The Afterglows of Whole School Development in Ghana: a case study of semi-rural municipality.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ADP	Accelerated Development Plan
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
BSLC	Basic School Leaving Certificate
CG	Capitation Grant
CPP	Conventional People's Party
CS/s	Circuit Supervisor/s
CSA	Community School Alliance
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DCE/s	District Chief Executive/s
DED/s	District Education Director/s or District Director/s of Education
DEMT/s	District Education Management Team/s
DEPT/s	District Education Planning Team/s
DFID	Department for International Development
DST/s	District Support Team/s
DTST/s	District Teacher Support Team/s
EIU	Economists Intelligence Unit
ERC	Education Review Committee
EQUAL	Education Quality for All
FCUBE	Free and Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GES	Ghana Education Service

GHC	Ghana Cedi
GoG	Government of Ghana
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSET	In-service Education and Training
ISDP	Integrated School Development Process
JHS/s	Junior High School/s
JSS/s	Junior Secondary School/s
JUSTEP	Junior Secondary School Teacher Education Programme
KfW	Reconstruction Credit Institution
LINK(s)/LLS	Linkages in Learning Sequence
MoE	Ministry of Education
MSE	Micro and Small Enterprise
NERP	New Educational Reform Programme
NLC	National Liberation Council
NRC	National Redemption Council
NSCE	New Structure and Content of Education
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PP	Progress Party
PTA/s	Parent Teacher Association/s
QUIPS	Quality Improvement In Primary Schools

RMT/s	Regional Management Team/s
SEO	Senior Education Officer
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SMC/s	School Management Committee/s
SPAM/s	School Performance Appraisal Management/s
SSS/s	Senior Secondary School/s
TLM/s	Teaching and Learning Material/s
TRC/s	Teachers Resource Centre/s
TTC/s	Teacher Training College/s
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WSD	Whole School Development

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Abstract

It is nearly ten years ago when Whole School Development (WSD) in Ghana was officially ended. Yet, most of its structures, systems and practices continue to function in the country. This thesis is based on data collected from a case study of a semi-rural municipality of the country regarding the reasons for its official ending and why despite its official ending, most of the structures, systems and practices continue to function. The thesis also indicates which of the structures, systems and practices are functioning and how well they are functioning.

The study adopted a qualitative research strategy and a case study design and drew on in-depth interviews with policy makers from the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Ghana Ministry of Education (GES) as well as with policy implementers from the case study site. The interviews were complemented with observation, documentary analysis and fieldnotes.

Key issues that emerged from the study include the desire of those in authority to maintain the status quo in favour of their personal interests which resulted in the official ending of WSD, the development of strong organisational capacity, a sense of responsibility, purpose, commitment, professionalism, a change of mind-set and schools' and communities' realisation of the benefits of WSD, which have contributed immensely to the survival of the structures, systems and practices.

Fundamental issues about the rural areas also emerged. These include the parents' low educational background and poverty, which limit their ability to honour their children's educational needs, despite the institutionalisation of the structures, systems and practices of WSD which were intended to improve the quality of, and access to, and participation in, education. Besides, the data revealed the existence of weak internal structural features, which undermine the children's learning environment and result in an excessive drop-out rate and poor learning outcomes with only a few of the children reaching the post-basic education level.

The findings suggest that there are political, social, physical and economic factors that are inimical to improvement in educational quality in Ghana and which need addressing with a change of mindset that is consistent with improvement to enable education to move towards the direction of the expected standard and quality.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Whole School Development (WSD) was introduced in Ghana in 1999 and was officially ended some four years later. Despite its official ending, most of its structures, systems and practices remain in place. This thesis is basically a story about why WSD was officially ended, what have remained of it, why they remain and how well they are functioning. However, to begin with, Creswell (1994) advises that as a way of enhancing the trustworthiness and authenticity of qualitative research, it is expected of the researcher, as the primary data-collection instrument, to identify personal values, assumptions and biases at the beginning of the research. I therefore find it obligatory to briefly introduce my positionality about the study before proceeding to discuss the actual background to the study.

My positionality

My eagerness to undertake this study has been motivated by my previous experiences as a pupil, a teacher and a headteacher in the rural areas of Ghana. Throughout these stages of my life, I experienced poor quality of education and lack of improvement in the delivery and financing of education in these areas even when there were educational reforms that were expected to improve the wellbeing of rural folks. Therefore with the introduction of WSD, I had my own anticipations of its effects in rural areas even before I came into contact with Pryor's (2005) work, which highlights my experience that educational reforms do not usually produce the intended outcomes in rural communities.

Inevitably therefore, I brought certain experiences to the study, which may have influenced my perceptions and understanding of the data I collected. So I need to acknowledge that I began this research with the feeling that even though most of the aspects of WSD have survived, they may not be operating as expected in the rural areas. As a matter of fact, this feeling acted as one of the motivating factors for my choice of a semi-rural rather than an urban

municipality for a case study. Indeed, I was interested in exploring the phenomenon I put under investigation but I was also interested in exploring how well the rural areas are performing. However, notwithstanding my positionality, I have spared no effort in being aware of my role as a researcher as much as I possibly could and have explained how I did this in Chapter three.

Historical background leading to the study

There has been a succession of educational reform efforts in Ghana since 1957 when the country obtained independence from British colonial rule. These reforms have been aimed primarily at developing and improving the country's system of education. A considerable amount of aid funds have been injected into them. Yet, it appears the reforms have not yielded the expected results particularly in the rural schools and disadvantaged districts.

Towards the close of the 1990s, a new educational reform - WSD - was introduced as an intervention strategy for achieving the objectives of the 1996 Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) reform. FCUBE itself was a reform initiative aimed at improving teaching and learning quality, increasing access to basic education and improving management efficiency alongside efficient cost and financing of education (MOE, 1996). Research evidence, by the time of the implementation of WSD, indicates that not much success had been achieved with the FCUBE, particularly in the rural districts. For example, in 'A Study of Primary Teachers' Views About Their Work in the Context of the FCUBE Reform in a Disadvantaged District of Ghana', Kadingdi (2004) noted among other things that pupils' achievement was low, dropout rate was on the ascendancy and some rural schools had dilapidated buildings and lacked basic resources such as teaching and learning aids.

The introduction of WSD was therefore an intervention strategy aimed at boosting the efforts of FCUBE in addressing problems in the education system.

The Problem

WSD was officially ended some four years after its introduction. However, up till now the reasons for its official ending and the continued existence of its structures, systems and practices and how well they are functioning have not been unfolded. Besides, in terms of quality of teaching, empowerment of communities in education decision-making and levels of local ownership of schools, there has been little evidence on the impact of WSD on pedagogy, deeper institutional change and school governance, especially in the rural areas.

Purpose of the study

I had three aims to begin with, namely to explore the circumstances that have created room for the survival of most of the structures, systems and practices of WSD, identify those that have survived and, with particular reference to the rural areas, examine how well those that have survived are functioning, especially in terms of their influence on school governance, pedagogy and institutional change and, thus, reveal the factors that have impacted on WSD for future policies that may be designed to effect long term sustainable changes intended to improve educational quality in the country in general and in its rural areas in particular. However, in the course of the study, I developed one more aim, namely to investigate the causes of the official ending of WSD in order to obtain a holistic understanding of the WSD process, which could then help me to identify significant instruments that could be used for addressing future reform problems.

Research questions

In totality, I investigated the following questions:

1. What were the aims and intended outcomes of WSD?
2. What structures, systems and practices were developed for its implementation?
3. Why was WSD officially ended?
4. Which of the structures, systems and practices of WSD have survived?
5. What have been the challenges of the implementation of WSD?

6. What factors have contributed to the survival of the structures, systems and practices of WSD?

7. How well are the survived systems, structures and practices of WSD working?

8. Which of the structures, systems and processes are good and therefore need to be retained and why?

9. Which of them need to be discarded and why?

10. What has been the impact of WSD on the quality of teaching and community involvement in education delivery and financing, particularly in the rural areas?

11. What major changes in policy could be recommended for quality improvement in schools?

Justification for the Study

First, I intended to help reveal factors that impacted on WSD implementation especially in the rural areas of the case study site, and to suggest a picture of what might be happening in other areas of Ghana. The information could then be used by policy makers to identify issues that need to be examined more closely in order to develop the necessary strategies for ensuring the success of future reforms.

Second, an increasing number of studies such as those of Akyeampong (2004) and Pryor (2005) have looked at educational policy and reform and/or transformation in Ghana. However, there have been little systematic qualitative interview research on how circuit supervisors, headteachers, teachers and local community members of rural areas understand and assess educational reform and its benefits, challenges, limitations and the ways to enhance educational quality. But "[r]esearch aimed at soliciting local subjects' perceptions and views of educational reforms are significant for informing on the impact of the reform initiatives on individuals and communities" (Dei, 2006: 191). Hence, I felt a systematic qualitative interview study such as this is essential to make a contribution in this regard and to help identify supports and resources that are needed to assist teachers and learners in the teaching-learning process.

Third, I intended through this study, to identify and examine the various structures, systems and policies relating to WSD and how these impacted on education delivery and financing. In particular, I found it necessary to examine the relationship between the various stakeholders in order to facilitate the understanding of the nature of the relationships, which in turn could be used to improve the relationship to a level that could assist in translating future reforms into hoped for results.

Fourth, I desired to call for improvement in the performance of supervision in the rural areas. Supervision is seen as a key tool for both quality control and quality improvement in education (Young, 1981). Hence, there is a need to maximize its potential for the performance of this role particularly in the areas where education quality suffers the most. As part of my objectives therefore, I aimed to offer greater understanding of the factors that hinder or promote supervision service. I expected that an understanding of these factors might prompt the identification and provision of the resources needed to improve supervision services.

Fifth, I was intent upon increasing policy makers' awareness of the role they need to play to ensure some amount of equity in terms of admission to institutions of higher learning and, ultimately, employment opportunities. The 3-Year Junior Secondary School (JSS) in Ghana was substituted for the Middle School and the first three years of secondary schooling[1] in the hope of providing more equal opportunities for those who have had little access to secondary schools (Cobbe, 1991). This implies an attempt at addressing concerns of educational justice and equity. However, without improving the effectiveness of the schools and hence the quality of education in the rural areas, the wide gap between the performance of students in these areas and that of their urban counterparts will continue to exist and the hope of increasing rural Junior Secondary School (JSS) pupils' access to the Senior Secondary Schools (SSS), which have room for only a small minority of the JSS pupils who become most successful in the JSS examinations, will come to naught. In effect, there is a need for a practical move to identify and develop

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[1]See chapter 2 for definitions regarding JSS, Middle School and the first three years of secondary schooling.

supportive plans that will help sustain meaningful changes and assist in redressing the imbalances in the quality of education in the rural areas. Without this practical move, the education sector's role will continue to be compromised with the result that the benefits accruing to the Ghanaian populace will not be commensurate with the educational costs that the country bears and the considerable donor support that the country gets.

Finally, I intended to use this research as a basis for further research. Other researchers could undertake similar research in other rural districts or make a comparative study of the impact of the reform on the quality of rural schools and their urban counterparts, the result of which would, in turn, help to identify areas for policy interventions and investments for the improvement of teaching and learning and for better output in education.

Structure of the thesis

I open with an introduction, which establishes the context and parameters of the study. I then follow this with seven chapters, each containing sub-sections.

In chapter one, I review literature on policy, with emphasis on educational policy and complement this with literature on change, educational decentralization and school effectiveness and improvement. Basically, I use this chapter to explore theoretical perspectives on the problem, and to establish my conceptual framework.

In chapter two, I draw a thread through time, examining the nature of changes in Ghana's education system and from this reveal the factors that triggered off the introduction of WSD.

I present the research methods and methodologies I employed for the study in chapter three. Here, I include a discussion on my entire fieldwork for data collection and analysis and establish the procedures I used for the presentation of the case study data.

In chapters four to six I provide the substantive fieldwork evidence: I present the origin, purpose, the policy-making and implementation phases of WSD in chapter four; the challenges and causes of its official ending in chapter five; and the structures, systems and practices that remain and how well they are functioning in chapter six. In these chapters, I have made a conscious effort to present detailed accounts and analysis of the responses of the study participants, using their voices in order to remain faithful to them and to gain the power of knowledge with which to evaluate, assess, interpret and pursue the implications of their responses for future policy and practice and to make recommendations.

Finally, in chapter seven, I present a summary of the key findings and reflections on the research process, looking at its strengths and limitations as well as the significance and uniqueness of the study. It is in this chapter that I draw conclusion from the findings, examine the implications for policy and practice and present recommendations.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL ISSUES
AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

I undertook this study in order to ascertain the reasons why in spite of the official ending of WSD most of its systems, structures and practices remain and to explore which of these remain and how well they are functioning. However, as argued by Bell and Stevenson, "it is not possible to understand what is happening in our educational institutions without developing an understanding of policy that reflects both its multi-stage and multi-tier character" (2006: 9). Indeed, educational organizations, including schools, are fraught with different attitudes, perspectives and interests and therefore have been rendered political arenas in which politics and micropolitics operate at various levels. Hence, to understand educational institutions, there is a need to understand how the workings of policy operate at the varied levels at which the multifaceted issues also operate. For this reason, I have used this chapter to review literature on policy, particularly education policy. This constitutes the key literature that informs my conceptual framework for the study. However, because the study involves not only policy but also decentralisation of education as well as quality improvement in education and for that matter change, I have complemented the literature on policy with those of education decentralisation, change and school effectiveness and improvement.

Under the circumstances, I have divided this chapter into four key sections. In the first, I have explored the policy formulation and implementation process. I began with a brief discussion of the narrow conceptualisations of policy and pointed out a range of conceptual issues missing in them. I have also reviewed the wider conceptualisation of policy which reflects the breadth, dynamism and complexity of the real nature of policy, using models of policy analysis as an aid and pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of each model. Finally, I have conflated the tenets of the models into a composite

model that provides an understanding of policy which reflects the breadth and complexity that the reality of education policy analysis entails.

In the second section, I have explored the nature of change generally and in the process discussed why change is difficult to understand and manage, particularly in education. Subsequently, I have discussed the change process from the perspectives of a few authors and theorists and reviewed the factors that facilitate change as well as the barriers to change and closed the section with a discussion on how structures, systems and processes may be developed, organised and managed at the school and community levels for a successful change.

In the third section, I have briefly traced the history of educational decentralisation in Ghana and noted the factors that may facilitate or impede educational decentralisation in developing countries with particular reference to Ghana.

In the final section I have examined issues on school effectiveness and improvement by locating the origins of WSD from the context of school effectiveness and improvement studies, starting with the factors that triggered off the Colemen *et al* (1966) research and taking a closer look at the report that emerged from their research. I have then linked this to the history of school effectiveness and discussed its implications. Finally, I have, in turn, linked this to a discussion of school improvement studies and its implications.

1.1 Education policy formulation and implementation

Early studies have conceptualised policy as a statement of intent – a programme of action or a series of guidelines for taking a particular course of action within a set of circumstances (Blakemore, 2003; Haddad, 1995; Harman, 1984) or as the pursuit of fundamentally political objectives and the "operational statements of values" (Kogan, 1975: 55). Such concepts constituted a technical and rational process of analysing policy and resulted in a largely linear conceptualisation of policy development, namely the identification of problems, development of solutions and the implementation

of strategies and interventions. However, such definitions are limited because they place emphasis on policy as a product or an outcome.

But in reality policy is not merely a product. It is often far from just a "mechanical application of means [by policy designers] in order to realise given ends" (Bleiklie, 2000: 54-5). As argued by Ozga, policy is not something that can just be delivered on tablets of stone to a grateful or quiescent population because "it is struggled over" (2000: 1). Thus policy is also a process involving a tug-of-war, a constant struggle; a continual pull and push. This is particularly so with education policy. Education financing delivery and receiving involve a host of participants including education Ministers, Directors, teachers, school inspectors, parents, students and local communities. As a result, education policy entails a political process in which competing groups, interests and ideologies struggle over the shape of policy (Trowler, 1997) both at the formulation and implementation stages. Olssen *et al* (2004) argue that educational policies are not only the centre of great controversy and public contestation but that educational policy-making itself has become highly politicised (2004) and the implementation process is subject to interpretation and recreation (Ball, 1994; Rizvi and Kemmis, 1987; Sayed and Maharaj, 1997). Policy formulation and implementation, then, is one part of a complex process. Therefore in order to understand policy, it is important to understand a range of inter-related processes as well as conflicts over values that go into both the policy formulation and implementation process. This calls for a study of some models of policy analysis.

Models of analysis of policy formulation and implementation

Various authors have presented models of policy analysis which illustrate the process of policy formulation and implementation. Among them are Bowe *et al* (1992), Ball (1994), Taylor *et al* (1997) and Bell and Stevenson (2006). In this section, I examine the analytical framework of each of these four groups of authors and then conflate the tenets of the whole lot into a composite model that is intended to provide a pictorial view and facilitate the understanding of policy which mirrors the degree of complexity that the reality of education policy analysis entails.

Bowe et al's (1992) model of policy analysis

Bowe *et al* (1992) present policy as cyclical rather than linear. The linear model of policy development (or the traditional pluralist framework) mentioned in the preceding section separates the generation of policy from implementation and over-simplifies and fails to reflect the complexity of the policy process. In the words of Bowe *et al* (1992), it "portrays policy generation as remote and detached from implementation. Policy in this context, then, 'gets done' to people by a chain of implementers whose roles are clearly defined by legislation" (1992: 7). Bowe *et al* (1992) argue and explain that policy is not linear but cyclical because it is a continuous process in which policy is being made and remade as it is being implemented. As policy is being made, it is constantly being recontextualised. Recontextualisation occurs because the policy is subjected to interpretation in varied ways according to the histories, experiences and values of the people. To illustrate this, Bowe *et al* provide a graphic representation as in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Context of policy making (Bowe *et al*, 1992: 20)

In the figure, Bowe *et al* envisage three primary policy contexts - the context of influence, the context of policy text production, and the context of practice. These contexts provide a mechanism for linking and tracing the discursive origins and possibilities of policy, the intentions embedded in it, as well as the responses to and effects of it. Each context involves struggle, compromise and ad hocery, and each one comprises a number of actions, some private and

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some public. They are loosely coupled and lack one simple direction of flow of information between them.

The context of influence examines where policy is initiated and where and how policy discourses are constructed in public and private ways. In education, this is where policy actors influence the definition and social purposes of education and establish key policy concepts such as FCUBE and WSD in Ghana, and budgetary devolution, market forces and National Curriculum in England. These concepts acquire currency and credence and provide a discourse and lexicon for policy initiation. Policy formulation at this stage may either gain support or face challenge.

Closely related to the context of influence is the *context of policy text production*. This considers the ways in which policy is represented in textual form, paying attention to factors such as timing, the language used as well as textual coherence or incoherence within or between texts. Policy texts then, represent policy in various forms, for example, official legal texts and policy documents; formally and informally produced commentaries which explain the official documents; and the speeches by, and public performances of, relevant politicians and officials. These second-hand accounts are relied on by many of those towards whom policy is aimed as their main source of information and understanding of policy as intended. The responses to text have real consequences which are manifested in the context of practice.

The *context of practice* is the arena towards which policies are directed, acted on and interpreted and recreated by practitioners with their own histories, experiences, values and purposes. Practitioners have vested interests in the meaning of policy and so they might interpret it differently according to their histories, experiences, values, purposes and interests.

The three policy contexts provide a mechanism for linking and tracing the discursive origins and possibilities of policy, the intentions embedded in it, as well as the responses to and effect of it. However, they do not render Bowe *et al*'s model of policy analysis complete because policy is also analysed in terms of its impact on, and interaction with, existing inequalities and forms of injustice. Moreover, the model does not take into consideration political and

al's model of policy analysis complete because policy is also analysed in terms of its impact on, and interaction with, existing inequalities and forms of injustice. Moreover, the model does not take into consideration political and social activities such as those of pressure groups and social movements that may tackle inequalities more effectively. As a result, Ball (1994) adds further dimensions to this analytical framework in his model of policy analysis.

Ball's (1994) model of policy analysis

As noted in the preceding paragraph, Ball (1994) conceives of a model similar to Bowe *et al*'s (1992) but makes a development on it. To begin with, he presents two-dimensional approaches to policy to illustrate the complexity of the policy formulation and implementation process. He names the dimensions *policy as text* and *policy as discourse*. Policy as text represents the contested, changing and negotiated character of policy. It involves what Henry describes as "the agency side of policy work" (1993: 102), where policy is created, read in a variety of settings, filtered, recontextualized and creatively acted upon. In literary terms it represents how policy is written and read and also places emphasis on the manner in which policy is presented and interpreted. This literary analogy is helpful in describing Ball's notion of policy as text because it illustrates Ball's point on how policy can have multiple authors and multiple readers. Multiple authors will emerge because the policy text has to be encoded in complex ways through struggles and compromises as well as authoritative public interpretations and reinterpretations (Ball, 1994). And multiple readers will emerge because of the unclear or incomplete nature of policy text arising from the compromises. The readers have their own contexts – their histories, experiences and values - which will influence their decoding of the policy text and effectively create multiple interpretations. In a nutshell then, policy as text emphasises the agency side of policy work – the freedom of individuals to shape the form of policy.

Policy as discourse balances the understanding of policy as text, albeit by definition they are different. Whereas policy as text relates to the freedom of individuals to shape the form of policy, policy as discourse describes the manner in which behaviour and ideas can be circumscribed by factors external

sculptures. Postmodernists such as Foucault argue that the discourse available to us can limit and shape how we view the world. Ball adopts this approach of argument to explain his notion of policy as discourse by quoting Foucault who argues that discourses are: "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak.... Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention" (Foucault, 1977: 49).

By drawing on the work of Foucault, Ball is here explaining that discourses can set parameters within which notions of truth and knowledge are formed and that actors' actions occur within such parameters. Ball explains that the factors that shape such discourses reflect the structural balance of power in society: "Discourses are about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority" (Ball, 1994: 21).

Policy as discourse, then, recognises the scope for individual and collective agency in responding to, and shaping, policy. However, at the same time, it emphasises the need to recognise that this capacity of individual actors to shape policy can be powerfully limited by wider structural factors and thus shape policy responses.

In the area of education therefore, policy makers, through the language in which they frame policy, can and do constrain the manner in which we think of specific education policies in particular and education in general. In this regard, the notion of policy as discourse helps to explain how powerful structural pressures such as the economic imperative to develop human capital have a decisive influence on determining policy.

Ball (1992), in delineating his analytical framework, draws on the work of Bowe *et al* (1992) for the three major policy text mentioned and explained above - the context of influence, the context of policy text production and the context of practice. However, he recognises the inadequacy of his analysis. The inadequacy arises from the lack of theoretical and practical effects of policy in terms of the impact upon, and interactions with, existing inequalities and forms of injustice as well as the lack of political and social activities of pressure groups and social movements that are likely to tackle inequalities

more effectively. For this reason, he adds two further contexts: the context of outcomes and the context of political strategy.

The *context of outcomes* defines the relationship between first order (practice) effects and second order effects. The concern of analysis here is with the issue of justice, equality and individual freedom. The *context of political strategy* also refers to issues about equity and equality. However, the analytical concern here is with the identification of a set of political and social activities which are likely to tackle inequalities more effectively.

In a nutshell then, for Ball, the policy process is one of complexity. In the words of Bleiklie, policy is usually far from simply "the mechanical application of means [by the policy engineer] in order to realise given ends" (Bleiklie, 2000: 54-55). Thus it is better to see the policy process as one in which policy is struggled over, made and remade and responses to it constructed on the basis of "interpretations and reinterpretations" (Rizvi and Kemmes, 1987: 14). Hence, the "processes of change at the level of national policy, within academic institutions and disciplinary groups, are only partially co-ordinated" (Kogan *et al*, 2000: 30). No wonder then, that Bowe *et al* argue that "it seems far more appropriate to talk of policies as having 'effects' rather than 'outcomes'" (Bowe & Ball with Gold, 1992: 23). This issue of effects is highlighted in Taylor *et al*'s (1997) model of policy analysis.

Taylor et al's (1997) model of policy analysis

Taylor *et al* (1997) present a model of policy analysis in which they summarise the definition of policy as what governments do, why and with what effects. This definition is useful provided it recognises the role of the various institutions at all levels of the education system and those that are effectively part of the public system that are involved in policy development in diverse and various contexts.

To establish the basis of policy analysis and, for that matter, the diverse contexts in which policy development occurs, Taylor *et al* identify a number of questions:

- What is the approach to education? What are the values relating to the curriculum, assessment and pedagogy?
- How are the proposals organized? How do they affect resourcing and organizational structures?
- Why was this policy adopted?
- On whose terms was the policy adopted? Why?
- On what grounds have these selections been justified? Why?
- In whose interests? How have competing interests been negotiated?
- Why now? Why has the policy emerged at this time?
- What are the consequences? In particular, what are the consequences for both processes (professional practices and outcomes)?

Taylor *et al* (1997: 37).

From these questions, Taylor *et al* (1997) develop a framework for policy analysis, focusing on three aspects of policy – *contexts, text and consequences. Contexts* equates with Bowe *et al*'s (1992) concept of context of influence. It describes the antecedents and pressures that result in the development of a particular policy. These antecedents and pressures include the role played by pressure groups and social movements who can compel policy makers to respond to an issue, as well as the economic, social and political factors that call for issues appearing on the policy agenda. However, a fuller understanding of context requires that a relationship is drawn between the current policy and the previous policy experience. This involves ascertaining the extent to which the current policy builds on, or breaks with, previous policy experience. Moreover, in order to construct a fuller picture of the policy process, an analysis of context may be done at any level – state or institutional level, or anywhere in between - because policy at any level will have its own context.

Text corresponds with Bowe *et al*'s (1992) notion of context of policy text production. Taylor *et al* indicate that an analysis of text demands answers to questions relating to how the policy is articulated and framed, the aims and

objectives of the policy, the values embodied in it and whether the ideas are explicit or implicit. It also requires finding out whether the policy requires action and if so what type of action and who is responsible for taking it. Any 'silences' (what is not stated) as well as 'transparencies' (what is clearly and openly articulated) needs to be noted because a considerable scope for interpretation exists in policy texts.

Consequences, as in Bowe *et al*'s (1992) concept of context of practice refers to the differing interpretations given to policy by practitioners because of competing interests and sets of values which results in differences in implementation. It is possible for the differences to be magnified because of the unique conditions of institutions which, in turn, can further shape the implementation of the policy. In the process, distortions and gaps might occur, resulting in what Taylor *et al* refer to as "policy refraction" (1997: 119). According to Taylor *et al*, policy gets refracted when it becomes less disjointed and less coherent as it is subjected to the process of encoding and decoding.

Taylor *et al*'s (1997) analytical framework is helpful for understanding the policy development process because of its focus on the context, text and consequences of policy. Such a focus exposes the interpretations and recontextualisations of policy. It also brings into focus the discourses embedded in policy and the power of actors in the policy process. However, it does not provide a fuller understanding of how educational policy shapes and is shaped by the actions of practitioners at the implementation level. Bell and Stevenson (2006) have noticed this loophole and have therefore added four other dimensions to this framework in their model of policy analysis, which is described below.

Bell and Stevenson's (2006) analytical framework

This framework provides four additional dimensions to Taylor *et al*'s analytical framework. The dimensions are socio-political environment, strategic direction, organisational principles, and operational practices and procedures.

Socio-political environment refers to the circumstances from which policy, based on the dominant discourse, is derived. It is within this environment that the overarching guiding principles of policy are formulated. *Strategic direction* arises from the socio-political environment. It provides a broader definition of policy and establishes its success criteria as they apply to fields of activity such as education. *Organisational principles* establish the parameters within which policy is to be implemented in spheres of activity including education. *Operational practices and procedures* are based on the organisational principles. They are requisite detailed organisational arrangements for implementing policy at institutional levels and for translating such policy implementation into institutional procedures and specific programmes of action (Bell and Stevenson, 2006). The model is depicted graphically in figure 2.

Bell and Stevenson (2006) explain that the four levels, in terms of translating policy into practice, are in hierarchical relationship. Thus the first two – socio-political environment and strategic direction – are concerned with policy formulation. The second two – organisational principles and operational practices and procedures - are concerned with policy implementation. Moreover, the strategic direction and organisational principles provide additional insight into text of policy - its aims and purposes, while operational practices will concentrate on the consequences of policy, its interpretation and implementation. Also, within the socio-political environment, an analysis of debates that give rise to educational policy can assist in understanding in more detail the context element of Taylor *et al*'s (1997) analytical framework. Bell and Stevenson explain that the four levels are nested in the sense that educational policy, derived from the wider socio-political discourse, is mediated through the formulation of a strategic direction in the national and regional context which, in turn, generates organizational processes within which schools are located and curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment determined (2006). Through this means policy, legitimised and derived from circumstances such as the need to address issues relating to globalising forces and local imperatives, is translated into activities in schools and classrooms.

Thus, Bell and Stevenson's (2006) analytical model helps to explain how the content of policy arises from the economic, social and political factors that give rise to an issue. It also helps to explore the consequences of policy more fully and concentrate more on the processes of moving from the formulation of policy to its implementation. However, it does not provide a picture of the cyclical nature of policy. It may therefore be conflated with other models to produce a composite one which may be considered quite graphic and interpretative of the cyclical nature of policy and its entire process.

Policy formulation

Socio-political environment
- Contested discourses
- Dominant language of legitimation
- First-order values shape policy

Strategic direction
- Policy trends emerge
- Broad policy established
- Applied to policy domains

Policy implementation

Organizational principles
- Targets set
- Success criteria defined
- Patterns of control established

Operational practices and procedures
- Organizational procedures determined
- Monitoring mechanisms established
- Second-order values mediate policy

Figure 2: Policy into practice: a model (Bell and Stevenson, 2006: 13)

A composite model of analysis of policy formulation and implementation

In this model I have conflated the tenets of Bowe *et al* (1992), Ball (1994), Taylor *et al* (1997) and Bell and Stevenson (2006) into a composite model with the aim of providing a graphic representation of policy and to help the understanding of policy which reflects the degree of complexity of practicalities of the policy formulation and implementation process. The model operates on the principle that policy is both a product and a process and so embodies issues relating to encoding and decoding of policy texts, especially how practitioners selectively interpret policy and make decisions relating to its implementation in their own contexts. Figure 3 gives a pictorial view of the model.

In the figure, there are three key contexts. The first is the *context of influence* – the social, political and economic forces, as well as the role of pressure groups and social movements that are likely to force policy makers to respond to an issue and, thus, initiate the formulation of policy. This context can occur at both the formulation and implementation levels because as argued by Bell and Stevenson (2006: 12) "an analysis of context can take place at any level. Policies at the state or institutional level (or indeed anywhere in between), will have their own context and including this within the analysis is vital if the aim is to build up as full a picture as possible of the process".

Antecedents and pressures prompt the initiation of the policy formulation process. The relationship between antecedent and pressures on one hand and policy formulation on the other is explained by the fact that the former can initiate policy and the latter can, in turn, produce antecedents and pressures so long as a policy formulated does not favour social, economic and political conditions as well as pressure groups and social movements.

Encoding begins within the second context – *the context of influence* – at the policy formulation level because at this level policy may either gain support or face challenge due to the interaction of competing interpretations, interests, values and intentions of policy makers. Socio-political environment and strategic direction within this context are based on the same principles as those

of Bell and Stevenson (2006) described above. Thus socio-political environment refers to the circumstances from which policy, based on the dominant discourse is derived. It is within this environment that the overarching guiding principles of the policy are formulated. Strategic direction arises from the socio-political environment. It provides a broader definition of policy and establishes its success criteria as they apply to fields of activity such as education.

Within the third context – *the context of policy text production* - encoding and decoding occur because as argued by Ball, "The physical text that pops through the school letterbox, or wherever, does not arrive 'out of the blue' – it has an interpretational and representational history – and neither does it enter a social and institutional vacuum" (1994: 17). The text obviously has an author and whereas authorship of the text involves encoding policy in complex ways through struggles, compromises, interpretations and reinterpretations, the de-coding of the text ensures interpretations by readers in their own contexts – their own histories and values.

At the level of implementation, there is decoding because the text will once again be subjected to differing interpretations by practitioners according to their experiences, interests and values. This in turn can result in differences in implementation, which could also be magnified in response to the unique conditions prevailing in each institution and, thus, further shape the implementation of the policy. In the process, distortions and gaps might appear, resulting in what has been termed "policy refraction" by Taylor *et al* (1997: 119), that is, distortions and reduction in coherence of the policy.

Thus, from the composite model, it is possible to link and trace the discursive origins and possibilities of policy, the intentions and interactions of competing interests and sets of values embedded in it, as well as the responses to and effect of it. There is no one simple direction of flow of interaction between them and they are loosely coupled. Coding and decoding helps the understanding of how educational policy shapes and is shaped by actors particularly the actions of practitioners at the implementation level.

What usually emerges from policy, whether or not it is shaped, is change, which if not appropriately managed can result in unintended consequences. In the next section, I take up the issue of management of educational change.

ANTECEDENTS AND PRESSURES (CONTEXT OF INFLUENCE)
- Economic, social and political forces
-Pressure groups and social movements

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION (CONTEXT OF PRACTICE)
POLICY DECODING

Operational practices & procedures
1. Organisational procedures determined
2. Monitoring mechanisms established
3. Second-order values mediate policy
Organisational principles
1. Targets set
2. Success criteria defined
3. Patterns of control established

POLICY FORMULATION (CONTEXT OF INFLUENCE)
POLICY ENCODING

Socio-political environment
-Contested discourses
-Dominant language of legitimation
-First-order values shape policy
Strategic direction
-Policy trends emerge
-Broad policy established
-Applied to policy domain

CONTEXT OF POLICY TEXT PRODUCTION
POLICY ENCODING AND DECODING

Strategic direction and organisational principles
-Articulation and framing of policy
-Aims, purposes and values of policy
-Explicitness/implicitness of aims and values?
-Actions required and by whom

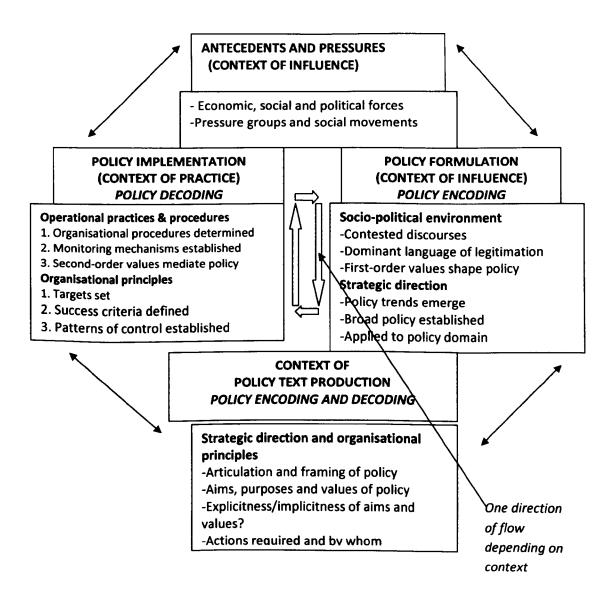*One direction of flow depending on context*

Figure 3: A composite model of policy formulation and implementation.

1.2 The management of educational change

For this section, I explore the nature of change generally and in the process discuss why change is difficult to understand and manage, particularly in

education. Subsequently, I discuss the change process from the perspectives of a few authors and theorists and review the factors that facilitate change as well as the barriers to change and close the section with a discussion on how structures, systems and processes may be developed, organised and managed at the school and community levels for a successful change.

The need for management of change arises because change is a process that is laden with complexities, ambivalence, politics and micropolitics. Change occurs over time and is viewed differently by different participants and therefore calls up a range of responses. Early research on change shows that change was considered linear (Fullan, 2001) because change was selected and announced with the expectation that it would simply occur. It is now apparent that this is not the case and so various theories have emerged to assist the management of change. For the purpose of this study, Fullan's forms the overarching discussion.

According to Fullan, the change process "is not a linear process but rather one in which events at one phase can feed back to alter decisions made at previous stages, which then proceed to work their way through in a continuous interactive way" (2001: 50). Thus for Fullan a successful change is not linear but consists of a series of overlapping phases because plans made initially may change in the course of implementation. He categorises the phases into three and explains what happens in each. The first is initiation (or mobilisation or adoption) where the decision to embark on change and develop commitment towards its process occurs. At this stage, a number of factors are required for success, for example, the active involvement of participants; a clear, well-structured approach to the change and external support (for example, government and other agencies).

The second is implementation or initial use - the phase at which the first experiences of attempting to put the change into practice occurs. This stage involves preparation of strategies and, where necessary, experimentation. The key activities that occur are the carrying out of action plans, the development of sustainable commitment, the checking of progress and the successful management of problems. Fullan (1993a) and other writers such as Hopkins

et al (1994) and Miles 1987) indicate that the essential ingredients for success at this stage are: a mix of pressure and support; responsibilities for orchestration/coordination; adequate and sustained staff development and in-service support; rewards for teachers early in the process and shared control during implementation.

The third is continuation/incorporation/routinisation/institutionalisation, where change gets built into the day-to-day practice of the system and becomes part of the usual way of doing things. A great deal of effort is required to reach this stage because institutionalisation does not occur automatically.

Fullan (1993a) notes that change presents a very complex and difficult situation for the participants: "under conditions of uncertainty, learning, anxiety, difficulties and fear of the unknown are *intrinsic* to all change process, especially at the early stages" (1993a: 25; emphasis in original). He also places emphasis on the implementation stage of change, contending that implementation is about making the change stick; about rolling programmes of work which are fluid and dynamic; about mobilisation – galvanising those to whom the change is directed to change their attitude; and about doing, trying and following through – that is, sustaining efforts over time.

Fullan (2001) also comments on the approach that is appropriate for introducing and effecting a change. He suggests a combination of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approach rather than one of them because for a change to be conceived, planned, negotiated and adopted in education, a range of roles ought to be fulfilled by the various participants. The problem however is how to identify the right mix for a given context.

Fullan's work is useful because it shows how the change process unfolds with time. In particular, the fact that he explores the full complexity of change and pays attention to the various levels at which change is dealt with helps in addressing the issue of multiple perspectives on change.

However, he does not include *will* of the people involved in the change process at the implementation phase. 'Will' is something that is difficult to change because generally, the degree of motivation, interest and general

involvement in any change depends on how much the person involved in the change has internalised a resolve to accept the change and participate in effecting it.

Thus, the circumstance under which participants involved in the change procedures accept the change is also important. Research findings suggest that voluntary adoption is the best. For example, according to Claxton (1989), the only kind of change worth promoting is self-chosen change, where the participants somehow move from the feeling for change to a resolution to change, albeit this is not considered to be a sufficient condition for acceptance of change (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1978) because a lot more is needed, as is exemplified in the case of the implementation of the WSD in Ghana (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Also, in practical terms contextual situations need to be taken into consideration when embarking on the change process because implementation of change seems more complex in certain situations than the case presented by Fullan. I have expatiated on this in this chapter and in chapter 7. However, the point I am raising at this stage is that much as I agree with Fullan, I feel a consideration need to be given to the different levels at which change may occur, for example, from the international to the national level, from the national to the regional level, from the regional to the district level and from the district to the school and local community levels.

Regarding the phase of implementation and institutionalisation, certain factors are required, (especially in the case of developing countries that do not have the necessary inputs) before the innovation and/or change can continue and become institutionalised. For example, there should be appropriate structures, systems and adequate resources to provide the needed aftercare to support the initiative and to help develop those new to the change. Besides, the change needs to become embedded in the structures of the institutions. In sum, certain factors need to operate for innovation and change to succeed. In the subsequent sub-section, I look at some of them.

Factors that facilitate change

Most studies on organisational change efforts in education have failed because they lacked adequate theoretical underpinning or philosophical background or failed to make it explicit (Herriot and Gross, 1979). It is therefore suggested that in the change process, participants "have to understand what they are trying to achieve, why they are trying to achieve it and how" (Rudduck, 1988: 208). In a nutshell, communication about the philosophy and rationale for the change is very important.

However, communication by itself is not enough to generate development. The social, political, economic and cultural environments of the participants can have constraining influence on the participants' willingness and ability to change. There is therefore a need to provide a mechanism that will enable participants to adopt the change, that is, understand and practice the philosophy albeit in the school situation, for example, "it is not easy ... to help teachers to arrive at such complex understandings" (Rudduck, 1991: 92). In this study, I explored the mechanism that was used to assist participants to understand and practice the philosophy and the rationale of WSD (see Chapters 4 and 6).

The beliefs, attitudes and ideas of participants are also crucial for a successful change. According to Fullan, individuals' involvement with and commitment to change are largely motivated by their understanding of the meaning of change (1991). This implies a subjective reality, which meaning "can be mediated by dealing with the objective reality" (Kadingdi, 2004: 66). Thus to have an objective meaning of change is important because the objective meaning acquired by participants is related to the practical issues that embody the change (Huberman, 1988). Hence, for a change to occur, it should have practical outcomes for the participants.

