Zimbabwe at large up to the area of study. There was the realization that the dropout scenario was a national crisis and trends have shown that poor policies surrounding the provision of this service have resulted in undermined provision of basic education. This chapter has also reflected that the availability of minerals in Umguza district has contributed to the increase in dropout rates in a way thus showing that besides absolute poverty being visible in Umguza District, there are other factors that could be possibly solely responsible for the persistent dismal performance of the education sector in the area. This historical background of the education sector of Zimbabwe assists the researcher to do an analysis on the trends in which the education sector has gone through and possible reasons for the failures of the previous interventions. This authenticates the need for the Education Transition Fund to address the continued challenges that the previous interventions had solely failed to put an end to. To curb it all, policy formulation and budgetary allocation has proven to be lacking in the education sector of Zimbabwe thus the coming in of the ETF would possibly improve the education sector through improved and increased access to basic education.

CHAPTER 2

THE ETF AND ITS INFLUENCE ON BASIC EDUCATION FOR ALL LEVELS IN UMGUZA DISTRICT

Introduction

This chapter will focus on the intended outcomes of the ETF and or against the findings from the study conducted. This will reveal the loopholes of the project and further progress to possible solutions to the failures that the researcher encountered during conducting the research

Roll out of the ETF

As it has been mentioned earlier that the ETF was in a two phase form, with the first one deep rooted in the provision of teaching and learning facilities such as teacher's books and textbooks, whilst the second phase of ETF was based on second chance education thus had much contribution to the provision of basic education. The second phase of ETF's main objective was to support the Ministry responsible for the provision of education in preparing at least a targeted 40000 out of school learners for reintegration and access to formal education system. The project was reported quarterly at partner level with its progress on activities planned and grouped quarterly. This in a way was a programming aspect which the researcher noted as a fruitful method on issues pertaining the monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the project

The project's first specific objective was to build the capacity of schools to be able to reintegrate the above mentioned target of the out of school learners. This objective was to be attained through a number of activities with the first being conducting provincial and district entry meetings. This was the first stage of the process of improving the access to basic education for

all in all the province and the district being case studied. Entry meetings are more of stakeholder mapping in the development of a project as this paves way and gives access to services providers or those who want to assist towards the common cause in the specific area of need. Paying special attention to Matabeleland north and Umguza District, the indicator for that activity was the number of provincial and district meetings and this indicator had a target of 10 meetings per quarter. Efforts put by the implementing partner in this area managed to actually conduct all the 10 meetings as per the target and in addition this activity managed to reach out to a total of 129 parents and guardians.

Community awareness meetings were also conducted and the number of participants attending community meetings was the indicator of this activity. Community awareness as a development intervention are meant to mobilize the community which is largely constitutes of one of the very important partner in the provision of children's right to access of basic education that is parents and guardians of the beneficiaries. Conducting of community awareness was more of an eye opener and informer to the parents and guardians on the importance of basic education to their children and the development of a country at large. This activity was accompanied by the establishment of the accelerated learning program sites. This fore saw the establishment of 3 sites in Umguza District. Identification and registration of out of primary school children and youths was also conducted and Umguza District surpassed the sites target of 150 pupils and instead acquired an accumulative figure of 161 registered out of school persons. This accumulative figure highlighted that stakeholders in the provision of children's right to basic education had well received the implementation of such a project in their area

The second phase of ETF also managed to train facilitators on non formal teaching methods. The facilitators were to be the ones responsible for the second chance pupils. These pupils needed special attention as compared to those in mainstream formal learning circuit since some had been out of school for long periods stretching to about 5 years and some had encountered psychological trauma due to being out of school, thus the researcher will address these trends as challenges faced by pupils resulting in dropping out. The project's indicator for this activity was the number of trained facilitators thus the target for the area under study was 12 facilitators and it was surpassed. This facilitator trainings and continued refresher courses empowered these teachers with skills and techniques on how out of school pupils are handled and how best they can be assisted so as to catch up with those in mainstream learning and be able to complete their primary education. In line with the facilitator training, the project also selected and trained supervisors of the project at site level. The supervisors would fore see the deliverance of basic education in the sites and improvement in the access to this provision at station level. Three supervisors were trained in Umguza District since it had three sites.