A key factor that also influences change is workload pressure. This refers to the amount of work involved in the change. If the change requires much more work such that the workload outweighs the benefits, participants may not be motivated to offer the needed contribution and commitment. Barber and Brighouse (1992) note that teachers accept and welcome increased

responsibilities but their problem is how to cope with the extra work without some assistance. Issues of this nature emerged in this study (see Chapter 5).

Verspoor (1988) has also analysed twenty-one World Bank projects and concluded that a well designed programme that introduced innovations at a rate appropriate for environmental conditions and on supporting the projects with effective organisation development programmes and training accounted for their successful implementation. Thus change needs to have well defined aims and objectives, meet needs and aspirations and has to be appropriately planned and accompanied by requisite inputs/resources and be given adequate timescale.

Again, Miles (1987) has identified some preconditions for a successful change initiative in the school context: relevance (the change must be meaningful, practical, applicable and connected with everyday concerns); clarity (an understanding of what is expected); skill (capacity building that will enable participants to perform the action expected of them); will (the motivation and interest to be involved in the change); and action images (participants' ability to visualise what is expected of them and what the change looks like in practice).

The issues Miles (1987) identifies merely help in determining the feasibility of project designs because contextual differences will determine the way the issues should be addressed. In addition, the issue of workload pressure, which Miles misses in his list, is an essential component for a successful change. Piloting may also be necessary so as to allow the nature and scope of the intervention to remain tentative at the outset for a trial and adaptation in local environments.

Barriers to change

According to Stoddart and Niederhauser, "the first barrier to change centres on difficulties with altering the status quo" (1993:15). It is believed that human beings are creatures of habit because they tend to follow the same path during their life. As noted by Morris, people are naturally resistant to change, especially those that require a change in behaviour. This barrier is motivated

by a number of factors. For example, Gross *et al* (1970) note that resistance to change occurs in education because of teachers' lack of clarity about the innovation, lack of requisite skills and knowledge, lack of requisite instructional materials, loss of staff motivation and lack of compatibility of organisational arrangements with the innovation. All these suggest that change should be accompanied by a change in the system in ways that support the participants. As noted by David (1994: 2), "policy changes from a tool to prescribe and control behaviour to a tool to empower people and facilitate change with appropriate checks and balances".

Commenting on the barriers to change, Fullan (1993b) also advises that the difficulties participants face in an innovation is natural and have to be coped with if a successful change is to be achieved. This advice is particularly relevant to situations where, as a result of the authoritarian and hierarchical nature about change, participants' views on the difficulties they face about change are drowned by power and authority. In such situations, the participants are likely to exhibit a less caring attitude and a sense of resignation and may do minimal work and offer less commitment. This is why Buchert (2002) suggests how far governments and aid agencies will have to go in order to develop common understandings and practices in the education sector development programmes in African countries.

Setting the ball rolling at school and community levels: developing and combining structures, systems, processes and forces for change
In the preceding sections, I have illustrated the nature of change and the change process, together with the factors that facilitate and impede change. In this section, I discuss how structures, systems, processes and forces may be planned and organised at the school and community levels for a successful change.

   a) Teachers' capacity building
"Educational change depends on what teachers do and think.... Classrooms and schools become effective when (1) quality people are recruited to

teaching, and (2) the workplace is organized to energize teachers and reward accomplishments" (Fullan, 2001: 115). This implies that for educational reform (such as WSD reform) to succeed, capacity building of teachers is needed to enable them to cope with the realities of the classroom. Virtually all authors of change mention the need for this (for example, Blenkin *et al*, 1992; Hargreaves, 1995; Wang and Gennari, 1983). Blenkin *et al* (1992) for example see professional development of teachers as the only route to continuous and lasting changes about improvement in education quality. This implies a need for capacity building not only at the initial training phase but also in-service training (INSET) in order to ensure continuous professional development.

There is also a need to improve the conditions that make a contribution to the complex process of teaching and learning. This means paying attention to things such as rewarding teachers and involving them in education decision-making.

Other authors mention the need to make INSET an ongoing strategy for capacity building and professional development. Research by Stein and Wang (1988) suggests that the inclusion of strategies for developing and sustaining teachers' motivation to use what they already know about effective teaching practices in staff development programmes is an effective way of building teachers' capacity.

Steadman *et al* (1995:67) note two types of INSETs: "Education which helps you decide what to do [and] training which helps you to do what is necessary more consistently, effectively and efficiently". Thus INSET needs to develop teachers and transform their practice. It should not be for personal benefit or seen simply as a straightforward activity that makes good deficits in teachers' repertoire (Gilroy and Day, 1993).

Commenting on the loopholes in INSET, Hargreaves notes that "... INSET in the form of courses, takes place off the school premises, and is for the benefit of the individual: it does not grow from institutional needs nor is there any mechanism for disseminating the outcomes within the school" (1994: 430).

For Hargreaves, then, INSET needs to be geared towards professional development and not restricted to the development of teachers just to enable them to grow or acquire the level of knowledge and skills necessary to motivate students to fulfil their achievement potential. Indeed, growth is necessary but as noted by Jackson (1971), "'[i]n teaching, as in life, the roads to wisdom are many'; that teaching is a complex, multi-faceted activity; that good teaching demands more than the sum of knowledge and skills; and that schools and classrooms are not always environments in which professional learning is encouraged or supported" (1971: 27). Thus, where INSETs are adopted to and supported by local classroom and school contexts, they are most likely to be sustained (McLaughlin, 1993).

b) Teacher collaboration and collegiality

There is a need for teacher collaboration and collegiality. In his study of school teachers in the greater Boston area about what teachers do and think, Lortie (1975) concluded among other things that teachers do not develop a common technical culture because they struggle with their problems and anxieties privately and spend most of their time physically apart from their colleagues and do not enjoy the norms of sharing, observing and discussing each other's work because they do not see themselves as colleagues who share "a viable, generalized body of knowledge" (1975; qouted in Fullan, 2001).

McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) have also illustrated the importance of the cultural and institutional forms of teacher's work through their study of teacher professional communities in a sample of schools in the United States in which they analysed three things: subject matter, beliefs about learners in the class and notions of effective pedagogy. From their analysis they concluded that the various ways in which teachers worked with colleagues impacted on their work in terms of what and how they taught in classrooms, how they understood their work with learners and what they expected of each other and learners.

Again, from the study, they found out that the establishment of strong professional communities contributed to the building of "norms for teaching"

as well as expectations for student performance. And where the norms included a strong service ethic, they had the potential for shaping cultures that supported student achievements. On the other hand, weak communities had the tendency to operate as collections of individual teachers who did not share ideas about their teaching practices or had a strong shared sense of responsibility for student learning.

From their study, McLaughlin and Talbert suggested that "a primary unit for improving education quality" (2001:12) could be the development of strong professional communities with high expectations of themselves and their learners (2001).

Moreover, in a study of the implementation of a curriculum in a cluster of South African schools, Mameweck (2002) found all the signs of strong teacher professional communities including shared norms and values and reflective dialogue around improving learners' learning. However, there was limited sharing of subject content and pedagogical knowledge which resulted in poor classroom practice but the teachers did not question the quality of their work because their strong sense of professional community served to mask this from them (cited in Christie et al, (2007).

Thus for successful implementation of change, teachers need to work in a highly interactive and collaborative environment. Teacher collaboration enables teacher educators to make themselves available and interact and to share and gain experiences that they can use to make tremendous contributions to the climate of their schools and the morale of colleagues and pupils (Livingston, 1987). On the school site, it offers a social support system that can build camaraderie and collegiality as well as a mechanism for learning and planning (Bol et al, 1998). It is thus an effective way of ensuring positive interaction among teachers for purposes of professional development.

Various models of teacher collaboration have been developed to emphasise practices such as developing a community of learners (Little, 1993; Louis et al, 1996), working in study groups (Joyce et al, 1989), conducting peer observations (Hopkins, et al, 1994) and coaching teachers (Showers, 1990).

All these practices enable teachers to work in a highly interactive and collaborative environment. The enquiry process itself that arises as teachers develop and evaluate new practices becomes an important component of staff development and offer opportunities for teachers to articulate goals as well as address questions and concerns and seek solutions together (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995).

Hoyle notes two indicators about the existence of collegial relationships in schools. First "teachers observing other teachers, and [second], teachers talking about their practice" (1997: 5). Hoyle argues that this technique "provides [the teachers] the opportunity to engage in the kind of thoughtful conversations that lead to higher levels of learning and growth" (1997: 5).

Thus, the experience teachers gain through collaboration becomes crucial in the era of educational change and the implementation of the change. As part of this study, I explored how well the aspects of WSD are working on the basis of how teachers collaborate in terms of their work, in other words, whether teachers actually do school-based and cluster-based INSETs and how well they do them and whether they implement what they gain from the INSETs.

c) Involvement of teachers in educational decision-making

The involvement of all interested parties in decision-making and other procedures helps to overcome resistance to change and, thus, promote success (Herriot and Gross, 1979) because involvement constitutes an important factor that affects teachers' attitudes and perceptions to change in terms of gaining their sense of ownership and shared vision. This does not necessarily mean inviting classroom teachers to the policy making table. As pointed out earlier communication is important to help establish clarity about the overall educational aims and objectives of a new reform. Consultation may be done through, for example, workshops and INSETs to share teachers' views on anticipated problems and on skills and resources that may be required for the reform. Elmore notes:

> Organisations that improve do so because they create and nurture agreement on what is worth achieving, and they set in motion the internal processes by which people progressively learn how to do what they need to do in order to achieve what is worthwhile (2000: 25).

Teachers therefore need involvement in this regard to enable them to express their views and what progress can be made and how it can be made for the reform.

d) Influence of the school head

The role of the school head in terms of their relationship with their teachers and the community is crucial in the change process. Claxton (1989) speculates that heads, like their teachers, experience doubts and uncertainty and therefore need support to enable them to get involved and participate in the change process. He advises that headteachers, as administrators, need to listen to their teachers and give them opportunities to share their experiences with them.

This implies that under conditions of the process of change, the personality and administrative style of the school head becomes a key factor in influencing the participants: "if the head is dictatorial and traditional, all our attempts to change will be doomed to failure" (Claxton, 1989: 146).

Verspoor argues that new demands that go beyond the traditional roles of the administrator as well as new demands of instructional leadership are placed on the headteacher when changes involving improvement in teaching and learning arise (2003). He emphasises that such changes demand the transformational role of the school heads and this requires them to lead and coordinate the efforts of the community stakeholders as well as to develop the capacity of the school and community to implement the change and enhance the effectiveness of the school. To sum up, school heads could have a vital catalytic role in orchestrating the change process provided they employ the appropriate leadership style, develop transformative leadership and promote positive and real change on the side of the teachers and the local community.

e) Parental and/or community involvement in schools

Fullan (2001: 198) concludes from his study of literature on parent and community involvement in schools that "[t]he closer the parent is to the education of the child, the greater the impact on child development and educational achievement". He notes, however, that numerous variables more or less determine the probability of occurrence of this closeness and that closeness per se may be harmful to the child's growth. In addition, there is a need to take into account decisions about the precise nature of parental involvement in terms of ethnic and class differences as well as variations related to the students' age and gender. Thus Fullan takes into account the contextual differences that might impede school-community relationship.

Nonetheless, there is a body of evidence that parental/community involvement in school yield positive outcomes for the teachers, pupils and parents. In their study of school effectiveness, Mortimore *et al* (1988) noted that one of the 12 factors that differentiated effective schools from less effective ones is parental involvement in the life of the school. Other evidence include those of Coleman (1998) and Epstein (1986). Fullan makes a statement that sums up the significance of school-community relationship for the context in which this part of the study is couched:

> ... educational reform requires the conjoint efforts of families and schools. Parents and teachers should recognize the critical complementary importance of each other in the life of the student. Otherwise, we are placing limitations on the prospects for improvement that may be impossible to overcome (2001: 215).

f) The role of supervisors/inspectors

School supervision/inspection has been seen as a key tool in quality control and quality improvement in education (Young, 1981) and so another key person in the change process is the supervisor/inspector. The supervisor provides a picture of the state, quality and standards of the school work, as well as point out any weaknesses in the work. The supervisor's work is therefore more or less administrative and like other administrators who promote change from a system perspective, supervisors might want to promote

change from a system perspective while teachers would want only minor adaptations within their individual classrooms (House, 1974). Differences are therefore likely to arise between inspectors and teachers as they both look at the philosophy of the innovation in different ways and therefore have different experiences of the innovation. There was therefore the need for me to examine the relationship between the teachers and inspectors in this study. In particular, how well the systems, structures and practices of WSD are functioning in terms of the role of the inspectors.

Considering the macro and the micro contexts

In the early pages of this chapter, I emphasised that policy is not just a matter of being formulated and then being accepted, implemented and institutionalised because context dictates its efficacy. Similarly, with change, contextual differences determine its outcomes. In this section, I elucidate with examples of educational reforms.

Studies undertaken in developing countries suggest that there is a wide gap between proposed reforms and the ability to implement them successfully. For example, Havelock and Huberman (1977) concluded from their review of nineteen United Nations (UN) educational projects that the huge amount of resources injected into the projects was wasted during implementation because the resources were used in dealing with problems that resulted from superficial analysis. They argued that because of management, financial and other constraints such as inadequate resources and organisational capacity as well as opposition from key groups in society to the proposed innovation and problems arising from personalities and behaviour of those involved in project implementation, most of the large-scale educational reforms sponsored by the UN run into serious implementation problems. Harley *et al* also comment that "the evaluation of many World Bank policies has revealed a great discrepancy between their policies and what happens on the ground, especially in Africa" (2000: 289).

Thus, there is a need to examine the socio-political environment within which change is to be introduced and appropriate strategies, systems and structures put in place before implementation of the change commences.

In addition, Verspoor has analysed twenty-two country case studies and over thirty supporting documents about quality improvement in education in Sub-Saharan Africa and concluded that:

> The assumption that change is an orderly, rational and linear process that provides centrally defined fixes to the quality problems of schools is one that has been found to be false in almost every instance. In fact, there is an emerging consensus that change is essentially a local process with the school as the unit of change; that local learning and adaptation is key; and that developing local capacity – at the school, the community and the district level – is a condition sine quo non for success. (2003: 6).

Besides, Buchert (2002) has conducted a comprehensive and detailed analysis of three countries in Africa, namely Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mozambique, and noted that all three countries adhere to the concepts of partnership, local ownership and support for sector-wide approaches to educational issues. However, Buchert cautions that there can be no blueprint for all contexts because "the level of rhetoric concerning mutual respect, transparency and genuine partnerships cannot eliminate underlying differences and structural relationships between aid providers and aid recipients" (2002: 83). This implies that contextual issues need to be examined carefully by donor agencies who intend embarking on educational reforms, particularly in developing countries.

Enslin and Pendlebury have made a similar remark: "... formal changes cannot guarantee better practice, and where the policy makers take little account of the context and agents of implementation, policy may impede rather than enable transformation" (1998: 262). Dalin *et al* have also echoed this remark: "educational reform is a local issue" and added that "effective system linkages are essential" (1994: xviii).

However, even though contextual factors are deemed important, Dalin *et al* (1994: xi) observe that there are some distinctive features common to successful reforms. They provide three of them:

1. A national operational commitment to quality improvement that is well planned – and evolving – as experiences from the field provide learning opportunities for regional and central planners. A national effort that is made concrete through systematic management and a professional support structure, and an effort that is sustained over at least ten years.

2. A strong local capacity with a strong emphasis on school and classroom practice. This means local empowerment, room to manage local implementation, latitude for adopting the programme to be maximally effective locally, assistance that enables teacher mastery to develop, and the encouragement to develop local materials.

3. A coherent linkage system between central, district and local levels via information, assistance, pressure and rewards. The various means of communication in the system must reflect engagement and commitment between levels and bureaucratic, rule-driven control.

Dalin *et al*'s observation emerged out of their review of the international reform literature they conducted in three different countries: Bangladesh, Columbia and Ethiopia. From this research, they concluded that successful reform implementation is not a question of: "...'bottom-up' versus 'top-down', it is a question of meeting the three principles of reform as stated above – in whatever mix that works in a given national context" (1994: xii).

Three lessons emerge from their remarks. First, simplistic and quick fix solutions do not auger well for reform implementation. Second, reform strategies are essential ingredients of successful reforms. Third, reforms may succeed with very different starting points, for example, with an external donor-driven, large scale, modestly innovative programme (as Dalin *et al* encountered in the case of Bangladesh), with a local innovation (as in the case

of Columbia) or with a national political initiative (as exemplified by the case of Ethiopia).

As a matter of fact, the question of top-down, bottom-up, is an inescapable issue in an educational reform such as WSD. I will therefore review a brief literature on educational decentralisation.

1.3 Educational decentralisation

One of the primary objectives of the introduction of WSD in Ghana was to empower and strengthen the capacity of communities to enable them to play a more direct role in the planning and resource management of their schools (MoE, 1999; GES: WSD Report, 2004). This objective was backed by an increase in the level of educational decentralisation in the country (see Chapter 4) in order to, *inter alia*, allow direct financial support to basic schools through their districts (see Narrator Two's account, Chapter 4).

Thus it was not the first time educational decentralisation had been embarked upon in the country. Way back in the 1980s, educational decentralisation became the platform upon which the local content curriculum programme was to be projected: "Decentralise decision-making and supervision from the region to the district and circuit levels, and increase the levels of school visitation and supervision" (GoG, 1986: iii). Hitherto Ghana had been one of the most highly centralised nations in Africa (Mfum-Mensah, 2004) but in the late 1980s a legislation designed to increase authority at sub-national level was promulgated, which in turn culminated in the passage of a local government law – PNDCL 207- and "granted sweeping power and revenue-collection rights to Ghana's districts and municipalities" (Osei, 2010: 271).

Educational decentralisation itself began in the developed world. Countries such as Australia, Canada and USA used it as an important instrument for managing and improving schools because of its accrued benefits (Mankoe and Maynes, 1994), which includes the attainment of greater efficiency in decision-making (Fidler and Bowles, 1989). Subsequently, many developing countries have followed suit in the hope of reaping similar, if not identical,

benefits. In Africa in particular, decentralisation reforms have been funded by the central government under the influence of donor agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Governments that did not yield to such influence risked losing aid from, or legitimacy in, the donor agencies. In some cases, neoliberal economic theory prompted the application of decentralisation because it was felt that there would be more efficient use of resources – financial, human and material – if authority was delegated to local levels. In other cases, decentralisation was motivated by the need for political democracy because it was believed devolving authority to local levels could open avenues for institutionalising the participation of the populace in local government (Osei, 2010).

In fact, studies suggest that rigid centralisation does not auger well for educational reforms. For example, according to Jessop and Penny (1998), the embedded centralised nature of education policy and change initiatives which were technically and expert-driven led to the failure of educational reform initiatives in rural schools in the Gambia and South Africa. On the other hand, Verspoor has also remarked that experiences from countries such as Guinea, Tanzania and Uganda suggest that school level capacity building for planning and experimentation can create an environment very congenial to quality improvement (2003). Verspoor cites examples of success stories - in Chad (where school funding is done through subsidies to community-owned and operated schools); in Guinea, Madagascar and Senegal (where support for school projects is developed at the school level) and in Tanzania and Uganda (where teachers are being encouraged to adapt reforms and innovations to local conditions and their pupils' learning needs).

The problem, however, is that contextual differences determine the success or failure of decentralisation. Mankoe and Maynes note that experiences of decentralisation in "developing countries have not been uniformly positive" (1994: 23) because in some cases decentralisation reforms ran into serious implementation problems, "including conflicts between the goals of decentralization policies and interests of government authorities" (Osei, 2010: 274). Mankoe and Maynes cite the case of Nigeria where the Universal Primary Education programme was launched in 1976 to promote equal

opportunities for all school-going children. The Federal Government was to be responsible for leadership roles involving initiation of policies, development of planning strategies, funding responsibilities and establishment of the programmes. The various States were then to see to the implementation of the programme by delegating functions of the setting up, the organisation and the administration of schools to the local bodies. However, the programme ran into serious problems in most parts of the country. Communities realised that they were not getting the essential supplies. Places such as Eastern Nigeria had to resort to various levies in order to fill the gap. Worse of all, the annual grant per pupil was withdrawn in January 1982. State governments remained responsible for education. However, the Federal Government retained policy power and controlled standards, curriculum, examinations and employment of teachers. Thus, efforts to embark on decentralisation failed because local conditions did not favour that.

Osei points out that "the most common explanation for difficulties in devolving control over schools is political wrangling" (2010: 274), which in most cases is the result of inherent mismatch between the goals of decentralisation policies and interests of government authorities. This means that a political policy decision can produce unexpected outcomes for a decentralisation reform (Gershburg and Winkler, 2003; Geo-Jaja, 2004) irrespective of the degree of its favourable outcomes. A case in point is the sudden decline in school enrolment in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire when education reform was linked to privatisation and fiscal decentralisation (World Bank, 1993). Thus,

> decentralisation cannot be divorced from the political or economic context in which it occurs.... So far as political structures ... are undemocratic and authoritarian, administrative decentralization has maintained or even reinforced central authority on education (Osei, 2010: 275-6).

On the other hand, Bray (2003) argues that in societies with well-educated populations and strongly entrenched democratic values, political decentralisation has been very successful. Thus priority needs to be given to the fundamental structures and purposes of decentralisation rather than

political interests. Where educational decision-making power is structurally devolved from the centre to make the periphery a basic decision-making or a self-managing unit, decentralisation is likely to be operated with success. However, this kind of decentralisation is based on two beliefs. First, significant responsibilities for decisions would be entrusted to those most closely affected by those decisions. Second, where people feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for the decentralisation process, educational reforms would have a high probability of success and sustenance (American Association of School Administration, 1988; cited in Mankoe and Maynes, 1994).

Thus a necessary ingredient for successful devolution of authority to sub-national organisations and actors is a firm commitment to the ideas that underpin the decentralisation process. There is clear evidence that in countries in which commitment to decentralised policies and direct funding to schools have been established, local management of schools has been facilitated and community participation and local ownership and commitment have been generated. In particular, community engagement in the process of education has been stimulated (World Bank, 2005a; 2005b; 2006).

Hoppers (1998) has also noted from his investigation of local autonomy and educational change in Teachers' Resource Centres (TRCs) in Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe that many of the participants – teachers, headteachers, education officers and parents - have been able to take on a leadership role in educational reform at local levels because firstly, circumstances permitted them to do so and, secondly, a congenial political and ideological climate supported administrative measures, at least, in principle to enable them to perform such roles. It was obvious that resources and poor professional competencies were lacking. However, this did not impede their efforts at taking greater responsibility for education development and using the congenial climate available to them. The implication then is that some measures of devolution in pedagogical decision-making towards stakeholders are necessary to enable TRCs to effectively facilitate a more integrative approach to educational change. For example, peer coaching (Thijs and van den Berg, 2002) works well among science teachers in Botswana.

In addition, Dunne *et al* (2007) have concluded from their wide-ranging international study of the impact of decentralisation on school processes, local governance and community participation that:

- less-centralised decision-making structures improve planning and management levels more than in centralised ones;
- decentralised structures in which local governments and local communities are given responsibility for building classrooms, hiring contract teachers or raising funds for the development of school infrastructure produce desirable outcomes such as the creation of awareness of opportunities for local communities to address problems of education affecting them;
- decentralisation has an impact on shifting responsibility for critical decisions to lower levels of government and creates an awareness of opportunities for local communities to address problems of education affecting them.

(cited in Penny, 2007).

Suzuki (2002) has also noted that access and participation yield significant improvement with parental participation, encouraged by the devolution of funding (cited in Penny, 2007).

However, in Dunn *et al*'s (2007) study, further conclusions were that:
- it is much easier to introduce decentralised structures than to change mindset, work culture as well as the culture of political patronage and improve accountability and levels of resources;
- throughout government systems, there is generally an unwillingness to devolve decision-making to lower levels;
- there is often a limited capacity of local authorities to restructure their systems and ways of working and, in particular, to assert their authority to allocate resources;
- officers often neglect their accountability downwards and concentrate on accountability upwards and that there is a need to give attention to both horizontal and vertical accountability and to privilege the former;

- when governments introduce decentralisation, they either fail to provide or make changes to the incentive structures that could facilitate and encourage greater response from service recipients.

(cited in Penny, 2007).

Thus in decentralisation reforms, there is bound to be structural problems and resistance, particularly from those in the helm of affairs who would want to maintain the status quo in favour of their personal interests. But decentralisation can succeed only when structures that create meaningful avenues for involvement of relevant stakeholders especially at the local level have been established and adequate attention has been given to issues of resources. In addition, capacity building and change in perceptions and mindset are required.

To conclude, decentralisation requires not only technical changes of the process but also changes in institutional cultures. There is a need to create a socio-political context that is conducive to transfer of authority. Where there are established governmental practices and power configurations that may act as impediments, they need to be altered and a firm commitment to the successful devolution of authority to sub-national organisations and actors established to allow local actors to display independence and initiatives in the course of implementing reform measures. Stimulating local decision-making and ownership demands that attention is focused on changing institutional processes, perceptions and mindset. The literature demonstrates that it is important to encourage actors to prioritise their activities and to think in the context of outcomes rather than just inputs. In addition, there is a need to eschew the practice of being merely accountable upwards and embrace the practice of being accountable horizontally and downwards.

The final theoretical issue I would like to consider is school effectiveness and improvement because WSD in Ghana was primarily driven by the need to improve basic education in the country.

1.4 School Effectiveness and Improvement

The origins of school effectiveness and improvement could be traced to the conception that emerged towards the close of the 1960s about the overpowering influence of schools, that is, the conception that schools can have a definable impact on a student's achievement irrespective of their home background. This conception arose largely out of attempts to review and counter the negative message about education, namely, that there is very little schools can do to influence pupils' achievement because of the predominating influence of home background on children (Silver, 1994). In the United States, for example, this message gained support after schools like Head Start had been established for children of poor families to facilitate the achievement of President Johnson's (1964) *War on Poverty* programme. With a strong emphasis on education as a means of combating poverty, this programme looked to specific policies for pre-school and the early grades of the elementary school in particular in order to compensate for environmental and family deficiencies which appeared to cause children to fail in school and consequently have limited life chances.

A couple of years after the establishment of schools for War on Poverty programme, a need arose to ascertain the degree of its success. Consequently, Coleman *et al*'s (1966) research ensued, from which emerged their report titled *Equality of Educational Opportunity Report*. Based on the findings of the research, the conclusion in the report was that school differences accounted for only a small percentage of differences in pupils' attainment.

In the following year, this finding was reflected in another research report in Britain: in the Plowden Report - *Children and their Primary Schools* (Department of Education and Science, 1967). And then Jencks *et al* (1972) also concluded from their research that the equalization of school resources would not make students significantly more equal after they complete school.

Thus for these researchers, there was little, if not nothing, that schools could do to influence students' achievement because, so to say, the students' destiny had been predetermined. Education then, was to be regarded as something

incapable of compensating for society and therefore was not to be viewed as a means of ensuring greater equity and/or equality.

Some of the findings and conclusions in the report present some points worth considering for the context in which this part of the thesis is set and I delineate them in the next section.

The Coleman et al (1966) research report

According to the report, schools "teach certain intellectual skills such as reading, writing, calculating and problem solving" (1966: 20) which are measured by standard achievement tests and rewarded in the workplace. However, the achievement tests:

> do not measure intelligence, nor attitudes, nor qualities of character. Furthermore, they are not, nor are they intended to be, 'culture free'. Quite the reverse: they are culture bound. What they measure are the skills which are among the most important in our society for getting a good job and moving up to a better one, and for full participation in an increasingly technical world... (1966: 20)

Thus the report highlights the overriding effects of non-school factors. Now then, if achievement tests are culture bound and, thus, not neutral but are linked to power relations of a society and the skills they reward, then there is a need to consider how students from other backgrounds who lack the cultural capital reflected in the curriculum and assessment requirements of the school might also be able to achieve success. In effect, the socio-economic background of pupils is the primary factor that accounts for their performance and so children from socio-economically deprived homes and communities are far less likely to do well in school than their counterparts from affluent homes and communities.

However, besides highlighting the overriding effects of non-school factors, Coleman *et al* noted that "improvements in school quality will make the most difference in achievement" (1966: 22) for the most disadvantaged students, that is, the low achieving students as well as those who come to school least prepared for the demands of schooling. This implies that improvement in

school quality is necessary because it could raise educational standards of pupils provided teachers and pupils work to expectation. The area that was considered to be the most important in quality improvement and in having the most significant effect on achievement for all students was teachers. In fact, Coleman *et al* discovered that the effect of good teachers was greatest on children from the most educationally disadvantaged background. Consequently, they stated: "a given investment in upgrading teacher quality will have the most effect on achievement in underprivileged areas" (1966: 317). Thus the professional development of teachers is a pre-requisite for improvement in educational quality.

The report contains yet another point worth mentioning: "it appears that a pupil's achievement is strongly related to the educational backgrounds and aspirations of other students in the school" (1966: 22). Some decades later, Davies also noted that "bright children who perform well can lift the performance of others around them" (2000: 29). Thus peers can have a strong influence on the attitudes and achievements of students.

In a nutshell then, Coleman *et al*'s research yielded major findings which included the fact that school cannot compensate for social inequalities, though it does have greater effects on those who most need them, and that teachers make the most difference of all the complex processes of the school. In fact, in view of their findings they suggested *inter alia* the provision of high quality teachers to disadvantaged and socio-economically deprived communities.

Even though the research (its methodology, definitions and the indicators used to measure equality of opportunity) and the conclusions arising from the findings have been subjected to criticisms and rendered controversial, as evidenced by further research (Rutter *et al*, 1979), the major findings concerning the role of school vis-à-vis home backgrounds of pupils did not sink into oblivion because they continued to be used as the basis for other research. For example, subsequent research such as that of Jencks *et al* (1972) on schools and social inequality elaborated on the issues raised in the study in different contexts and through different theoretical frameworks and arrived at the same conclusions. There is little doubt then, that schools contribute

greatly to the formation and perpetuation of social patterns, including patterns of inequality and this should not be left out of consideration in situations where improvement in education is being sought and where schooling is to be used as a means of bridging the equity-inequity gap that exists in society. Christie *et al* note:

> What is important to recognize is that the knowledge codes and forms of thinking on which schooling is based automatically privilege some at the expense of others. This is no simple matter to adjust – but ignoring it is likely to mean the perpetuation of initial inequalities (2007: 20-21).

As noted from the evidence of this current study, issues of unequal delivery of educational resources and socio-economic problems militate against teaching and learning processes in schools in the rural areas. Therefore Coleman *et al*'s research has implications for school reforms such as WSD in Ghana and I will discuss this in subsequent sections.

School Effectiveness Research

Effective school research has tried to counter the conclusions of Coleman *et al*'s research by contending that schools could have a definable impact on a student's achievement, irrespective of their home background and have even gone to the extent of establishing what the features of effective schools are.

One such research came from Weber (1971) in the United States. Before embarking on his research, Weber was aware that low reading attainment in the early grades of inner-city schools was a reality. But thinking of another inner-city school about which he had read and witnessed that reading achievement was about, or above, the national average, he focused his research on some public schools attended by very poor children. He located four schools that could be considered successful and examined them in some detail. He found out that such schools could be successful because they had something in their practice that differentiated them from unsuccessful schools. Among such things were strong leadership and use of phonics and individualization. He then concluded that schools rendered 'effective' could influence student's achievement (cited in Silver, 1994).

Also, in Britain, the research of Rutter *et al* (1979) indicated that schools do make a difference because, among other things, children's behaviour and attitudes are shaped and influenced a great deal by their experiences at school, particularly by the characteristics of the school as a social institution. Rutter and his colleagues have even gone to the extent of proving with their research finding that schools can not only make a difference but that it is possible to identify many of the factors that create the difference and that those factors make the schools effective, for example the climate and leadership of the school.

Several other research about school effectiveness have been conducted and a lot of quantitative studies on it appear in the work of individuals such as Scheerens (2000) and Townsend (2001) and in the volumes of *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* journals, as well as in collections such as the *International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research* (2000). All such studies show that schools do make a difference and that there are certain features which make schools effective. A meta-analysis of those features that have been established and tested provides the following characteristics: professional leadership, shared vision and goals, a learning environment, concentration on teaching and learning (time on task), high expectations, positive reinforcement, monitoring progress, pupil rights and responsibilities, purposeful teaching, a learning organization, and home-school partnership (Sammons *et al*, 1995).

In addition to the above list of features, Dembele (2005) lists "will" as another characteristic that makes schools in developing countries effective because he believes that parental push for schooling in these countries makes a difference to school effectiveness.

However, the problem with school effectiveness researchers is that they often focus on school qualities without adequately acknowledging that these do not make the decisive difference to students' life chances. In effect, school effectiveness research seem to lose sight of an important aspect of the environmental factor which also contributes to students' life chances, namely the influence of home backgrounds and social conditions. As contended by

Christie *et al*, "to measure the qualities of effective schools is to address only one part of the effectiveness story – and the larger part at that" (Christie *et al*, 2007: 24). Furthermore, effective school studies do not adequately reveal how schools come to be effective.

Notwithstanding the above weaknesses of school effectiveness studies, policy makers have become inspired by the findings about the fact that schools can make a difference and that it is possible to identify many of the factors that create the difference and make schools effective and have, as a result, supported a considerable number of work in what has become known as the School Improvement Programmes and Strategies ((Mortimore, 2000).

School improvement studies

Whereas School Effectiveness studies attempted to isolate critical inputs and processes that might produce the best outcomes in terms of achievement results, school improvement studies gave attention to the full variety of changes that occur in schools and which interact with student characteristics to produce differences in the learning outcomes of students. The preoccupation of the School Improvement Movement then, was to establish the ways schools improve their effectiveness over a period of time and to determine the factors that bring about this change. Attention was therefore directed to the processes of school improvement and the links between processes and outcomes (Gray *et al*, 1999).

Among the influential theorists of this movement are Fullan (2007) and Hopkins (2001). These theorists have analysed school-based approaches to change and subsequent studies have included links to system change.

What characterizes school improvement work is the assumption that school change takes time and that the change can be complex, if not contradictory. For example, according to Fullan (2000), changing a primary school can take three years and a secondary school five, depending on the size and complexity of the school. And the change will involve structures and culture of the school. The latter is even more difficult to change. As noted by Christie *et al* "powerful teaching and learning depend on a range of internal relationships in

schools that need to be engaged with, and successful change cannot simply be mandated" (2007: 25). Factors such as the nature of leadership and teachers' capacity to execute the desired changes, as well as their professional judgement that the change will be better than what currently exists need to be given attention.

Thus school improvement studies have contributed to knowledge about the complexities of working with schools as social institutions. They show that change is difficult to effect and sustain and that school culture is an important element to pay attention to when effecting school change because of its immense influence on school performance.

Therefore school improvement reforms focus on the school as the unit of change and seek changes from classroom through teacher to headteacher level, engaging the teachers in professional dialogue and development, together with change in the school culture with the support of external professional agencies (Harris, 2002).

Gray *et al* (1999: 36) suggest four ways in which school improvement can be measured:

- Loose descriptions of what has happened, starting with how things were and step by step description of what has happened since then;
- More systematic description where headteachers involved in effective school improvement programmes estimate how much change has occurred usually using different outcome measures such as changes in staff morale and pupil achievement;
- Judgement by people external (e.g. inspectors) to the school about how much change has taken place;
- Judgements about extent of improvement based on 'harder' measures such as examination and test results.

In this study, I have virtually based my investigation of the factors that have contributed to the continued existence of the WSD practices, systems and processes on these four ways.

In addition, Gray *et al* (1999: 140), through their studies of areas of change and correlates of school improvement in some British schools, have emerged with dimensions of change that are more likely to produce the best results in school improvement usually in terms of student learning and achievement. These are:

- Efforts to raise pupils' examination performance through such strategies as entering pupils for more examinations and mentoring 'borderline' pupils;
- Modification to management structures and planning procedures to achieve greater staff (and to a lesser extent) pupil participation;
- Efforts to implement more coherent policies for teaching and learning in such areas as codes of classroom conduct and homework;
- Changes in the ways in which the curriculum was organized, mostly in response to national reforms;
- Refurbishment of the school environment and facilities;
- Efforts to involve parents in their children's education and the community in the life of the school;
- More active marketing of the school; and
- Giving attention to the processes of teaching and learning, including such things as fostering more discussion of classroom practices.

However, a closer look at the menu of the traits identified above against approaches used in school improvement initiatives in developing countries such as the Aga Khan Project in East Africa, would suggest the following major factors that could be considered necessary ingredients for ensuring school improvement in developing countries:

- Emphasis on efficient school management;
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- Improving the working environment of teachers; and

- Getting more local community participation in school development.

The fundamental principle underlying all these factors, despite the differences, is to improve, with time, student learning and achievement results, which is also the ultimate aim of all school improvement initiatives whether in developed or developing countries (Akyeampong, 2004).

Therefore it goes without saying that despite the problem of contextual differences in the implementation of school improvement policies, school improvement ideas in developed countries have, on the whole, influenced and shaped similar initiatives in developing countries. One such initiative is the Whole School Development.

WSD: its implementation within the macro and the micro contexts

A closer look at the history of WSD indicates that WSD originated from School Improvement studies. But studies on School Improvement have been concentrated in the developed countries and therefore strategies of school improvement have, in the main, emerged from schools in the developed world. In the developing countries, very few comparable improvement studies have been conducted. An example is that of Farah's study, entitled *Roads to Success* (1996), which was conducted with the Agha Khan University in Karachi and was commissioned by the World Bank as a background study for new education projects in Pakistan.

Considering that virtually all school improvement studies have been carried out in the developed world, what is significant to note is that how the strategies identified in the western school context play out in contexts that are radically different may not be straightforward (Hopkins, 2002) because to describe specific strategies that operate well in a school in a particular context is one thing, and to expect to transpose the strategies into other contexts where schools are less effective is another. The fact is, a reform, just like policy, is not just a matter of being identified at a particular place as ideal and then being implanted, accepted and implemented elsewhere.

Hence, as I noted in the case of the literature on policy, change and decentralisation about the importance of contextual differences, it is important in this case also to consider that any attempt at using school improvement strategies for education reforms ought to begin with the question as to whether the characteristics can actually assist to improve individual schools, be they effective or ineffective and whether, in the first place, the changes for improvement will be accepted by those who are expected to implement them and by the immediate and wider communities of which the school forms a part.

In the Agha Khan School Improvement initiative that was introduced in many parts of East Africa in the mid 1980s, a mixture of school improvement strategies including child-centred learning, a focus on teacher learning, professional development, leadership training and capacity building, were selected. However, some of the strategies did not prove very successful. For example, an attempt was made to promote teacher's professional development through centre-based in-service training workshops but then the transfer of skills to classroom practice was often problematic. It was realized that 'on-the-job' support was more critical but this also had implications for changes in the culture of the school and the way job support is organized to assist teachers in their classrooms (Hopkins, 2002).

Therefore in terms of implementation of school improvement strategies, Farah (1996) stresses a combination of school and community factors. In her study of *self-sustaining primary school change in Pakistan*, she compared 'improving schools with eight control schools in rural areas all over Pakistan. The characteristics she identified were similar to those of the studies conducted in the developed countries. Among them was: capable leadership with support from a vigilant school local community. She concluded that:

> Critical causal factors in the process of positive school change are a combination of (1) *a competent head teacher* and (2) *a vigilant and supportive community*. Either of these stakeholders can be responsible for encouraging the participation of the other. Sustained change, however, comes about when both are present. *A successful head teacher* takes

initiatives both inside *and* outside of the school. (Farah, 1996: 11; emphasis in original).

Thus for Farah, desirable qualities such as commitment to participatory development and effective leadership are crucial for ensuring school effectiveness. However, for a school to be able to sustain self-initiated improvement, there is a need for a positive relationship between the school and the community it serves (Farah, 1996; cited in Marland, 1999). Besides, several steps ought to be taken initially for the school to acquire some prerequisites of 'effectiveness' before striving for improvement. These steps include ensuring regular attendance at school by teachers; positive attitudes from pupils, teachers, headteachers, parents and the school local community in terms of handling the school's problems; and a sense of collegiality, competence and confidence from the head in their dealings with the staff.

All the above issues are significant to improvement in education quality and need to be given attention if successes are to be achieved for school improvement.

Juxtaposing the macro and the micro: the urban and/or the advantaged vis-a-vis the rural and/or the disadvantaged

The literature on school effectiveness and improvement, generally speaking, goes across effectiveness and improvement traditions as well as a range of policy, macro- and micro- positions. Even though a note of caution is necessary when applying international literature in Ghana, it could be said with some degree of certainty that the literature is capable of offering many insights for working to improve schools in Ghana, especially in the rural areas. Practically speaking, there is little doubt that in all countries, there are schools that are privileged and others that are underprivileged and therefore school effectiveness and improvement research studies have implications for school development in all countries. As argued by MacBeath *et al*,

> The history of school education, *wherever and whenever it has been written*, provides accounts of schools in the centre of the social mainstream as against schools perpetually on the periphery. What brings them together is a common policy framework but their social and economic

circumstances are worlds apart. Schools on the edge face a constant struggle to forge a closer alignment between home and school, parents and teachers, and between the formal world of school and the informal world of neighbourhood and peer group (2007:1; emphasis my own).

MacBeath *et al*, describe underprivileged schools or *schools on the edge/periphery* as schools that "serve families and communities that have been cut adrift" (2007: 1) and indicate that

> However bleak the picture, there are schools in all countries which succeed in defying the odds, sometimes by statistical sleight of hand, sometimes by a concentrated and strategic focus on those students most likely to reach the bar and, in some instances, by inspirational commitment to deep learning across boundaries of language and culture. These schools are, in every sense, exceptional (2007: 2).

Thus, even though underprivileged schools face difficult circumstances, there are some in every country which manage to succeed. And it is from such underprivileged schools that lessons can be learnt, albeit, as mentioned above, there is a need to recognise that studies of such schools cannot be seen to reflect all of the conditions of the schools in the rural areas of Ghana. Schools on the periphery elsewhere – for example, in Europe and America - are schools of their own systems, in which majority of the schools are at the centre of the social mainstream. However, in Ghana, majority of the schools have the characteristics of being on the periphery of the social mainstream, leaving a minority at the centre. The majority of the schools are in rural and most remote rural areas undergoing relatively poor socio-economic conditions. Most if not all of the children in such schools lack cultural capital on commencing their schooling. Besides, they face problems of a lack of electricity and water in their social environment. Educationally, their schools lack resources such as laboratories and textbooks and the stability of their teaching staff is precarious. On the other hand, schools in the minority (referred to here as privileged schools) and in the urban areas which are at the centre of the mainstream are well resourced both socially and educationally and most of the children who commence schooling are rich in cultural capital. Hence, there is a different order of the problem.

Notwithstanding that the problems mentioned in the international literature about underprivileged schools manifest themselves in different forms in rural schools in Ghana. Whereas schools on the periphery elsewhere may have electricity and pipe-water and be sufficiently equipped with qualified teachers evidence from this study shows that most schools on the periphery in Ghana lack such resources. Much disparity exists between rural schools and their urban counterparts. This in turn results in disparity between pupils in rural schools and their urban counterparts.

Thus, the Coleman *et al* report (1966) has implications for the disparity between the rural and the urban areas in terms of educational provision. In particular, and to stretch a point, the fact that achievement tests are culture bound and, thus, not neutral but are linked to power relations of a society and the skills they reward draws attention to the question as to how students from other backgrounds who lack the cultural capital reflected in the curriculum and assessment requirements of the school could be assisted to achieve success. As I have noted earlier, WSD in Ghana focuses on, *inter alia*, child-centred primary practices in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving with the view to improving the quality of teaching and learning in basic school classroom (GES: WSD Report, 2004). The final examination for the basic school then tests particular skills including reading, writing, calculating and problem-solving. The likelihood of students' success at work or in higher education depends on passing the Basic School Leaving Certificate (BSLC) examination because invariably the examination result is the criterion used to sort and select students. Thus, if sorting and selecting are done on the basis of specified knowledge and ways of thinking, then there is little doubt that those from disadvantaged background – particularly the rural poor- are much more likely to encounter difficulty in achieving successes than their urban counterparts. Obviously then, the playing field is not level.

Also, Coleman *et al* (1966) suggest improvement in teacher quality to support the most disadvantaged students, that is, the low achieving students as well as those who come to school least prepared for the demands of schooling. Thus the professional development of teachers is a pre-requisite for improvement in educational quality.

Summary and conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the nature of education policy within its wider social, political and economic contexts, focusing on the levels at which policy is developed and implemented and paying attention to issues about power and influence in policy formulation and to the importance of values in shaping and implementing policy. I have also reviewed relevant literature about change with reference to educational reform programmes in both developed and developing countries. Besides, I have explored issues about educational decentralisation and school effectiveness and improvement. In each of the reviews, I have discussed the complexities involved and ways of managing them.

All the reviews provide converging themes on what may count as useful instruments for planning and gauging the success of educational reforms in developing countries. Specifically, the reviews offer some lessons worth noting.

First, there is a need to manage reforms in rapidly changing environments (such as experienced in developing countries) differently from routine tasks in stable environments. Adequate timescale, support and continuous review to gauge successes are necessary.

Second, it is essential to design educational reforms in a way that will make management strategies appropriate to the degree of uncertainties in the environment and to the level of resources available to the front-line implementers as well as to the degree of innovation called for in the projects.

Third, the need to ascertain the possibility of acceptance of the proposed project by the target population is important.

Fourth, flexible arrangements would be necessary to accommodate participants' needs and capacities and to provide the possibility of a sense of ownership, even if practical constraints present difficulty in planning everything together.

Fifth, unintended outcomes –both positive and negative - are to be given consideration and the necessary precautions taken as the proposed reform proceeds to the implementation level to elicit new demands from individuals.

Sixth, contextual socio-economic factors are far stronger variables affecting outcomes and it is important to recognise this in order to inject greater realism into reform implementations. For example, the specification of education quality should be considered nationally or culturally or situationally specific rather than presumed to be universal.

These lessons are worth giving consideration. Indeed, the literature is full of instances where no attention is paid to them. Ghana is a typical example of a country in which experiments and innovations in the content and forms of education and critical reflections on educational change have been organised (Buchert, 2002). Chapter 2 of this thesis relates instances. And as Chapter 4 shows, at the time of the proposal for WSD implementation, there had been international convergence at several levels and a means of amalgamating them had to be sought to enable WSD to develop.

Much of the literature on change, decentralisation and educational reforms comes from the developed countries and positive lessons can be learned from them. The caution here, however, is the need to consider contextual differences when transferring such lessons to the institutional settings of education in developing countries. In effect, all aspects of education need to be research-based. This implies that educational programmes need to be based on indigenous research and continuous evaluation to enable them to thrive in their own contexts.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION IN GHANA BEFORE WSD: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I reviewed related literature on education policy and practice, educational change, educational decentralisation and school effectiveness and improvement in order to establish my conceptual framework. In this chapter, I discuss the major educational policy initiatives in Ghana from the pre-independence era to the close of the 20th century in order to ease the understanding of the contexts in which WSD was introduced in the country. I begin with a discussion of the educational activities of the pre-independence era and follow it up with a discussion of the major educational initiatives of the post-independence era.

2.1 Education of the pre-independence era

Ghana's current education landscape owes its origins to education policy initiatives adopted by successive governments from the second half of the 19th century. At this time, strenuous attempts at shifts in the curriculum, access, funding, improvement in education quality and efficiency in the management of schools in the country began. However, before this time, Western-style education had long been introduced, first by the merchants of Europe in the 16th century (Graham, 1971) and, subsequently, by the missionaries of the same continent in the 18th century (Antwi, 1991). Though the schools later spread into other parts of the country, they were initially established in the castles along the coasts (where climatic and oceanic conditions favoured European settlement) and were run at one time or the other by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Danes.

Initially, the curriculum had a narrow focus because it centred on basic literacy, with the Bible and scriptures as the main texts. For example, the Portuguese aimed to provide "reading, writing and religious teaching for

African children" (Brasio, 1952; quoted in Kimble, 1963: 62) and the Dutch, the Danes and the missionaries had similar aims (Graham, 1971). Thus it could be said that initially, European style education in the country was geared towards acquisition of basic literary skills and not the kind that could translate the pupils into self-independent individuals. As would be expected, the pre-occupation of the Europeans, at this time, was to educate the local inhabitants as interpreters of trade and commerce and to propagate religious teachings.

However, from the mid 19th century, the socio-economic, political and legislative environments of the country began to have a more profound impact on education policy initiatives, not only on curriculum but also on access and participation, funding, efficiency in education management and efforts at quality improvement.

It all began with issues of skills acquisition for employment purposes. By the 1850s, it had become visible that "oversupply of [academic] graduates" (Foster, 1965a: 89) from the castle and mission schools "was exceeding ... demand" (Foster, 1965a: 67) and traces of unemployment of school leavers had surfaced. Consequently, the creation of agricultural and industrial institutions as a panacea for easing or solving the problem became a popular idea and remained a recurring theme in succeeding policy documents.

To utilise the panacea, shifts were made in terms of access to education. When education began in the castle schools, it was originally intended for the children of chiefs and of the rising class of wealthy merchants, traders and professionals as well as for mulatto children. These constituted children of Africans and Europeans in the upper segments of the Gold Coast[2] society. Later, however, the economic trend of the country dictated a shift in access and participation. Education was extended to involve all the indigenous people, particularly from the second half of the 19th century because of a steady increase in commerce throughout the whole country, especially from the 1850s. Cultivation of cash crops had increased and the rise in domestic

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[2] Gold Coast' was the original name of Ghana before the country attained independence. Hitherto it included the Gold Coast Colony (which was established in 1874), Togoland (after 1922) and the Ashanti Region and the Northern Territories (which were administered separately until 1936).

comforts of the Africans had resulted in demand for better houses. Demand for clerks to transact business for merchants had also shot up. Consequently, the local people began to feel the importance of education. Some chiefs made demands for more schools to be opened and even assisted in recruiting children themselves (Graham, 1971: 99).

As a result of the popular demand for education, no definite pattern of school distribution existed in the second half of the 19th century. Schools were established wherever the desire for them was expressed and whenever the townsfolk expressed a genuine wish to assist in running them. A need then arose for some form of regulations that would ensure the quality of the schools. Consequently, an Inspector of Schools was appointed in 1856 to take responsibility for issues relating to finance, textbooks and stationery, buildings and furniture as well as training of teachers and general inspection of schools. However, the poor state of the roads made the carrying out of the entire task impossible.

A more workable approach was adopted to ensure the efficiency of schools through the enactment of the 1882 Education Ordinance. This ordinance made provision for the establishment of industrial schools to assist pupils to develop skills in handicrafts, manufacturing processes and agriculture (Foster, 1965a) in order to help resolve the problem of unemployment of school leavers.[3] However, of particular interest to the Ordinance was the kind of governance and management of the schools that would ensure efficiency. Consequently, by this Ordinance, two categories of primary schools were to exist: Government Schools and Assisted Schools. The former were to be maintained entirely from public resources, and the latter, set up by missions or private individuals, were to receive financial aid from the government according to their efficiency. For the overall control and supervision of the system of grants-in-aid, a Board of Education was established and an Inspector of Schools appointed.

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[3] It appears this Ordinance did not achieve much success with the establishment of industrial schools because in 1908 and 1909, further attempts intended to make the education system more orientated towards work through new education reforms achieved little success due to reasons including the preference for academic education, which was stimulated by the demand for general academic education by the country's formal occupational opportunities of the economy.

It would seem that the 1882 Education Ordinance was a reproduction of the structural characteristics of English education which had arisen from the 1870 English Education Act because there are obvious similarities between the two. First, they had similar aims, namely to expand education. Second, they both made provision for the establishment of Boards that would assist in the administration of the grants-in-aid system whenever a need arose. Third, the Colony's grant- in-aid system was patterned on the English one: every school in England was paid according to its size and the number of certificated teachers together with additional sums for the number of pupil and assistant teachers. There was also payment to pupils by attendance and results. A similar situation existed in the former: schools were granted aid according to the amounts earned by the pupils as well as by proficiency, attendance and results.

The grant-in-aid system was introduced in England as far back as 1861 and was found to have had drawbacks in terms of the position of the teachers, academic pressure on pupils, neglect of other aspect of the curriculum and feeling of distrust between teachers and inspectors. Similarly, there were drawbacks in Gold Coast's case. Almost invariably, the position of the teachers and their livelihood depended on the amount of grant earned by their pupils. The teachers were therefore, as reported by inspectors, so intent on the measures by which the maximum grant could be obtained and less insensitive to the value of those intellectual influences which a school needed to exert but which could not be measured officially with mathematical exactitude that they over-pressed the pupils to produce good results. Moreover, even though improvement in the 3Rs (namely Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) was recorded, the other subjects were neglected. Also, teachers were tempted to falsify registers and deceive inspectors by making pupils learn their reading books by rote. Inspectors' attempt to check this resulted in a feeling of distrust and hostility between them and the teachers.

Notwithstanding the drawbacks, the system (of grant-in-aid) was introduced in the Colony from 1882 because it was felt that the efficiency of the schools or pupils' could be enhanced through examinations as a result of the institutionalization of payment by results. In addition, the system enabled

many schools to obtain support which otherwise they would have had limited chances of getting (Graham, 1971).

However, to maximise benefits from the introduction of the grant-in-aid, the drawbacks (of the 1882 Education Ordinance) were not allowed to continue to take their full toll on the schools. A few amendments related to organisation and governance were made, which eventually culminated in the enactment of the 1887 Education Ordinance. This Ordinance formed the basis of the education system in the Colony throughout the period of the first quarter of the 20th century. Under this Ordinance, a system of managerial control was established to replace the Local Boards. Local governing bodies of mission societies became Boards of Management of their schools, but they were responsible to the government for their efficiency. The Boards of Management appointed Local Managers who were normally in charge of the Church to be in control of each school. These Local Mangers were accountable to the Central managing body in Cape Coast or Accra.

The appointment of Sir Gordon Guggisburg as the governor of the Gold Coast between 1919 and 1927 increased efforts at improving the quality and system of education in the country, albeit the focus of his Ten Year Plan was on developing transportation infrastructure for purposes of expanding commerce in the country. Alongside this, Guggisburg had in mind the development of other infrastructure such as hydro-electric works and telecommunication (Kay, 1972) and encouragement of technical and agricultural education as a response to the growing problem of unemployed school leavers, which had emerged from the disdain of manual work by the younger generation who believed that such work was meant for the slaves.

Guggisburg was of the opinion that "primary education must be thorough and be from the bottom to the top" (McWilliam and Kwamena-Po, 1975: 57). In his time, the 1925 Education Ordinance was passed to ensure, among other things, better teaching and effective management of schools. Under this new Ordinance, any school that attained a certain standard of efficiency qualified for a grant and the scale of the grant was determined by the efficiency of the school. Obviously, a steady increase on government expenditure on grants

would be inescapable as the Ordinance maintained the primary objective of multiplying as rapidly as possible the number of schools classed as efficient. However, partly as a result of the premature ending of Guggisburg's Ten Year Plan due to the expiry of his governorship in the Gold Coast and partly as a result of teacher shortage and inadequate funding, his policy of improving primary education was hardly brought to fruition. It was not until independence had been attained that efforts were made to revive the plan.

2.2 Education of the post-independence era

With the attainment of independence in 1957, many education policy texts began to be developed. This chapter concentrates on key ones developed from 1957 to the close of the 20th century, namely the Education Act of 1961 which gave legal backing to the Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) for Education of 1951; the Dzobo Committee Report of 1974 which resulted in the New Structure and Content of Education (NSCE) of 1974; the New Education Reform Programme of 1987 and the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) of 1996, which was followed by the implementation of the Whole School Development (WSD) reform.

Even though the chapter concentrates on the above policy texts, wherever necessary, reference will be made to other texts - documentary or other materials - which include reports of commissions and committees and which, within the discursive parameters of this thesis, are significant. This flexibility in the choice of texts, as explained by Ozga,

> allows for imaginative interpretation that goes beyond the formal [policy texts] used by policy analysts and towards the kinds of illuminative work done by historians and cultural analysis (2000: 95).

Again, even though the focus is on basic education,[4] wherever necessary, reference will be made to higher levels, that is post basic education, for clarification of issues under discussion.

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[4] Basic education currently comprises the first nine years of schooling – 6 years primary and 3 years junior secondary.

From the mid 1950s, great political changes occurred in the Gold Coast, resulting in shifts in the country's education policy. Self-governing was attained in 1951 and the ADP for education was promulgated in the same year. Among the aims of the ADP were to provide free and compulsory primary education for all children of school-going age (that is, from the age of 6) at public expense and to expand teacher training facilities for the training of teachers. Thus, the policy of increasing access to education, which was developed in the pre-independence era, was maintained and given impetus by the ADP. This time, education was to be compulsory and, to minimise the burden of the poor and enable the government to succeed in exercising this compulsion, education was made free.

However, even though the ADP was promulgated in 1951, it was not until the introduction of the Education Act of 1961 that it gained legal backing. Notwithstanding that, from 1957 to 1960, education continued to develop in accordance with the various policies laid down before independence in 1957 when the Conventional People's Party (CPP) became the first government of the first republic of the Gold Coast, now Ghana. By the close of 1957, education facilities had expanded rapidly to almost all parts of the country. The number of pupils in primary schools had risen to about twice the number in 1951 and a large number of new classrooms had been erected to cope with the increase in enrolment (McWilliam and Kwamena-Po, 1975). Facilities for further education were also expanded. In particular, as many teachers as possible were trained for the primary and middle schools. By 1958, and for the first time, the number of trained teachers in these schools had risen above that of the untrained (Graham, 1971).

The pace increased dramatically (Ninsen, 1991; Rimmer, 1992) after the Education Act in September 1961 when free and compulsory education itself began. Before the Act, that is, between 1960 and 1961, the number of public primary schools was 3,514 with a total enrolment of 441,117 children. Within two years, both these figures had doubled and by 1966, the total number had risen to 8,144 schools with a total enrolment of 1,137,494 children. As a

consequence, large numbers of youths graduated from the schools. However, there was not a corresponding increase in formal employment opportunities (Hodge, 1964) and so unemployment soared. Steps were taken to resolve the problem, among them, the establishment of technical training institutes. Thus, once again, the view of agricultural and industrial education as a panacea for unemployment in the pre-independence era has surfaced, even though "unemployment is largely an economic, not an educational problem" (Palmer, 2006: 129).

In 1966, there occurred a change of government through a military coup which brought into power some influential people who were unhappy about the trend of education development in the previous regime. These people called for a halt of the rapid education expansion and some public primary schools were closed down as a result. By a similar time, there were concerns rising in other African countries that the massive expansion of schooling around independence had caused major problems of quality and the emergence of the 'educated unemployed' (King and McGrath, 2002).

The military regime - the National Liberation Council (NLC) – which overthrew the CPP appointed a committee – the Kwapong Educational Review Committee (ERC) - to, *inter alia*, conduct a comprehensive review of the educational system of Ghana at all levels and make recommendations and suggestions for reforms for improvement and elimination of inefficiency and waste. The Committee met and submitted a report, the contents of which included a noticeable fall in the standard of education in the country since independence. The Committee's definition for educational standards included academic achievement levels, teaching and learning quality, supervision, efficiency, staffing, accommodation and equipment shortage (Report of the Education Review Committee, 1967).

According to the Committee, the causes included the commencement of the previous Government's accelerated programme of educational expansion at a time when adequate numbers of qualified teachers and other personnel were not available and the fact that many politicians and political appointees with only very little education and without other desirable qualities had been given

posts of high responsibility or large emoluments in the public services, which gave the impression that good education was not essential to advancement in society (Report of the Education Review Committee, 1967).[5]

The committee's report then resulted in the introduction of the continuation schools. This was a two-year pre-vocational classes based on the perceived industrial and farming needs of the country (Martin, 1976) and was inserted at the point of the middle schools with the hope that middle school leavers, most of whom hitherto could not further their education at formal secondary schools, or those youth who could not get as far as the middle school and hence primary education was terminal for them, would be better prepared for the world of work. "However, the continuation schools programme suffered serious set-backs which eventually led to its demise" (Palmer, 2006: 135). Among other reasons, many pupils in the continuation schools paid little attention to the vocational and technical subjects of the curriculum because they were keen to enter Senior Secondary School (SSS) either for prestigious reasons or simply to pursue academic subjects or both. As a matter of fact, "this dual function – as both a continuing and terminal institiution – of the continuation schools was a large factor in its demise" (Palmer, 2006: 136).

In May 1966, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) upon NLC's request, offered support to launch a stabilisation programme (Rimmer, 1992). This programme, between 1966 and 1968, resulted in devaluation of the local currency (by 30% against the dollar) and removal of price-control and subsidies. In addition, the NLC resorted to large scale retrenchment in the public and private sectors with the hope that those retrenched from the public sector would be provided opportunities by the private sector (Ninsen, 1991). The expected result proved negative because opportunities in formal private sector employment also declined (Palmer, 2006). There was also a reduction in overall government expenditure with a serious consequence on the education sector: "total expenditure in education declined, participation rate[s]

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[55] Another blame came from the Progress Party government to whom the NLC handed over power in 1969: "weaknesses in administration, planning and co-ordination of educational development; imbalances in the structure of education and mal-distribution and lack of relationship between the school curriculum and the demands of work and life after school" (MoI, 1971: 158).

of school aged children dropped, [and] so did the proportion of trained teachers ... [with] this degeneration [continuing] well into the 1980s" (Ahadzie, 2000; cited in Palmer, 2006: 136).

When the NLC handed over power to the elected Progress Party (PP) government in 1969, efforts were made to minimise the problem of unemployment (which was taking its toll on school leavers) through an increase in the opportunities available for entering Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE). To facilitate this, an alien compliance order was issued in November 1969, which resulted in the departure of many traders from the country within six months (Peil, 1974) but retained the problem of rising unemployment (GoG, 2004a).

The PP government's desire to address the problem of unemployment was short-lived because the government was overthrown in a military coup in 1972 and once again the country entered into a military regime under the National Redemption Council (NRC) government. Confronted with the long-standing problem of youth unemployment, the NRC also saw education reform as a panacea (Palmer, 2006) for resolving the unemployment problem. This became glaring after the Dzobo Educational Reform Committee of 1973 (appointed by the NRC) had submitted their report. The report and recommendations of this committee resulted in the emergence of the New Structure and Content of Education (NSCE) under the new education reform of 1974.

The 1973 Dzobo Educational Reform Committee report and the NSCE of 1974

The Dzobo Committee embodied in their report that there was a high rate of unemployment and under-employment among the graduates of the middle and secondary schools because these graduates do not have the proper attitude and skills that enable them to work with their hands and to readily take up the type of practical work that is currently available in our society (GoG, 1972). For this reason, the committee recommended the introduction of a Junior Comprehensive Secondary, which later became known as the Junior

Secondary School (JSS) under the new education reform – NSCE - of 1974 (MoE, 1974).

Hitherto, the old structure of pre-university education, namely elementary and secondary education, consisted of up to 17 years duration: 10 years of elementary education (6 years basic primary and 4 years middle schooling)[6] and 7 years of secondary education (5 years secondary plus 2 years sixth-form)[7]. The new structure reduced the duration to 13 years: 6 years primary, 3 years Junior Secondary (JSS), 2 years Senior Secondary (SSS) (Lower) and 2 years Senior Secondary (Upper).

The NSCE had worthy aims. First, it aimed at cost-effective and cost-recovery mechanisms for effecting policy on budget adjustments in the country's system of education. Thus the introduction of the JSS meant that the duration of pre-university education was to be shortened by about 4 years so as to reduce the cost of schooling and create excess funds for improving quality and access at the Basic Education level.

Second, it aimed at expanding secondary education at a lower cost (to the government) so as to provide more equal opportunities for those who have had little access to secondary schools (Cobbe, 1991). Thus the introduction of the JSS was intended to create more room for primary graduates who wanted to further their schooling at the post-JSS level, that is, SSS.

Third, it aimed at enhancing the educational relevance and efficiency of the country through diversification of the curriculum, thereby de-emphasising academic knowledge (which had been inherited from the pre-independence era) in favour of job-relevant or vocational education for the 12-15 year olds. The emphasis was at the JSS level, where it was mandatory to embody subjects such as agriculture and "the rudiments of trade" in the curriculum for all pupils at this level (Scadding, 1989: 44). This was intended to make it

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[6] Successful completion of 10 years of elementary schooling may grant access to the vocational institution or, through success at an entrance examination, to the training college.
[7] Entry to the 5-year secondary depended on passing a common entrance examination from middle form 2/3/4. From the 5-year secondary schooling, entry to the 2-year sixth-form was based on passing the General/School Certificate of Education (G/SCE) ordinary level examination with very strong grades.

possible for pupils to leave the education system with skills that would enable them to become employable.

However, in spite of its worthy aims, the NSCE did not produce any sustainable impact. A few JSSs were established at the regional and district centres on pilot basis. But once again, limiting factors such as inadequate teaching and learning materials as well as inadequate trained teachers were at work and so "the JSS programme never survived this experimental stage" (Palmer, 2006: 137). Besides, there was lack of interest on the part of those administering it (Palmer, 2006).

Also contributing to this lack of progress were political instability and economic depression in the country. The series of military coup d'etat resulted in shifts in economic policies, which in turn took their toll on successive governments. First, the NLC (which overthrew the CPP) re-oriented itself to the West and received financial support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The NLC gave way to the PP government in 1969 and the latter continued this relationship with the IMF/World Bank. But due mainly to PP's expansionist policies which implied greater public spending that would ran counter to the former IMF/World Bank agreement with the NLC, it was not until December 1971 that an agreement was reached.

Second, the NRC came and "repudiated all external debts that arose through fraudulent contracts. This antagonised donors and foreclosed any possibility of [this] regime receiving concessional and long-term bilateral aid" (Palmer, 2006: 137).

Third, the Supreme Military Council (SMC) also ascended the throne through another coup and reintroduced the structural adjustment policies advocated by the donors which meant, and resulted in, a cut back in public expenditure including education.

Fourth, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) dethroned the SMC in 1979 in a military coup and, targeting government officials, formal and informal market traders, conducted its housecleaning exercise, claiming that

this would eradicate corruption in the country's commercial system. Initially, the targets were the illegal distribution of imports. However, when the exercise was extended to include local foodstuffs, it restrained rural producers from marketing their products for fear of their goods being forcibly sold. Rural household incomes declined and many retreated into subsistence farming with a trickling down effect on nonfarm enterprises due to a fall in consumer demand (Clark, 1988; Robertson, 1983).

Fifth, the AFRC handed over power to an elected government - People's National Party (PNP) – in September 1979 but, then, launched a second coup and took power again under a new name – Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC).

Coupled with the military coup d'etat and the changes in economic policy was economic recession. From the mid 1970s, the economies of many less developed countries including Ghana were enfeebled by a marked decline in terms of trade of primary products. Prices of primary products dropped sharply in spite of rising energy prices. Ghana, being dependent primarily on agriculture with cocoa as its major export, could not endure the constraints of the severity of the drop in prices of primary products. Government revenues declined while expenditures increased, unconstrained by budgetary considerations.

This forced successive governments within that period to cut back on real level of financing the education sector from 6.4% to 1.4% Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 1976 and 1983. Soon, schools began facing inadequate supply of educational resources, both human and material. School management began collapsing and inspection/supervision virtually came to a halt at the basic education level and the quality of education began to suffer a rapid decline, especially in the early 1980s (Ahadzie, 2000; Sawyer, 1997).

A further reform was therefore considered necessary to salvage the education system. Hence, the introduction of the New Educational Reform Programme in 1987.

The New Educational Reform Programme (NERP) of 1987

In 1987 the PNDC government, with the support of the World Bank, initiated the NERP as an integral part of the country's Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) of 1983. The aims of the NERP were to improve the efficiency and quality of education, expand access to education at all levels and make education financing more equitable, as well as improve sector management of education as a whole (World Bank, 1986; Chao and Alper, 1998). In addition, as in previous education reforms, the NERP attempted to make education more oriented to work so as to respond favourably to the massive unemployment problems and economic crisis.

Thus, the goals of the NERP were not different from those of the NSCE reform. However, certain changes that were effected in terms of structure of the education system shortened the duration of pre-university education from 17 to 12 years (World Bank, 2004c): from 6 years primary, 4 years middle school, 5 years secondary school and 2 years sixth-form to 6 years primary, 3 years JSS and 3 years SSS. Basic education thus comprised the primary and JSS. Middle school in the old system was therefore replaced by JSS with 3 years' duration. The middle schools were, in the main, academic schools whereas the JSS curriculum included pre-technical and pre-vocational education (Dongo, 2002).

A significant thrust of the NERP was the priority given to basic education with substantially increased resource inputs from donors and the government of Ghana (Chao and Alper, 1998). In view of the country's progress on the ERP, Ghana received support for the reform from donor agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and from countries such as Canada, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (World Bank, 1990). Ghana government itself increased expenditure on basic education. In 1987, budget on education increased by 700%, increasing in real terms the share of basic education from about 45% to about 60% of the total allocation for education (EIU Country Report, 2001).

As noted in Chapter 1, socio-political environments have influence on policy because it is within such environments that the overarching guiding principles

of policy are formulated (Bell and Stevenson, 2006). At the time of the NERP, the political environment influenced both its design and the underlying assumptions of how this reform would impact on the economy. The PNDC was driven by socialist ideology and it was clear from their objective that the education system would be made more equitable and responsive to current critical issues, especially unemployment. No wonder then, that the NERP adopted an education policy with a vocational and technical bias in line with the Gold Coast governments education policy. Also, the increased attention of the NERP to basic education had a political undertone. The PNDC government was interested in securing the political support of the (majority) rural folks rather than the minority - mainly the urban elite - and so tactfully spread the benefits of education in favour of the rural areas through the introduction of vocational and technical subjects in order to realise its interests.

In any case, the NERP resulted in a number of changes. Notable among them was the establishment of many JSS in the country. Some communities enthusiastically welcomed the JSS idea. In the process, the JSS became more open than before and enrolment in basic education increased (Peil, 1995).

However, despite the achievements, many problems were still noticeable. First, most pupils proceeded to the JSS alright. However, beyond the JSS, "secondary and especially university education [became] less open than seemed possible in the 1960s" (Peil, 1995: 304). This problem, according to Peil (1995), affected pupils of rural background more than those from the urban areas. The fact is, admission to SSS was, and is still, determined through very good passes at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), which is written by JSS 3 pupils. But poor quality education is prevalent in the rural areas of Ghana (Chao and Alper, 1998) and so pupils from rural schools are disadvantaged. Besides, research by Chao and Alper, following the implementation of the NERP, revealed that constraints to educational access such as "quality of school ... and children's sex" still existed (1998: 24).

Second, the NERP failed to curb the unemployment problem. As noted by Palmer, "the expected effect a vocationalised JSS system would have on the labour market – that it would prepare students for (self) employment and reduce unemployment – failed to materialise." (2006: 142).

Third, the curriculum was considered rigid, compartmentalized and overloaded in content with a greater percentage of the subject matter being regarded as irrelevant to the pupils' immediate environment (Kadingdi, 2004). Closely related to this, Aryeetey *et al* (2005) have noted that the NERP failed to inculcate "any meaningful vocational and technical oriented skills into the students" (quoted in Palmer, 2006: 142).

Fourth, resources proved to be inadequate. Serious consideration was not given to the associated capital or recurrent costs. For example, it was difficult to get adequate numbers of suitably trained vocational/technical teachers and to secure enough money to finance the construction of JSS workshops and purchase the requisite tools and equipment (Akyeampong, 2002; GoG, 2004i; cited in Palmer, 2006). It was expected that temporary teachers and local craftsmen would be employed to fill in the shortfall in qualified teachers but this proved unrealistic. In fact, when schools began to present budgets for the cost of hiring these teachers and local craftsmen, the Ministry of Education (MoE) was quick to change the initial intention of paying them because it realised that these budgets had not been factored into the national budget. In addition, public suspicion that JSS pupils were being trained to become local artisans and carpenters through the use of local artisans as teachers was reinforced, and so the vocationalised JSS concept lost favour among many parents (Akyeampong, 2002).

Under the circumstances, another Education Review Committee was set up to review the education system. The Committee came out with the results in 1994 and this led to the introduction of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE).

The Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) of 1996

The FCUBE was introduced in Ghana in1996 as a response by the Ministry of Education to a constitutionally mandated charge based on Article 39 (2) of the 1992 Constitution of the 4th Republic of the country, which requires that within 10 years of the promulgation of this Constitution, the government should initiate a programme for the provision of FCUBE (Government of Ghana, 1992).

The FCUBE did not differ from its preceding policies in terms of themes and ideas. For example, just like the 1987 NERP, the FCUBE aimed at expanding and improving the quality of education at all levels, making basic education free and compulsory, enhancing the relevance of education to the social and economic needs of the country and improving supervision and management (MoE, 1996). However, a marked difference occurred in terms of the emphasis it placed on its implementation, the directions it issued for the programme and the aim of decentralising the management of the education system. The Constitution itself, in Article 39 (2), entitles every child of school-going age in Ghana to a balanced and broadly based curriculum in order to promote the mental, spiritual, moral, physical and cultural development of the child. It also aims at preparing pupils for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. In effect, the FCUBE required all Ghanaians to receive 9 years of free quality schooling in order to ensure that all graduates from the basic education level are prepared for further education and skill training. It was designed to equip pupils with fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for developing their talents further through additional education and training (MoE, 1996, 1998).

The FCUBE Policy Document of 1996 required improvement in the quality of teaching and learning to be promoted by curriculum review and development, the provision of teaching and learning materials (such as textbooks and books for school libraries) and the development of assessment and evaluation techniques for pupil performance. In terms of the curriculum, it was designed to develop in pupils

skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and knowledge of the principles and skills of numeracy, measurement and of the relationship involving space and shape. In addition, knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic and physical heritage of the people and their neighbours should be emphasised. Research and study skills, skills of enquiry, analysis and knowledge of healthy living plus issues of gender sensitivity in text of curriculum as well as in illustration should be pursued (MoE, 1996: 17).

Consequently, in designing the Basic Education curriculum, emphasis was placed on the acquisition of appropriate knowledge and culture as well as literacy, numeracy and practical skills in the form of exposure to, and hands-on experience in technical and vocational skills. The idea was to ensure that an education of comparable quality had been made available to all through the evolution of a common school system.

Emphasis was also placed on teacher education. Efforts were made to ensure effective teacher training and attention was paid to continued professional development of teachers through in-service training. In fact, the FCUBE policy document stipulated:

> The implementation of the fCUBE programme will require the services of a large number of well qualified teachers in the shortest possible time. The teachers should be well-versed in teaching, particularly in primary methodology, [and] teacher development will be more school-based so that emphasis can be placed on hands-on-training activities in schools (MoE, 1996: 25).

To ensure the development of professional support systems for pre-service and professional continuing education of teachers, the FCUBE Policy Document promised to supply materials such as cardboards, newsprint and technical tools in adequate quantities and to provide school-based in-service training of teachers (MoE, 1996). In terms of in-service training, it was proposed that headteachers would be trained so that they can in turn train teachers:

> After each phase of Headteachers' Continuing Education, Headteachers will organise School-Based Continuing Education for teachers under the supervision of Circuit Supervisors. Circuit Supervisors will visit each

school regularly at least once a month to support headteachers in the continuing education of classroom teachers. School Based Education for teachers will be organised at least twice a week (MoE, 1996: 31).

This was a commendable programme that required, in addition, a change in teachers' practices – attitudes and behaviours as well as arrangements for effecting effective supervision and monitoring. Thus it was not enough to tie up the strategy for improving quality education with an over-emphasis on material input. There was also the need to identify requisite strategies for mobilising teachers' attitude and behaviours in the education system so as to enable them to handle the unfamiliar pedagogical issues embedded in the revised curriculum. Besides, there was a need for arrangements that could ensure effective supervision and monitoring of the programme at the district level, for example, the provision of logistical support for effecting the required supervision.

In effect therefore, the FCUBE has borrowed many of its ideas directly from the recommendations of the previous educational policies. For example, issues such as free and compulsory education and training of teachers emerged in the ADP of 1951. The FCUBE also embodied these with a renewed commitment. Thus the tendency for policy development in education in Ghana appears to be the retention of existing systems with slight modifications. However, in contrast to previous education policies, credit is owed to the FCUBE reform for making a great impact on the acquisition of support from various donor agencies. As a result of the introduction of the FCUBE and in response to the government's call for improvement in teaching and learning, many donor agencies came down to assist. Among them were Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Department for International Development (DFID), Swedish International development Agency (SIDA), United Nations' Children's Educational Fund (UNICEF) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). These agencies had the realisation that lack of funds impeded government efforts to supply the requisite resources to ensure successes (World Bank, 1996) and therefore decided to provide the necessary financial and technical inputs to

assist. It was during this period of assistance that the idea of the introduction of WSD emerged.

Summary and concluding remarks

Thus far, I have reviewed the salient elements of education of the pre- and post- independence eras which I consider relevant for discussions involving historical issues for this thesis. There have been various education policy initiatives in both eras. However, those that have produced profound influence on the system are the ones that have been adopted by successive governments following the attainment of independence. Within the policy initiatives are identifiable themes concerning curriculum, access, funding and efforts at quality improvement and efficiency in educational management within the economic, socio-political, and legislative environments.

What emerges from all these is, in the main, a renewed government commitment to focus on skills development for purposes of combating unemployment and, invariably, meeting the employment demands of the country. This renewed commitment, which is reflected in both the pre- and post- independence education policy documents has thus been driven by poverty reduction and economic imperatives. But as mentioned earlier, the problem of unemployment cannot be resolved with changes in the education system. What is required is a change in the structure of the country's economy. This, though, is not the issue at stake in this study. My task is to examine how successful an education reform has been in terms of its acceptance and implementation and why. In the next chapter, I discuss the methods and methodologies I used for the examination of this problem.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, I describe, examine and justify the methodological approaches I used for the study. I begin the entire process by explaining why I chose a particular research strategy and rejected other research techniques. I then continue to account for the procedures and techniques I used to generate and analyse the data, taking into account the contextual background in which I conducted the research and my selection and access to the study sites. Subsequently, I establish the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study and, finally, close the chapter by discussing the ethical connotations of the investigation.

3.1 The research strategy

Research strategy here refers to the general orientation towards the conduct of the study, that is, whether the study employed qualitative and/or quantitative research (Bryman, 2001). I adopted a qualitative research strategy because of the purpose of the study, namely to explore the circumstances that have created room for the survival of the systems, structures and practices of WSD and how well these systems, structures and practices are working, particularly in the rural areas. My aim, in terms of epistemological considerations that underpin the theory – that is, "the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge...." (Bryman, 2001: 11) - was to understand the situation from the perspective of the study participants. I did not intend to 'discover' knowledge but to see how the participants themselves socially construct it. This is consistent with the constructionists' epistemology (Crotty, 1998) and the interpretivists' theoretical perspective, which sees meaning as "situated" in specific contexts (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999: 49).

Thus I needed a research strategy that would enable me to seek answers to questions such as 'why' and 'how'. Besides, I needed a research methodology that would allow designs and procedures capable of eliciting 'real', 'rich' and 'deep' data so as to enable me to gain an in-depth, holistic description and understanding of events, processes and procedures as well as the nuances of issues inherent in the WSD policy making and implementation processes, alongside the work of the circuit supervisors, headteachers, teachers and local community members in the district I used for the case study. As I have noted below, I used a case study methodology, semi-structured interviews, non-directive questioning and impromptu discussions. All these are consistent with theoretical and epistemological underpinnings. Stake notes that the use of case studies can "assist readers in the construction of knowledge" ((1998: 95). In addition, I wanted to use the participants' voices wherever necessary and as much as possible during the stage of analysis so as to, among other reasons[8], remain faithful to them as far as possible.

Quantitative research would not have allowed me to meet all the above demands because it relies on objective, quantifiable data under experimentally controlled conditions to seek facts and causes of human behaviour (Stainback and Stainback, 1988). Besides, quantitative methodologies with, for example, predetermined points of view emerging from questionnaires, tend to measure human behaviour 'from outside' and therefore will produce little understanding of the subjective values, meanings and interpretations that the participants might impute on their measurable behaviour.

By using the non-directive, open-ended qualitative methodology, I was able to produce raw data concerning the thoughts and perceptions of the participants, which assisted me in getting to the depth of the problem. This depth helped me "achieve 'Verstehen' or sympathetic understanding" (Jones, 1997: 3) and enabled me to see the problem under investigation through the eyes of the participants rather than attempting to impose my own explanations. Hence, my choice of qualitative research strategy.

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[8] See Chapter 1 and below for other reasons.

3.2 Research Design

Case study design

My choice of qualitative research in turn influenced my choice of a research design. I needed a research design - a framework - that could inform my decisions about the collection and analysis of data and maximise my chance of producing research results that would help me gain awareness and understanding about the data (cf. Blake, 2000) and that would be considered credible by particular audiences. But my choice of a framework depended on the phenomenon I intended to investigate (Merriam, 1998). I expected that case study design would be an appropriate framework for illuminating the phenomenon as it can create room for asking 'why' and 'how' questions (Yin, 1994) and thus elicit participants' viewpoint and provide a holistic and in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon with the aid of other sources of data. My choice therefore fell on case study methodology.