The researcher noted that most of the activities that were conducted and their set targets all had the mandate to improve the access to basic education for the rural populace in Umguza District. The project also supported the establishment and operation of district forums with key stakeholders of the second chance education. This activity which was much visible in the last quarter of the project was aimed at coming up and fore seeing the way forward to challenges succumbed during the running of the project. Umguza district conducted these district forum meetings and they had the presence of Umguza RDC, ORAP, CRS, WEI *Bantwana*, local business personnel, child protection committees and chiefs

Since the project had a main goal of preparing learners for reintegration into mainstream learning, thus the reintegration model became a key note during the running of the project. This became a yard stick for progress made by sites. The system was also meant to be a promotion system thus an improvement on the promotion rates from basic education secondary education. It should be noted that one of the key successes of the project was that some pupils set for their grade seven examinations. The system of reintegration brought about competition in the classroom setup among the learners and also decreased the stigmatization of the former dropouts. This fore saw the reintegration of a total of 25 pupils in Umguza, with 16 being female and 9 males. It should however be noted that the researcher noted a number of successes of the project and as well as failures in the attainment of basic education in Umguza District.

Successes of the ETF

It is without doubt that the intervention was quite relevant and appropriate to address some of the challenges that were largely faced by the out of school children. It is also paramount to note that the program revealed quite a number of lessons learnt and notable successes.

Increased school enrolment and Reduced school dropouts

ETFs major success is derived from its objectives. The project's ability to surpass the given targets shows that they had underestimated the number of out of school persons but however still managed to not restrict their assistance to the targeted figure but instead exceed by all possible means. The accumulative 161 beneficiaries in the district is a visible sign of increased school enrolment in the host sites. During the period of data collection the researcher discovered that

though the project stopped in May 2015, Deli had the highest total school enrolment of 352 pupils as per third term 2015 whilst it had recorded 291 pupils in June 2013. Mathabiswana Primary school also improved its total school enrolment from 281 pupils in 2013 to 332 pupils in 2015 (third term). Zimdabule Primary school's total enrolment only increased during the first two terms of the project that is the second and third term of 2013. However it should be noted that due to its remoteness children later continued dropping out due the distance factor amongst other factors.

Improved pass rates

The pass rates of the host sites showed that the project had an impact on the overall pass rate of a school and even the district itself. During the first year of the project Deli recorded 56.25% as of 2013 from 12.5% in 2012. In 2014 its pass rate was 57.778%. These figures clearly show that the project had an impact on the pass rates of the host sites as drastic change was noted during the first year of the project. Mathabiswana recorded 10.256% as of 2013 from a dismal 4.26% in 2012, and then later recorded 12.82% in 2014. However it should be noted that this indicator was not fruitful in all three sites, as Zimdabule fore saw dropping figures in pass rates. In 2013 it recorded 12.5% from a 6.25% in 2012 but however dropped in 2014 to 8.824. Much blame has been put on the continued dropping out of pupils and distance travelled to this site as a hindrance to the attainment of better results. The district as a whole also fore saw changes in its overall pass rates though these figures were affected by other schools in the district thus the figures were fluctuating throughout the course of the project. In 2013 the District recorded 16.07% which dropped from 23.92% in 2012. An improvement in 2014 was noted as it recorded 23.059%. Through the data collection process as the researcher interviewed the Ministry personnel, there

was a finding that the project had played a fundamental role in the improvement of pass rates as it brought back to school some pupils who were intelligent but had dropped out due to circumstances beyond their control. Their existence in back to school was also viewed as a challenge to those in mainstream learning thus resulted in intensive efforts by those in mainstream to produce better results.

Improved Literacy Rates

Through interactions with the project beneficiaries and the facilitators, the researcher noted that the ability to read and write had improved. Some of these beneficiaries had never been to school at all and thus could not read and write completely but through the accelerated learning system that grouped them according to their level of understanding in academics, assisted the facilitators on were exactly to start with these students. As the student was enrolled with the program, they were given an entrance test which would determine whether the pupil will be in Level 1(grade 1-3), Level 2(grade 4-5) or Level 3(grade 6-7). Through attending school, the beneficiaries understanding continuously changed and the appreciation of basic education also changed in some beneficiaries.