However, the choice of the case study type was of concern to me because "almost any kind of research can be construed as a case study" (Bryman, 2001:49). In fact, *case study* is a generic name and has been defined differently by various authors including Bassey (1999), Bryman (2001), Yin (1994) and Merriam (1998). However, Bryman's definition chiefly steered my understanding of the term: it is "a research design that entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case", although the term "is sometimes extended to include the study of just two or three cases for comparative purposes" (2001: 501). Thus, *a case* is "a thing, a single entity, [or] a unit around which there are boundaries...." This *thing* or *single entity* or *unit* "could be a person such as a student, a teacher, a principal; a programme; a group such as a class, a school, a community; a specific policy; and so on" (Merriam, 1998: 27).

Therefore the *case* that was my focus of interest was a municipality/district called Oyemame Distirct[9], although the policymakers (who were part of the study), by definition, also constituted a *case*. I have characterised three of the

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[9] Oyemame District is a pseudonym for the case study site

policymakers as Narrators[10]. From these, I obtained data through face-to-face interviews. In addition, I obtained data electronically from two other policymakers. I have discussed below the merits and demerits associated with the use of the two *cases* (that is, the policymakers and the municipality) under the section titled 'the research methods'.

Oyemame District is among the poor districts in Ghana, albeit geographically, it is quite close to the urban districts and is located in a region with a sizeable percentage of the basic education resources of the country and, at the same time, with a fair share of rural communities in which educational standards, particularly at the basic education level are very low. It is quite problematic to compare rural with urban across different countries because area designation can vary from country to country and also within countries, depending on the motivations of the definitions (Muula, 2007). However, some indicators including population size, occupation and other socioeconomic variables, availability of basic amenities and infrastructure as well as political or legal proclamations used to characterise rural-urban settlements in Ghana would be useful in getting some knowledge about the depth of the rurality or semi-rurality of Oyemame District.

In Ghana, a settlement classified as "urban" has a population threshold of 5, 000, whilst a settlement with a population size under this figure is designated "rural". The urban sector houses the country's industries and businesses and is dominated by economic activities such as public sector employment and non-agricultural self-employment. It also enjoys a greater share of the country's basic amenities and infrastructure. On the other hand, the rural sector is dominated by agricultural and informal economy and accounts for the bulk of the country's agricultural output. However, it is characterised by a lack of reasonably adequate infrastructure and basic amenities (Boakye-Yiadom, 2004).

Oyemame District has a few semi-rural towns and many rural villages and has a total population of about 160, 000 whose major economic activities are fishing and subsistence farming. These economic activities have created

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[10] See Chapter 4: they are named Narrator One, Narrator Two and Narrator Three.

micro-communities in which members share certain common interests including battling with problems of poverty, a lack of infrastructure and basic amenities such as health care and piped water as well as inequity and inefficiency in the provision of education in their localities. Educationally, the district has nine circuit zones with no less than 100 basic education schools under the supervision of circuit supervisors appointed by the Ghana Education Service (GES). All the schools follow the same curriculum and are run by a District (or Municipal) Education Director (DED) together with circuit supervisors, headteachers and teachers who are expected to use a uniform statutory framework for organisation, supervision and management of the schools. Many of the schools are not too far away from accessible areas, albeit some of the pupils have to walk from their remote villages well away from transport links in order to get to the nearest basic education school in their area.

My choice of this district as a case study site therefore did not arise in a vacuum. It was based on a reflection of some criteria which Wainwright (1997) feels need to be considered in the selection of study sites, namely ease of access to participants, the possibility of recording adequate data, and availability of any characteristics about the sites which might influence informants' testimony. Considering the location of the district, it was possible for me to access participants from the implementation level with ease. In terms of educational resources, I expected that, even though the study was not a comparative study of a rural and urban area, the findings might highlight some significant differences in terms of equity and efficiency in the delivery and financing of education in the country. Besides, the fact that the economic activities of the district have created micro-communities in which members share certain common interests was an advantage to me since it was possible to sample some members of the school-local communities with ease for an investigation that was intended to build triangulation into the study. In addition, the large number of schools and their homogeneity in terms of curricula and syllabi offered me the opportunity to employ a multi-site approach for the interviews with similar interview agenda across the sites and to ensure that the data would be comparable in nature. Finally, my familiarity

with the educational and socio-economic settings of rural districts influenced my choice of the study site. I am myself from a rural district and have experienced poor quality education as a pupil, a teacher and a headteacher in a rural district which was not chosen for this study because of time and transportation constraints. The cultural and socio-economic characteristics of that rural district are similar to the one I chose for this study. I therefore anticipated great semblance in the educational and socio-economic setting with the chosen district and this presented me with some assurance about the manageability of the research process.

The problem, however, is that case study methodology has been criticised for its reliance on single cases, which makes it unsuitable for effectively drawing generalisation from the study (Bryman, 2001; Smith, 1991). Yin (1993) dismisses this criticism, contending that the increase of sample size does not transform multiple cases into macroscopic study. Tellis (1997) also argues that there is a replication logic in the use of multiple case study, which differs from sample logic in which selection is made from a population. Bassey (1999) echoes this argument by saying that case study design can provide an audit trail through which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings.

Thus, in spite of the criticism about generalisation of the case study approach, I considered it suitable for this research because I anticipated that through my emphasis on an intensive examination by means of the use of in-depth interviews and focus groups of a contextualised single case, I would be able to obtain multiple view points from participants in a particular semi-rural cultural context, which even though cannot be generalized to other semi-rural districts, might help me reveal the complexity and unique nature of the phenomenon and explain what may be new and unique in a particular semi-rural district and what might be expected to be happening in others. Besides, my use of a variety of data collection techniques, which allowed me to triangulate and obtain a rich depth of data (Hakin, 2000; Stake, 1998), served as a cross check for me to address a further criticism of the case study approach, namely that the results can be strongly shaped by the researcher's perspectives and attitudes. In addition, the use of triangulation itself - the application of

different methods - helped me to reduce (if not eliminate) the effects of the peculiar biases of one particular method.

Sampling

In view of the purpose of the study, I adopted purposive or judgmental sampling technique. I chose a reasonable sample within the case study site. The DED was one. In addition, I employed all the 9 circuit supervisors (CSs) in the district, except two who were unable to participate because of time constraint. However, I was able to interview their teachers and community members.

Again, out of 114 headteachers in the district, I chose 10 from 5 circuits, two from each circuit. Two of the circuits were semi-rural, and three rural. I based the selection of these circuits on the possibility of availability of the headteachers, their teachers and community members for interviews, following telephone contacts. However, one of the semi-rural heateachers could not make himself available due to his engagement in an assignment. I compensated for this by interviewing another rural headteacher who made it possible for me to interview his SMC community member but not his teachers because they were engaged in sports with the kids in and out of the school within the week I was completing the data collection. I therefore substituted with another group of teachers of a semi-rural school whose headteacher agreed to be interviewed. I used this school because I had then had enough data from the rural communities.

For the focus group interview, I decided to use a total of five schools, one each from the 5 circuits in which I intended to interview the headteachers. However, as I have mentioned in the preceding paragraph, because teachers of the headteacher I used for compensation were engaged in sports, I shifted onto another school. Each focus group contained a minimum of 3 teachers. For two of the schools, each comprised 5 teachers.

Finally, I initially decided to employ five local community members, one from each of the circuits in which I interviewed the headteachers. However,

because of the arrangement of the headteacher I used for compensation I ended up using 4 from the rural and one from the semi-rural.

All the above interviews excluded those of the 5 policymakers from outside the case study site and I have presented a graphic representation of the sample and number of interviews from which I obtained the interview data in Table 1.

The entire sample may be considered inadequate for some researchers, particularly in the case of the policymakers of who I was able to contact only three face-to-face and two others electronically because of my futile attempts at getting their addresses and telephone numbers for initial and subsequent contacts. Notwithstanding this problem, the responses of the meagre number of the policymakers involved in the study provided the quantity and the kind of rich and in-depth data which may not be too far below what I expected from a larger number. Besides, as pointed out by Patton (1987), the sample should be large enough to be credible, considering the purpose of the evaluation (in this case the study) but small enough to permit enough depth and detail for each case or unit in the sample. Thus, given the purpose of this study and the need for in-depth and detailed data, I considered the sample size large enough to impact favourably on the credibility of the data but small enough to provide the degree of depth and detailed data for the cases in the sample.

Moreover, the focus and significance of the research was of primary importance to me. The research focused on individual perspectives of the study participants with special interest in those from the rural areas and so the significance lay not with gathering data from a representative sample for generalization of results but with eliciting diverse data in depth from a range of participants (majority of who come from the rural areas) with varied characteristics. The participants varied mainly in terms of years of professional experience, their social background (that is whether rural or urban) and involvement in the WSD reform. Furthermore, it was impossible for me to ignore practical considerations. The interviews required travelling from one village to another under constraints of a tight budget, inadequate transportation and inaccessible roads to the most remote villages/schools to meet the headteachers, teachers and local community members. Hence, there

was the need for me to lessen the burden and at the same time obtain a reasonable and varied sample capable of ensuring the trustworthiness and authenticity of the research.

Table 1: Sample and Number of Interviews

Policy-Making Level	Policy Implementation Level (Case Study Site)					Total
PMs	DED	CSs	HTs	Focus Group (TRs)	COM	
		PuC 1	0*	0*	0*	1
		PuC 1	2	1	1	5
		PuC 1	0*	0*	0*	1
		PuC 1	1	1	0*	3
		R C 1	1	0*	1	3
		RC 0*	2	1	1	4
		RC 1	0*	0*	0*	1
		RC 0*	2	1	1	4
		RC 1	2	1	1	5
	1					1
5						5
Sample 5	1	7	10	5	5	33

Key

COM Community Members

CSs   Circuit Supervisors

DED District/Municipal Director of Education

HTs   Headteachers

PuC Peri-urban Circuit

PMs Policy Makers

RC   Rural Circuit

TRs   Teachers

0*   No interview/s

In terms of selection of the sample, I used some criteria. First, I chose CSs and headteachers who were within the system at the time of the implementation of WSD and had remained. I expected that this length of time would have enabled them to gain experience as educational practitioners and to have acquired some knowledge of WSD as well as its impact on their work and schools. I made this selection through information supplied by the DED through a headteacher of the case study site. The information contained details such as their years of experience as teachers and headteachers and their qualifications. From the list I also selected a sample and, at the commencement of each interview, gave them a questionnaire I had prepared, which responses provided further details. The questionnaire asked for information including their number of years of experience, their qualifications and age (see Appendix 4i and 4ii). Secondly, I based the selection on their willingness to participate in the research and, thirdly, the location of their schools, whether in a rural or semi-rural area because I needed to make some comparison between the rural and semi-rural responses. This comparison was necessary because education reform implementation usually dissipates as one moves from the urban to the rural areas.

For the teachers, I based my selection on the following criteria: first, their willingness to participate and, second, they would have gained at least two years experience as teachers and would have had some knowledge of the WSD reform. I expected that two years would have enabled them to gain experience as practitioners and to have acquired some knowledge of the factors impacting on their schools as well as on their own work as teachers (see Appendix 4iii).

For the local community members, they were selected in terms of their status as SMC members, although some of them, in addition to being SMC members, also served as executive members of the PTA and District Assembly. I have discussed details of how I gained access to all the study participants in the next section.

Access negotiation

Prior to the commencement of data collection, I had to negotiate access to participants. This was not a simple task, considering the fact that I had been

away from the country for nearly a decade before attempting an investigation of this nature. However, I knew a couple of friends who assisted me to gain official permission and enter the field.

In terms of gaining official permission, I first decided on the choice of a case study site and my positionality influenced the choice (see introduction to the thesis for my positionality). Initially, my aim was to reveal through the study that reforms such as WSD do not work as expected in rural areas because of problems of poor structural features such as weak infrastructure. However, I soon realised through electronic interviews with some of the policymakers that WSD had been officially ended, although there is continued existence of its structures and systems[11]. I therefore decided to explore the factors that have allowed the continued existence of the structures and systems and to ascertain how well they are functioning, particularly in the rural areas[12].

I was quite familiar with the districts of Ghana and so was able to choose one with ease by giving consideration to the focus and purpose of the study and to practical considerations such as the sample, time, transportation and financial constraints. Subsequently, through the assistance of the friends who were themselves headteachers, I was able to gain official permission by first, sending a letter of introduction and brief information about the research to the DED (see Appendix 1), who in her capacity as the gatekeeper, granted me access to her CSs and the schools telephonically when I phoned to inquire of the letter I had sent to her. I then contacted the CSs also telephonically and through my request about interviewing their teachers and headteachers (which I embodied in my letter of introduction, and in their capacity as the next gatekeepers of the schools after the DED), they also introduced me to their headteachers, who subsequently introduced me to their teachers and the community SMC/PTA executives on my arrival in Ghana for the field study. I have discussed below the principles underlying the contents of the letters I

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[11] It appears the termination of WSD was not publicised and so even most of the study participants did not know that it was no longer in existence.
[12] On commencing the field study, I decided also to explore why WSD was officially ended because I speculated from the responses of the first few participants that it was a critical issue that hampered the smooth running of WSD and that it would help offer a holistic understanding of the WSD implementation process.

sent to study participants and the basis for my access negotiation with them under the section titled ethical considerations.

Then came the second phase of my access negotiation, namely, entering the field. I travelled to Ghana and on getting to the case study site, I decided to take certain precautions because of Hammersley and Atkinson's caution:

> the problem of access is not resolved once one has gained entry to a setting, since this by no means guarantees access to all data available within it ... not everyone may be willing to talk, and even the most willing informant will not be prepared ... to divulge all the information (1993: 76).

Thus, even though I had gained access to the participants, I needed to win their confidence and cooperation because there was the possibility of their reluctance to divulge information because of the manner in which they perceived my identity, roles and therefore my integrity. As mentioned by Cotteerill and Letherby (1994), personal identities with regard to the research topics can have great influence on the research process. Fears and inhibitions can arise, especially when the phenomenon under investigation is highly emotive. However, if the informants are able to identify themselves experientially with the researcher through empathetic understanding between them and the researcher, such fears and inhibitions could be dispelled to enable them to engage in informative talk with the researcher.

In short, the acquisition of rich data and for that matter the success of the research depended significantly on the degree of access to the sources of data. I therefore needed to be careful about the way in which I had to manage the research process and, more importantly, my identity. Consequently, I spent some time to engage in informal conversations and interactions with the participants before the actual formal data generation process began:

> Especially in the early days of field negotiation it may be advantageous to find out more 'ordinary' topics of conversations with the view to establishing one's identity as a 'normal', 'regular', 'decent' person ... [as this] can throw additional and unforeseen light on informants, and yield fresh sources of data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993: 82).

However, it was also important for me to avoid getting over identified with the participants and influencing them in any direction that might distort their account of events and thus raise ethical and ideological questions regarding the trustworthiness and authenticity of the data I was to generate. Consequently, I embarked on "ordinary topics of conversations in order to establish my identity as a 'normal', 'regular', 'decent' person ..." (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993: 82) and tilted the conversations to the direction of the aim, purpose and the significance of my study and how it was intended to benefit their schools and communities as well as educational policy makers. I then complemented this with conversations about my identity and role as a researcher in order to help establish what Cotteerill and Letherby describe as the "kindred spirit":

> The kindred spirit is a role which may be allocated to the researcher by her
> respondents or may be one she seeks to adopt herself. This can occur when
> the focus of the research concerns complex experiences (or issues) which
> both the researcher and her respondents share (1994: 120).

Thus, I felt that the kindred spirit might make the prospective informants refrain from seeing me as a spy and from erecting barriers in the process of data generation and, instead, give cognizance to my role and identity as a researcher and be interested, confident and cooperative about my endeavours – namely my efforts at generating rich, in-depth data and taking precautions to minimize, even if I was not able to eliminate all extraneous and unintended factors that could compromise the trustworthiness and authenticity of the data.

Choice of language
Another issue I needed to consider was the type of language to use, whether vernacular or English. Walker notes:

> A practical research issue which faces us all is the intrusive and imperial
> nature of the research voice, for as soon as we begin an interview, draft a
> questionnaire or engage others in conversation, the very language we use
> creates frames within which to realize knowledge .... There is no doubt that
> our use of language determines to a large degree what we will learn.
> (Walker, 1993: 73).

Thus it was important for me to decide on what language to use for the most part, if not throughout, the data collection period before moving to the field. Although the vernacular of the case study site is not different from mine, considering that all the participants, except some members of the local community, have gained acceptable level of English language both in writing and speaking through academic and professional work, especially from the secondary to the tertiary level where they have had their teacher training education, I considered it advisable to use English Language so as to standardize the responses and keep the tone of the interview conversational within the expected time scale with ease. However, one member of the local community could not communicate effectively in English so I used the vernacular in order to let him feel at ease and thus allow information to flow freely. I translated this into English during the transcribing and data analysis phase.

3.3 Research Method

My choice of a research design also influenced my choice of the research method. As noted by Tellis (1997), case study is a triangulated research study and it usually relies on multiple, but not single, sources applied under triangulation to build checks and balances into the research design. Thus, the philosophy underpinning the use of triangulation, as explained by Denzin, is that "no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors .... [Every] method reveals different aspects of empirical reality ...." (Denzin, 1978; cited in Patton, 1987: 28). In fact, Denzin is so obsessed by this philosophy that he rules: "I ... offer as a final methodological rule the principle that multiple methods should be used in every investigation" (cited in Patton, 1987: 28). In addition, he outlines four types of triangulation: *Data source triangulation* in which the researcher ascertains the similitude of data from different contexts; *investigator triangulation*, where the researcher uses several researchers to investigate the same phenomenon; *theory triangulation*, where researchers with different viewpoints interpret the same results; and *methodological triangulation* in which several methods of data gathering are used to generate confidence in meaning and interpretation of data..

For this study, I employed methodological triangulation in order to facilitate my acquisition of a holistic, detailed and in-depth understanding of the problem I put under investigation. This then informed my choice of a research method. Bryman defines research method as "a technique for collecting data" and says "it can involve a specific instrument, such as a self-completion questionnaire or a structured interview schedule, or participant observation whereby the researcher listens to and watches others" (2001: 29). Therefore I use 'research method' here to refer to the techniques and/or instruments for data collection.

I collected data from both primary and secondary sources and used a variety of techniques - interviews, focus groups, fieldnotes, observation and documentary analysis. Patton argues in favour of this technique:

> Multiple sources of information are sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective on the ... [phenomenon]. By using a combination of observations, interviewing, and document analysis, the fieldworker is able to use different data sources to validate and cross-check findings (Patton, 1990: 244).

Using five policy makers for interviews helped me to obtain multiple view points about the policy formulation process. However, since all the policymakers were closely associated with WSD, there is the possibility that they could have been biased in their presentations. In any case, my aim was to tell the story from the perspective of the study participants and, by reason of my awareness of the possibility of bias, endeavour to use multiple sources of information, which after piecing together, could suggest an answer to the problem I put under investigation and thus deepen my understanding of it.

Table 2 provides a summary of the multiple sources and, hence, the techniques I used for data collection. I have provided a discussion of each of the sources/techniques and how I used them in the subsequent sections.

Interviews

Interviewing is a form of conversation with a participant or participants with the aim of gathering information (Denzin, 1978; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The assumption behind qualitative interview is that the view points of others are knowable, meaningful and can be rendered explicit (Bernard, 2002; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). Interviews allow the researcher a much wider scope to ask questions out of sequence and the interviewee a greater chance to answer questions in their own ways. For these reasons and in view of my desire to interact directly with the participants and the context in which they work so as to enable me to ascertain their understanding and views of WSD as well as the convolutions and processes that characterise their work and thus obtain meanings and rich, descriptive data which could suggest answers to the problem I put under investigation, interviews formed the most important source of my primary data. For the individual interviews, each one lasted approximately one hour and the focus group ones lasted approximately one-and-a-half hours.

Ensor (1996: 2) notes that interview

> is constraining insofar as it canalizes and silences expression ([because] in the way it is constituted and in the manner of questioning, probing and responding, a regulation on speaking and silence is imposed, although by no means absolutely.

In other words, there is the tendency for participants to be shy or entertain some fear because of the nature and manner of interviewing. I therefore anticipated that in spite of my assurance of confidentiality and anonymity, some participants would be shy or entertain some fear about voicing out their actual views especially because of the fact that the interview had to be audio-taped. My reason for having initial informal chats with as many of the participants as possible was therefore not merely to get their prior knowledge of the WSD implementation but also to develop a strategy that will help break through any shyness, fear or façade (Vulliamy *et al*, 1990; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1993). Notwithstanding that the problem of fear or facade somehow surfaced from interviews with some of the participants in expressions such as:

- *Use what I am telling you but check how you use it and then what you say because I've trodden on a lot of people's steps; I wouldn't want you to say it in the same way that I'm saying it. I say it but I can verify it; I can justify it [but] you will find it difficult to justify a lot of what I am telling you....*

- *And there is a bit of confidentiality thing and I'm going to come onto it a bit later....*

In any case, I intensified my assurance of confidentiality and anonymity and this somehow broke through the fear, or shyness or facade as manifested in statements such as:

- *if you want to get in touch with her, she will probably tell you more about it. She might be a bit more reluctant to tell you the whole truth and not the very truth as I am telling you.*

- *I will give you; please you may use it but please don't quote me on saying this.* and

- *Feel free. Ask any question. Feel free. Come straight. Don't refine it....*

In particular, the focus group interviews were very effective because the teachers found some kind of group solidarity in these sessions and came out of their fear or shyness or facade.

Another issue that I felt needed attention before the commencement of the interview was a decision on the type of interview that was capable of eliciting appropriate and enough responses because interview schedules differ in characteristics. For example, there is the in-depth unstructured interview type, which merely outlines topics to be pursued with the participants. This usually has no pre-determined questions and the interviewees tend to control the interview process because they are given maximum flexibility to respond. There is also the pre-determined, relatively structured interview schedule which sets some parameters on the interview process. This second one is not favoured by Jones. He explains that by presenting such a schedule,

Table 2:   **Data Generation Techniques**

Data required	Purpose	Focus of investigation	Instruments
Background information of study participants	For profile of interviewees in order to obtain their personal characteristics, eg. level of academic & professional experience & involvement in WSD reform implementation.	District Education Director (DED), headteachers, teachers, & community members.	Questionnaire, documentary analysis & semi-structured interviews
Origins, aims & objectives of WSD in Ghana	To ascertain the source, purpose and the intended outcomes of WSD	Policymakers from DFID, Ghana MoE and GES	Semi-structured interviews & documentary analysis
Planning and organisational support	To explore systems, structures, logistical support, capacity building activities and adequacy of timeline established to drive & sustain the implementation process of WSD	Policymakers from DFID, Ghana MoE & GES & policy implementers from school & community levels	Semi-structured interviews, focus groups, documentary analysis & field notes
Challenges of the implementation	To investigate challenges faced in the WSD implementation process.	Policymakers & implementers of the WSD reform.	Semi-structured interviews, focus group & field notes.
The official ending of WSD	To ascertain the causes of the official ending of WSD	Policymakers from MoE & GES; DED, CSs, headteachers & teachers.	Semi-structured interviews and focus group.
Survival of the WSD structures, systems & practices	1. To identify the WSD structures, systems & practices that have survived. 2. To single out the factors accounting for the continued existence of the structures, systems and practices of WSD	Policymakers from MoE & GES; DED, CSs, headteachers and teachers.	Semi-structured interviews observation, focus group & field notes.
Functioning of the structures, systems & practices of WSD	To ascertain how well the survived structures, systems and practices are working.	DED, CSs, headteachers, teachers and local community members.	Semi-structured interviews, observation & field notes.
Recommend-ations for quality improvement	For recommendations about changes in policy for quality improvement.	All study participants	Semi-structured interview

... the interviewers have already predicted in detail, what is relevant and meaningful to their respondents about the research topic; and in doing this they have significantly pre-structured the direction of enquiry within their own frame of reference in ways that give little time and space for their respondents to elaborate their own (1985; quoted in Walker, 1985: 56).

On the other hand, critical ethnographers like Wainwright (1997) believe that the researcher needs to be pre-armed with fair knowledge and insights to enable them to guide the research process rather than enter the research field as a novice of the phenomenon. They therefore agitate for a sort of semi-structured interview schedule in which

a dialectical approach is adopted, allowing the researcher to oscillate between the world view of informants, (e.g., by departing from the interview schedule to pursue an interesting line of inquiry), and insights offered by the historical and structured analysis, which may enable the constructs and categories employed by the informants to be actively deconstructed during the course of the interview (Wainwright, 1997: 8).

Thus even though the unstructured interview type has a major advantage, I employed the semi-structured interview or 'guided interview' schedule which consisted of questions based on the issues I identified from the research questions for purposes of setting some parameters which will prevent me from losing control of the interview process and help me to lead the respondents away from determining the research agenda and scope, and thus adopt a more focused approach for the interview process. With my background as a pupil, teacher and headteacher in Ghana, and with a fair knowledge of issues on WSD, I was in a position to identify in advance some of the issues and problems that needed investigation and complemented these with relevant and significant issues that emerged from the case study site.

However, since "a good qualitative interviewing requires that the interviewee does the majority of the talking" (Vulliamy et al, 1990: 101), I allowed the informants some flexibility and freedom of response so as to permit free flow of information. However at the same time, I made attempts to keep the interview within the time scale in order not to overstretch the participants' patience. This measure also helped me to ensure that I had done a systematic

collection of data across responses in order to ease my comparison of the data from the various participants.

I also needed to make decisions about the venue for the interviews. Oppenheim advises: "It is best to avoid settings that may be perceived as unpleasant or threatening by respondents" (1992: 192). At the same time, I needed to avoid periods that could have been unpleasant or threatening to study participants, considering their time obligations to their families, their work and their communities. For this reason, I left decisions about the venue and time for the interview to the participants.

Further still, there were decisions about how to document the responses. Although "note-taking [in the course of interviews] draws the researcher into the interpretation early in the study and in one sense makes the researcher more of a person in the eyes of the subject" (Walker, 1985: 109), I audio-taped all the interviews with the approval of the participants and thereafter transcribed them. This process permitted free flow of information from participants in a natural rhythm. It also allowed the recording of both relevant and irrelevant information from which I sifted for relevance at the analysis phase of the research. Again, it enabled me to obtain fuller, verbatim and more accurate record of responses and to gain repeated access to the responses during the stage of analysis (Heritage, 1984: 238). Besides, having had the opportunity to audio-tape created room for me to capture gestures and other non-verbal cues that the participants portrayed either consciously or unconsciously, all of which I considered important for the interpretation and/or analysis that related to the responses. As noted by (Powney and Watt, 1993), the use of the tape recorder frees the interviewer to concentrate upon the task at hand and explore the interview account.

Besides interviews with individuals, I used focused group interviews involving teachers from the case study site.

Focus group interviews
I used these to supplement data that I generated from other sources. Generally, focus group interview involves "a group of individuals selected and assembled

by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research" (Powell, 1996: 499). It is different from group interview because unlike group interview which involves interviewing a number of participants at the same time, placing emphasis on questions and responses between the researcher and the participants (Gibbs, 1997), focus group interview involves "interaction within the group on topics that are supplied by the researcher" (Morgan, 1997: 12). And unlike individual interviews which aim to obtain individual attitudes, beliefs and feelings, focus groups draw out varied perspectives and emotional processes within a group context (Gibbs, 1997).

The focus group interviews enabled the teachers to indicate which aspects of the structures, systems and processes of WSD are still in operation in their schools, their views about the factors that have contributed to the survival of the aspects, how well they think the aspects are working in their schools, problems they encounter and what major change in policy they feel can result in quality improvement in schools. I allowed participants to question and query others' views and express their opinions about issues related to the research as well as what is salient about them (Morgan, 1988). This interview also created room for me to ascertain the degree of consensus of the data I had generated from individual interviews. I had a little bit of difficulty in getting the teachers because of their class monitoring and lesson delivery obligations. However, the headteachers were able to arrange for me to get at least three in a group.

Field notes

I held informal conversational interviews as part of my field study and so the field notes enabled me to record discussions about the settings, events and interactions with participants and to have an idea of their views on these. It also enabled me to record certain themes I had not anticipated before commencing the field-study but which were relevant to the impact of WSD in the case study district. Again, I was able to note comments that could not have been directly elicited but had potential relevance to the research. In

addition, it enabled me to explain and analyze appropriately the entire data gathered throughout the research.

Observation

In view of the focus and purpose of the study, I anticipated equity issues related to delivery and financing of education to emerge and so made brief observations in the schools I visited. I focused the observations on the following questions:

- What are the school structures like, e.g. completed/uncompleted buildings built of mud or cement blocks?
- How remote are the schools in terms of accessibility to transport links and how motorable are the roads?
- What is the pupil-teacher ratio like?
- Are the classes crowded or virtually empty?
- Are there enough furniture for pupils?
- Do children have instructional materials – textbooks, pens, pencils and exercise books?
- Do the schools have good drinking water and descent toilets?

Thus my observation took the form of viewing the school infrastructure, examining pupil-teacher ratio and pupil-textbook ratio, pupils' uniform, the school grounds etc both in rural and urban schools and comparing them. These observations enabled me to balance the potential artificiality of relying on only what participants had mentioned. After all, the adage goes: "seeing is believing". Therefore what I saw provided empirical evidence of what the participants themselves 'socially constructed'.

Documentary analysis

I analysed relevant documents to supplement the data I generated from the interviews and field notes. Among the documents were official records from the Ministry of Education, District Education Office, Inspectorate Division and records from the schools of the headteachers and teachers. Specifically, the records included guidelines for the supervision of schools, documents that

deal with the historical development of supervision and WSD in Ghana, the statutory framework for the WSD reform, record of pupils' attendance, record of pupils' work and records of meetings of the school and the community. I also engaged in a critical review of literature on issues including policy formulation and implementation, change management, decentralisation and donor agency direct support to schools in developing countries. All these documents were relevant because of their compatibility with the WSD reform process and having them helped to unfold the changes that had occurred following the implementation of the reform.

However, when using the records, I anticipated potential problems. Firstly, I felt some of the records could be unreliable. Bryman notes that "people who write documents are likely to have a particular point of view that they want to get across" (2001: 376) and therefore cautions that "documents cannot be regarded as providing objective accounts of a state of affairs" (Bryman, 2001: 377). Secondly, I felt that other requisite records may have gone missing or were incomplete. Concerning the problem of unreliability, Vulliamy *et al* (1990) advise that a guiding principle is to question the validity of the document however official they might look and to try to understand the position of the author or committee that produced them. I heeded this advise and in addition resorted to triangulation techniques to obtain information from multiple sources which I then analysed together to alleviate the general problems of documentation.

Data analysis

Managing and analysing data electronically can save time and energy. However, I chose to do it manually because I was apprehensive about the technical problems involved in using the electronic approach. In the case of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), for example, there is the possibility of the data getting decontextualised as a result of the process of dividing codes into texts that are then retrieved and grouped into related fragments (Fielding and Lee 1998). Kelle (1995) also cautions that the huge amounts of unstructured textual data that qualitative research

generates can drown the researcher in the data if they do not manage the data appropriately.

My use of the manual approach therefore promised me some confidence and offered me the opportunity of interacting and getting closer to the data. This in turn granted me the assurance of, and the additional confidence in, managing the data appropriately without losing the commonalities, relationships and inter-relationships between the responses as well as the context and substance of the patterns and principles embedded in the data.

In order to manage the data conveniently and appropriately, I used the thematic approach to data analysis, which I have described below. However, I was able to do this systematically only after I had transcribed all the interviews.

Transcribing the interviews

I needed to transcribe the interviews myself in order to ensure the confidentiality that I established with participants while negotiating access and during the time of the interviews and to increase my familiarity with the huge amounts of the audio-taped interviews. I transcribed all the interviews verbatim by word processing them, except for one which I conducted in the vernacular because the respondent could not speak English. I later transcribed this one also into English and while doing so ensured that I had retained the meaning and substance of the responses. The whole lot of the interviews yielded over 300 pages of A4 sized paper after printing each out as single spaced text.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) see the need for researchers to transcribe the interviews while they are still fresh in their mind in order not to lose threads of the interview episode. However, this was not always possible in my case because of the sheer number of interviews involved. Thus I was able to transcribe less than half the audio-taped interviews during the field study and the rest weeks after I had completed. However, I tried to revoke memories and to re-immerse myself in the interview episode by referring to my post-

interview field notes before proceeding with the rest of the transcription. The transcription completed, I proceeded to develop themes and patterns.

Developing themes and patterns from the transcripts

Generally, in qualitative analysis, there are certain common tasks which centre on procedures for coding and categorising data and for analysing connections between different aspects of the data and different units of meaning (Goetz and Le Compte, 1984; Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Fielding, 1993; Silverman, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1994; Robson, 2002;).

However, it is up to the researcher to make their own analytic choices regarding which data to extract, which to code, which patterns summarise a number of chunks as well as what the evolving story could be (Huberman and Miles, 1984).

I made my own analytic choices but also used the thematic approach to data analysis outlined by Fielding (1993) as a guide. Fielding's approach basically involves identification of themes and patterns across the case study sites. Harvey (1990) describes this approach as 'pile-building' because of the process involved. The approach basically involves reading through the data to identify common themes. The themes are then coded, cut up and re-ordered into piles to tally with the major themes, followed by a sequence drawn from the re-ordered piles to ensure the establishment of meaningful arguments and punctuations with relevant quotations from the transcripts.

Whilst using Fielding's approach as a guide, I also considered the utility about the application of iterative process of data analysis, which involves the transcription of audio-taped interviews and fieldnotes and comparing them with observational and informal discussions. This is important because qualitative data analysis hardly follows a linear process in view of inter-relatedness and the need to obtain meaning. I then coded the transcripts and extracted major themes and patterns. I used the iterative method to look for themes and patterns and compared them constantly by searching for

reoccurring words, phrases or issues, frequency of concepts or themes used by respondents and the assumptions underlying their responses.

Besides, I applied the system of data reduction proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In this system, inductive reasoning and some degree of constant comparative method of analysis is used for the data reduction. The following sequence and discussions therefore constitutes the core of my analysis of the transcripts.

Referring constantly to the fieldnotes and checking them against the transcripts for clarification and corroboration in order to enrich my understanding of the transcripts, I marked major themes and cut them out on the basis of the themes and patterns. I then categorised them for description and produced a pile building in an ordered manner to be in harmony with the themes. I followed this with the construction of an outline by producing a sequence that is intended to create a meaningful argument.

Thus by and large, the whole research process was iterative rather than linear in the sense that both the data collection and analysis oscillated between specific observations and considerations for broader structural issues. For example, on getting to the case study site, I did some analysis to capture significant emerging issues such as ascertaining from the initial responses the remnants of the WSD and the reasons for their existence, which I subsequently used with the circuit supervisors, headteachers and teachers for ascertaining which aspects of the WSD are good and therefore need to be maintained and why and vice versa and which I later used as themes for discussion in the latter interviews, for example, themes for the underlying reasons for the continued existence of the WSD structures, systems and processes.

Even though I had generated broad themes from the interview guide which provided a first step in coding the data, I had to keep referring to the verbatim transcripts in their entirety in order to immerse myself in the details and to get a sense of the interview responses as a whole before breaking them down into parts.

Thus, at the beginning of the research, my aim was to reconstruct the data to answer the questions I had posed long before entering the case study site. But on entering the site and commencing data collection, I noticed significant emerging issues which called for additional questions and therefore the development of additional themes.

I need to point out, for the benefit of my reader's understanding, that in order to develop a sufficiently meaningful argument, I selected some quotations from the transcripts. This, to Silverman is an approach that could result in bias on the part of the researcher because the researcher might select only those "fragments of data that support his argument" (1985: 140). For this reason, he suggests the introduction of simple counting procedures into the analysis to show how many respondents subscribe to a particular view. But Wainwright (1997: 9) considers this an inappropriate application of quantitative criteria to qualitative data because he feels that:

> the rationale for conducting in-depth interviews is that people involved in a phenomenon may have insights that would not otherwise be available to the researcher, and it is the quality of the insight that is important, rather than the number of respondents who share it.

I can therefore conclude from Wainwright's argument that in the logic of qualitative analysis, validity of information lies in its explanatory power and not just in the number of respondents who subscribe to an assertion. My technique of selecting some quotations from the transcript then, was a means of establishing a valid information rather than the number of respondents who share a particular claim. The following section is therefore a description of how I presented the case study report.

Presenting the case study report

I used the thematic analysis approach for the interviews, fieldnotes, observation and relevant documents. However, for Chapter 4, I used my own analytic approach with the thematic, inductive and the iterative approaches as a guide. The analysis in this chapter therefore appears in the form of vignettes of the participants.

At the initial stages of the research, some ideas began emerging because I had fore knowledge about them. However, I did not allow this to prejudice the analysis. Instead, I took heed of what Hitchcock and Hughes (1992: 98) have advised:

> It is important to note that the materials themselves are placed against the research focus and the other way round which might lead to forcing the materials into the researcher's prearranged ideas and hypotheses.

Thus, instead of allowing the ideas that had begun emerging to prejudice the analysis, I depended on the extracted distinctive descriptors and categories of major themes that were developing from the data. However, to ease the entire work, I first completed the steps I have described above. In brief, I transcribed the interview data by typing them onto the computer. I then produced hard copies and after familiarising myself with the data by making short notes along the margins of the transcripts, began marking major themes and cutting them out. Thereafter I developed patterns and categories, followed by sub-categories meant for abridgement and, subsequently, for description. I then proceeded to build a pile in an ordered manner to be in harmony with the themes and developed an outline by drawing a sequence that engendered meaningful argument. Throughout this process, I made repeated references to the fieldnotes for clarification and corroboration in order to ease the understanding of the interview transcripts. To stretch a point, the entire process was iterative rather than linear in the sense that the analysis moved backwards and forwards between specific observations and considerations for broader structural issues.

My role as a researcher

I have already outlined my positionality in the introduction. It was my positionality that helped me to identify my personal values and enhance the trustworthiness and authenticity of the research. Considering the damage that my positionality could cause in this regard, I spared no effort in being aware of my role as a researcher as much as I possibly could. I have described how I did this above (under 'access negotiation').

Also, on getting to the field, I first proceeded to the DED for her to establish my identity. She then arranged for me to meet the CSs on one of the days of their workshops. On meeting them, she introduced me and they in turn arranged for me to meet the headteachers of the schools I had selected with their assistance and to make the necessary arrangements with them. The headteachers in turn informed and arranged with their teachers and members of their local community on my behalf about the date and time of the study.

Throughout the period of the research, maintaining my position as a non-participant proved one of the greatest challenges for a couple of reasons. First, it was difficult for me to resist the inclination to make a personal contribution to some of the responses being provided by participants during some of the interviews. For example, in an interview with two[13] of the executive members of the SMC in a village, I asked them to indicate what they think can be done to improve on the quality of education in the village. In their response, they enumerated problems which they felt needed immediate attention, one of which was inaccessibility of their road:

Another problem is inaccessible road to the village. You may have noticed it as you travelled to the village. When it rains, the road becomes unusable. There was a time when the Assemblyman's wife was bitten by a snake. We had to carry her to the main road before getting transport to the nearby clinic because no vehicle could use our road. If we hadn't done that she would have died.... So accessible road is very important to us and we really need it.

And my reaction was: *Oh I see. I myself had part of my elementary school education in a village where there was transportation difficulty. Our landlord's wife went to the farm and was bitten by a snake. There was no transport to take her to the nearby clinic. And all efforts to get her vomit the poison proved futile so she died. So I really do understand the problem you have raised.*

Others probably felt I was gathering reports for the Ministry of Education and therefore asked me to deliver messages on their behalf. For example, another

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[13] I asked for one member but the two came together for the interview and so I took advantage of this to increase the depth of the data.

SMC executive member made the following comment while making a contribution to improvement in teachers' service conditions:

This one, you should not forget it; emphasise on it: he who neglects a teacher, you are equal to a person who is neglecting his parents because the teacher taught you; he made you what you are today. And now you have reached a stage and because of your qualification that you are here - you are enjoying ... you forget about the person who brought you to that level.

Thus, even though I had explained the purpose of the research to them, some of the study participants in the rural areas occasionally regarded me as a 'saviour' or a 'reporter' and shared some problems, which they felt I could be of assistance. Nonetheless, I needed to maintain a balance between empathy and aloofness, knowing that the only means by which I could get to know of their experiences and views was to listen attentively, maintain my 'detached' role and make an appropriate comment but not one that will endanger the trustworthiness and authenticity of my research.

Apart from restraining my positionality from damaging the trustworthiness and authenticity of the research, I also bore ethical issues in mind in order not to invade the privacy of the participants or cause harm to them.

3.5 Ethical Concerns

Every research has ethical connotations. In particular, ethical issues are inescapable in studies which feature social life, for example, case studies (Simons, 1989) and "the very naivety of many research participants ... make it more imperative that ... researchers protect them" (Ely *et al*, 1991: 223). In view of this "a professional code of ethics is beneficial as a *guideline* that alerts researchers to the ethical dimensions of their work" (Punch, 1994: 90); emphasis in original) and so many professional bodies including the British Educational Research Association (1999 and 2004) and the British Psychological Society (1993) have established ethical guidelines to inform researchers on areas of research that require careful consideration. Besides, ethical issues in research have been discussed by various authors including Murphy and Dingwall (2001), Bryman (2001), Birley and Moreland (1998)

and McKenzie *et al* (1997). However, these guidelines and discussions "do not tell the researcher what to do in specific cases. Interpretation is needed, but any individual's interpretation is highly dependent on the personal position taken by that person" (Sowder, 1998). For this reason, "actual ethical practice comes down to the individual researcher's own values and ethics" (Merriam, 1998: 218). This does not mean that such codes are valueless. Rather, as advised by Small, "we need not throw away our codes, but we should keep them in perspective" (1998: 115). In keeping the codes in perspective, I accepted that it was my responsibility to try to act in ethically responsible ways by taking due account of my goals, the situation in which I was conducting the research and the values and the interests of the people involved (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Therefore on commencing the research, my key ethical concerns centred around two major ethical issues, namely informed consent and harm to participants.

Informed consent

My research was overt and in overt research, "it is generally expected that a researcher will explain his or her purpose and role to individuals with whom a sustained relationship is maintained...." (Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 111). This sounds quite simple but entails a lot of responsibilities because the participant is expected to be fully informed, is competent to give consent, fully understands the conditions of consent and gives consent voluntarily (Sowder, 1998). In addition, the information given to the participant must include the research goals, what the data will be used for, the participant's role, why and how they were selected, the risks and benefits of participation and the possibility of withdrawing from participating at anytime (Sowder, 1998). Even where consent has been obtained, problems can arise (Burguss, 1989) because where, for instance, the research involves various participants in an organisation, as in my case, it is rarely possible to "tell all the people ... *everything* about the research" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:265; emphasis in original) and various reasons account for this. For example, at the beginning of the research, the researcher may

> not know the course the work will take, certainly not in any detail.
> But even then, once the research problem and strategy have been

> clarified, there are reasons why only limited information may be
> provided to participants. For one thing, ... divulging some sorts of
> information might affect people's behaviour in ways that will
> invalidate the research. (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 265).

But on the other hand, if the researcher does not divulge every information, then the participant has not been informed and consent has not been obtained and therefore their privacy has been invaded (Burgess, 1989).

Therefore to be on the safer side, I decided to "accept some moderate measure of field related deception" (Punch, 1994: 92) in the hope that the interests of the participants would still be protected and that the deception would be passive. In this regard, I merely gave a broad overview information about my research. This, I felt, was not an active deception because it was not untruthful and misleading:

> Certainly an introduction need not be the recounting of myriad of details.
> It can, and most often should, be a broad overview. The person making
> entree need not feel she or he is being sly or dishonest by making that
> introduction as general as serves its aims. Some of its purposes are to
> communicate about the study, the roles of the researcher that are line with
> that, the ways participants will be involved and their rights, and the support
> that is needed, while not providing information that would impinge on the
> very phenomenon to be studied. This aim is not dishonest per se (Ely *et al*,
> 1991: 38-9).

Besides, I identified with Punch's views on access negotiation:

> With formal organisations and certain communities, where entry has to be
> negotiated through hierarchical channels, a statement of purpose is
> normally essential to satisfy gatekeepers. Thereafter it may be situationally
> inappropriate to repeat continually that purpose and to identify oneself ....
> To negotiate access and consent with everyone would be almost futile ....
> (1986: 37).

However, before commencing the interviews, I was aware that my successful negotiation of access with the DED and the CSs was not enough to guarantee cooperation from the headteachers, teachers and the

local community members (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) because of their family and other commitments (in the case of the community members) and, in the case of the teachers, their classroom commitment as well. I therefore needed to come up with reasonable demands and adequate guarantees. Guided by the principle of informed consent, I embodied the purpose of the research, my researcher status and role, the participants role in the research and the measures intended to protect their interests within a standard, formal access letter much along the lines of what Seidman (1998) refers to as "consent form" and sent to the CSs, who then informed their headteachers, who in turn informed their teachers and community members before I had physical contact with them. But this was not enough to complete my responsibilities on research ethics. There was also the issue of avoiding harm to participants to attend to.

Harm to participants

This concerns physical harm, stress, loss of self-esteem, harm to participants' development or "inducing subjects to perform reprehensible acts" (Diener and Crandal, 1978: 19). To avoid harm, first, I resorted to access negotiation in order not to invade the participants' privacy. I also protected participants by constantly establishing and maintaining mutual respect and confidence between them and me. I endeavoured to equalise power relations between me and them and democratised the interview process by explaining my role and identity as a researcher and to ensure that there was no exploitation because harm in research ethics has exploitation connotations. Exploitation occurs when participants receive little, if not nothing, in return for furnishing a researcher with information (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Understanding the need to give something back, I resorted to the 'pay back' strategy advocated by Ely *et al* (1991), which involved relating the participants' own stories rather than imposing my own and reporting their meanings as well as describing their social context, not as separate but as it is lived and understood by them. Besides, at the end of every interview or observation or the use of a documentation, I expressed my appreciation to the participant(s).

Furthermore, I have ensured the observance of confidentiality and anonymity. The potential for harm was great in view of the fact that the study embodied information including personal and other details that might be identifiable and which were likely to be publicised. To prevent identification, I am still guarding the information, both transcripts and audio-tapes, and ensure that there is confidentiality and anonymity. In fact, Stainback and Stainback have advised that "unless otherwise previously agreed upon with the participants, persons and places remain anonymous and original data and field notes that could reveal the identity of persons or places remain confidential" (1988: 113).

The problem however is that unlike quantitative research where it is relatively easy to anonymize records through the use of figures and statistical analysis, and present findings in ways that ensure confidentiality, qualitative research makes this less easy. The solution, then, is to use pseudonyms. But "the use of pseudonyms ... may not eliminate entirely the possibility of identification" (Bryman, 2001: 480) especially where it is easy for readers to conjecture the participants or sites or times involved in the study through some features of the study. Punch states:

> Pseudonyms can often be punctured by looking up the researcher's institutional affiliation at the time of the project.... In addition, the cloak of anonymity for characters may not work for insiders who can easily locate the individuals concerned or, what is even worse, *claim* that they can recognize them when they are, in fact, wrong. [Besides], many institutions and public figures are almost impossible to disguise (1994: 92; emphasis in original).

In effect therefore, I have been apprehensive about the impossibility of identifying in all circumstances whether there has been the likelihood of harm. Besides, the reporting phase of the study has resulted in revealing the voices of the participants. Anonymity has been protected and pseudonyms have been used through fictitious names in order to increase confidentiality. However, the apprehension prevails because inevitably, the participants' feelings are going to be depicted, resulting in their risk of exposure, embarrassment, and a possible loss of standing or self-esteem (cf. Stake, 1994). In sum, the question of the possibility of avoiding harm completely in this study cannot be

answered with certainty. This, indeed, constitutes the crux of the ethical problem in this study.

In any case, I take consolation from the fact that the inability to establish full informed consent may exonerate the researcher. Erikson states: "if we happen to harm people who have agreed to act as subjects, we can at least argue that they knew something of the risks involved ...." (1967: 369). This statement, as mentioned by Bryman, is a potential area for disagreement (2001). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the problem of harm to participants cannot be evaded completely. As mentioned by Punch, all research have some elements that are at least ethically questionable (1994). Hence, all that the researcher can do is to seek means of avoiding harm but if not successful strive to minimise it.

3.6 Trustworthiness and authenticity of the Study

Trustworthiness and authenticity are alternative tools for establishing the reliability and validity of qualitative research in view of the problems involved in guaranteeing the reliability and validity criteria in this type of research (Bryman, 2001). In order to enhance the understanding of discussions in this section, I consider it necessary to provide a little exposition on reliability and validity and how they alternate with trustworthiness and authenticity before clarifying the impact of the latter two on my research.

Reliability "refers to the consistency of a measure of concept" (Bryman, 2001: 70) and it "is often defined as the consistency and stability of data or findings" (Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 98) and therefore "concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable" (Bryman, 2001: 28). Thus the fundamental principle underlying the issue of reliability in research is consistency of measurement – consistency in procedures and findings or the extent to which the study procedures yield the same answers however and wherever they are conducted (Kirk and Miller, 1986).

LeCompte and Goetz (1982) define two ways in which reliability may be established in qualitative research. These are external reliability, which refers to the extent to which a study is replicable, and internal reliability, which

refers to a situation where members of a research team consisting of two or more researchers agree on what they see and hear.

Both external and internal reliability are difficult to meet in qualitative research for three major reasons. The first reason arises where emerging, rather than predetermined design approach, is used by a team of researchers. In this case, the different backgrounds and interests that the researchers bring to the investigation, for example the specific questions asked and methods of data collection, could influence the study design. It is also possible that the different background and interests of the researchers would influence the interpretation of the data and for that matter the conclusions drawn. Thus "different researchers are likely to produce different, though not necessarily inaccurate, sets of findings and interpretations about the same inquiry area or setting" (Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 99).

The second reason is that the views people hold and the perceptions they have change due to factors that influence the settings, for instance the kind of experiences people acquire. This can have influence on the research. Thus, whereas quantitative research attempts to address data in an objective, stable and static manner and, therefore, applies reliability and validity criteria, qualitative research pays attention to the contribution of the subjective and dynamic elements of the research situation to the research and, therefore, "to define reliability in regard to consistency of findings over time [as in quantitative research] is in direct opposition to the nature of the data collected with qualitative methods" (Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 99).

The third reason stems from the fact that contextual differences operate in many natural settings when a researcher collects data. That is, qualitative researchers collect data in natural, uncontrolled settings and therefore it is possible for different researchers to obtain different data if respondents behave differently toward a topic or an issue due to changes in the historical or current context surrounding the questions, conversation, observation, or setting.

In a nutshell, therefore, because quantitative research assumes the possibility of replication, its approaches to reliability tend to be inapplicable to qualitative

methods, which acknowledges the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of situations (Le Compte and Preissle, 1993).

The other criterion for establishing the credibility of research is validity. This "is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research" (Bryman, 2001: 30). Kirk and Miller (1986) also refer to validity as the extent to which measures or methods are appropriate for the issues under study. That is, there is validity where the data that a researcher generates represents what he or she was attempting to study.

Like reliability, validity has internal and external aspects. Internal validity refers to the evidence of good correspondence between researchers' observations and the theoretical ideas they develop. External validity refers to the extent of generalisability of research findings across social settings.

LeCompte and Goetz (1982) have argued that unlike internal validity which tends to be a strength of qualitative research by reason of the long period of intimacy with the social life of the group being studied and therefore offers a high level of correspondence between concepts and observations, external validity is a problem in qualitative research where case studies and small samples are employed.

Thus by reason of the problems involved in establishing the reliability and external validity of qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) have suggested the use of trustworthiness and authenticity as alternative tools for establishing the validity and reliability criteria in this research strategy.

Trustworthiness comprises four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, and each has its equivalent criterion in quantitative research.

Credibility equals internal validity and ensures that, firstly, research is conducted according to the standards of good practice and secondly that there has been respondent or member validation, that is, the findings of the research have been submitted to the members of the social world who were studied for confirmation that the investigator has correctly understood that social world and therefore the findings of the research are believable. Another technique

recommended is triangulation (that is, using multiple sources of data or methods, or using cross-checking technique for findings derived from the integration of quantitative and qualitative research, albeit Denzin (1970: 310) uses the term more broadly to refer to "multiple observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodologies".

Transferability is equivalent to external validity and ascertains whether the findings can be applied to other contexts or in the same contexts at other times. But whether the findings "hold in some other context, or even in the same context at some other time, is an empirical issue" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). As a result, it is recommended that qualitative researchers use what Geertz (1973) calls *thick description,* that is, rich accounts of the details of a culture. This, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), provides others with database for establishing the transferability of findings to other settings.

Dependability parallels reliability and establishes whether the findings are likely to apply at other times and requires that peers audit all phases of the research record in order to establish the degree to which proper procedures are being, or have been, followed, including the degree of justifiability of the theoretical inferences. This entails making sure that complete records of all phases of the research process, for example problem formulation, selection of study participants, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts, decisions on data analysis, to mention but a few, are kept in an accessible manner so that peers can act as auditors, possibly during the research and certainly at the end to establish the extent to which proper procedures are being and have been followed, including assessment on the degree to which theoretical inferences can be justified.

Confirmability Corresponds with objectivity, which cannot be completely established in qualitative research and therefore as an alternative measure, ensures that the researcher has acted in good faith, for example it should be obvious that the researcher has not allowed their values to intrude to a high degree, that is, they have not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to influence the conduct of the research and findings arising from it.

The other alternative tool is authenticity. This concerns:

1. *Fairness*, that is, whether the research fairly represents different viewpoints among members of the social setting;

2. *Ontological authenticity*, whether the research helps members to get a better understanding of their social milieu;

3. *Educative authenticity*, whether the research can help members to appreciate better the perspectives of other members of their social setting.

4. *Catalytic authenticity*, whether the research has motivated members to engage in action to change their circumstances; and

5. *Tactical authenticity*, whether the research has empowered members to take the necessary steps to engage in action.

(Guba and Lincoln, 1994; cited in Bryman, 2001: 272-275).

For the purpose of this study, I have, wherever possible, dovetailed issues of authenticity with those of the potential problems and possibilities for establishing the trustworthiness of the study because the authenticity criteria are closely related to action research, which is not the type of research I adopted for this study. Hence, four issues for establishing the trustworthiness and authenticity of this study are my concern: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility

Establishing credibility (that is, respondent or member validation) of findings presents problems where each research participant or a group of participants ought to be given part or all of the findings for validation. The participants may not be critical because of their intimate relationship with the researcher (Bloor, 1997) or they may not understand the concepts and theories that the researcher has used in analysing the findings and therefore they might be unable to validate the analysis. Under the circumstances, the issue of establishing the 'truth' as known and experienced by the participants and interpreted from the data as 'realities' will depend on the researcher's integrity.

As a way of ensuring my integrity and credibility of the study, I began all interviews with a brief explanation of the purpose of the research and assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. However the findings, that is, copies of the transcripts did not receive respondent validation. My intention was to allow respondents to comment on, and to make alterations (additions, deletions or corrections) as well as indicate any specific aspects in the transcript that they would not have been happy to see quoted in the report. This measure could have enhanced the authenticity of the report and increased protection of participants from harm. However, this did not happen because at the end of every interview, participants themselves responded to my request (of sending the transcript to them for alterations) by indicating that it was not necessary. Especially in the case of one participant, I considered some of the responses so sensitive that I felt there was a need for the alteration but on phoning him from England about this request, he said he was happy with the responses and so there was no need for that.

To compensate for the shortfall of lack of respondent validation, I resorted to making triangulation central to my study and to build it into my data collection and analysis in order to enhance the trustworthiness and authenticity of the findings. First, I employed a variety of methods – interviews, fieldnotes, observation and documentary analysis. Besides, I included a range of data sources – different people, different documents and different places of the case study site – just to enable me to acquire as many perspectives on issues as possible. I also kept fieldnotes and field diary for regular review of the research process. I was aware that differences between sets or sources of data could be very important in illuminating and therefore crucial, especially in the case of the views of CSs, headteachers and teachers where contradictions were common because of differences in values, beliefs and attitudes. As a result, I refrained from simply aiming at clarifying meanings and perceptions. I have also discussed issues about researcher bias and in the process divulged my positionality.

Transferability

I used case study design for my research, with a small number of participants drawn from a setting. The participants did not constitute a representative of a population and it was not even possible for me to enumerate the population in any precise manner. This raises questions of transferability because it is impossible to know how the findings from non-participant observation or an interview guide with a small number of individuals in one setting can be transferred to other settings. Thus the scope of the findings of this study was restricted. However, as argued by Mitchell, it is "the cogency of the theoretical reasoning" (1983: 207) and not the statistical criteria that is important in considering the transferability of the results of qualitative research. In qualitative research, the interest is to generalise to theory rather than to populations. In the words of Bryman (2001), it is the quality of the theoretical inferences that are made out of qualitative data that is crucial to the assessment of generalisation.

Besides, my intention was not to generalise. Rather, I intended to provide a picture of what is happening in a particular locality so as to give an idea of what might be happening in others. As mentioned by Crossley and Watson (2003) and Merriam (1988), the aim of qualitative research is not to generalise findings but to develop a unique interpretation of events. Therefore the themes emerging from the data analysis of this study apply to the case study site and the key approach I used to ensure transferability was the provision of rich, thick and in-depth descriptions. Hence, the findings relate specifically to the situated knowledge of the study site.

Dependability

Dependability strives to explain whether the findings of a research can be applied at other times. This is one major principle of quantitative research. As explained above, quantitative research assumes the possibility of replication and therefore its approaches to reliability tend to be inapplicable to qualitative methods, which acknowledge the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of situations (Le Compte and Preissle, (1993). However, Cohen *et al* (2000) argue that this does not mean that qualitative research should not strive for

replication in generating, comparing and validating constructs. That is, for Cohen *et al*, reliability, be it in qualitative or quantitative research, is very important as far as the goal of minimising errors and biases goes. Therefore even if it is not fully practicable, the degree to which it can occur need to be considered.

Under the circumstances, I have tried to make my assumptions and interpretations explicit in the presentation of the responses of the study participants as well as the findings. Besides, in a technical sense, reliability is not so much a matter of the possibility of replication through the use of similar techniques intended to arrive at similar results. Rather, reliability is pursued through careful, detailed and explicit documentation of the procedures followed and the development of a case study database (Yin, 1994). As explained above, I have endeavoured to pursue both.

In terms of validation by peers, the justification for requiring that peers audit all phases of the research record in order to establish the degree to which proper procedures are being, or have been, followed, including the degree of justifiability of the theoretical inferences is that researchers, being the main instrument of data collection, develop fondness for what they observe, hear and decide to concentrate on which can affect the findings. This may be due to empathy or the characteristics of the researchers (such as age, gender, personality or religion), or what may strike them as significant (Bryman, 2001). I have tried to meet this condition by providing explanation of the procedures I followed throughout the research process. I have retained the audio-taped data for verification. I have resorted to the use of triangulation and supported the findings with interpretations and recommendations with reliable data which I have generated from multiple sources and reliable procedures. I have kept complete records of all phases of the research process, for example problem formulation, selection of study participants and decisions on data analysis in an accessible manner so that peers can act as auditors to establish the extent to which proper procedures have been followed, including assessment on the degree to which theoretical inferences can be justified.

Confirmability

Confirmability corresponds with objectivity and establishes that the researcher has acted in good faith, for example, it should be obvious that they have not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to influence the conduct of the research and findings arising from it. In this regard, I have tried to refrain from engaging my personal values or theoretical inclinations to influence the conduct of the research and findings arising from it. I have obtained direct and repeated affirmation of the data I generated through what I heard, saw or experienced through triangulation (that is, multiple sources of information) to establish the confirmability of the data I generated.

In a nutshell, I have made all efforts to maximise the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study by presenting a detailed account to study participants about the focus and purpose of the study. I have outlined my positionality in relation to the study, the position of the study participants and the basis for the selection and context from which I generated the data. I have used participants' voices as much as possible. And I have resorted to the use of triangulation and provided a detailed account of the strategies I used for data collection and analysis to help establish a clear and accurate picture of the methods and methodology for the study.

Summary and conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the methodological and ethical issues involved in the study. I used qualitative research strategy and case study design because of the nature of the study. In terms of instrumentation, I applied questionnaires, interviews, focus group interviews, documentary analysis and observation, with field notes as an ancillary instrument. For data analysis, I used the thematic approach with Fielding's (1993) model as a guide but made my own analytic choices as well. Finally, I have considered ethical considerations and trustworthiness of the study.

CHAPTER 4

THE ORIGIN, PURPOSE, THE POLICY MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION PHASE OF WHOLE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

Introduction

I considered it necessary to investigate the origins of WSD in Ghana because the source of an educational reform could impact on the successes and/or failures of the reform. It was also important for me to ascertain the aims and objectives of WSD in the country because an important instrument for determining the successes or failures of a programme is the degree of achievement of its aim(s) and the intended outcomes. And it was imperative for me to identify the strategies that were applied, including the systems and structures that were put in place, for the policy making and implementation processes because educational reform policy making and implementation strategies can influence the degree of successes of a reform and can have implications for future educational policies.

This chapter of the thesis therefore contains my analysis of the responses of study participants about the origin, aims and objectives as well as the policy making process and implementation strategies of WSD in Ghana. All the participants discussed their experiences of WSD and each of them focused on portraying the insider's view of what is important. However, I have paid attention to what is significant for this study and therefore made a selection from the responses. As I have pointed out in the methodology, this is not to suggest that I have selected only those fragments of the data that favour my arguments. Rather, I have geared my attention towards the extraction of valid information from the explanatory power of the narratives and used them to substantiate the arguments.

On writing about the experiences of the respondents, it became imperative for me to use their voices as far as possible because "*voices enact stories and provide a rendition of how ... people understand what is happening to them, what they see as the problems and their solutions and how they intend to*

approach any desired change. The voices become the power of knowledge with which to evaluate, assess, interpret and pursue educational reform." (Dei, 2004: 58).

Thus, as an outsider, I felt that using the voices of the study participants to discuss observations, understandings and interpretations might help me provide a more complete picture of the introduction and implementation of WSD and, through this, reveal the subjective understandings of wide-ranging issues which impact on educational reforms in both the urban and rural local contexts. Besides, I wanted to remain faithful to the participants as much as necessary. However, I have protected anonymity and ensured confidentiality by using pseudonyms.

I begin the analysis by tracing the origin, purpose and the policy making phase of WSD, using the narratives of the policy makers and a senior education officer and follow this with the preparation, piloting and the implementation so as to reveal the source, aims and intended outcomes of WSD, the structures and systems that were instituted and the strategies that were applied for the policy making and implementation phases. Next, I explore how circuit supervisors, headteachers, teachers and community members were prepared and involved in the implementation. At the end of each narrative, I draw the reader's attention to the salient elements by providing a summary. Subsequently, I produce a coherent account of the narratives by reconciling them. Finally, I discuss the narratives and close the chapter with a conclusion.

4.1 The story from the policy making level

Narrator One's account

Origin, purpose and the policy making phase

Narrator One was a policy maker involved in the WSD policy making and implementation process and was a key role player in the coordination of the WSD reform. In his narrative, he began with how the whole idea started:

> *The Whole School Development came out of the desire of the state to*
> *reform the education, particularly basic education, in Ghana. Now the*
> *1992 constitution provided for the establishment of a programme that*

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will initiate changes and bring about improved education delivery in
the country. From this, FCUBE ... that was initiated by the
constitution, there was the need to put in place a process that will
bring about improvement in the administration and delivery of basic
education in the country. As a result of that, the government of Ghana
requested the support of the British government to fund the new
initiative....

According to Narrator One, WSD in Ghana emerged from the desire to
improve educational delivery and administration in the country. Out of this
desire, financial support was sought from the British government.

On the question of the actual source of WSD, that is, whether it emerged from
Ghanaians themselves and not from an external source, he reacted: *"No!! In*
fact, it didn't come from any external sources" and continued:

> *Many people sometimes ... think that we borrowed it from South*
> *Africa; we didn't borrow it from South Africa.... Now when we were*
> *thinking of how to develop education, we had to ask the DFID to*
> *provide us with a consultant from the UK, who will help us to design a*
> *concept note.... So when he* [the consultant] *came, he brought the*
> *idea: Integrated School Development Process.... Now from this*
> *Integrated School Development ... he helped us to design one concept*
> *note similar to what had happened in South Africa. And there was*
> *also at the same time, a Whole School Development programme in*
> *Australia. So we borrowed from all these because we were concerned*
> *with improving the management and administration of education and*
> *the quality of education in our schools. Because performance of pupils*
> *had reached its lowest ebb; teachers output of work was too terrible –*
> *too bad. Teachers were simply not working. We needed something*
> *that would revamp the enthusiasm and the commitment of teachers. So*
> *we had to look round and brainstorm together with the help of this*
> *consultant ... for us to come out with it. It's not an outside thing....*
> *The consultant who supported the South Africans ... was the same*
> *consultant we engaged to help us design a concept note that will help*

us improve education delivery in this country.... And it was at a point where Whole School Development process was becoming the norm for educational improvement. So it is not something that we imported.

In a passionate manner, he explained that WSD was not expected to be ephemeral and enter into oblivion as did other education reforms:

Unlike other or earlier programmes, this was not supposed to be a programme. It was not supposed to be a project. It was to be a process. The difference between the process and the programmes or the project was that if it is a programme or a project, it will have a beginning date and an end date. If it is a process, it is something that will have a beginning but will become part and parcel of the education system that will continue long after funding of the initiative has been exhausted.

Indeed, various education reforms introduced in the country have failed. For example, as noted in Chapter 2, the continuation schools programme of the NLC government collapsed because it suffered serious consequences, the key one being lack of interest by pupils because they were keen to enter SSS. The junior comprehensive schools programme of the NRC that was introduced on experimental basis also collapsed because of economic constraints and the lack of interest of those administering it. This time around, strenuous efforts were made to ensure the survival and success of WSD through adequate preparations, piloting and good implementation strategies.

The preparation, piloting and implementation phase

Narrator One went on to recount the structures, systems, resources and strategies that were put in place to ensure the success and sustainability of WSD. He began with capacity building at the implementation level:

All manner of administrative [personnel] - from the administrators to the classroom teachers – were ... given new orientation in terms of administration ... management and all the other logistics which would

enable them do their work better. So as the initiative went on, we had to provide in-service training to directors at all levels, whether the district or the region; then circuit supervisors, then auditors, accountants, headteachers and classroom teachers. And in terms of the administrators, the in-service training was geared towards improving management practices – record keeping – just general management practices. Planning and delivery approaches were all put in place. Then we also gave training to auditors and accountants in terms of financial management.

Blenkinn *et al* (1992) see professional development of teachers as the only route to continuous and lasting changes in improvement in education quality. The implication is that capacity building is an essential ingredient of a successful change. According to Narrator One, capacity building encompassed not only teachers but all staff engaged in ancillary services in educational provision and financing.

He went on to mention that mechanisms were instituted to ensure effective and efficient financial management:

Now to improve the financial management, we undertook studies to find out the district that had the capacity for personnel to be able to manage on their own, or who will need very little supervision because at that time, there was still a problem with management. Many districts did not have the requisite calibre of personnel to man the districts.... So after the initial study, we found that out of the then 110 districts, there were about only 30 districts ... that were very good.... And these 30 districts were classified as Ready Districts – districts ready to be decentralised because they have the requisite personnel and capacity at the grass-root level, so that if you give them resources, they will be able to manage the resources with little supervision.

But to ensure that they were not overwhelmed, we had to give them some management training. So three groups of consultants were engaged – one with accounting bias, another with management bias and another with education specialty. These three groups provided

training to the district directors and the district personnel and people at the district offices, right from the district director to the messenger.... We also had the District Education Management Team, which was for short called DEMT. This ... Team, we took time also to give them training....

On the mechanisms that were established to ensure efficient and effective financial management, he added that checks and balances were introduced to minimise, if not prevent, abuse:

After they [the education staff in the chosen districts] *had been given this* [training], *moneys which normally, under the centralised system, would have been in Accra for them to be accessed through the treasury, were now directly lodged - their budgetary allocation - was now directly lodged in the district. And to ensure that there were some checks and balances and to avoid abuses, the district local government administration was also involved; they were sensitised in terms of how to help the district directors to manage the resources. So the district director and his people were given the first mandate of planning how they intend to improve education in the district. But to ensure that it was not outside a district's plans for education, they consulted with the district assembly because at the district assembly we also had the District Education Management Team....*

Narrator One has mentioned above that District Education Management Teams (DEMTs) were given training. He explained that with this training, DEMTs were expected to gain skills

... in terms of what they should look out for in the budget that will be presented by the districts, in terms of what checks they should put in place, in terms of how they can monitor to see whether they are on track etc.

He also makes mention of attempts at decentralisation for purposes of financial management of WSD. However, it was not until the requisite

training had been given that responsibilities for financial management of WSD were decentralised to the districts:

> *Then after we had done all this, the moneys were lodged into the district directorates.*

Narrator One went further to explain how control measures were put in place to check efficient and effective allocation of resources:

> *Now initially, we had to ensure that things were going smoothly. So after the districts had prepared [their plan or budget], they took it to the district assembly. The districts and assembly together ... also went through and modified it to suit the plans of the districts and to ensure that there were no duplications. You see the system was such that education had been partially decentralised earlier and the district assembly's local government was responsible for the provision of infrastructure, furniture, and other issues at the school level. So they were providing furniture. But these resources that we had, because of the acute nature of the shortage of basic essentials in the school, we allowed them to use some of the funds to procure furniture and the rest. Now to avoid duplication of sending material and resources to one particular school more than others, and to ensure that it is fairly distributed within the districts, the district assembly had to come in. If the district education office had earmarked a school for the provision of certain logistics, and the same school had been earmarked for provision by the district assembly, then that amount, either for the district assembly will have to be reallocated to another school, or that for the district education office will now be reallocated to another school, since it has been covered by the district assembly. These are some of the teething problems that we wanted to ease. As a result of that they had to consult with the district assembly.*

He added that while ensuring efficient and effective allocation of resources, further measures were instituted to ensure that the districts got enough of what they had planned and supervision and monitoring had been effected to ensure transparency:

You see, one of the basic problems before the reform was that the budgetary allocation at the national level hardly ever reached the districts. The process of accessing it was cumbersome. And again because a smaller percentage of the budgetary allocation actually did reach the districts, they had to reprioritise. You get what I mean? [Yes, I do]. If the national allocation for education for example; let me just make the mathematics simple, for example is just 100. At the end of the year they must have been able to access, at most, 30-40%. So everything they had planned for the year is thrown out of gear. And the moneys come in trickles. But with the allocation of the moneys now direct to the districts, now they know exactly how much they have and they plan within what they have.... And ... monitoring mechanisms too had been put in place.

There were additional mechanisms to ensure that schools got the resources they required and had prioritised:

Now the money that was allocated to the districts also had allocation to the schools. In each district we started with 20 schools that were going to be provided funds in order to improve education delivery in those schools. And then through a cascading mode were spreading until all the schools in the districts were covered. Now these 20 schools ... we started with about 6 million Ghana Cedis ... for the schools. It ... looks peanuts but it was substantial money in the hands of a headteacher to enable them to provide basic materials that will be required.

For the mechanism of ensuring that schools got the resources they required, Narrator One explained that special provision was made for the poor to ensure that they were adequately catered for:

Then we also gave them guidelines in terms of how to spend the money: minor repairs, provision of exercise books for the poor, provision for needy students in terms of their uniform, school bags ... and then paying their school fees. All this was taken into account. And there was a guideline for the selection of those who were actually

poor and needy to ensure that the system was not abused. I cannot recount all the details now. But measures were put in place to ensure that this was going on.

To ensure that the poor were adequately catered for, two categories of moneys were allocated to each district:

So the district itself had moneys the District Director could spend. And within that budget were moneys meant for the schools, which the district director could not spend; the only person who could spend that money was the headteacher.

At this stage, Narrator One introduced the involvement of the community in the WSD process. He mentioned the use of the School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for the acquisition, control and management of school funds as a check on headteachers to prevent financial abuse:

And to serve as a check on the headteacher, the chairman of the school management committee was involved in the planning – the school plans - for the utilisation of those funds. The PTA and SMC were all involved. And the chairman of the SMC had to sign the plans before the headteacher can access the moneys at the district education level.

And to assist headteachers and the community to prevent financial abuse, arrangements were made for them to access bank facilities:

Now we also directed that to avoid abuses, all schools should be made to open bank accounts. But immediately we realised that in the rural areas there were even some districts that did not have banks, let alone their schools. So ... we directed that each district, where their schools don't have local banks, should open one account for all such schools with different ledgers to account for the releases of the moneys to the headteachers. So it was not a problem whether you had a bank account or not. Nevertheless, your money could still be saved in the bank. And then when you have prepared your plan, showing how you are going to use the money, you go to the district office, the district

director and his team will go through and say that "Yes, it's in line with the aims and objectives and the targets that the districts have set."

Narrator One went on to relate some strategy that DFID developed for the provision of financial support to the WSD process. This was done with the WSD Team which was established purposely for coordinating activities of WSD in the whole country:

The money was first launched into the Ministry of Education funds. Within that, the money itself, there is a component for the district ... a component for the headquarters ... and a component for the Ministry of Education.... The British government had committed 50m over a period of five years – about £10m a year. But it was released in tranches based on our needs and capacity. So when the money comes you have to put in the proposal and the plans showing everything that you wanted to do within a period of, say, 3 months. And the money is launched into the Ministry of Education account. When it comes there ... part of the money [is allocated] *for the districts.... Because the districts are starved with money, when we have this money ... each division of the Ghana Education Service ... came together with their plans. And as one big team, chaired by the Whole School Development, we went through the plans to avoid duplication. And then we have dates – implementation dates. When that has been finished ... then the money is transferred from the Ministry of Education into the Director-General's account. When it's time for implementation, the Director will release a memo to the Director-General.... The Director-General will then send it to the Whole School Development Secretariat to confirm whether the activities they intend to carry out is within the plan. If it is, we give approval and then the Director-General will release the funds for the implementation. If they are not able to carry on an activity, they have to explain why ... and if it's reasonable, we will have to reschedule it for another time. So it ensured that people could not toy with the money the way they wanted....*

There were also stringent measures on the districts and their divisional directors for submission of financial reports and any surpluses of funds:

> *Then we also had deadlines for accounting for the moneys. Every month, from district to divisional directors, you must send financial returns. Even if you have not performed the activity, you should send what we call a nil report.....*

Thus the WSD team were intent upon controlling embezzlement and misappropriation of funds. But not only that. The issue of structural problems such as lack of electricity and pipe-borne water as well as lack of accommodation for teachers in rural and deprived areas, which usually militate against successful implementation of educational reforms in such areas, was also of great concern to them. To minimise the acuity of such problems, incentive packages were instituted for schools in such areas:

> *Then we also instituted incentive package for teachers in deprived areas. Unlike other incentive packages, we ensured that there was incentive package for the headteacher, for the circuit supervisor, for the classroom teachers. And it was strictly to go to schools in the rural areas. Any school in an urban area, particularly the district capital, was disqualified. You were not to have it!! .... And then other incentive packages were something like, we provided essential commodities like ... radios ... and solar lamps ... to teachers in rural communities, where they could not get electricity. So we sent them all these things in order to boost the morale of the teachers. Then we also had accommodation facilities provided at vantage points as a cluster for teachers. We look at central points and then we have schools there, schools there, schools there..... Then the resident is built there for the teachers and in the morning they use their bicycles and they go and then they come....*

In order to ensure the success of the implementation of WSD, INSET programmes for professional development of teachers were devised. Narrator One described the features of the programmes. He began with cluster-based and school-based INSET:

Money was provided again for two types of in-service training. One was school-based, where the teachers of a given school met after classes and discussed their teaching and learning problems and provided support to each other. Then besides that there was a cluster meeting of a number of schools, a maximum of 8 and a minimum of 5 schools which are closer. In exceptional cases where distances between the schools are too far apart we allowed for at least 3 schools as a cluster. And then where schools are very close, we allow for a cluster of... a maximum of 8....

He described how the INSET programmes functioned with ancillary supports:

Now during this cluster, we had what we termed lead teachers in various subjects who would bring problems from their schools for discussion at the cluster centres. In the cluster centres, school 'A' would present its problems. And then the rest of the schools or lead teachers who are there, if they have any idea about how to resolve the problem, they help that teacher to resolve it. So they resolve each others' problems there. Where there is a problem beyond the group, the entire group, it was referred to the district office. And at the district office we also had in place what we term District Teacher Support Teams, who have been given training in in-service training - in how to support teachers professionally.

And then he mentioned other ancillary supports for the INSET and described their role:

Now where they have a problem, if the problem goes from the school to the cluster and from the cluster to the district and it was still a problem, they could immediately trade it with the nearby district. Now if they still have a problem,... or even while they are trading it with a nearby district, they inform the secretariat of the Whole School Development about the problem, then we will look round, if there is a training college around, we will alert the training college to send somebody to go and help them overcome that problem. [You mean a teacher from the training college?]. *Yes. Sometimes there may not be a*

teacher from the training college but they may have a secondary school where there is an equally competent teacher. We would ask them to go and resolve that problem for them. Where they don't have any, we would look at the itinerary of our monitoring officers - those who would be going round – if they could pass there and resolve the problem for them. So in a way there was some kind of monitoring that had been put in place - checks and balances - to ensure that no one was left out.

In addition, he described the role of consultants who acted as the last resort for the above mentioned features:

Then besides that we have the District Support Team; three different groups of consultants: one in education, one in educational management, and one in financial management. Now this group, from the 110 districts, we divided the 110 districts into 3. And they went round from district to district. When they go to a district they interact with the district personnel, ... the headteachers [and the] teachers. And they visit cluster centres and so on. Where they have a problem which they were unable to resolve and the Whole School Development Secretariat had not provided them anything, when this people go, they deal with the problem. If they are not able to deal with it because it is not in their subject area, because members of the team were actually competent retired directors of education, who are in different subject areas: Mathematics, Science and the rest, ... as they go out, whether is a problem of management or a problem of teaching and learning, they are competent enough to deal with it. So this support team brought back comprehensive report on the management of the resources and how it is impacting on teaching and learning at the school level. And where there are weaknesses, they correct it there and then.

Besides, he explained the role of the WSD Team:

Besides this District Support Team, there is the Whole School Development Team that went round. In fact, we were not many. But we were everywhere. We were just a team of three. Myself and my two

assistants.... As the team were going round, the District Support Team from headquaters were also going round, and circuit supervisors were going round, we were equally going round monitoring everybody. Where they had problems, we were able to address the problems. At the same time, we were monitoring the in-service training that we were providing teachers from the national level. If we had a problem, we could relay the problem to the head quarters and we had the problem resolved.

Finally, he mentioned that monitors came from DFID to ascertain developments on the implementation process:

... we had monitors also from UK. The auditor general from UK [by UK; you mean DFID?] Yes, Department for International Development from the UK ... to come and monitor the districts in terms of the spending of the money and to see for themselves what improvements have come into the schools, the management systems.

Obviously, DFID will be interested in monitoring and ascertaining the impact of WSD because they had pumped huge sums of money into it and yet were not realising the intended outcome. They had therefore developed a new strategy of providing support whereby moneys will go directly to districts and therefore to schools:

... they were sending huge sums of money to education but the money never reached education.... So they developed a new strategy of providing support direct to education in the district.

Summary of Narrator One's account

According to Narrator One, the idea of WSD in Ghana originated from Ghanaians themselves and it emerged from the desire to improve educational delivery and administration in the country. Out of this desire, the support of the British government was sought. When it was granted, various systems, strategies and structures described briefly in the following paragraphs were developed to ensure that WSD did not become an ephemeral reform.

Piloting was done with some 110 districts. These districts were categorised in terms of their capacity for management and training was given to all their education staff, including the DEMT which was established in each district to be responsible for strengthening checks and balances that had been put in place to ensure efficient and effective allocation of resources and to deal with abuses such as misappropriation and embezzlement.

Twenty schools were selected from each of the districts chosen for the piloting phase and mechanisms were developed to ensure that these schools got the resources they require and have prioritised. The resources were in the form of granting of capitation grants to the schools through their district headquarters, and PTAs and SMCs were involved in the acquisition and appropriate utilisation of the grants in a transparent manner by the schools with the supervision of the WSD Team.

Special provision was made for schools and teachers of the poor and deprived areas in the form of provision of incentive packages such as accommodation, radios and bicycles. Again, strict monitoring was instituted in order to ensure that the package went to the schools and teachers in these areas rather than their relatively advantaged counterparts.