Improved promotion rates

Community involvement and support was also a success of the ETF. The community played a profound role in uniform mobilizations and this greatly reflected the acceptance of the project in the area. This acceptance should also be noted that it resulted in the community, which comprises of the parents and guardians of these children, being able to release them so that they

attend the next level of education. The support included old uniforms as well as new ones from well wishers and from income generating activities linked to the ALP project for the purposes of meeting school related expenses and for program continuity, though some of these IGPs were short lived. The poultry projects and gardening were the most common IGPs established in Umguza District. As the researcher interviewed the project beneficiaries and guardians, there was a realization that perceptions about education in Umguza District had changed. This was also highlighted by an improvement in the promotion rates that is the number of pupils who are able to proceed to the next level education which is the secondary level. The researcher noted that neglect had also played a big part as hindrance to access to basic education, but ETF had managed to overcome that, as some parents completely showed concern for their children's education after attending a number of community awareness meetings.

Pupil Textbook Ratio

The learning environment was made conducive for the project beneficiaries through the provision of learning material such as crayons, pencils, pens, books and rulers which research has proved to be basic necessities in the provision of quality education. Each grade 4-7 beneficiary was entitled to 9 mathematics exercise books, 3 plain books, 9 writing exercise books, 3 pencils, 3 pens and 2 rulers per term. Grade 1-3 project beneficiaries were also entitled to crayons as well as sketch pads together with 4 pencils, 3 plain books and 4 pencils per term. This provision came as a result that most of these pupils had been out of school due to financial reasons thus could not afford to acquire these learning materials. The provision of these materials was assistive in the psychosocial support to the beneficiaries and made them have the feel of being in school without any form of discrimination. Further textbooks were disbursed to these 3

sites and they were a further boast to the batch that the schools received during the first phase of ETF. It should be noted that this was an achievement for the project as this fore saw some children feeling the need to also be part of the project than be at home and failing to attend basic education.

Increased access to Quality Education and Improvement on the Quality of Education in Umguza

Provision of equal opportunities in assessment for the project beneficiaries and conventional learners through writing same tests and end of year examinations reduced discrimination in the school set up. The researcher noted that some of these beneficiaries even performed better than those in the conventional classes. These cases were noted through the conducted interviews in Deli Primary school and Mathabiswana Primary school. These three schools also came up with an initiative of issuing out of End of Term reports which motivated the project beneficiaries and proved to improve learners' performance due to competition amongst themselves. They also motivated their pupils by buying presents for those that were performing well academically and by so doing it was one of the project's success. The project's beneficiaries also held consultations and these yielded better parent and teacher relationships. This fore saw parents being actively involved in improvement of their children's access to basic education. This was highlighted in a profound way even through attendances of beneficiary guardians and parents to school functions such as sports and consultations at Mathabiswana primary school.

Motivation of pupils in the back to school program, through prize giving and merit awards was also a great innovative idea which came along with the running of the project in Umguza was

solely a great success in the improvement of psychosocial support to the back to school program beneficiaries. Engagement with stakeholders and establishment of links for the purposes of complementing the project also came along with these prize giving ceremonies. This resulted in Mathabiswana leveraging support from donors such as the USACF and the One World Futbol (SHED). Integration of those in the back to school into the convectional (Main school) activities also highlighted a great improvement in the provision of basic education for all through the back to school program in Umguza District. The integration was inclusive of co-curricular activities such as drum majorettes, football and athletics and it enabled children to largely contribute to a positive integrated school environment and culture.

The project's inclusion of disabled pupils also highlights great success towards the improvement of access to basic education level. The program was designed not to discriminate or stigmatize learners. The ALP had a disability inclusion component. The referral systems were strengthened and the learners with conditions that needed assistance were referred to the Special Needs Education (SPNE) for further assessment and referrals to schools with enabling environment. Gender mainstreaming also highlighted the project's need to improve the existence and easy access to quality basic education in Umguza District and rural Zimbabwe at large. This was noted by the rapid rise of the girl child out of school numbers, turning up for the back to school program

Engagement of Child Protection Committees

At partner level, the roles and responsibilities of the duty bearers were somewhat well defined. The duty bearers that often supported the activities were as follows, District education officers, District social services, community leaders and other NGOs. These roles included monitoring the projects' implementation and long run by the implementing partners. Engagement with the communities through the awareness and feedback meetings resulted in the meaningful participation of the community. In addition to this, the community leaders were tasked with the role of sensitising the community and ensuring that parents register their children in the project. The level of participation of Child Protection Committees (CPCs) differed by area but was solely impressive.