Two types of INSETs were instituted: school-based and cluster-based. In the former, teachers of a given school met after classes and discussed their teaching and learning problems and provided support to each other. In the latter, schools were organised into cluster units, each unit ranging from five to eight, and teachers were grouped into a single school-based in-service unit. To facilitate the activities of the cluster, Lead Teachers were created and partnership roles established with them to enable them to work in close collaboration with District Teacher Support Teams (DTSTs) which had also been created at the District Offices to provide instructional and management support to the schools. Lead Teachers within a cluster were expected to meet with the DTSTs to identify common unresolved problems about teaching and learning in the schools forming the cluster. On the basis of the problems identified, cluster-based workshops were formed and the Lead Teachers and DTSTs acted as resource personnel. Problems beyond their expertise were

referred to other cluster centres for assistance. If the problems persisted, they were referred to the National WSD Co-ordinator for support. And the support came from any one of the following: a competent person from a training college or secondary school, the WSD Team or the District Support Team (consisting of different groups of consultants in the areas of Educational Management, Financial Management, Mathematics, Science and other subjects).

In addition, DFID instituted special strategies in collaboration with the WSD Team in the funding process to check abuses. The strategies included releasing money in tranches based on the needs and capacity of WSD and the stipulation of deadlines for submission of financial reports and any surpluses of funds for implementation of plans or activities which for one or other reasons could not be carried out at the district level. And monitors came from DFID to ascertain developments on the implementation process.

Narrator Two's account

Origin, purpose and the policy making phase

Narrator Two was also a policy maker but from the DFID Team. He was involved in the WSD policy making and implementation process and liaised with the WSD Team on behalf of DFID. He began his account thus:

> *Going back to the early 1980s, there were a number of support programmes developed from various development partners.... The World Bank had introduced the FCUBE; well, had supported the introduction of the FCUBE by the Ministry and were the key players. The DFID, then known as the ODA, was one of the key supporters. Various programmes and everything had been started, like supporting modular teacher training programmes and various other things. In 1989 a programme was established called the JUSTEP – Junior Secondary Teacher Education Programme ... and that was basically supporting the development of teacher training ... and that was the British Council managed programme before ODA. ODA took that over in the beginning of 1990 and it changed its focus slightly; it*

became support to teacher education and that meant it was looking at not just teacher training colleges, not just the junior secondary, but looking at everything.... At the same time, the USAID had some programmes going on. The World Bank also had some support programmes going on. And the Germans GTZ, had some programme with KfW – KfW was giving support for the teacher training colleges.

This first section of the account draws attention to the succession of reform efforts aimed at developing and improving the education system in Ghana (see Chapter 2). According to Narrator Two, a number of development partners had been involved in these reform efforts, particularly from the 1980s.

He continued that in the 1990s, there began a proliferation of these development partners with numerous disjointed activities:

Up to 1997 the Ministry, the Ghana Education Service, were invited by the DFID and workshop was established at a place called Mandeville – Mandeville Hotel in London - and it was facilitated by a World Bank person. And from that - what was often referred to as the Mandeville Conference - developed the Education for Teaching Plans. It also started the development of Education Sector Programme of DFID. Now, prior to that there had been support going on in supporting good education ... school health, teacher education, in-service provision, distance education [etc] with research.... And at the same time, there had been QUIPS, there had been USAID support programme going on, supporting projects in schools and districts. DFID was actually commissioning ... what was called Integrated School Development Process (ISDP).... At the same time we had also been supporting resources and performance management. And that was being piloted. And the intention was to pilot ISDP in 20 districts. And alongside it, there was the girls' unit; there was support to inspection, which was developing School Performance Appraisal Meetings and all that sort of thing. And it was all very, very disjointed.

Therefore subsequent to a conference in England, which involved some members from the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, a

meeting was held in Ghana, out of which strenuous efforts were made to piece the disjointed activities together and from which WSD eventually emerged:

... back here in Ghana, after the Mandeville Conference, with all pretty disjointed papers that had come from it – (but it was given clear steer of decentralisation process) - what we said was that "How are we gonna do it?" So we got together the key directors and we had some consultants in: Resource Performance Management Advisers Consultants. We had an EU who was working on policy and planning. We had our economist [from] DFID ... and we got them all together.... After this meeting, it was decided we needed a national co-ordinator, and ... [we] appointed [one]. And what actually happened, what came from that initial meeting, was that there was a need to integrate all of these initiatives that was going on into one complete ... plan. And from that evolved the concept of Whole School Development.

Concerning the question of whether the WSD idea did not come from an external agency but originated from Ghanaians themselves, he intimated:

It originated from Ghana – Ghanaians - within GES. It originated from the Ghana Education Service. The Ministry of Education people met in a conference [to discuss] activities which had gone on before and then getting together with the GES division staff and under the Directors.... And that's where it came from - it came from within; it was internally generated - from within; supported by DFID. And one thing [Mr A] was doing successfully towards the end was actually bringing in all the donors – USAID ... LINK ... QUIPS - all these coming on. And then they were actually supporting it [that is, WSD] and they were providing evidence on the success of it....

For the origin of the concept "Whole School Development" itself, he articulated:

It was actually people coming together with what name to give. We didn't want to call it Integrated School Development because that was already being at the complex [he probably meant it was already

creating problems]. *We didn't want to call it just Resource and Performance Management because that wasn't all. We were trying to get a name and this name evolved at the meeting. It may have been the first time it was ever used. But I know it has been used extensively across different countries. And it may be the result of a lot of dissemination that took place and people coming to see what was actually going on.*

He went on to indicate the purpose of WSD:

We wanted to build the capacity at the district and school level to enable the districts to eventually take over the responsibility of providing quality education. In other words, moving from the central provision of service delivery to a decentralised provision of service delivery.

To sum up, they wanted to ensure the institutionalisation of decentralisation in the country.

The preparation, piloting and implementation phase

Having stated the purpose - the aims and objectives of WSD – Narrator Two proceeded to describe the structures and strategies that were put in place to ensure its successful delivery. He began with the source of funding and funding strategies:

... the bulk of the money for service delivery was coming from ... donor support. [By donor support you mean from DFID?]. DFID mainly.... DFID had agreed to put in £50m over 5 years to support the implementation of service delivery. We decided ... that ... a mechanism will develop where money would flow into the GES account directly from the DFID. But with argument over whether that money should be fangible, some of the experts said it should be fangible and there should be no distinction between government money and DFID money. But mainly coming from within the Ghana Education Service itself, they wanted to keep it within the budget, account for it within the budget, but identified clearly as a separate line for DFID, and that was to help them with the reporting on how it's done.

Thus, DFID made an immense financial contribution to WSD. The amount quoted here corresponds with that of Narrator One's quotation. To ensure that WSD was adequately catered for, the bulk of the amount went to the Ghana Education Service (GES) which was going to develop structures and systems for the implementation and the rest to the Ministry of Education:

> *The systems to be used will be identical to what was being used within the Ghana Education Service. The whole principle of this was: no systems would be used which was not what the Ghana Education Service would use themselves. So some of the money, there was a percentage of the money which DFID said they were going to give, which came to the Ghana Education Service, a small amount of the money was to go to the Ministry of Education.*

But in order to ensure that there was efficient and effective allocation of financial resources,

> *The Ghana Education Service sat down* [with us] *and we did a figure out of a planning exercise where we looked at what needed doing. The GES division came up with a plan. They then got together and shared with each other, which had never happened before. Then they prioritised and said this activity is being done by 2 other divisions, which division is gonna do it? So they maximised the use of the money that was actually available. If they needed more than one division to do something, then they will decide who is the lead division and they would be the ones who the money went to ... and the other group would be part and parcel of the delivery.* [Did they ever name the divisions?] *The ... key divisions were Teacher Education, Basic Education A and F (Administration and Finance). Those were the key divisions. But Secondary Education was involved, and all the others.... They were all involved in this lateral planning.*

Arrangements were also put in place to ensure the availability of requisite human and material resources for the implementation:

And they identified things that they needed: vehicles, ... computers;
they needed various things to do it. They needed to develop manuals
and ... training courses, workshops etc. They identified that they
needed District Support Teams. District Support Teams – it was
decided they would recruit newly retired personnel with a record of
achievement. Not people who had retired and had never done
anything, but people who had achieved. And these comprised of
somebody from education with education background, somebody from
finance background and somebody ... with management background.
And these teams were set up to go out and visit the districts and
support the districts in what they were doing. Capacity building
activities were undertaken by mainly Teacher Education, Basic
Education, Inspection – inspectors and things like that. Alongside this,
they identified certain processes in the system which needed to be put
in place: SPAMS, ... SMCs, ... District Education Planning Teams, ...
School Education Planning Teams ... District School Arrangements,
In-service School Based and Cluster Based....

Besides the above, Narrator Two mentioned some processes that were
identified and put in place at the piloting phase. He began with arrangements
made with some 110 districts that were chosen for the pilot phase:

We then decided that the 110 districts were split between, not equally
split, but split between 10 regions. Now a region could cover vast
areas and some areas of the regions were inaccessible. So it was
decided that they will set up zones and have Zonal Coordinators.
These were identified from young people who had record of
achievement and they were appointed Zonal Coordinators. They were
based in Teacher Training Colleges. So we looked at where teacher
training colleges were and put them there. I can't remember how
many they were now, but they were a number of them, more than the
10 regions. And their job was actually to coordinate and get involved
and set up Planning Teams. So districts ... set up their Planning
Teams, Lead Teachers were developed, headteacher training was

carried on. The World Health, and coming from here, GCEW, were also involved in a lot of things.

He then reiterated that WSD was geared towards the process of decentralisation to the school and local community level and so training was given at both levels to enable teachers and local community members to function in concert for its success:

> *So we were looking at ... Performance Management of Non-teaching Personnel, and performance of teaching personnel; trying to improve quality [and] also getting parents and community leaders involved, working with assemblies.... And there were procedures being developed and how they would work: training was being given - training was given to SMCs. Some of these [SMCs] were illiterates or semi-literate people involved in the schools. When SPAMS were developed, some of these were very, very illiterate. In the very, very deprived areas you could be a farmer with no English at all, or a mum with very little schooling but very, very keen and they were involved in this. But they would try to get skills – we would try to identify and try to give them skills....*

He went on to give a brief description of how the districts were organised for the implementation of WSD and added that the manner in which the districts were labelled after they had been organised into groups did not receive a favourable reaction:

> *A decision was taken that money would be distributed to every district in the country. And to do that we identified what we call Ready Districts and identified Unready Districts. Later on another one came in, which was Semi-ready. This was causing ... problems because people did not like being called Ready and Not Ready. It also created some problems between development partners because some of the development partners didn't want that....*

He explained why the categorisation of districts into Ready and Unready was necessary:

The ready districts were classed as ready on certain criteria: they had to have a qualified and trained District-Director, a qualified and trained book keeper, trained and qualified circuit supervisor, headteacher trained, lead teachers identified [etc.].... A Non-ready district, the money was being held by the region and based upon their plan, the region would supervise on how it was being used. And the District Support Teams were going in to support them to be able to manage those funds and everything.

He gave a brief description of why and how GES was to be supported by the districts through the establishment of School Planning Teams to maximise the use of funds:

The intention was that schools would have School Improvement Planning Teams. Those Planning Teams would then work with their cluster arrangements to try and develop systems together. The cluster arrangement plans ... were referred to the districts. They were then developed and districts plans taken all of those into account. That would then inform GES for the big spending plan and then they would inform the divisions on the support we had defined. That was the idea and that was started.

On the question of attempts that were made to bridge the gap between the rural and the urban areas, he responded:

That was part of it. There was budget allocation based on a formula and part of that formula was for deprivation.

Finally on the question of capitation grant, he stated the year in which it started and explained how and why it started:

People here say 2005. But it was in 1999.... [He asked]: Do you know where it came from? [No]. It came from myself and [A]. [He asked again]: And do you know why? [No]. We were saying give schools money to spend, and everybody without help from the Ministry down. I felt you give money down there and it is squandered. And I said the money that I am suggesting is coming from the British tax payer.

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You've never tried it and I'm telling you to try it.... And we tried it and it was the most successful thing that we've ever done....

Summary of Narrator Two's account

Narrator Two reported that since the 1980s, there had been a succession of support programmes in Ghana for the improvement of the country's education system. But in the 1990s, it was realised that the support programmes had become proliferated and their activities were disjointed. Consequently, efforts were made to piece them together through collaborative meetings of consultants, the development partners and personnel from the MoE and the Ghana Education Service (GES). From this developed the idea of building capacity at the district and school levels for the purposes of empowering the districts and the schools to enable the districts to assume the responsibility of providing quality education as the schools and local communities work in tandem with them.

According to Narrator Two, the aforementioned idea originated from Ghanaians themselves – from within the GES - but there was not a concept note for it. To get one, brainstorming at a meeting occurred, which took into account the aims, structures, strategies and processes, the intended outcomes that were being sought in education at the time as well as experiences from other countries about the implementation of WSD. From this brainstorming emerged the concept note "Whole School Development".

Initially, much of the funding of WSD came from DFID. Later, however, due to lack of cooperation from other development partners to operate through a concerted action, the entire responsibility of funding fell on DFID.

To ensure appropriate use of the funds and thus guard against abuses of embezzlement and misappropriation, DFID developed strategies with GES whereby the bulk of the amount went to GES which was going to develop structures and strategies for WSD, and the rest to the Ministry of Education. Also, moneys were released in tranches based on the needs and capacity of

WSD. Planning and implementation of activities were assigned to the various divisions of the GES and care was taken to avoid duplication.

Arrangements were put in place to ensure the availability of requisite material and human resources and to support the districts, the schools and local communities. Things needed were identified, for example vehicles, manuals, training courses and workshops. For human resources, District Support Teams (DSTs) were generated from retired personnel with background in education, finance or management and with a record of achievement. The DSTs were to perform itinerary visits to the districts for purposes of supporting them with the WSD implementation. Divisions of the GES such as Teacher Education, Basic Education and the Inspectorate were also assigned the responsibility of capacity building. School Performance Appraisal Management teams (SPAMs), SMCs and District Education Planning Teams (DEPTs) were also established.

WSD was geared towards the process of decentralisation to the school and local community level and so training was given at these levels to enable teachers and local community members function in concert for the success of the reform.

Piloting was done with 110 districts which were split between 10 regions. In view of the fact that some regions were large and/or inaccessible, Zonal Coordinators were established from young persons with a record of achievement. These were planted in Teacher Training Colleges to enable them to coordinate and set up Planning Teams in the districts. The districts were categorised as Ready, Unready and Semi-ready, based on their capacity for management. However, this did not receive a favourable reaction from the districts which felt uncomfortable about being called Unready. The development partners were also not happy about this.

Besides, special provision was made for the poor and deprived areas in the form of budget allocation based on a formula of which part was for deprivation. Capitation grant was also instituted to enable schools to get direct funding through their districts and this also helped the disadvantaged schools.

Narrator Three's account

Narrator Three was also a policy maker from DFID and was actively involved in the formulation of the WSD reform policy in Ghana but left the system before its implementation. As a result, he was able to give detailed account of the origin, purpose and the policy making process but only a scant of the implementation.

Origin, purpose and the policy making phase

He began his story from the year in which the WSD idea began to evolve and continued with the World Bank's involvement in the FCUBE, which was already in progress:

> *I arrived in Ghana in 1995 and left in 1999. And it was really ... the time of when the WSD reform ideas were being put into place. The FCUBE programme had started ... under the previous government, and that was driven very much by the World Bank which was putting in infrastructure and ... equipment into many of the secondary schools and primary schools and junior secondary as well, at that level.*

He continued with USAID's activities in the country:

> *And also USAID had been involved in some teacher training programmes for specific schools; and there was a bit of criticism in the fact that they were looking at specific schools rather than looking at all the districts.*

He mentioned in the above statement that there was a bit of criticism. This criticism was given exposition in Narrator Two's account relating to the proliferation of support programmes of donor partners in the country towards the close of the twentieth century. As noted in Narrator Two's account, the British Council had a support programme called JUSTEP for the development of teacher training colleges, which was taken over by DFID and its focus changed slightly to make the support all embracing rather than just looking at teacher training colleges. In addition USAID, the World Bank and the GTZ each had their own support programmes. As a result, the activities were disjointed and this created problems. Narrator Three articulated some of the problems that arose from these disjointed activities. He began with the

problem that emerged after teachers had been trained with support from donor partners:

> *What emerged ... was that while teachers were being trained in the Teacher Training Colleges, they were then sent out to the schools. And if they were sent to a rural school, they probably never went. Somehow they managed to get to an urban centre.... So we felt that ... the teachers were not actually allocated in an equitable manner. Rural schools were being neglected quite considerably.*

He continued with the problem of lack of correspondence between teacher training courses and practices of teachers in schools and the attempt that was made to resolve this:

> *We also found that the link-up between initial teacher training and what actually went on in the schools was very poor. So what the teacher training colleges did, they started ad-hoc in-service teacher training and it was very much centralised in Kumasi or in Accra or in Cape Coast or in Tamale – in particular teacher training colleges. And teachers would come along, or they might not come along....*

He went on to explain that the attempt made to bridge the gap between teacher training courses and teacher practices in schools was not successful, despite the huge sums of money that was being injected into teacher training:

> *But then when teachers are back into schools, nothing happened and there is not really any change at all. So the World Bank found that the resources it was putting in under a loan agreement with the Ghanaian government, they were not having the desired effect. Moneys were being spent. What ODA was finding was that, in the teacher training colleges, the new teachers were being developed – teachers were being trained but when they got into schools there was not so much effect and they went into the urban schools, not into the rural schools. Evidence showed from USAID studies - it was also the case.*

As a result of the futile attempts, it was found necessary to develop a new idea, which he described thus:

The idea will be that donors would work together in what they called Sector Investment Programme or it was then re-termed the Sector-Wide Approach to Education. So support for the inspectorate, schools, Teacher Education Division, all of those needed to be fit into a specific strategic framework, in which the idea was that projects will disappear but funding will be put into an overall pot. And this was very much dictated by the World Bank. Although they see themselves as the donors of last resort, it was hugely the people who tended to dictate the way the things went.

The preparation, piloting and implementation phase

Subsequent to the above idea, the British Government decided to increase allocation of funds to Ghana's education system to support plans geared towards improvement of education with direct funding to schools through the districts under a process of decentralisation:

And suddenly there was all this potential money floating around, potential because the way that it was constructed was that it would be driven by the needs of the districts and the needs of the schools. So it was very much turned on its head in that it was child centred, therefore teacher centred, therefore community focused and district focused. And regions really didn't play a part in. There was little bit of politics going on here because the regional headquarters became almost not required.

The reference to the fact that "the regions really didn't play a part in" and "the regional headquarters became almost not required" applies to the decision that was taken to facilitate the process of educational decentralisation in order to ensure direct funding to schools and thus facilitate local management of schools, generate community participation, local ownership and commitment and stimulate community engagement in the process of education. According to Narrator Three, the decision was not taken unilaterally by DFID. It was done in consultation with:

> *... [Mr/Ms A, B, C, etc from the Ghana Education Service], the*
> *Minister [for Education] ... and a group of people [including] ... people*
> *from the World Bank and ... people from USAID.... All of us would*
> *work together, and UNICEF as well, would work together to try and*
> *make sense.*

Apparently, there was confusion over the funding process, which he referred to as donor politics:

> *Now we had donor politics there, because we had big boys and small*
> *girls and they would matter in. So there was much politics there like*
> *anything else.*

Eventually, however, a concept note was developed for WSD:

> *But the concept of Whole School Development and the idea of trying to*
> *make a change in the classroom, which everything which affected the*
> *child which was obviously curriculum, teacher training, infrastructure,*
> *but also community involvement, ... the use of PTA, the use of all those*
> *happening, and for the school and the districts to get funding, was*
> *based on plans which they presented ... [with] the Ghana Education*
> *Service.*

However, when it came to the control of WSD and funding for its implementation, another confusion arose but this time, between the GES and the MoE:

> *The other politics here was the politics between the Ghana Education*
> *Service and the Ministry of Education.... Who control the Whole*
> *School Development programme: was it the Ghana Education Service*
> *or was it the Ministry of Education? The Ministry of Education was*
> *responsible for policy, the Ghana Education Service was responsible*
> *for the delivery of that policy. However, when it came to funding, if all*
> *the money that went into the Ministry of Education has had to be to the*
> *early FCUBE programmes, which were the World Bank programmes,*
> *disbursement of all that was controlled very much by an office in the*

Ministry of Education and a lot of the districts just did not get, not through design, but by human nature and default.

At this stage, Narrator Three made indirect reference to the introduction of Capitation Grant (CG). During the era of the FCUBE reform, money for its funding was launched into the MoE coffers and as indicated by Narrator One, many of the districts were denied their share when the money was disbursed. Therefore with the emergence of WSD, new strategies were developed:

And one of [the strategies] *was to show how much funding each of the schools needed. In other words, we started to think about money for children - in other words per capita, and actually thinking about where the funding went.*

He went on to describe some of the systems, structures, strategies and processes that were intended to be established before his departure from the country. He indicated that WSD was piloted and the whole idea of WSD was geared towards educational decentralisation. He also made mention of the establishment INSET as part of the strategy for educational decentralisation:

... with ... the Whole School Development programme ... the idea was that [it] *will be rolled out with pilot districts in particular regions so the whole country will go through that; that Teacher Training Colleges would be involved in this: they will be involved in schools and INSET programmes would be school-based and district based, as opposed to headquarter-based. So it was really a matter of changing the minds of people.... So it was very much driven by: one group was a group of educational economics people. Another group were ... educationalists – those people that were classroom practitioners - people that looked at what happened in the classroom and this had to be much more classroom observation. And the idea of peer to peer observation and the responsibility of the school administration was very much the headteachers taking much more control of what went on in schools. And that was the idea.*

He explained that with WSD, one of the objectives was to ensure that funding got not only to the urban but also the rural areas so as to bridge the rural-urban gap:

> *... a lot of funding was actually going in. There was also more funding coming in and it was that if there was more funding coming in, it was going to be for rural and urban, getting rid of that gap between them.*

At this point, he reiterated the fact that decisions about WSD, in particular the funding procedure, were done by consensus:

> *It was done through debate and discussion and all of the donors involved. We call that Developing Partners at the time. But the donor thing was giving money. But this was more in partnerships and the idea was of a Sector-Wide Approach with sector investment programme.*

However, some of the donors felt uncomfortable about the funding procedure. Narrator Three explained this and in the process mentioned some of the disjointed activities of the development partners which were pieced together to allow WSD to evolve and which has been mentioned by Narrator Two:

> *Some of the donors found that much more difficult. When you have a cake, and you divide the cake up, donors would say, for example, ODA had been involved in teacher training. We had been involved in the Distance Learning programme in Winneba. We wanted to build upon that. USAID had been involved in Science and Maths. But GTZ were also involved in that. GITA also wanted to be involved in that as well. So there was a little bit of overcrowding in some areas and not in other areas. And the whole idea of putting money into a pot ... how do you actually trace the moneys which actually come from a particular donor or a partner because the accountants/economists would want to see value for money for that?*

Thus some donors did not feel comfortable about putting all the moneys from the donor partners into one pot, *viz*, the coffers of the Ministry of Education because it would be difficult to track the contribution each donor partner was

making and also the effects of such contribution. Therefore DFID, for example, decided to put their money directly into the districts. Narrator Three explained this as he traced the origin of the concept of WSD:

The Whole School Development was actually coined by DFID. World Bank were still using FCUBE ... while Whole School Development was something which was actually coming through very much from players like DFID, GTZ [and] UNICEF.... But I would say the terminology was created by DFID and there is a bit of confidentiality thing and I'm going to come to it a bit later or come on to it now.... DFID used a lot of its money to actually drive it down to the Districts, by putting money directly into the Districts and into Teacher Education Division and things like that rather than to the centre. Whereas World Bank wanted to put all into one pot in the Ministry of Education, DFID decided to put it directly into the districts.

However, when DFID put their money directly to the districts, it raised concerns from the other donors:

And there was a little bit of concern from the other donors that DFID was pushing this down to the District faster than may be in the centre because I think DFID felt that there was too much talking and not enough action.

In addition to the concerns felt by the donors, Narrator Three had the feeling that the Ministry of Education was also not happy about DFID's decision:

I don't know how that was felt by the Ministry of Education. But I think the Ministry of Education felt that DFID were kind of not staying within the club, if you know what I mean. They were actually spending the money in a way that the Ministry of Education couldn't measure fully and I think it was done wrong by DFID, I think it was done too quickly, I think, and this is the confidentiality thing. I think that moneys had not been spent in the health area because that was the first Sector Programme in health and so moneys were transferred. And there was a bit of double counting, I think. When Britain said it gave

so much money to Ghana it kind of added up health and education but it switched some of it across. And I would say that the accounting for that money was a little bit not too good and this happened after I had left. It was happening just as I was leaving, but it continued to happen after I had left....

When asked to indicate the other categories of professionals who were involved in the policy formulation process he recounted:

All of the divisions were involved: GES plus Inspectorate ... Teacher Education Division ... Curriculum Development ... [and] District level people were involved. A helm of people were involved in some way as well because it was really a matter of not just the professionals but ... community members.... And Girls Education, they were involved as well because of the equity aspect and problems with girls' education.

Responding to the question regarding the efforts that were made to ensure that teachers had been developed for the implementation of the WSD, he intimated:

... Whole School Development ... [was] done in pilot districts and with pilot schools in pilot districts and so [headteachers for example] *were ... in-service trained in the districts ... and ... the headteachers then went back and implemented school programmes within the schools. These were focused very much on curriculum issues, on marking of exams, on deciding on what kind of equipment was going to be purchased with this amount of money, that type of thing. And new teachers were already taken, they had a kind of mentor and they were kind of, say a young Science teacher would come in, then may be the head of development would say "No, you look after this person and come and observe some lessons" and things like that. So the idea was, even though at that time, they were all fully trained, they came out of the TTCs, it was recognised probably for the first time that these people actually were still kind of on probation; and ... I would like to say they were supported. That was the idea ... we had: peer-peer. So there wasn't this kind of the old head of department come in and*

observe a lesson but it was actually may be two new teachers would come in and help each other and we have a kind of system. We left different models up to districts in different schools. [Different models?] Different models. You know, they could say you could do it this way, that way.... The idea was, you choose which one is best for you.

And when asked to mention the arrangements that were made for the implementation of the reform in terms of resource allocation he indicated:

I'm not too sure because this actually came up after I had left. But what I understand is that allocations were made out to districts based on the number of pupils in the schools and then schools basically had to have their plan and had to cost that plan with the help of the District Finance Office. And then they would submit what they wanted.... So it was always like a process.

The allocations he referred to are the Capitation Grants mentioned in the account of the first two Narrators. He said it appears there were anticipations of failures in the implementation of the Capitation Grant:

Now I would imagine that a lot of the teachers probably thought that this was a waste of time. They thought they weren't going to get it anyway. But at least they felt that everybody had to go through the same thing to look for the resources. Now it was from bottom up. Whether it actually worked like that in the end, I don't know but those were the priorities....

Reacting to the question as to whether any strenuous efforts were made to bridge the gap between the urban and rural areas in terms of the implementation of WSD, he intimated:

Well, by treating schools and districts as individual schools and districts, and so therefore instead of everything coming from the centre and then going to the headquarters in the region and then gradually going out there in the pilot schools and pilot districts, they would treat it based on the number of students they had. Therefore the idea was, if

you had more students, you get more money. It was a bit more complicated formula than that. But it was a formula based primarily on the child.

On the amount of time allowed for developing, introducing and implementing the WSD reform he articulated:

It took a long time for the policy to be formulated. It took 2 years, I would say from '96 to '98. And then from '98 to 2000 it was put in a pilot programme and things like that, and then rolling it out. Of course, I only saw the first stage of that. So yes, there was a plan.

However, he remarked:

But I think there was then a political imperative to speed it up like all those things because some people felt the piloting of things is a donor thing; "We don't have time for that. The only way we actually implement things in our country is actually doing it country-wide and doing it quickly – big bang". Whereas the foreign partners would tend to say "Let's do it slowly" ... the others would say "No!!"

In his view, some people must have felt that giving adequate timescale for piloting and developing the necessary processes and structures was something donors were noted for but for which others did not have time. Therefore whereas the donors would want adequate timelines to ensure good preparation, training and establishment of requisite strategies as well as processes and structures for the success of the implementation process, he feels that there must have been pressure from the MoE and the GES for short circuited implementation time span. For him, in situations such as this, the donors have very little control and the reforms do not yield the expected result:

Now there was less control. I mean when there were projects, the projects were very much run by the donors - they were the USAID projects the ODA projects - and it was very much manned by people who were coming from the UK. They were appointed there. They did the projects - 3 years, over ... and gone. No change!!

He therefore felt a similar situation may have occurred in the case of WSD:

> *The whole idea about the Sector Investment Programme, the Sector-Wide Approach, was that money was put into the pot and so therefore the control was really in the hands of the Ministry and the GES. So while the donors would want to slow it down, quite likely the Ghanaian Ministries and that would say no, we wanna do this quickly. So I would think that. But I wasn't there when it was happening so I don't know what the dynamics were.*

In any case the fact that there were many donors at the time of the inception of WSD emphasises the point that one of the aims of WSD was to bring the disjointed activities of these partners into a concerted one. Narrator Three reiterated this point but said he left before the whole idea came to fruition:

> *Up until then USAID had gone and had had pilot districts. How do you roll out into other districts? And there was a lot of discussion on that. And I must admit that I left as the Whole School Development programme was being developed. I was working there when it was actually starting to be implemented in 2001 to 2002. That's when it started.... And I have seen some of the results of the Whole School Development programme. But it was mainly big players - personalities being involved in this.*

At this stage, he mentioned some of the advantages they expected to get from the implementation of WSD. He used research he conducted with some of his colleagues on the management and administration of private schools in Ghana as an example:

> *... what we were actually trying to show was that in these private schools, a lot of them were not as well resourced as you might expect but it was the parental support, it was the fact that the children were there. A lot of the teachers weren't trained from the TTCs but they were supported within the schools.... If you actually start with what happens in the schools, you can get teachers sponsored - teachers actually ... do their apprenticeship in the school, then they go to the*

TTC ... 2 years in the TTC and the last year out. The thing about that is that they would be sponsored by the Districts so they will go back to their own areas ... and they would be sort of owned by the schools. Now it is exactly what happens in the private schools. The employers were the schools and the headteacher took responsibility of the development of the teachers, the curriculum and all that in the schools. And the results from the private schools were quite a bit better, particularly in the rural or semi-rural areas.... Parents were not going to the state schools but rather go to the private schools.... They didn't have that much but they were ready to invest in their children, knowing they were going to get something out. And ... if that kind of thing worked in the private schools then if you could put it into the rural district areas, I don't know ... the success. But that was the idea ... that actually you don't need all those resources. What you do need is key teachers, key bits of curricula, support from the community, support from districts and then a really good headteacher that will know exactly and would have the right of higher and fire.

He used a figurative expression to explain one objective/advantage of WSD, namely the benefits of funding schools direct through their districts:

There should be much more freedom. In other words, if you are given this amount of money, how do you spend it? It's been like house-keeping. You know, you give the mother the money she would know how to feed the children. But if you start just pouring out food like food aid and things like that, it's rubbish - it doesn't work. That was the idea. So it was an ideological thing. It was based on experiment; it was based on the fact that the North was wanting to give more money and more funding to key areas of education and health.... So we were trying to link in the feeding programme and all that, which had come through and were trying to integrate all that altogether.

He considered the intended outcome of WSD laudable and was therefore wondering why educational decentralisation could not be embraced without hesitation:

And why was it complicated at the centre? If you go to the district and you go to the schools, the headteacher with support from the inspectorate of the Teacher Training Division, not based in Accra or Kumasi, but actually based at the district level, would be able to give that support. And you get many more school visits, you get much more of that. That was the whole idea.

Finally, when quizzed on whether WSD emerged out of politics, he began with a counter question and intimated:

But isn't it interesting that it continued on to the change of government? It wasn't politics. If anything, it was donor-driven. It was more donor-driven.... For those of us that worked (I hope well with Ghanaians) on the ground level, they saw that we were actually working as equal partners. And I would always say that what about Abena [in other words what about Mary]? What about Kwame [what about John]? In the end ... are they getting the education? They will only get one standard life and if you let down Abena and you let down Kwame, what do we get? And if you put all the money into Teacher Training, and it doesn't get to the child, what's the point?

Thus for Narrator Three, WSD was not a politically driven reform which got out of fashion with a change of government. Neither was it a donor dictatorial ideology. There are indelible traits of it because of its inherent advantages. And one of the advantages he mentions is in connection with opening the doors of good quality education to children so as to enable them to have access to opportunities in life.

Summary of Narrator Three's account

According to Narrator Three the idea of WSD began evolving between 1995 and 1999, after the FCUBE programme had started within the same period with funding from the World Bank. Around that time USAID was also helping with Teacher Education in particular districts rather than all the districts and there was mismatch between teacher training courses and

practices of teachers in schools. Attempts to resolve the mismatch failed, despite the huge sums of money that were being injected into it. As a result, a strategy called Sector-wide Approach to Education (initially called Sector Investment Programme) was developed collaboratively with the GES and the development partners to fit all activities that were going on into a specific strategic framework with funding from all the development partners placed in a single pot to be used for education improvement in the country.

However, some donors did not feel comfortable about putting all the moneys from the donor partners into one pot - the coffers of the MoE - because it would be difficult to track the contribution each donor partner was making and also the impact of such contribution. GES also did not feel comfortable about the funds for WSD being put into one pot - the coffers of the MoE. The reason is that during the era of the FCUBE reform, money for its funding was launched into the MoE coffers and many of the districts were denied their share when the money was disbursed. Therefore when it came to the time of WSD, a strategy was developed with the GES whereby funds for WSD went directly to the districts through GES and to ensure that funding got not only to the urban but also the rural areas, so as to help bridge the rural urban gap.

So DFID for example, decided to put their money directly into the districts through GES and began to increase allocation of funds to Ghana's education system to support plans geared towards improvement of education in favour of decentralisation and thus facilitate local management of schools, generate community participation, local ownership and commitment and stimulate community engagement in the process of education.

In the opinion of Narrator Three, the MoE was not happy about DFID's decision of putting money directly into the districts because the money was being spent in a way that the MoE could not measure fully. In spite of the confusion about the funding process, WSD continued. DFID used a lot of its money to drive it down to the districts by continuing to send money directly to the districts.

According to Narrator Three, decisions about WSD were taken with all the divisions of the GES and a helm of people were involved in some way as well because it was not just a matter of professionals but community members as well.

Also, Narrator Three stated that WSD was piloted with some schools in some districts. During the piloting, headteachers were given in-service training on issues such as acquisition and use of capitation grant and on curriculum issues and they in turn went to implement school programmes within the schools. New teachers were mentored and there were other arrangements *(different models)* such as peer-peer assistance to help teachers.

Enough time was allowed before the implementation began in order to ensure a timely review and feedback and to gauge the successful implementation of WSD and thus sustain its efforts and meet its various objectives. However, Narrator Three feels that from his experience, there must have been the political imperative to speed things up, though he could say for a certainty that WSD was not a politically driven reform that got out of fashion with a change of government; and it was not a donor dictatorial ideology. He feels that it thrived because of its inherent advantages.

The story from the implementation level

So far I have presented responses from policy makers regarding the reasons why WSD was introduced, how it was introduced and the systems and structures that were established to ensure its institutionalisation. I now present the experiences of the policy implementers about how WSD was presented to them, how they were sensitised and involved in it.

The District Education Officer's (DED's) account

To begin with, I asked her to explain how the whole idea of WSD began. The following emerged as her version of the story:

Origin, purpose and the policy making phase:

> *The idea started in Ghana as an intervention to educational development and we had a programme called QUIPS - Quality Improvement in Primary Schools - and it was a USAID sponsored programme; and the QUIPS concept seeks to involve communities and they were looking at developing the school as a whole. In which case the involvement of the communities and the schools - bringing the two sides together to make sure that the school developed as a whole.*

The DED made reference to USAID's sponsored programme - QUIPS – and this recalls the existence of proliferation of donor agency programmes in Ghana prior to the emergence of WSD in the country, as mentioned by Narrators One and Two. She also provided responses regarding the preparation and piloting phase of the implementation of WSD.

The preparation and piloting phase of the implementation process

The DED explained how SMCs and PTAs were established and how the community were sensitised to enable them to realise the need to foster good relationship with the school and to seek its wellbeing and that of the teachers:

> *In this one, they looked at the training needs of teachers, how the community was involved in training and teaching and learning delivery in their community. So in this Whole School Development, the concept brought about the introduction of the School Management Committees (the SMCs) and then the Parent Teacher Associations. You see that when a school, a body like a school is in the community, it shouldn't be looked at as an island that nobody knows exactly what is in there.... So there was the need for this link up and interaction for the school pupils, the teachers and the community members. And then another point too is that ... there was the need to really foster good rapport with the community members, how to ensure that the teachers are safe; they can have a place to accommodate themselves, community members looking at the school as their own and supporting in whatever way. For example maintenance of the school building; we*

needed to really sensitise the community to accept that "yes, this thing is for us. If it's for us, then let's keep it, let's maintain it for other generations to come and access this one."

She went on to explain why DTSTs were formed:

So in addition to all this communal aspect, the training of the teachers also came in, in the sense that "What is the capacity of the teacher? ... What is the capacity of the headteacher in areas of management? So ... that aspect brought about the District Teacher Support Team....

She described how lead teachers functioned to support school-based INSET:

With the DTST issue what happened was that good teachers were identified to come together ... and we call them lead teachers. So every school would bring these ... personnel plus the headteacher because the head will have to supervise whatever they would be doing in the school. So ... they were brought together and given training in the various subjects that they should be dealing with. So this one, the headteacher was supposed to organise school-based in service training and ... do a classroom observation on the teachers when they are teaching so that their deficiencies would be identified.... So this lead teacher ... would draw a programme to give the teachers ... to take them through how to address, or how to teach that particular topic....

She then proceeded to describe the cluster-based and how it works in tandem with the school-based with the support of the DTSTs:

Then from the school level, may be the lead teacher cannot go deep enough on that area; then we have what we call the cluster centres. This one is a cluster of schools, may be four, three, five, in a particular area within certain radius. Then what they do is, the District Teacher Support Team would then be at the cluster centre; a school is identified to be a centre for other schools to come. So the lead teachers and the headteacher would come to this centre from the various schools in that cluster and then the DTST member who is well versed in that area would be with them and they would bring their thoughts or discuss the

issue and then they would find solutions to it. Then all the other lead teachers from the various schools would also take along with them whatever they have done, how to solve the problem, how to teach the topic, and all those things back to their various schools. And then another school-based training would happen for them to impart that knowledge and skill to their colleague teachers. And then they would use it in their classrooms. So this is the WSD DTST concept. And in fact, we have adopted it and we are still using it, even though the QUIPS programme has faced out.

She explained that assessment instruments were developed to assist head and lead teachers to assess the teaching-learning process and to identify areas that needed addressing during the cluster-based and school-based INSET:

And because of this one, we came along with some instrument.... It was like a check list; so you go into the classroom, the teacher is teaching then you will be looking at whether the teacher is using the various TLMs appropriately, children getting access to the TLM, even the time management of the teacher is all looked at. Classroom arrangement and all those things. So that at the end of the day, after analysing the instrument, you realise that the teacher has really dealt with everything about lesson delivery or whatever assessment and all that. Even how to give out questions to pupils, whether he was skewed to boys or girls. You know, how the responses and everything that happened in the class is taken care of by this observation instrument. And then assessment exam on the teacher, whether the teacher has done what he is supposed to do; is he a good teacher?, needs to be supported?

There is another thing too, like a monitoring form, we call it the number of exercises given. You see, most of the time you need to do assessment. And periodically you go in with that form – that one is "Form 1c". We go in with it, we randomly pick pupils exercise books to see how the teacher has been giving them exercises to see what is happening and we look at the quality of exercises that were given; the

responses of the children and all that. And that too helps to assess the teacher. And then from there the office especially, when we look at it then we see that "No, this teacher we need to support him in this area, how to even set questions and all that". So we put them together and we make training on how to ask questions or how to set exam questions, for all teachers to make use of them. So it is like a guide for us to improve upon all the work that we are doing.

Responding to questions regarding the time frame for the implementation, she intimated:

Yes; in fact initially, it was on a pilot basis. I quite remember, for the District, we had three schools - three school-communities - because of the community aspect. That one we call it CSA - Community School Alliance. It was all part of the QUIPS programme. So we had three pilot school communities and then they were taken through training and all those things. They came out with PTA-SMC manual and all those things for use. Then after that, we did the expansion. I think the expansion was in three phases. Every year, we had a batch of school-communities that came on board. And they were taken through the training that the pilot school had, and then they also were trained. And in fact we used the pilot, some of the personnel in the piloted areas to be the resource persons so that those other school-communities would not think that it is something that is being put on them but that the other communities have benefited so they are also capable of benefiting. So this is how it was done.... So at the end of the day all the school communities have been trained in the Whole School Development concept. And we used it to work and they were favourable.