The links between these CPCs and the school as well as the referral systems were quite efficient. 3 cases of children with complex home situations of abuse were noted at Mathabiswana. Throughout the running of the project it was noted that there was continuous feedback with the CPCs in the District. Child backgrounds were recorded in partnership with the child protection. This exercise was fruitful as it unpacked not only the vulnerability status of the learners but also revealed the underlying factors contributing to poverty and drop outs. Some of the factors revealed were the issue of dysfunctional families. It was noted with grave concern that dysfunctional families also affect the learners' access to basic education. Some of the guardians visited or summoned to school were not seeing the value of education, thus not concerned about the attendance of their children. As much as these highlighted successes reflect that the project played a fundamental role in trying to improve the access to basic education for all in Umguza

District, the researcher also encountered a number of challenges and failures that ETF succumbed from implementation to the end of the project.

Failures and Challenges faced by ETF

There were quite number of notable challenges that were encountered during the period program implementation. The challenges that impeded the progress of the program were inclusive of lack of buy in by MOPSE-Delayed provision of signed MOUs which directly resulted in the limited participation of the Ministry officials. In the light of the above the back to school program at times seemed as a standalone project for the implementing partners. Furthermore this saw partners being left with constrained access to ALP schools. Late disbursements of funds affected programming quality and the achievement of some outcomes. Most activities were suspended for the better part of the project implementation period. In addition to this low morale was noted amongst the ZALP facilitators who complained about not receiving their allowances on time. There were limited resources allocated for monitoring and supervision therefore in this regards the documentation of success stories was limited. Beneficiary verifications were limited to ALP sites. Absenteeism continued to be rife during the entire project. The high rates were reported in Zimdabule due to its remoteness. An analysis of the attendance registers revealed a significant 50% attendance.

Continued Dropouts

One of the crucial points to note was the issue of drop outs noted within the program. Despite the continued mobilizations and registrations, a number of drop outs were recorded across all the

districts. The monitoring findings highlighted some of the reasons for drop outs within the ZALP project. Firstly the drop out within the ALP learners was allied to the fact that the pupils are not seeing the benefit of the project, the curriculum does address their needs, such as appreciation of vocational trainings. A significant number of learners dropped due to relocations and during the course of the project, the number accumulated to 43 with Deli Primary School recording the highest number of dropouts which was 19 children. This was due to small scale farmers resettlement after the farm they occupied was redistributed and commissioned to be a commercial farm. Only 3 cases were for early marriages which were noted at Zimdabule Primary School while 13 had dropped out due to lack of interest. Mathabiswana had 8 dropouts which was the lowest dropout number of beneficiaries during the course of the project

Lack of interest was also highlighted, as follow ups done by the facilitators revealed that some of those learners did not have valid reasons for not attending school thus it was deduced as lack of interest. The completion of grade 7 exams saw decline in attendance and this can be attributed to the fact that beneficiaries perceived that there was not much being done since they had wrote their exams which marked the completion of basic education. Thus most of them did not see the reason for being at school and this psychological effect can be derived from the parental and guardian attitude towards the importance of education. Age also had a bearing on the drop outs rates. Most of these learners were mature and old and they felt too old to be part of a basic education program. Through interviews the researcher noted lack of interest in the pupils on the accelerated learning system, but instead wanted life skill equipping subjects such as metal fabrication and wood work amongst others. Only those who had never been to conventional school at all showed interest in this learning system.

Another critical issue noted was that of child labour. Parents viewed these learners as potential for labour so children drop out because they have household obligations such as herding cattle. The cropping season also took precedence as these learners were expected to be home to assist their families. The value that is attached to education was also raised as another major cause for concern contributing to high dropout rates. The DEO of Umguza District further pointed out that due to the vast cultural dynamics associated with that region in the district, members of the community generally do not take education seriously and hence, as a result prefer their children to do household chores and engage in casual labour.