She also described how the community contributed through their labour with the financial support they received:

Yes, in fact the communities, they did marvellously well because ... there was a package of about 3 million seed money for the community to identify a project they want to do for a school and then they would

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contribute. The budget that will be done, the amount, the QUIPS programme gave out 3 million seed money and the community contributed to implement the project that they identified. [What is the definition for contribution over here; did they contribute some money or they gave out their labour?] *Yes; by way of labour.*

In terms of questions about the capacity building of her circuit supervisors, she said:

When we were doing the training for the District Teacher Support Team, they were all part of it because then the District Teacher Support Team were not regular on the field like the circuit supervisors. So that at any point in time, a circuit supervisor in a school would also have the idea as to what to do to support a teacher if the teacher is in crisis or is may be not doing what is expected.... And in fact, every year or every time ... we do training so that every time people will be in there to know how of the concept of implementation. So when we are doing the training, they all come and then we give them refresher.

She mentioned that in addition to the capacity building of circuit supervisors and headteachers and to enhance the role of the SMCs and PTAs, handbooks for circuit supervisors, headteachers and SMCs/PTAs were prepared with the support of some of the community members:

SMC/PTA handbooks were prepared. And then we had Circuit Supervisors handbook and then headteachers handbooks. Yes; these books were prepared and they came back. Some of the community members were part of a team that reviewed all the books before they came back finally and we are using them.

Summary of the DED's account
To sum up, the DED also made reference to the existence of the proliferation of donor agency programmes in Ghana which eventually resulted in the emergence of WSD in the country. She explained the preparations that were made prior to the implementation of WSD, making mention of capacity

building of circuit supervisors and headteachers and the structures and systems that were established including the formation of DTSTs and lead teachers who were expected to assist in the running of the school-based and cluster-based INSETs, as well as the formation of SMCs which were expected to run in tandem with PTAs. She indicated how the entire community were sensitised to enable them to realise the need to foster a favourable relationship with the school and to seek its wellbeing and that of the teachers and how the community complemented the financial support they received with their labour to support the implementation.

Accounts of the circuit supervisors (CSs), headteachers, teachers and community members

Responses from CSs, headteachers, teachers and members of the community indicate that after plans about the introduction of WSD had been developed at the policy formulation level, the various stakeholders at the implementation level were sensitised and given training to develop their capacity for the implementation. The responses also confirm claims about the piloting of WSD. Below are a sample of the responses.

Sensitisation and training

A CS who was quizzed on how he came to hear of WSD intimated:

> *The policy was being formulated by stakeholders like the PTA executives, the SMC, the head, the chief's representative or the chief himself if available, circuit supervisors and officers from the circuit office. [You were invited during the policy development process?] Yes, yes. Sometimes I attended their meetings.* (CS).

It appears a malapropism has occurred in this CS's use of the word 'formulated' because in actual fact the policy, as mentioned by the Narrators, was formulated by higher officials of the MoE and GES in collaboration with donor agencies such as DFID and USAID. Perhaps he meant to indicate that the stakeholders were sensitized through meetings at which discussions were held and the role expected of them outlined. To be sure, I probed further by

asking whether the stakeholders were actually involved in the policy development before its implementation and his answer confirmed what I reckoned:

> *Yes, they came together to discuss what part the USAID will be giving through the office to the community and then the role the community should also play to make sure that the whole project was successful.* (CS).

A headteacher also mentioned that they were given prior information about its introduction and implementation through workshops:

> *We attended a workshop as heads of basic schools and it was mentioned in passing. In fact we didn't get much details about how the whole thing is going to work and how the whole thing is going to affect our educational system. It was just mentioned in passing and we were looking forward to a whole programme about it, where perhaps whatever benefits that will be derived from it would be seen.* (HeadTeacher).

Another headteacher explained how he came to hear of WSD:

> *We were invited to a workshop and we were briefed about the meaning of WSD and we were told what to do to bring up this concept to reality* (Headteacher).

According to this headteacher he attended a workshop where the meaning and purpose of WSD was made known to them and what would be expected of them. When asked to explain whether teachers were also involved in the workshops, he answered:

> *Yes, some of them were invited to the workshop. In fact, I attended the workshop with another teacher, but not all of them. After the workshop, we also went back to brief the rest of the teachers.* (Headteacher).

It appears that most teachers did not have the opportunity to attend workshops relating to the promulgation of WSD. In a group interview of teachers, one of

them pointed out that they were informed of the introduction of WSD through their District Office and that the issue was publicized through the media:

I think first of all we got a letter from our Director of Education that they are going to reform our educational system. And also through the media. (Male Teacher).

This teacher's words were echoed by a female teacher in the same group:

Me too I heard of it through the media and through the Directorate – from the office (Female Teacher).

Members of the community also explained how they heard of WSD. For example an SMC Chairman offered his response in this way:

In the olden days, for past time ago, we know that the teachers they did whatever they like... and the same thing applies to the headteachers. And as at now they change. They will set some, let's say SMC members. So they select us for that and they gave us training. And as at now we know what is going on. We communicate with the teachers and headteachers. So if something is going wrong in our community, we have opportunity to ask them. And capitation grant, as at now we know. We know everything in the school. They are telling us that the school, it belongs to the community. So because of that by this time, we did our best to the teachers and they let us, we parents, to know what's going on. I think because of that this time, everything is going on smoothly. (SMC Chairman).

From the response of this SMC Chairman, it appears he heard of WSD when the reason for the introduction of WSD was promulgated and he was selected to be trained as a member of the SMC. According to him, they have witnessed the benefits of WSD: it has made them develop a sense of ownership of their school and this drives them into ensuring its smooth running.

Another SMC Chairman, who is also the Chairman of the PTA of the community, made a similar comment about the role of the community:

Now they have made us understand that the school ... belongs to the community. The government only supplies the teachers and the logistics – like the books and other things. And the community with the school, that is the headteacher and the teachers, will have to manage the place. (SMC/PTA Chairman)

This SMC and PTA Chairman is 53 years old and is married with 2 children who attend school in a city but not in the village because according to him the quality of education in the village is poor. He was not born in the village but he lives there because he is doing a project in the village. However, he is committed to improving the village so he can also feel comfortable living there. In his account, he explained the responsibility of the government and the connecting link between the school and the community in the delivery and management of education. In terms of management, he went further to explain how the SMC collaborate with the PTA executives in communicating policies they make with the school to the parents:

So the community, what we do is we have formed the PTA ... and ... the SMC. So we have the PTA executives and we have the SMC. The SMC, they meet with the headteacher, then we discuss - we come out with policies - policy guideline for the school. So with our policy guideline, what we do is as soon as we decide on anything, we call the PTA, we bring all the parents ... then ... we make it known to them. So ... if there is the need for any financial this thing, then we tell them that we want to do this, so this is how we shall be able to implement the programme.(SMC/PTA Chairman).

In addition, he explained the process of financial management of the school with the assistance of the Municipal/District Directorate:

And if there is the need that we go to the district (because now because of the capitation, they say the teachers or the headteachers should not collect any money from the community). So if there is the need that we have to get money for any project, we have to apply to the directorate. And when approval is given, then we go forward to collect the money.

And in terms of collecting the money, it is not the teachers who do the collection. We the SMC collect the money. (SMC/PTA Chairman).

He cited an example to explain how the SMC and the school collaborate for the purpose of financial management of the school with the assistance of the Municipal Directorate:

An example, you see that we have JHS 1,2,3. Now the JHS 1,2,3, previously it was only two blocks – two classrooms. And so we need one room – one classroom to make JHS3 - there was the need that we had to construct one classroom. And by constructing the classroom, we call the parents.... We decided this is the situation because the children need the classroom. They all agreed and we billed each parent one Ghana cedi.... So we wrote to the District Director of Education and she approved that we should go ahead. So we collected and that is what we have – the 3ʳᵈ classroom....(SMC/PTA Chairman).

He summed up his explanation:

So what I know is, it is a collaboration between the directorate education and the community. And they have made us understand that the school belongs to the community [so the community] has to do every maintenance. Then when it is beyond our control, then we fall on the district. (SMC/PTA Chairman).

The fact that some Districts were selected for training before WSD was implemented, as mentioned by Narrators One, Two and Three above, was confirmed by other study participants. For example, a headteacher spoke of the selection of her district and some schools for training purposes:

[My] District was taken on board in September 1999. They first selected 20 Basic Primary Schools and I was not a headteacher then, so I was not trained. Those who were selected were trained at UCC in October, 1999. (HeadTeacher).

The headteacher's mention of the year (1999) in which her District was selected for WSD implementation and training recalls the year in which,

according to Narrator One, the first 110 districts were selected to start WSD on pilot basis. This suggests that her District, the field chosen for the case study, was among the first 110 Districts selected for the pilot study.

A response from another headteacher suggests a confirmation about the piloting of WSD in some schools in selected districts before its extension to other districts:

> *I was posted here in 2001. By then the 'A' stream; we are in two streams – both A and B. But I head the B stream. But when I came, the A stream was on board already. So after two years or so we were also asked to go for a workshop. And it was there that I heard that there was something about Whole School Development process. And that our school was the last batch of teachers in the district, now the Municipality, which were being trained to come on board. But before that there were other schools in the Municipality which were already on board.* (Headteacher).

This headteacher went further to emphasise that teachers were given training and when I asked him to establish the contents of the training, he acted accordingly:

> *The teachers were prepared. They were given training; they were given adequate training; not training – adequate training.* (What kind of training were they given?) *They were given INSET, that is, how to prepare teaching-learning materials, how to teach, and how to go about their normal duties; lesson notes preparation – how to go about it. They were given all these training.* (HeadTeacher).

A further description of some of the contents of the training were given by another headteacher :

> *... they took us through some workshops, and they came out with some other instrumental supervising affairs, supervising the teachers in the classroom and also teachers and their work; some of which were recordings of lessons delivered by teachers. The teachers themselves had some forms which they had to fill in, in the course of their work.*

Headteachers also had theirs to fill. And then the supervisors also had theirs to fill. All aimed at improving the teaching and learning situation.... But certainly, we had been taken through several workshops. Teachers and headteachers in the district. (HeadTeacher).

The headteacher went further to describe some instruments that were introduced to them:

Some of the instruments, let me give examples; something like checking teachers attendance as well as preparation of teachers' lessons. So that if you even go to some office of some hardworking headmasters you'll see examples. My office for example ... you even see the one for checking the attendance of teachers. All these were introduced by the Whole School Development programme. (HeadTeacher).

In a group interview of teachers, one of them pointed out that they were introduced to techniques about the teaching of numeracy, literacy and problem solving:

I attended a workshop at Cape Coast when I was there. That one, it was about Whole School Development Project; if I remember very well. We were taken through numeracy, literacy and problem solving. So that's a little I know about the Whole School Development project.... (Teacher).

In another group interview of teachers, one of them mentioned that they were taken through some topics they found difficult to teach and were introduced to the acquisition, preparation and use of teaching-learning materials.

Some of the difficult topics that were difficult to teach at the primary level, we were taken through those topics. And some of the teaching and learning materials that we were supposed to use, we were made aware how to come by them and how to prepare lessons with them. (Teachers).

Summary of accounts from CSs, headteachers, teachers and community members

According to the CSs, headteachers, teachers and community members, they were sensitised and training was given to all those who were to be involved in the process of implementation. Piloting was done with some selected schools. Responses from them indicate that there have been tremendous benefits from the implementation of WSD. In particular, community members have expressed their realisation of the role they need to play in the organisation and administration of their schools.

4.3 Reconciling the accounts from the policy making and implementation levels

A critical examination of the accounts reveals that they are not irreconcilable. There is an intimate connection between them and responses unique to each one may be regarded as supplementary information rather than a misrepresentation, a variance or a cause for alarm for the existence of inconsistencies in the narratives. The fact is, in view of the varied roles played by each of them, one or the other may have had access to information or had experiences that the other(s) did not have. Besides, each of them delivered accounts they could recall or found necessary to report during the interview.

When pieced together, the accounts reveal that Ghana was seeking to address its education system through a process of decentralisation by enhancing the role of the regional and district offices of the GES with the involvement and active participation of local communities in education provision. Various development partners including the World Bank, Britain (DFID), Germany (GTZ and KfW) and the United States (USAID) had come to assist in the form of specific initiatives such as Junior Secondary Teacher Education Programme (JUSTEP), Integrated School Development Process (ISDP) and Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPS). However, it was realised that the numerous and varied assistance being offered were disjointed. Consequently, effort was made to piece them together through collaborative meetings of

consultants, the development partners and personnel from the MoE and the GES. This effort culminated in the emergence of WSD.

Now, when WSD emerged, it did not have a concept note. As a result, the Ghana government sought the assistance of the British government to provide a consultant who would assist in developing one for it. The assistance was offered and when the consultant arrived, the concept note "Whole School Development" emerged through brainstorming with personnel from the GES and MoE taking into account the aims, structures, strategies and processes, the intended outcomes of the reforms that were being sought in education at that time as well as experiences on the implementation of WSD in other countries such as Australia and South Africa.

Unlike most previous education reforms which encountered numerous problems and therefore became ephemeral in their activities and/or entered into oblivion, WSD was intended to be a process and to triumph over all odds. Consequently, structures, systems and processes were developed to ensure its success. The various stakeholders at the implementation level were sensitised. Piloting was done with 110 districts which were categorised in terms of their capacity for management. Systems such as DTSTs, SMCs, SPAMs and DEMTs were developed and various training programmes organised for capacity building.

Mechanisms were also put in place at the school and district levels to ensure efficient and effective allocation of resources and to guard against abuses such as embezzlement and misappropriation of funds. The mechanisms included the involvement of SMCs in their schools' acquisition and utilisation of CG in a transparent manner and the development of strategies by the funding body of WSD, namely DFID, in collaboration with the WSD Team (which was based in Ghana) for providing support in a manner whereby moneys went directly to districts and subsequently to schools. Incentive packages were instituted for schools in rural and deprived areas so as to minimise structural problems such as lack of accommodation for teachers and lack of electricity and accessible roads which usually militate against successful implementation of educational

reforms in such areas. In addition, monitors came from DFID to ascertain developments regarding the implementation process.

In short, efforts were made to ensure that there were requisite structures, systems, strategies and adequate timescale for the commencement and progress of the implementation process and to ensure that contextual socio-economic factors that were likely to militate against the successful implementation of WSD were put under control in order to ensure greater realism into whatever was proposed.

4.4 Discussion

WSD in Ghana emerged from the desire of the state to improve education delivery and administration in the country. Out of this desire, the support of the British government was sought. The support came for two major reasons. First, to respond to the universal call for free and compulsory basic education as embodied in the Jomtien Conference of 1990 which set a challenging agenda about 'Education for All' as well as in the targets for the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and, second, to motivate the implementation of decentralisation in Ghana.

The call for free and compulsory basic education has compelled governments and donors to reassess their policies and strategies on delivering aid. The reassessment has favoured the granting of aid to countries that embark on decentralisation. As a result, many developing countries including Ghana have embarked upon sector reform programmes, usually in the context of rolling out national policies on decentralisation. Communities have been empowered and there have been increased levels of local ownership (Dunne *et al*, 2007). Thus the granting of support to Ghana to enhance its quality of education through WSD came with the desire to bark the country's decentralisation process by strengthening the empowerment of local communities to manage their schools. In fact, one other policy maker interviewed electronically emphasised this point when he was asked to relate how the whole idea of WSD started in Ghana: *It was based on the belief that centrally driven education sector reform in Ghana had had mixed results and*

that by empowering local communities through funding schools directly might achieve better outcomes. WSD was conceived as the means of providing school communities with the capacity to manage their own development. (Policy maker involved in the policy making process of WSD in Ghana. Response to electronic interview).

Thus at the heart of WSD was the concept of decentralisation of which community involvement was to play an important role. Here, community involvement corresponds to global discourses concerning choice, consumerism and accountability and pledges empowerment and bottom-up change (Pryor, 2005). However, this desire for decentralisation appears largely to have been identified and/or encouraged by those in authority in Ghana at the headquarters of the MoE and the GES who were aware of the global discourse surrounding this and the possibilities of international funding for such reforms. Hence, it appears the embracement of decentralisation in Ghana was a very top-down attempt to deliver bottom-up approaches to educational delivery, financing and decision-making, as implicit in the following responses about the purpose of WSD in Ghana:

> *We wanted to build the capacity at the district and school level to enable the districts to eventually take over the responsibility of providing quality education. In other words, moving from the central provision of service delivery to a decentralised provision of service delivery* (Narrator Two).

> *.... we were looking at ... Performance Management of Non-teaching Personnel, and performance of teaching personnel, trying to improve quality, also getting parents and community leaders involved, working with assemblies....* (Narrator Two).

> *Poor performance of schools, lack of ownership in the national reform programme* [and] *lack of accountability* [were the reasons for the introduction of WSD]. (Policy maker involved in the WSD policy making process in Ghana. Response to electronic interview).

All the above responses came from people within a group of the development partners and not from Ghanaians. Yet, it is interesting to note that the idea of WSD came from Ghanaians and not from a member of the development partners or from any external source. Interesting because education reforms in Ghana have usually been engineered by external bodies such as the World Bank. Such reforms eventually fail because they are not driven by the needs and aspirations of the local populace (Dei, 2004). As will be noted in later chapters, one respondent remarked passionately that WSD has made tremendous successes and left indelible impressions in Ghana because it responds favourably to the wishes of the country. This passionate remark corresponds to Fullan's argument that the reasons for the failure of most educational reforms extend beyond the identification of specific technical problems (1991: 34). In presenting this argument, Fullan backs Wise's (1977) remark that policy-makers are frequently 'hyper-rational' and advises that:

> *Innovators need to be open to the realities of others: sometimes because the ideas of others will lead to alterations for the better in the direction of change, and sometimes the others' realities will expose the problems of implementation that must be addressed and at the very least will indicate where one should start* (Fullan, 1991: 34).

For Fullan then, deliberations between donors and donor recipients are necessary in reforms of this kind. However, it appears the World Bank was a bit dictatorial in this regard because with the Sector-Wide Approach to Education that preceded WSD, it *was very much dictated by the World Bank. Although they see themselves as the donors of last resort it was hugely the people who tended to dictate the way the things went* (Narrator Three).

The last statement: *"Although they see themselves as the donors of last resort it was hugely the people who tended to dictate the way the things went"* suggests that for Narrator Three, issues of this nature require unanimity because it is the recipients who hold the key to the success or failure of intended outcomes of reforms introduced by donors.

Thus, an interesting point as indicated by Taylor *et al* (1997) is that it is important to locate decisions on education within the context of pertinent

questions regarding not only the purpose of education, but also who it is meant for and who is responsible for making such decisions. After all, policy is not merely a product - a statement of intentions and practices or values that are designed to bring about desired goals and are therefore to be followed. Policy is also a process – the ability to operationalise the values. 'Values' here refers to individual values, - the beliefs and principles that individuals cherish and which help to understand the world and provide a moral guide to shaping actions and responses to the environment (Begley, 2004). The fact that policy is a process means that values do not operate freely in the environment from which they originate. Instead, they undergo constant shaping, formulation and re-formulation through conflict, contestation, negotiation and compromise. In the process, actors with access to resources to power decisively shape the policy development. 'Power' is used here to refer to a resource that can be deployed in a particular context. Hence, it is not only the donors or development partners who have the financial resource who can shape education policy. The recipients can also shape the development of policy decisively and thus make it work or fail depending on their beliefs, principles, needs and aspirations. Therefore "it seems more appropriate to talk of policies as having 'effects' rather than 'outcomes' (Bowe *et al*, 1992: 23).

Another interesting point relates to problems that emerged at the policy making stage. According to Narrator Three, some donors did not feel comfortable about the funding procedures for WSD, that is, putting all the money in the coffers of the MoE because that was going to make it difficult to track the amount and the impact of the contribution each donor partner was making. Secondly, in terms of the control of WSD and its funding, there was confusion over who should control WSD and its funds – whether GES or MoE. This is a manifestation of the fact that policy making entails a political process in which competing groups, interests and ideologies struggle over the shape of policy (Trowler, 2003).

Yet another interesting point relates to the origin of the concept note - Whole School Development. When WSD emerged, it was like a baby that had just been delivered and did not have a name (in this case, a concept note). Therefore the Ghana government sought the assistance of the British

government to provide a consultant who would assist in developing one for it: *"Now when we were thinking of how to develop education, we had to ask the DFID to provide us with a consultant from the UK, who will help us to design a concept note...."* (Narrator One). The assistance was offered and the consultant came. *"So when he came, he brought the idea: Integrated School Development Process...."* (Narrator One).

But as in many cultures where it is believed that the (type of) name given to a child can influence its personality development, so it was believed in this educational initiative that the kind of concept note it would bear could influence the intended outcome: *"We didn't want to call it Integrated School Development because that was already being at the complex"* (Narrator Two). By the use of the phrase "already being at the complex", Narrator Two probably meant that the system of Integrated School Development was already creating problems because hitherto the disjointed activities of the development partners were not yielding the expected results and they were battling with how to get the activities pieced together for purposes of yielding something more beneficial. And *"we didn't want to call it just Resource and Performance Management because that wasn't all"* (Narrator Two). "That wasn't all" because in addition to engaging in Resource and Performance Management there was the zeal to move from a centralised system of educational management, delivery and financing to a decentralised system that involves managing, delivering and financing schools through the districts with the involvement of the local communities. Consequently, scouting and brainstorming with the assistance of the consultant became necessary: *"So we had to look round and brainstorm together with the help of this consultant ... for us to come out with* [a concept note]*"* (Narrator One).

It appears the consultant eventually concentrated his attention on the system of Integrated School Development in order to establish a concept note with the team because *"from this Integrated School Development ... he helped ... to design one concept note similar to what had happened in South Africa"* (Narrator One). Thus, he ensured that the aims, structures, strategies, processes and the intended outcomes that were being sought in education at that time had been taken into account. In addition, experiences were drawn

from the implementation of WSD in other countries such as South Africa and Australia: *"... he helped us to design one concept note similar to what had happened in South Africa. And there was also at the same time, a Whole School Development programme in Australia. So we borrowed from all these because we were concerned with improving the management and administration of education, and the quality of education in our schools. Because performance of pupils had reached its lowest ebb; teachers output of work was too terrible – too bad. Teachers were simply not working. We needed something that would revamp the enthusiasm and the commitment of teachers"* (Narrator One). "[So] *we were trying to get a name and this name* [Whole School Development] *evolved at the meeting. It may have been the first time it was ever used. But I know it has been used extensively across different countries* (Narrator Two). So the concept note – WSD – has its origins from the context of influence (Bowe *et al*, 1992) and to get a fuller understanding of the context, a relationship was drawn between the current policy and the previous policy experience by ascertaining the extent to which the current policy builds on, or breaks with, the previous policy experience (Taylor *et al*, 1997).

[The concept note] *may have been the first time it was ever used* [in Ghana]. *But I know it has been used extensively across different countries"* (Narrator Two). Thus, Ghana is not the first country to embark on WSD. Countries such as South Africa and Sri Lanka had already begun using it with similar, though not identical aims. In South Africa, WSD was aimed at achieving a systemic and targeted intervention programme that will work 'holistically' with schools at all levels to improve performance. In Sri Lanka, it centred on revision of textbooks, teacher development and decentralisation, as well as on the achievement of improvements in the quality of schools (Akyeampong, 2004). The goals for the implementation of WSD in both countries corresponded to the aims and objectives Ghana was seeking through the improvement of her education. It was therefore felt that 'Whole School Development' was an apt description of the educational initiative for which a concept note was being sought.

In a nutshell then, the concept note also did not emanate from a unilateral decision of the consultant or the development partners. Decisions on WSD were still at the 'initiation phase' and to ensure its success, there was the need to develop commitment towards the process by ensuring the active involvement of the participants (Fullan, 2001). So the concept note had to emerge through brainstorming with personnel from the GES.

Unlike other previous educational reforms such as the ADP of 1951, the Education Act of 1961 and the NSCE of 1974 (see Chapter 2) which encountered numerous problems and almost entered into oblivion, WSD was intended to be sustainable. Consequently, adequate timescale was allowed for the development of its policy and for the implementation itself to begin. The various stakeholders at the implementation level were sensitised and a range of structures, systems, strategies and processes developed to ensure its successful delivery. As articulated by Narrator Three: *It took a long time for the policy to be formulated. It took 2 years, I would say from '96 to '98. And then from '98 to 2000 it was put in a pilot programme and things like that, and then rolling it out.... So yes, there was a plan* (Narrator Three).

As noted by Fullan (2001), successful management of change does not end with meeting the criteria for success at the initiation phase. There are criteria to be met at the implementation phase as well: preparation of strategies and, where necessary, experimentation, as well as the development of sustainable commitment, the carrying of action plans, the checking of progress and the successful management of problems are all required. For Hopkins *et al* (1994) and Miles (1987), additional criteria such as responsibilities for orchestration/coordination, adequate and sustainable staff development and in-service support also need to be met. All these require adequate timescale.

However, Narrator Three remarked: *But I think there was then a political imperative to speed it up like all those things because some people felt the piloting of things is a donor thing; "We don't have time for that. The only way we actually implement things in our country is actually doing it country-wide and doing it quickly – big bang". Whereas the foreign partners would tend to say "let's do it slowly" ... the others would say "No!!"*

Any educational reform involves numerous stakeholders – makers, sponsors, deliverers and receivers of the reform. As a result, both the policy making and implementation processes are complex and sensitive. Fullan (2001), Miles (1987) and Hopkins *et al* (1994) therefore see the need for adequate timescale and preparation. Thus, in order to ensure the success of educational reforms, adequate time is required for training, establishment of requisite strategies, processes and structures and for the kind of consultation, collaboration, co-ordination and coherence needed for gaining the support and commitment of the stakeholders and for ensuring the kind of continuous review intended for resolving anomalies in the process. Narrator Three feels that this may not have happened. For him political expediency must have been allowed to take precedence over the requisite consultative, collaborative, co-ordinated and coherent approach required for the reform to succeed because he feels it must have been felt that giving adequate timeline for piloting and developing the necessary processes and structures was something donors were noted for but for which others did not have time. Therefore whereas the donors would want adequate timelines to ensure good preparation, he feels that there must have been pressure from the MoE and the GES for short circuited implementation time span. For him, in situations such as this, the donors have very little control and the reforms do not yield the expected result: *Now there was less control. I mean when there were projects, the projects were very much run by the donors - they were the USAID projects, the ODA projects - and it was very much manned by people who were coming from the UK. They were appointed there. They did the projects - 3 years, over ... and gone. No change!!* (Narrator Three)

He therefore felt a similar situation may have occurred in the case of WSD, albeit he was not there during the period of implementation and therefore could not tell what the dynamics were: *The whole idea about the Sector Investment Programme, the Sector-Wide Approach, was that money was put into the pot and so therefore the control was really in the hands of the Ministry and the GES. So while the donors would want to slow it down, quite likely the Ghanaian Ministries and that would say, "No, we wanna do this*

quickly". So I would think that. But I wasn't there when it was happening so I don't know what the dynamics were (Narrator Three).

The dynamics, as revealed by the other participants, were that apart from adequate timescale for the policy formulation and implementation, various strategies, structures, systems and processes were developed to ensure its successful delivery. For the purposes of financial management, DFID instituted special strategies in collaboration with the WSD Team in the funding process to check abuses. Within the strategy, they released money in tranches based on the needs and capacity of the WSD reform. The money was first deposited into the coffers of the Ministry of Education, who then gave part of it to the districts. But *"because the districts are starved with money"* (Narrator One*)* and for that matter by reason of fear of embezzlement and misappropriation, proposals and plans for WSD were streamlined: all divisions of GES converged with their plans *"and as one big team, chaired by the Whole School Development, we went through the plans to avoid duplication* [and to ensure that the proposals have implementation dates]" (Narrator One). Thereafter, the money was transferred from the Ministry of Education into the coffers of the Director-General who, in turn, released a memo (that had been submitted to him by the Director of Education for the implementation of the plans) to the WSD Team to confirm that the intended activities conformed to the plans before approval was given to enable the Director-General to release funds for the implementation. Activities that were not carried out for good reasons were rescheduled for another period. *"So it ensured that people could not toy with the money the way they wanted ...."* (Narrator One).

In addition, monitors came from DFID to ascertain developments on the implementation process. Obviously DFID would be interested in monitoring and ascertaining the impact of WSD because they had injected huge sums of money into it and yet were not realising the intended outcome. They had therefore developed a new strategy of providing support whereby moneys will go directly to districts and therefore to schools: *"they were sending huge sums of money to education but the money never reached education.... So they developed a new strategy of providing support direct to education in the district"* (Narrator One).

There were additional mechanisms to ensure that schools got the resources they required and had prioritised. These included the granting of CG to schools through the districts and the involvement of PTAs and SMCs in the acquisition and utilisation of the grants in a transparent manner.

Special consideration was given to the rural and deprived areas. Lack of resources in the rural areas obviously has impact on teachers and their work and this in turn impacts on the performance of learners. As a result, WSD made special provision for schools and teachers of the poor and deprived areas in the form of provision of incentive packages such as accommodation, radios and bicycles. Again, strict monitoring was instituted in order to ensure that the package went to the schools and teachers in these areas rather than their relatively advantaged counterparts.

One other check and balance that was instituted is in regard to the issuing of contracts for the provision of infrastructure to deprived districts. Schools were built in deprived areas and some degree of transparency was applied in this regard. Local communities were also made to act as watchdogs to assist the WSD Team to check abuse by contractors who had been granted the responsibility for erecting the school buildings.

Besides, studies were done in various districts and some 110 districts were chosen and categorised in terms of their capacity for management and additional training was given to all education staff of the chosen districts: *"after the initial study, we found that out of the then 110 districts, there were only 30 districts.... And this 30 districts were classified as Ready Districts – districts ready to be decentralised because they have the requisite personnel ... at the grass-root level, so that if you give them resources, they will be able to manage the resources with little supervision. But to ensure that they were not overwhelmed, we had to give them some management training* (Narrator One). *"... and ...* [we] *identified Unready Districts* [which needed close supervision. For example] *their money was being held by the region and based upon their plan, the region would supervise on how it was being used. And the District Support Teams were going in to support them to be able to manage those funds and everything"* [Narrator Two].

DEMTs were also created and given training. This training was intended to strengthen checks and balances on abuses: *we also had the District Education Management Team, which was for short called DEMT. This District Education Management Team, we took time also to give them training in terms of what they should look out for in the budget that will be presented by the districts, in terms of what checks they should put in place, in terms of how they can monitor to see whether they are on track* [etc] .... (Narrator One).

Furthermore, in-service training for teachers was instituted. There were two types: school-based and cluster-based and these have been described under the summary for Narrator One.

In fact, "*all manner of ... [personnel] – from the administrative to the classroom teachers – were ... given new orientation in terms of administration, in terms of management and all the other logistics which would enable them to do their work better.... We had to provide in-service training to directors at all levels, whether the district or the region; then circuit supervisors, then auditors, accountants* [and] *headteachers....*" (Narrator One).

WSD was committed to ensuring a strong internal and external accountability in educational delivery, financing and management. Therefore to pilot districts, categorise them in terms of their capacity for management and to train all their education staff and ensure that other necessary mechanisms were established were all strategies of strengthening the internal and external accountability of the districts. Besides, selecting twenty schools from each of the districts chosen for the piloting phase and developing mechanisms to ensure that these schools get the resources they require and have prioritised and, also, involving PTAs and SMCs in the acquisition and appropriate use of grants in a transparent manner by the schools with the supervision of the districts and the WSD Team were all strategies for strengthening internal and external accountability.

Elmore provides a useful definition of internal and external accountability and the definition helps to understand what WSD was aiming at in terms of accountability: "systems that hold learners, schools or districts responsible for academic performance ...." (2004: 90). Thus to ensure the establishment of

both internal and external accountability, teachers, together with community members were to be responsible for internal accountability in schools. For example, SMCs and SPAMs were established and schools were to be responsible for the request and use of their capitation grant in consultation with the SMC. The districts (now called municipalities) together with their CSs were then to exercise external responsibility on schools through supervision and guidance. The municipalities in turn received external accountability control from the GES and the WSD Team, and the GES and WSD Team were also accountable to the DFID. Therefore setting clear expectations and tasks in schools and districts and monitoring them; putting systems in place for schools, communities and districts to perform the tasks and for monitoring to take place; and expecting that on the basis of the defined tasks and systems, strategies would be developed to help schools to improve quality of education and to ensure external accountability such as meeting external demands of examinations, were all ways of instilling a sense of responsibility particularly in schools, communities and districts in order to improve the quality of education in schools.

And as argued by Elmore, "the practice of improvement requires a culture of coherence and accountability" (2004: 127). Thus, improvement in the quality of education involves improvement in the quality of management, and this in turn involves improvement in the quality of accountability. All these call for a common purpose among those who provide education and those who deliver and those who receive, with explicitly stated, mutually agreed and understood responsibilities and lines of cooperation and accountability. In any case, it may happen that not all participants would yield to mutual agreement because as mentioned earlier in the literature review, change will advance or enhance the position of certain groups and disadvantage or damage the position of others; self interests of some people will be threatened because the established identities of these groups may be undermined; and vested interests could also be under threat because reforms involve the redistribution of resources, the restructuring of job allocation and redirection of lines of information flow. For this reason, there is the difficulty of achieving success with everyone. Besides, putting accountability systems in schools in difficult circumstances

without considering their underlying problems poses further problems to such schools, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters. However, the point being stressed here with regard to Elmond's argument is that a culture of coherence and accountability is required for improvement practices and WSD aimed at that.

Summary and conclusion

WSD in Ghana originated from the amalgamation of the efforts of the various donor agencies that were supporting the country to improve its quality of, and access to, education at the basic education level. It centred on a policy of decentralisation and aimed to enhance management and administrative practices, ensure a sense of accountability, purpose and commitment particularly at the district and school levels and to involve local community participation in education delivery and financing with direct funding to schools through their districts. The purpose was to build a strong organisational capacity for good leadership and constructive management that would ensure this accountability and a sense of purpose as well as a sense of responsibility, commitment and professionalism for the improvement of educational quality. Hence, the establishment of the various structures, systems and processes to ensure its successful implementation and institutionalisation.

CHAPTER 5

CHALLENGES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND THE OFFIAL ENDING OF WSD

Introduction

How policy is created - the mobilisation of forces for change – is crucially important, but so too is the frequently overlooked question of what happens to policy reforms once they enter the realm of individual institutions (Gilborn, 1994: 147).

The quotation above draws attention to the need to conceptualise policy as both a product and a process because policy making does not end at the point of its formulation; it continues even at the implementation phase. And it is implicit in the quotation that it is extremely important to pay attention to the human factor and/or local conditions, as well as requisite strategies, systems and structures for implementation when making a policy. However, this consideration is not sufficient to guarantee the successful implementation of policy and therefore anticipations of what will happen when policy reaches the various implementation levels should not be left out of consideration. As argued by Trowler "Local conditions have very important effects on whether a policy 'works' or not and can often result in unintended consequences" (Trowler: 2003: 42). With the WSD, there were laudable aims and objectives for its introduction and the various key and interactive factors that affect its implementation were given careful consideration and the necessary preparations made to ensure its successful implementation and institutionalisation. Notwithstanding that problems were encountered during the piloting phase and thereafter, thus, resulting in its official ending.

In this chapter, I analyse the problems that were faced during the implementation of WSD and explain why WSD was officially ended. I have put the problems under the following key headings: lack of commitment; lack of cooperation between District Assemblies, District Chief Executives (DCEs)

and District Education Directors (DEDs); lack of cooperation relating to politics of the DCEs; lack of cooperation between the School Management Committees (SMCs) and headteachers; misappropriation of funds; lack of transparency about the use of school funds by headteachers; friction arising from categorisation of Districts into 'Ready' and 'Unready'; difficulties relating to donor support; problems relating to flow of funds; lack of vernacular textbooks; lack of parental responsibility; and constraining factors in the rural areas.

5.1 Lack of commitment

The development of sustainable commitment is essential for successful implementation of change (Fullan, 2001). However, responses from both the implementation and policy making levels indicate that problems of lack of commitment militated against the implementation of WSD. For example, at the implementation level, the DED and a CS made the following remarks when relating the kind of problems they encountered:

> *The negatives came up because when they were doing the implementation, when we called the community meetings - the SMC meetings - they had to meet and all that. And they were given some token. You see, because it was funded externally that these things came in. Then when it faded off and ... we have taken it on board, obviously the funding will not be like it used to be. And somewhere along the line, we thought that it was like because of the token that was given that was why they were participating. But in actual fact, the essence was that you take it like it is yours. So that if your child is going to school and you have to go and talk to the teacher about the performance of the child, you don't need a token to go and do that. So when we started withdrawing some of these things. Then the notion came out that, "Oh after all, what do I gain?" You see? That was the problem that we started facing.* (DED).

> *The problem ... was, initially the community members were fully involved. And later when they saw that they were not being paid, or let*

me say incentives were not being provided for them, some started
getting away from the project and it came to a time the Assembly had
to also come in with some funds in order to complete the project. (CS).

As inferred from the responses above, there was active community participation at the initial stages because tokens were being offered for motivation. Tokens were necessary at the initial stages of the implementation because as noted by Fullan (1993) and Miles (1987), one of the factors required for success at the phase of implementation of change is the offering of rewards early in the process. However, when the tokens ceased coming, the participation dwindled. In effect, there was lack of a sense of ownership from the community. But not only that. Teachers also exhibited a lack of commitment. This was revealed by the DED:

Initially, the teachers were ... trained in a whole lot of lessons - how to
prepare lessons. how to fill the general form, how to do this, how to
do that. They thought that it was an extra work.... But well this is
human nature because any other thing that will come, this is how they
will look at it. But at the end of the day, those who were keen to use
the concept felt that yes, it was good for them because they saw the
change in their pupils' attitude to learning and to general
performance. So it was OK. (DED).

There were accounts from the policy making level as well. According to Narrator One, the key problem they faced at the initial stages of the implementation process was lack of commitment on the part of the DEDs. He explained that this kind of problem usually stems from the age at which people gain promotion to higher positions in the field of education in Ghana and the meagre salaries they have to grapple with despite the promotion:

One of the greatest weaknesses that we had was commitment on the
part of district directors. You see, the sad thing about educational
management in this country is that people are promoted not on the
basis of competence but on the basis of how long they have served.
Salaries are poor; weak. And people come into managerial positions
where resources are put at their disposal at a ripe age – when they are

about retiring. Tell me, "I have barely a maximum of three years to retire. I have no place to lay my head. My pension itself will not be able to pay for one room of my own. And it will not rent a place for me to live with my family for any length of time. Would I engage my faculties in improving education at the expense of improving myself?" [He directs the question to me]: *You have to answer the question, I can't answer it!!* [He continued]: *Alright. So because of that people, you know, some directors did all sorts of clandestine things. Alright? And the Whole School Development Team would have to be up and doing in order to match this thing* (Narrator One).

For Narrator One, the fact that promotion to managerial positions is based on experience rather than on competence creates room for all kinds of abuse including embezzlement, particularly by those promoted on experience at an age they are about to retire because they would like to enrich themselves before they go on retirement. He indicates that this problem persisted even at the time of the implementation of WSD and they had to find a means of counteracting it. While relating a further problem, he explained that people were able to abuse the system with impunity because there was virtually no punishment for this:

> *The other weakness of the system was that until the Whole School Development came, nobody was interested in punishment. We had a code of discipline alright. But if an accountant misbehaved in this district and mismanaged some funds, instead of disciplining him, getting him to pay for the money, and probably even sacking him, the mere punitive measure that was given him was transferring him to another district to go and continue his mismanagement of the resources* (Narrator One).

Now then, because the WSD Team were intent upon monitoring and checking abuses, people did not want to be in positions where their clandestine activities including embezzlement of funds could be monitored and checked and this, according to Narrator One, is what created the problem of lack of commitment:

So because of that it was very difficult to get people to do the work, until we insisted, "O.K. fine, if we audit your account and you have mismanaged the moneys, no money will be sent to you and your district assembly will be informed: as a result of your mismanagement of funds, we are not sending you any money until the district can resolve that and make sure that the money is retrieved and used for the purpose of education" (Narrator One)

Thus, to motivate people to be committed, the above assurance was given and this must have spurred others into accepting management positions being offered by the WSD Team. However, Narrator One still feels abuses of all forms must have occurred:

But again the district personnel themselves are human beings. So you can imagine what sometimes happened. (Narrator One)

Thus, the assurance of refusal of the WSD Team to send money to the district being managed by a DED who has mismanaged funds of the district was probably no punishment to the district personnel. So misappropriation and/or embezzlement of funds was/were inevitable.