Failed provision of some tenants of Quality education

One of the challenges that were encountered was the lack of effort in creating disability friendly environment though the program accepted learners with disability. The term trainings conducted seemed to have paid less attention to the handling of children with disabilities as a way of curbing the gaps that existed. Trainings for capacitating DLLCs were inadequate, thus support provided to schools was rather limited. In addition to this, such a gap was allied to inadequate resources. Shortage of exchange visits amongst schools for the purposes of strengthening the less viable sites. Platforms for addressing psychosocial support issues noted among children were very limited, thus it was difficult for most schools to use the referral systems. Lack of documentation skills and record keeping were noted at all three sites. The gendered dynamics of the girl child programming was a bit lacking. It was noted with grave concern that there was a need to provide sanitary wear for a girl child as some of the project beneficiaries were teenagers who are already on their menstrual cycle thus cases of failure to attend school during their menstrual periods were noted.

Unclear way forward for project beneficiaries

Project continuity which remained uncertain, envisaged that teaching will stop once the partners withdrew, mainly due to financial challenges. Unclear discussions by the stakeholders and implementing partners on the learner transition to secondary schools were also one of the major failures of the ETF. During the collection of data and research it was noted that the provision of learning material for the pupils created a dependency syndrome to the parents and guardians and resulted in them being too reluctant on providing for their children so as to have easy and enjoyable access to basic education.

The research also noted that parents and guardians of the beneficiaries did not have the feel of ownership of the project, this shows that continuity of improved access to basic education was undermined as they saw the project as being owned by the implementing partners. The researcher also found out that the project did not exactly address the source of the reasons for being out of school such as distances travelled to school and home based problems such as neglect. This task was left to be handled by care givers, but there is the realization that implementing partners should also be involved in addressing this challenge. Through interactions with the Umguza District populace there was a realization that the area received quit a reasonable amount of remittances from relatives and family members in neighboring countries but still failed to send their children to school for basic education. In a way this was also a challenge because the children felt no need to be at school as their saw their elderly and uneducated brothers surviving in the neighboring countries though they ignore the sustainability of their lives in the foreign countries and the importance of basic education.

The programming aspect also failed to create viable linkages for those who would have completed their basic education into secondary schools. Donors were supposed to be linked to the beneficiaries and the project's sustainability would have been seen through creation of promotion methods such as scholarships. The project's sustainability is also questionable as it only ran for 2 years. This means that at the end of the project that were left in level one and two would remain out of school as long as SDCs and schools administrations have failed to come up with tangible income generating projects that would keep them in school.

Attendance of lessons by beneficiaries after those in conventional learning have finished school was also a loop hole noted in the programming of ETF. This was a form of discrimination as beneficiaries were forced to attend to household chores and other rural-setup related tasks before attending school and resulting in them attending school tired and reducing their participation. Some of the beneficiaries opened up during the research and mentioned the project as time wasting and hindrance to their tasks that could make them money for themselves. Although they used classrooms like other pupils but their time of attendance made them not to feel comfortable especially those with ages that were above the general range of being in primary school. It should be noted that these beneficiaries were being taught by already trained teachers who had their own classes to attend to during the conventional school timetable, which is why they taught the ETF classes afterwards. These encountered challenges are literally a sign of something missing in the programming aspect and this also entails that although some targets were surpassed, there are also factors that were ignored but are vital in the child programming field.

Chapter Summary

The findings in this chapter revealed the loopholes and strengths of the child centered initiative and thus this leaves the researcher with a mandate to find possible solutions to the challenges encountered during the implementation of ETF. This chapter also managed to lay out whether the intended outcomes according to the conceptual framework were attained and whether the project did well more than harm in the area or the other way round. This chapter also managed to pave way for a suggestion of a way forward to the problems encountered, which will assist improve the programming aspect of future programs related to the ETF and will also assist to come up with even better programming techniques pertaining to child programming.

CHAPTER 3

ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ETF

Introduction

This chapter outlines the ways in which ETF could have been a success and what could be possibly done to improve the programming aspect of ETF and other child centered projects. This chapter also outlines the way forward for the continued improvement of better access to basic education in Umguza District.

It is imperative to acknowledge that ETF objectives were to improve the access to basic education directly and indirectly, though one cannot divorce the fact that challenges were encountered. As mentioned in the conceptual framework that certain indicators were supposed to be seen as the project progressed but in the presentation of findings and data analysis, the researcher realized that not all of these indicators were visible and some were only noted at the onset of the project and later decreased and got back to the normal surrounding situation. Findings on attendance rates displayed a loophole in the programming aspect of the project as less effort was put to improve the attendances. In the previous chapter the researcher made mention of continued dropout cases and failure to attend school by those already part of the project, as failures of the project, thus coupled with the above failures and successes, one ought to state and recommend solutions on how best can the access to basic education be improved. These recommendations will be distributed using the stakeholder sequence. Under the stakeholders one ought to give solutions to these failures firstly from service provision that is how best child provision can improve the access to basic education for all in Umguza District

and even the country at large. Secondly the researcher will allude on recommendations pertaining to child participation and improvement of the state to access to basic education in the area of study through ETF and other child centered programming related to this project. Thirdly child protection related recommendations will also be noted under the recommendations to various stakeholders in the project. Using the above mentioned criterion, recommendations will be clustered according to stakeholders in the service provision of basic education for all.

Recommendations to the Government and National policy formulators

This is an essential partner in the provision of the education service thus their position on enhancing effectiveness of education projects and other initiatives to resuscitate the education sector is crucial. Thus the researcher recommends that:

- The government should have constant and regular visits on remote site schools so as to know how best these school could be assisted to improve the quality of education service provision. These visits will also allow the government through the relevant ministry, to know areas of special need in their country
- The government should see to it that even remote schools have improvement on the education system management tools which will optimally maintain and utilize the sector's resources directly towards the improvement of the service provision
- Packages for those who cannot afford to pay for basic education should be put in place. Besides the existence of BEAM, the government should continuously engage the private sector, business people and companies to assist improve the access to basic education for all

- The government should also promote exchange visits for its ministry responsible with other developed country so as to improve its abilities on how best they can improve access to basic education and reduce school dropouts and complete non attendance
- The government should equip the ministry with adequate monitoring and evaluation tools so that they could do follow ups on drop outs and on children who are not attending school but should be in school
- The government should see to it that more schools are built in rural areas as the population increases and this will lessen distances travelled by children to school as it has proved to be an obstacle towards the attainment of basic education in rural Zimbabwe

Recommendations to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

This is the ministry responsible for the provision of education to the Zimbabwean population. It is imperative to have recommendations for this cluster of stakeholders as they run the education system from national level down to provincial and lastly district level thus the recommendations will be aimed at improving the overall access to basic education all over Zimbabwe

- The ministry should coordinate links between the education system and other sectors that deal with the provision of other children's rights such as the health sector, the water and sanitation, social services and protection committees as well as rural development agencies as this will address the reasons for child drop outs and obstacles hindering their attendance to convectional learning system
- The ministry should also resource the learning system so as to make the learning process and culture enjoyable and reduce dropping out due to continued failure and boredom

- The ministry should coordinate and conduct workshops to come up with strategies for enhancing inclusiveness in the provision of basic education and promotion of psychosocial support for those children who would have been reintegrated into the mainstream
- The ministry should also see to it that at every school there should be adequate access to child protection facilities so as to lessen suppression of children's rights
- There should be a strengthened institutional capacity within the ministry in the management of schools. This could be attained through engaging information and technology companies so as to strengthen the system of tracking out of school children so as to find out what could be the reasons behind dropping out
- The ministry should have at least two teacher training refresher courses for all teachers a year so as to improve their psychosocial support skills

Recommendations to NGOs and Donors

NGOs as the implementing partners in the project played a crucial role in the running of the project thus the programming aspect is a vital tool which determines the success or failure of a project. Recommendations to this cluster of stakeholders will assist upcoming projects proposal drafting and approved projects implementation to be sustainable

- Educational projects should have stipulated duration and number of intakes to be enrolled. This will foresee the progress of the project as it won't end before other pupils

complete their grade 7. Thus project time frame and planning should be designed with consideration of the intakes to complete the basic education cycle

- Disbursement of funds should not be delayed as this resulted in some pupils dropping out again due to less efforts being put by the teachers and schools because they would not have received their stipends
- The programming of educational projects should also be inclusive of exchange visits for the project teachers and beneficiaries as this will be assistive in improving the access to basic education through learning best activities from other sites that are doing well
- NGOs should also engage the children so as to know and discover what they have in mind and what they could possibly want to do than just impose activities on them. Programming should be inclusive of children's participation, protection and provision
- NGOs should also link schools with donors for scholarships so as to improve the promotion rates, which have a great impact on access to basic education especially for the less privileged

Recommendations to local authorities

Local leaderships play a vital role in the provision and improvement of access to basic education as they legislate traditional laws thus have the ability to reduce drop out scenarios in their areas

- Local leadership should be actively involved in the operations and daily running of schools in their areas. This would be assistive in figuring out what could be hindering access to basic education and why children are dropping out even without the assistance of NGOs

- Local leaderships should come up with stern measures to punish parents and guardians who don't send their children due to neglect
- Child laboring in disguise of household chores which results in absenteeism should be abolished by local authorities and parents. This will improve every child's access to basic education in rural Zimbabwe

Chapter Summary

The recommendations above are as a result of a realization that there have been loopholes in the provision of education in Umguza District even with the existence of the ETF which was aimed at resuscitating and reviving the education sector. However coupled with the above programming reforms and recommendations there a future possibility of reducing the rates of drop outs, increasing the access to basic education and improvement of the promotion rates to secondary school. This can be noted as a viable way forward to the challenges encountered. Such efforts are of great impact to the improvement of the district literacy rates which also directly contribute to the national literacy rate. These recommendations are useful for further academic researches as they would assist future project programming to avoid possible eras that could end up in doing harm than good

CONCLUSION

Coupled with the findings above, the researcher noted that the continued existence of school drop outs has been a resulting factor of limited access to basic education through financial constraints, social construction and neglect in the area of study. It should be noted that ETF managed to go beyond its targeted figures and managed to improve the state of quality education through provision of textbooks and other learning material which is vital in basic education. It should also be noted that this project was meant to revitalize the education system which was already in shambles and thus judging from the above assessment one can safely conclude that it largely contributed to the sector's resuscitation. Though challenges were faced and failures noted, the researcher ought to note that the obstacles to the attainment of a better access to basic education could be possibly curbed through the recommendations stated and thus avoid future project lapses and failure.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE (STAKEHOLDERS and PARTNERS)

Good Day Sir/Madam.

My name is Mr. Thembela Mbengwa. I am a student studying an Honours Degree in Development Studies at Midlands State University in Zimbabwe and I am currently collecting data for my dissertation.

The title of the dissertation: *“The contribution of the Education Transition Fund (ETF) towards ensuring the attainment of basic Education for all in Umguza District”*. I respect and appreciate your valuable time, but could you please help in answering the following questions. I can assure you that this information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality, and all information given to me will be used for academic research purposes only.

Position of Respondent:

Date:

1. What are your views on the Education Transition Fund?

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2. What are your comments on the programming aspect of the project by the implementing partners?

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3. In your opinion was there adequate psychosocial support for the project beneficiaries?

Yes No

a) If Yes, what were these and were they adequately implemented?

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b) If No, what could have been done to address this gap?

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4. What are the main challenges, if any; did you face as a ministry during the running of the project?

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5. What can be done to address these challenges in child centered project programming?

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6. In your experience in the Education field, what can be possibly done to ensure that children do not drop out of school before they complete their basic education?

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7. In your considered opinion, was the ETF a sustainable approach in improving the access to basic education in rural Zimbabwe? Yes No

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..... a) If Yes,
What really reflected its impact on basic education?

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..... b) If No,
what could have been done to ensure that the ETF sustainable in the provision of basic
education for all in Umguz District?

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8. What other viable opportunities or solutions could you recommend to reduce school dropout
cases as a burden on the provision of basic education for all

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Any further comments or contributions to the subject under study

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE (BENEFICIARIES, PARENTS/GAURDIANS and TEACHERS)

Good Day Sir/Madam.

My name is Mr. Thembela Mbengwa. I am a student studying an Honours Degree in Development Studies at Midlands State University in Zimbabwe and I am currently collecting data for my dissertation.

The title of the dissertation: *“The contribution of the Education Transition Fund (ETF) towards ensuring the attainment of basic Education for all in Umguza District”*. I respect and appreciate your valuable time, but could you please help in answering the following questions. I can assure you that this information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality, and all information given to me will be used for academic research purposes only.

Position of Respondent:

Date:

1. What is your understanding of the project?

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2. How best has it assisted you in improving your livelihoods through education?

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3. Would you want another project similar to this one for the future in your area?

Yes No