WSD aimed at building strong organisational capacity at the district and school levels and this required, *inter alia*, a sense of purpose, responsibility, commitment, professionalism and mindsets that would support hard work and instil competence and confidence in DEDs, CSs, headteachers, teachers and local communities. Unfortunately, contrary to progressive reformers' belief that "good ideas would travel of their own volition" (Elmore, 1995: 18), this was not proving to be the case. Thus, a lack of a sense of commitment, ownership, discipline and responsibility was an impediment to the achievement of these aims and objectives of WSD.

5.2 Lack of cooperation between District Assemblies, DCEs and DEDs

Again, Narrator One articulated problems of lack of cooperation between District Assemblies, DEDs and DCEs:

Then the other problem we encountered was the lack of cooperation between the district assembly, the district chief executive and the district directors. And the reason was very simple. You see, education had taken the giant step of decentralising and sending resources direct to the district director. Even though the whole nation was talking about decentralisation and that the district assemblies were going to be decentralised, they had not. The district assemblies themselves were still centralised.

Commitment to decentralised policies contributes to successful implementation of reforms (Hoppers, 1998; Thijs and van den Berg, 2002; World Bank, 2005 and 2006) and rigid centralisation does not auger well for educational reforms (Jessop and Penny, 1998). As mentioned by Narrator One, the lack of cooperation stemmed from the fact that decentralisation had not yet taken a giant step in the country and so the District Assemblies were still enjoying a high degree of centralisation. Consequently, some DCEs in charge of the District Assemblies would not allow the District Directors who were merely in charge of education in the district to take control over the management of funds:

So there were rifts between the district directors and the district chief executives. Some district chief executives took over control of the moneys. They did their awarding of the contracts etc in order to get their 10% (Narrator One).

The expression - *they did their awarding of the contracts in order to get their 10%* - was used as a metaphorical expression for the DCEs' monopoly over the award of contracts with the intention of pocketing a percentage of the allocated funds. Obviously, the DEDs would not be happy with this and so friction between them and the District Chief Executives was inevitable. The WSD Team had to step in:

And that was where I had a problem. Because when I go, I say, "Mr District Chief Executive, I'm sorry. It is true that education is under you. But this money that has come is not for the local government; it's for the Ministry of Education. And it has to be accounted for at the

central level. To ensure that government funds are not misused, that is why you are brought in. And to ensure that there is a fair distribution of these things, that's why you come in. Supervise how it is done but it is not for you to do it". And they don't understand (Narrator One).

So the intervention of the WSD Team about the abuse of funds in turn resulted in rifts between them and the DCEs. In Ghana, DCEs usually have strong political affiliations with the reigning government and therefore dealing with DCEs over sensitive issues such as this could produce uncomfortable repercussions:

> *before you get to Accra* [or before you realise] *they will politicise it and your name will go to high political offices and they will be thinking of how to kick you out* (Narrator One).

However, the WSD Team somehow succeeded in counteracting this because they had the backing of DFID:

> *If we didn't have the DFID behind us, ensuring that we were actually doing our work, there was no way we could have succeeded because we were accountable to the DFID. So any action that we took we had to report ...* (Narrator One).

It is becoming apparent that WSD was operating on a challenging terrain. And like an earthquake zone, this challenging terrain has many cracks, fissures and fault lines. Any reform which disadvantage or damage the position of certain groups by making them lose their personal gains and self interests is likely to face opposition and result in friction. For sure, tremors will occur as people look for the least opportunity to maintain the status quo in order to retain their gains and self interests and as checks and balances are being applied to counteract this. It was therefore not surprising that when other problems – difficulties relating to donor support and flow of funds emerged – the situation of WSD became precarious. These problems will be elucidated later. In the interim, other problems need looking at.

5.3 Lack of cooperation relating to politics of the DCEs

Narrator One articulated problems of lack of cooperation relating to politics of the DCEs. As mentioned in the previous chapter, contracts were awarded for construction of schools/classrooms in deprived areas and a high degree of transparency was applied in order to avoid abuses. According to Narrator One, this generated tensions between the DEDs and the DCEs because the latter, for political reasons, wanted the schools to be built in particular localities:

> *Now even in the award of the contract, we had problems with the district chief executives and the district directors. In some districts, they wanted the schools to go to some communities for political reasons. Even when the communities already had, they wanted to add more. But we said, "No way, no way. We wouldn't take that!!" There was one district for example where they manipulated it so much that when they complained, we had to go and to re-do the bidding and examination. We had to go round to all the school communities and to interview the people and to see for ourselves which schools actually needed the buildings and we did the allocation ourselves ... because the District Chief Executive and the District Director had come into locked horns. The district director is saying that "Look, this school needs the thing." But for political reasons, [the DCE would say] "No; it must go here." So we say "No way!! We have come to survey the thing and this is the list of communities that we think really deserve the schools. So award the contract to the contractors to build in those schools and we are coming round to monitor until, you know [it is done]" (Narrator One).*

Dunne *et al* (2007) noted from their wide-ranging international study of the impact of decentralisation on school processes, local governance and community participation that there was often a feeling of disinclination throughout government systems to devolve decision-making to lower levels. Various reasons account for this and one of them is the reluctance of people in managerial positions to relinquish their posts because of the fear of losing personal gains. Obviously, change processes will advance or enhance the

position of certain groups and disadvantage or damage the position of others. Self interests of some people will be threatened because the established identities of these groups may be undermined. Vested interests could also be under threat because reforms involve the redistribution of resources, the restructuring of job allocation and redirection of lines of information flow. Therefore it is not surprising that the above rifts and lack of cooperation occurred in the implementation process of WSD.

5.4 Lack of cooperation between School Management Committees (SMCs) and headteachers

Narrator Two also mentioned the problem of lack of cooperation but, this time, between SMCs and headteachers. He made reference to Akyeampong's (2004) study of WSD:

> *Kwesi* [rather Kwame] *Akyeampong did a particular study and it was very interesting. One of the comments ... was that the SMCs were trying to interfere and causing problems and everything. And this was causing all sorts of problems: disruptions at school and everything ... and the headteachers were not prepared to share; they did not want them* [the SMCs] *to be making decisions. So that was addressed* (Narrator Two).

The problem being referred to by Narrator Two was encountered at the school and local community levels. It relates to the relationship that the SMCs and headteachers had to enter into in order to ensure transparency and accountability during the WSD implementation. Sayed *et al* (2000) and Akyeampong (2004) allude to this in their study of WSD (in Ghana). In the case of Sayed *et al*, who studied how WSD had impacted on some 20 schools in the Cape Coast municipality, they realised that headteachers were struggling to come to terms with the establishment of transparency and accountability with the SMCs. Akyeampong also makes reference to this in his work and says it was a teething problem. This problem, as mentioned by Narrator Two, was addressed.

In any case the problem of lack of cooperation between SMCs and headteachers has its origins in a historical fact, which is, in the past there was a narrow and limited focus on community participation and involvement in school governance and funding. The focus was on parental involvement and parents paid user fees and mobilised themselves for the collection of community funds. With the emergence of WSD, the focus on parental involvement was expanded. SMCs have now been created in order to improve school-community communication and to provide schools and communities some power for decision making over matters such as finance - Capitation Grant (CG) - which normally resided with large bureaucratic institutions such as regional and state educational institutions responsible for education oversight and policy directions. This time, SMCs, headteachers and teachers had to enter into a new relationship in which they were to collaborate in school governance and in securing funds - CG - for the school in order to ensure transparency and accountability. This new relationship was something that the headteachers were finding difficult to come to terms with. Hence, the allegations about the SMCs.

5.5 Lack of transparency about the use of school funds by headteachers

Narrator One also mentioned issues of lack of transparency on the part of headteachers:

> *Sometimes some of the headteachers too would hide the receipt of the moneys from the teachers until you go there to some of the teachers and you ask.* [When you go] *you ask the headteacher to go aside, to go away. And you take the teachers aside* [and you ask them]: *"How much did you receive this term for Whole School Development?"* [They would say], *"We have not received anything". And then you know straight away that* [there is something fishy going on]. *Then you call the headteacher after you have interviewed the teachers and they have given you this thing* [this information]. *Where there is transparency in the school, you know exactly. The moment you ask the teachers, they will be telling you how much they have received;*

they will be able to tell you what allocations they have made for different classes etc. But where there is no transparency, you ask the question and is a kind of: "What is this man asking about? Is there any moneys at all; have we received any money? No; we have not." Alright, sometimes the headteacher must have teamed with one of the teachers. Then you see that teacher saying: "Ee..mm yes; we have received so, so and so." And the others would say, "Ah! how come you alone know it?" Then you see where the problem is coming from and then we try to find ways of resolving it. (Narrator One).

To summarise, according to Narrator One there were cases of lack of accountability and transparency on the part of some headteachers. However, once again, the WSD Team found a means of resolving this problem:

Sometimes we demote the headteachers and get other new headteachers. Sometimes we transfer them away from the place to schools where the teachers are strong enough to be able to counteract his activities. (Policy Maker A)

The problem of lack of transparency about the use of school funds is probably one of the reasons why the headteachers were finding it difficult to come to terms with their new relationship with the SMCs about acting in collaboration in school governance in order to ensure transparency and accountability. If that is the case, then obviously a relationship of this nature is likely to arouse allegations of interference. Headteachers would not want to share and would not like the SMCs to be making decisions because this will undermine their positions and clandestine activities.

Misappropriation of funds by District Education Directors

Again, there were problems of misappropriation of funds meant for education by the DEDs. Narrator One recounts how this occurred. According to him, DEDs were expected to submit financial returns regarding all activities they had performed under the guidelines they had developed with the WSD Team. Such activities included capacity building training activities such as workshops for teachers, headteachers and CSs. Sometimes, due to poor

attendance, there could be excess funds which had to be returned to education coffers. However, instead of returning them,

District Directors will vie it for some other activity which they had planned, which was not within our budget. And the WSD Team would say, "No; no way!! We gave you this for this. And if you have done for this, we expect this money to be returned for us to re-prioritise it for its use. You have no right to use it". So we chase them up. There were instances where district directors even gave the moneys as loans to the district assembly, to secondary schools. Alright, you can see the pressure from the political end. If money meant for education in a district is now being loaned to a district assembly, you can see the political pressure. (Narrator One)

According to Narrator One, the WSD Team found a means of counteracting the problem of misappropriation and they received strong backing from the DFID who collaborated with them to institute a strategy to curb the abuses:

So well, we had to cope with some of these things and negotiate with them. Sometimes we had to use force and how do we apply our force? We refuse to send further funds to the district. We just write to tell the district plainly: "For this and this reason, further release of funds to this district is suspended until they can account for the earlier moneys given them or until they can return the balance." Full stop!! And that didn't need the Director-General. If it was to be the Director-General, people could easily use politics to pressure him. So it was left in the office of the Whole School Development. So I just write the letter, take it to the DFID, give them a copy and then get the Director-General to sign it and then give them [DFID] a copy and then we just dispatch it. You come to the Director-General and he tells you: "Go and see the Whole School Development." When you come, I show you the DFID copy: "So go there and resolve it!!" If you can go to the DFID and resolve it, fair enough. You go to DFID, they tell you: "Go to Whole School Development and resolve it, or go to the Director-General and resolve it. If you can't resolve it there, we are not releasing any

moneys here. And we release moneys based on returns that have come from the district that we see". Sometimes the DFID is also able to put bricks by saying that "Because this particular district has not sent returns or this particular region has not sent returns, we are not releasing the money for the whole country." Then this forces the people to ensure that, "Hey, if we joke, we are going to be disgraced." Because we will write to your district assembly and say, "Because you have done this, this, this and this, the whole nation is being denied." Who would want to be publicised in this? So we were able to get some of our way but as usual, these problems are more of galore, you can't talk of them all. (Narrator One)

Signs were that WSD and its Team were playing on dangerous grounds and were therefore hanging by a thread.

5.1 Friction arising from categorisation of districts into 'Ready' and 'Unready'

Again, friction arose from the mere categorisation of districts (that had been selected for piloting) into 'Ready Districts' and 'Unready Districts'. Narrator Two recounted this:

... a decision was taken to pilot [WSD]; decision was taken that money would be distributed to every district in the country. And to do that we identified what we call Ready Districts and identified Unready Districts. Later on another one came in which was Semi-ready. This was causing ... problems because people did not like being called ready and not ready. It also created some problems between development partners because some of the development partners didn't want that .... (Narrator Two)

WSD was piloted in some districts before it got filtered into other districts. From the piloting stage, districts were classified as Ready and Unready. Ready Districts were those ripe enough to be decentralised because they had the requisite personnel and capacity to manage resources appropriately with little supervision. Unready Districts lacked requisite personnel and capacity to

manage resources without close supervision. To be classified as Unready was probably quite demeaning. Hence, the displeasure exhibited towards such classification. The policy makers may have had a good reason for calling a district 'unready'. However, as argued by Bleiklie, policy is usually far from simply "the mechanical application of means [by policy engineers] in order to realise given ends" (2000: 55) because policy practitioners have vested interests in the meaning of policy and will interpret it according to their histories, experiences, values, purposes and interests. Therefore even though the policy makers may have had good intentions for calling a district 'unready', their action must have been considered unfair following interpretations and reinterpretations based on the values, experiences and purposes of the districts and development partners.

5.8 Difficulties relating to donor support

Quite apart from the above problems, there were difficulties relating to donor support for the WSD reform process. One of it relates to the manner in which development partners provided financial support. Narrator One related it when he was asked to name the international organisations that were involved in the WSD policy making and implementation process:

> *The Whole School Development was actually supported by the DFID. Occasionally, we had support from USAID. But USAID did not send money direct to the districts. There was also support from DANIDA and others. But these were not direct as the DFID support. You see, many development partners were supporting education through the national budget. The difficulty with that kind of support was that the money goes into the national budget and the Controller and Accountant-General now had the right to distribute the moneys according to how they think. So sometimes the money that was even meant to support education never came.*

> *The other secret that many people would not want us to mention is the hard fact that at a point in time, the national coffers itself was not adequate. And they were depending on this development partners*

support to support the budget. So any development partner support funding that went into the national budget may end up going to the wrong end; it will never come to education.... This is why one of the directors of the DFID said that he's wondering why in spite of the huge sums of money they are sending into education, no impact is being made. Alright, sadly yes; on paper they were sending huge sums of money to education but the money never reached education. So they developed a new strategy of providing support direct to education in the district. That is where the Whole Development came in handy to ensure that things were moving smoothly and that education was actually getting the budget. So DFID was providing 100%, I should say, of the moneys that were going to the districts (Narrator One).

In a nutshell, funds provided for the implementation of WSD were misappropriated. However, DFID realised this and took the necessary action with the WSD Team to counter the problem by directing funds direct to education. This must have incurred the displeasure of the state on whose land WSD was operating and, for that matter, in whose hands the key to the success of WSD lay. Thus, the situation of WSD and its team was becoming increasingly precarious. It looks as if the camel has been fully loaded and any more straw will break its back as problems about flow of funds surface.

5.9 Problems relating to flow of funds

The key problem that occurred was the flow of funds. Why? The agreement originally made was that DFID would disburse funds based on reports. January, February, March reports would release funds for the 4th quarter. So that would give it plenty of time for reportings to come in. DFID had been asked if GES could use some other funds to appoint a financial controller. His role/responsibility was to professionalise the finance department, identify people to be trained up, identify courses for accountants, for book keepers and so on and so forth at headquarters, regions and districts to get the training and also to identify somebody who ... will be able to take over from him.... We also had agreed that they could spend money on employing internal

auditor – professionalising the internal audit. We also agreed that they would bring in a professional person to pump the human resource division and draw up training manuals and identify training courses; identify what was the human resource needs and develop it up. And so there was professionalization of key services.... We had the condition that Ghana money would flow and there were a number of occasions when it had been pointed out that Ghana government had the responsibility to put their money in and make the funds flow and they did. And funds were flowing; things were happening. We disbursed, I think in 3 months, we got ... over £3m in activities (Narrator Two).

Thus, as explained by Narrator Two, DFID started funding the implementation of WSD and later Ghana contributed towards the funding process. Huge amounts of money therefore got injected into WSD. It was expected that with adequate funds flowing, hopes for positive advancement in the implementation process could be raised. But what happened was contrary to the expectation:

Now what happened? We get people retiring within the GES; we get new people coming in who are not as enthusiastic because it wasn't their idea but they did the job. You had different people within DFID who made certain decisions about funding flows. So they changed the reporting criteria. So they made it very, very difficult for the reports coming in because they shortened the time between the reports and release of funds. Where we had first month for the 4th quarter, it became something like one month for the next month. And so it tightened that; it became very, very tough. It could not be done. The reasons for this: some of the consultancy companies that had been employed on the finance side; the performance management side, they are doing the tremendous number of activities – developing the training sessions being held etc. Changes of Director-General, changes of various positions – they were no long coming in. And when the report went, they chose to say that they were leaving therefore they could not guarantee that there will be acceptable use of funds. This created a very, very big problem.... (Narrator Two).

In the words of Narrator Two, the key problem that arose after huge sums of money had been injected into WSD was the retirement of trained personnel in Ghana and new people taking their place as well as changes in personnel in DFID. Besides the changes in personnel in Ghana due to retirement, there were transfers of personnel against plans initiated by DFID with the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the WSD Team about decentralising educational decision-making to the district level:

Lots and lots of problems.... An agreement had been reached ... that nobody who had been trained and was part of a Ready District should be posted for (I think it was) 3 years. They had to remain in place. They could only be replaced with somebody who had already been trained. So a ready district would always be ready. Regions, districts, religious units, ignored the directives and reposted staff. People applied for transfer and they were given transfer. People moved!! So within a very short period of time a ready district could become an unready district.... They were creating problems because a ready district money was being sent down to the district to use, based on their plan. A non-ready district, the money was being held by the region and based upon their plan, the region would supervise on how it was being used.... (Narrator Two).

If Ready Districts were depleted immensely and unexpectedly through transfers and retirements, then obviously the chaos that occurred is not unimaginable. Certainly, efforts geared towards educational decentralisation were being hampered:

You could go as far as to say, it was coming back to a centralising to a certain extent. So for instance, districts were having to meet to do a planning under the guidance of the headquarters. It was necessary, initially, that process should continue.... They will come in to develop their plans. So District Education Planning Team is not functioning as it was intended. The intention was that schools would have School Improvement Planning Teams. Those planning teams would then work with their cluster arrangements to try and develop systems together.

The cluster arrangement plans ... were referred to the districts. They were then developed and districts plans taken all of those into account. That would then inform GES for the big spending plan and then they would inform the divisions on the support we had defined. That was the idea and that was started [Narrator Two].

Thus, although a decentralised policy was developed for capacity building training activities and school development in the districts for the implementation of WSD, it did not advance as expected:

However, what happened was, many of the districts, many of the schools, did not continue that planning process.... From my perspective they were not supportive of Whole School Development.... One of our policies which we had developed right from the word go with Whole School Development process was that only classrooms could be built or refurbished if they were part of the school plan and the district plan. And they would be scrutinised very, very carefully because the money was not intended to be used for building classrooms. In 2002/3 a decision was agreed between the Minister and DFID to focus funding on building classrooms.... For justifiable reasons, the money wasn't being spent. They were still sitting there. My argument was the disbursement mechanisms – the reporting mechanisms – were there but they didn't use it.... (Narrator Two).

For Narrator Two, rules, regulations and guidelines developed by DFID and the WSD Team were not adhered to. The idea of a decentralised policy intended for capacity building training activities and school development in the districts for the implementation of WSD did not advance as expected.

Signs were then developing that the Ministry of Education was withdrawing its support for WSD:

We had a situation being developed where there was less support for this.... From my perspective, they were not supportive of Whole School Development.... (Narrator Two).

What is more, there emerged, as Narrator Two has already recounted:

different people within DFID who made certain decisions about funding flow [and changed reporting criteria for funds by shortening the timescale between release of funds and submission of reports, thus making it difficult for funds to be released and, at length, when they received the reports which probably embodied request for further funds] *they chose to say that they were leaving therefore they could not guarantee that there will be acceptable use of funds. This created a very, very big problem....* (Narrator Two).

The worst thing happened when a new Director-General of Education was appointed:

Later on a new Director-General came in here. I wasn't here, but my understanding was that the Director-General in his negotiation with other people called some directors and told them Whole School Development was stopped. [Which year was that?] *I understand 2003.... So unfortunately the Whole School Development collapsed.... The unit was closed down....* [But] *all the systems that ... we had are still there. There are SMCs in place ... etc etc.*

Thus, with the retirement of the Ghanaian trained personnel and new people taking their place and also with the emergence of new DFID personnel, reporting and funding criteria as well as training activities for capacity building and school development plans in the districts were changed. This resulted in funding problems for the WSD implementation process. In particular, the GES tightened up release of funds from their end to the extent that disbursement of funds in the context of decentralisation began to be rendered a centralised activity. A GES status report about WSD notes malpractices about non-adherence to rules, regulations and guidelines which weakened the capacity that was built through WSD. In particular, the report makes reference to the mass transfer of DEDs and Accountants without consultation with WSD. This created a vacuum for capacity building intended for the sustainability of the initiatives developed through WSD (GES WSD Report, 2004). Thus, WSD did not get the support it needed. And what broke

the camel's back was its termination out by the prevailing government that took power from the government under whose regime it was introduced.

Apart from the human problems mentioned above, there were material ones. Among them was lack of vernacular textbooks.

5.10 Lack of vernacular textbooks

This problem was central to teachers' concerns. Studies conducted at the time of the implementation of WSD showed that the problem of lack of textbooks in schools was getting less acute. For example, a study by Sayed *et al* (2000) showed that the policy of decentralisation for the implementation of WSD appeared to have helped the improvement on the availability of textbooks in primary schools. And a similar evidence emerged from a World Bank impact evaluation on improvement of primary education in Ghana (2004). However, a sample of common views expressed by the participants for this study shows that there is a lack of vernacular textbooks, at least in the primary or Junior High Schools (JHSs) from which I conducted the research, and that this situation persisted even at the time of the implementation of WSD. One teacher of a school in a relatively urban area made the following comment during a focus group inteview:

> *On my part, I'm teaching Ghanaian Language but as at now the syllabus is there without any textbooks. And even I would have wished that the Ghanaian Language syllabus should have been written in the local languages because some of the terminologies in the syllabus are difficult to translate.... So they should have written it in the local languages.... And they should have made textbooks available to go in line with it.... I think taking the subject without textbooks I think is not easy.... (Teacher).*

In another school in a remote rural area, a teacher remarked that lack of vernacular textbooks was a major problem:

> *And the Fante language – Teaching of Fante, we don't have a single book for the teacher.... And we have to ask the children to buy, and it*

becomes a problem. Many of the children are not getting the money to buy and so the teaching doesn't go on at all. Sometimes the teacher has to write the passage on the blackboard for the children to read. Whereas if they have got the books, it would have helped us better. So we need books for the Ghana language. (A male teacher in a rural school)

Apparently this school faces problems with lack of textbooks in general because when the teachers were asked to indicate whether they have textbooks for other subjects, one lady teacher answered emphatically that they do not and added that the case of the vernacular textbooks is rather acute:

No!! The textbooks for the subjects are not sufficient. For English like this, they have to get enough so that it will be like a child to a book. Here is a case the books are not sufficient so you have about 3 people sharing a book. [So it's not Fante/Ghanaian language only?] *Yes. As for Ghanaian language they don't have the textbooks at all – yes, there are no textbooks at all. The other subjects they have it but not sufficient.*

Some headteachers also pointed out that they were lacking vernacular textbooks:

Textbooks are available (For all subjects?) *For all subjects; excluding Ghanaian language, which haven't come yet.* (Headdteacher).

Now even, the Fante we don't have Fante books ... but as for the Maths, English, Science, they have enough to use.... (Headteacher).

We do not have French teachers, we don't do French. And you have brought French books. We have a lot of teachers here who teach our local language, which is Fante. We don't have a single book here to teach Fante with. And you have brought plenty French books here. Look at them – lying down. We don't have any use for them. The school is not offering French. (Headteacher).

CSs also acknowledged the fact about lack of vernacular textbooks. For example:

> *As for textbooks, in fact,* [in our] *Municipality, we don't have problem with textbooks. Every school, there are enough textbooks, with the exception of the Fante textbooks.* (CS).

One of the interventions WSD focused on is child-centred learning practices in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving. This was a laudable intervention for it was aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning in basic schools. However, the success of interventions such as this depends on the availability of textbooks including Ghanaian language textbooks so long as the study of Ghanaian Languages in Ghanaian schools is regarded as an important subject and so long as emphasising the teaching and learning of Ghanaian languages in schools is a good approach to addressing the question of local educational relevance (Dei, 2004). If there are adequate textbooks for other subjects but inadequate or lack of Ghanaian language textbooks, then it seems Ghana's linguistic cultural resource base is being put at risk of getting undervalued and under-utilised.

5.11 Lack of parental responsibility

Concerns were also expressed about lack of parental responsibility. Many participants spoke of lack of parental responsibilities in terms of ensuring the educational and physical needs of their children, provision of stationery and school uniform for the kids, ensuring their children's regular attendance at school and monitoring their homework and their academic progress and behavioural development through regular contact with teachers. Below is a sample of the comments:

> *The community are not helping in the sense that they know what they are supposed to give to their children when they are coming to school. And some, they don't care.* (Teacher).

> *I was thinking about the parents to also support education in the country, because right now as I am talking to you, the government*

policy is Free Basic Education. Pupils are not paying fees. And many
of the parents think because the government says is paying everything
for the child, even when the child needs a pencil, they want the
government to provide the pencil. So it's time they talked to the
parents that if the government has taken part of their responsibility,
that small part, they should also take it. (CS)

I think the government, if he can do it, because of the problem that the
books that the children use to buy, if he is able to give or to provide the
children free text books and stationery ... the parents also will look
upon their wearing and other things.... (SMC Chairperson).

According to the teacher, they do not receive the needed support from the community because some of the parents shirk their parental responsibilities. The CS feels there should be cost-sharing in education between the state and parents. Like the CS, the SMC Chairperson feels there should be cost-sharing in education. However, she feels the cost-sharing should be such that the government will take responsibility of pupils' textbooks and stationery and, parents the responsibility for the school uniform and physical needs.

As a result of the introduction of public policies and discourses that espouse the goals of free and compulsory education for all by successive governments, many parents have come to understand that the government bears all the responsibilities for education. Consequently, many parents, guardians and communities are finding it difficult to come to terms with the increasing call on them to bear some fundamental costs. In the view of the CS and the SMC chairperson, the government alone cannot shoulder all the educational responsibilities of the country and so parents need to fulfil their part of the role for educational responsibilities.

Problems of lack of vernacular textbooks and parental responsibility were found to be general. However, study participants expressed deeper concerns about problems they face in the rural areas as the following section indicates.

5.12 Constraining factors of the rural areas

There were articulations of unfavourable internal structural features in the rural areas and financial constraints of the rural poor parents and of how the educational background of these parents affected their ability to honour such a responsibility. Indeed, economic pressures in rural communities present difficulties for parents in such communities to send their children to school. Where parents' eagerness exists to send the children to school, poverty impedes their efforts to cater adequately for the children's physical and educational needs. Besides, poor conditions in the rural areas undermine the learning environment. Such conditions include inaccessible roads which result in transportation difficulty, lack of teacher accommodation, piped water supply, electricity and health care. In addition, there is teacher absenteeism, gross teacher shortages and paucity of school supervision. The resultant effects are excessive drop-out rate and poor learning outcomes of pupils, with only a few of the pupils reaching the post-basic education level.

The central problem for most of the study participants in schools in the rural communities then, was the lack of access to education and its resources by children in isolated communities in general and by pupils of poor parental background in particular. Most of the participants attributed this problem to poverty, explaining that poverty in the rural communities makes it difficult for parents in these communities to honour their parental duties and responsibilities by ensuring the physical and educational needs of the children. The rest of the participants ascribed the problem to factors such as sheer shirking of parental responsibilities and the relevance of education to parents and/or their educational background. A few of the ascriptions are delineated below.

Poverty

A teacher made the following remarks while responding to a question about the performance of his pupils:

> *The performance of these kids are more or less average, looking at their background, because we are in a rural area, lacking a lot of things. Because ... in fact, the parents find it difficult to provide all the*

necessities that can go with the teaching and learning. So I would advise that if they could be any help from above that will centre around the provision of textbooks, because formerly there was a system where children were even being given uniform - that is the needy, but brilliant students. If that system is to be initiated here, I think it will go along way; it will help the rural schools to compete equally with the urban ones. (Teacher).

According to this teacher, the children are in a rural area where internal structural problems such as lack of piped water supply and electricity are acute and where, by reason of poverty, the parents are unable to cater adequately for the children's educational needs. Yet, the children are managing to put of their best and so they need the kind of push that will enable them to compete equally with their urban counterparts.

A CS also commented on the lack of parental responsibilities which he says presents obstacles in the teaching and learning process:

In fact some of the parents are not providing the basic needs of their ward and therefore teachers are finding it very difficult to do effective teaching and learning with the children. For instance some children are not having writing materials like exercise books; even common pen. Sometimes some teachers even go to the extent of providing school uniform for some of the school children. Sometimes some teachers even buy school bags for some of the children, especially those who are from far from nearby communities and they sometimes walk through the rain to school. Some of the teachers are good. (CS).

The CS does not mention categorically that the problem stems from the poverty of the parents. However, the fact that he describes how sympathetic teachers assist the kids by buying school uniform and bags for them is suggestive of the active role of poverty in this problem. Indeed economic pressures in rural communities make it increasingly difficult for parents in such communities to perform the kind of parental roles expected of them. In a case study of *Schooling and Education in Africa*, Dei noted repeated "references to parents who do not have the resources to adequately provide for

their children's daily care and their schooling needs." (2004: 112). Ghana is no exception to cases of this nature. Therefore where state support is inadequate, genuine fears exist about economic constraints which militate against children's education and which mostly affect the children of poorer families in general and families of the rural poor in particular.

The fact that, according to the CS, some of the pupils have to cover long distances on foot to school (if it is due to the problem of inaccessible roads rather than inability to pay the fare for transportation) is clear example of the realities of the weak infrastructure in the rural areas and for that matter the kind of problems pupils in such areas face. The school bags are meant to be used by the kids to carry textbooks home for out-of-school studies. Without the bags the books get damaged by the rain and it appears school authorities were very concerned about this because a headteacher of a rural school also made mention of this in his comments about logistics and school uniform for the kids:

> *In fact, we have other logistical problems.... No school bags!! You see, some of these textbooks you see here cannot be given to the children because some of them do not have common school bags to keep them in. And in times of raining, all these things will spoil so we are reluctant to give the books out. They cannot have school bags, they cannot have proper school uniform. In fact, if you had been here early to see how some of these primary children had dressed ... you will be sad* (Headteacher: EE School).

According to this headteacher, the teachers do not want to risk giving the books to the pupils without the bags for fear of the books getting damaged when it rains; the pupils do not have *proper school uniform* and he wished I had arrived earlier enough to witness the clothes the primary pupils wear to school[14]. Perhaps many of the children were in tattered clothes because there were expressions of similar grief from headteachers of other schools who gave

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[14] Apparently, by reason of transportation difficulty, I got to the village when the lower primary section of the school had closed and so I was unable to see the children.

vivid descriptions of the children's uniform. For example, one village headteacher lamented:

> *If I look at them, sometimes I want to cry. You see somebody's school uniform - tattered.* [If] *you consult the parents* [they tell you] *they don't have the money. But, you see, the children, they are willing to learn; they are willing to learn but the parents are not helping them. So I wish somebody will come. If it's school uniform, books, just give it to them...you see, just bring the books so that the best pupil in the exams you give it to them; you give uniform as prize for them to motivate them to learn.... Even my old attire, I have to give some out to the pupils. So I wish somebody will come to our aid, especially to the remote areas. No light, nothing. So it's very difficult coping with the situation. So I need motivation. People should come.* (HeadTeacher).

For this headteacher, the situation presents a pathetic sight. The parents' ability to support their children is impeded by poverty. Yet, the children are ready to learn. The emotional, together with the psychological effects of the acuity of the problem on this teacher is such that he tries to help by giving the pupils some of his old clothes. And he is calling for benevolent individuals and organisations to offer the kind of push that will enable the children to satisfy their quest for schooling.

The relevance of education to parents and/or their educational background

Whereas most of the study participants attributed the parents' inability to supply their children's physical needs and provide the needed support for their education to poverty, others assigned the problem to the parents' educational background and/or the relevance of education to them. One headteacher from a remote rural school intimated:

> *You see? the parents are not helping the children* [because] *they don't see the essence of their children learning, so when they get home ... they just allow them to roam anywhere. Even the time for them to*

come to school, is the time that they want to send their children (HeadTeacher).

In the view of this headteacher, the parents' lack of realisation about the relevance of education impacts on their ability to honour the educational responsibility of their children.

Another headteacher made the following remarks when explaining the relationship between his school and the community:

> *I would say we are in good relationship with them. But because they are illiterates, at times when you call them that this is the situation at hand ... they will sit down promising "we shall do it; we shall do it ...." But in the long run you won't see them. At times you find it difficult when you get such problem* (HeadTeacher).

This headteacher ascribed the parents' failure to honour their educational responsibilities to their lack of education.

And in a group interview of teachers in a rural school, one of the teachers remarked:

> *As my colleague was saying, the teachers over here, actually they've committed themselves. And more or less the teachers feel that they want to set a mark. And actually they did. But for here, because it is more or less a rural area, they don't know much about education. And they don't value education. And so it's just a matter of, in the morning, "go to school". Sometimes, no pocket money. And here too this school feeding programme does not reach here. So there are a whole lot of problems. And that performance – the good performance the pupils had - actually teachers committed themselves and they put in maximum efforts and that brought about that result* (Teacher: AfetchMix School).

According to this teacher, he and his colleagues do not get the needed support from the parents. The parents are not educated and are not aware of what education can offer and therefore pay little attention to physical and

educational needs of their children. He adds that the school feeding programme that has been instituted in the country has not been extended to their school and this compounds the problems of both the pupils and the teachers. As a result, they have to operate under hard conditions in order to achieve good results.

The school feeding programme, according to Narrator Three, was something that was intended to be instituted in the country during the WSD policy making process:

> ... *the other thing which we were talking about as well, which I developed was the importance of health. Because even if you've got good teachers; you've got curricula, you've got good infrastructure, if the children are coming to school without a good feeding programme or a good food, then it's all wasted. So we were trying to link in the feeding programme and all that, which had come through and were trying to integrate all that altogether* (Narrator Three).

However, it may be inferred from a comment made by Narrator One that the school feeding programme did not become part of WSD but was adopted later from UNICEF and some NGOs by the government under whose regime WSD collapsed:

> *The feeding programme was not part of Whole School Development. There was already a feeding programme provided by UNICEF and some NGOs, particularly the Catholic Relief Services in the northern part of the country. That was not part of the Whole School Development. That is a new initiative, and I wouldn't say of the reform because the reform borrowed from the Catholic Relief Services which was already organising the school feeding programme on the ground. They realised that well, the school feeding programme was helping in the Northern sector, so they adopted it.* (Narrator One).

In any case, whatever the origin of it, it has been instituted in some areas and some responses to questions relating to how well it is operating indicate that it is actually helping the children, though many participants expressed

dissatisfaction about the fact that it has been limited to some schools in some districts.

Coming back to the issue of relevance of education to parents and/or their educational background, it is true that "a necessary precondition for participation [in education] would seem to be some engagement with schooling and recognition of its importance" (Pryor, 2005: 196). However, it is also true that "understanding, knowing and responding to your child is part of being a *responsible parent*" (Dei, 2004: 107; my emphasis). Parents may be poor and they may lack education or may not have had some engagement with it. Nonetheless it is incumbent upon them to recognise their parental responsibility and render the very little support they possibly could for the wellbeing of their children. Such support may include being there for the children and helping teachers to address problems they see or perceive in the children's lives. Indeed, money is important. But there is much more to parental roles than having money and being able to provide the material needs of children. As argued by Dei, "the ability to delineate parental roles and responsibilities is itself significant as a starting point to fulfilling what is required of an adult" (2004: 107). School teachers are there to assist parents and pupils and it is only when parents have been able to identify their roles and responsibilities and performed them that teachers will be able to provide the necessary assistance. But responses from CSs, headteachers, teachers and SMC members of rural communities indicate that many parents in rural communities do not perform their responsibilities in ensuring their children's regular attendance at school and maintaining regular contacts with teachers in order to monitor the children's academic progress and behavioural development. Below are two examples:

> ... *I have ... urged them to be part of the running of the school. They should visit the school regularly to check the performance of their kids. Some of them, for a whole year will not know where their children even sit.* [They need to] *come to school* [and say]: *"Oh Master Good morning; Madam Good morning. I am the mother or father of so, so and so. I want to come and check how he/she is doing." The teacher there will have to bring all the exercises of that child, open them, let*

the parents see. You the parent, make sure you check how your child is faring.... How the child has been assessed over the years so that the parents would know whether the little money she is putting into the child's education is going down the drain or is being put to good use.... (Headteacher).

The headteacher suggests that parents' contacts with the school can create opportunities for knowing how they can help each other, especially how the school can assist parents to track the children's performance in particular and development in general. Indeed, "[t]he closer the parent is to the education of the child, the greater the impact on child development and educational achievement" (Fullan, 2001: 198). However, contextual factors determine the probability of occurrence of this closeness. For example, in a typical rural village of Ghana such as the one in which this headteacher works, where family livelihood depends on farming, time constraint would greatly obstruct this contact because parents have to wake up early in the morning and cover long distances on foot to the farm. The only time they can be available in the house is the evening, when schools have already closed. If there can be any contact, then it could be the parents visiting the teachers in their houses or vice versa, as exemplified in this CS's comments:

Sometimes the parents themselves are not even aware that the children are not regular because in some cases you go to them and they say, "Oh I have been seeing off my boy to school everyday. I am not even aware that he doesn't come to school...." There was an instance where ... we went to the house [of a pupil] *only to realise that, after all, this boy had been seen off by the parents ... to come to school. But immediately they see him off, he just goes to the market and to pull the truck just to get money....* (CS).

Like the headteacher, the CS expresses the need for a connecting link between parents and the school. He cites the example of a pupil about whom the parents believe goes to school but plays truant and says without this connecting link, issues of this nature will not come to light and be given the needed attention. Thus, parents need to collaborate with the school in

whatever way possible to guide the development of their children. Without this collaboration, there is the possibility of the parents living in ignorance about their children's development.

Other issues came up. These include drop-out, teacher accommodation, lack of accessible roads and transportation, teacher shortages and lack of qualified teachers, lack of educational facilities and lack of electricity. A few of the ascriptions on these are delineated below.

Drop-out

One participant expressed concerns about school dropout during the same group interview mentioned above:

> *And also we have to meet the PTA or the parents and talk about the school proper, because some of them they don't even finish the school. The townsfolk boys will impregnate some of the school pupils and some of the boys too fail to attend the school. So there is too much school dropout in the rural areas. So that one too we have to meet the parents and talk about that one* (Female Teacher).

According to this teacher there is a high pupil dropout rate in the village and so there is the need for them to meet the PTA and address the problem.

Lack of educational facilities

Another central problem for many of the study participants in rural communities is lack of educational facilities. A local community member serving as SMC Chairman in a remote village complained about this and expressed the desire for a library where the children could go during their spare time to read in order to help develop their reading ability and improve their knowledge:

> *Even if we are having a library here, it will help the school children because after closing ... they go there for reading. Frequently reading, then they are picking the knowledge. So if we get library too, is O.K.* (SMC Chairman of a remote rural village).

In the same remote village, teachers also made a passionate appeal in their group interview:

> *And I think there should be a library or where they can may be read books or something that is going to help them learn how to read.* {Teacher A)

> *Now sometimes you can also use sports. If you have enough sport equipment in the school, that will also boost the young ones or even those people for our catchment areas to come to this school so that this school will also improve – it's both academic and the sports. You can't only go with the academic because sports is also part of the education curriculum. So the school needs sports equipment to boost our enrolment membership.* {Teacher B)

> And *I would also suggest that if the rural set up are to be assisted with the supply of stationery and other logistics and any scholarship mechanism, it would go a long way to revamp the rural education that has not been going on well as the urban ones.* {Teacher C)

Teacher A advocates for provision of library facilities, which she feels can assist pupils to acquire reading skills. For Teacher B, sports is a component of education and so he feels if his school has sport facilities it will attract children into the school. Teacher C also expresses concerns about lack of educational resources but suggests the institution of scholarship mechanisms as a way of motivating pupils in rural areas.

Teacher quality and availability

Coleman *et al*'s (1966) research, together with its report, yielded major findings which included the fact that school cannot compensate for social inequalities, though it does have greater effects on those who most need them, and that teachers make the most difference of all the complex processes of the school. In fact, in view of their findings they suggested *inter alia* the provision of high quality teachers to disadvantaged and socio-economically deprived communities. WSD in Ghana may not have borrowed directly from

this research. However, the findings of the research may have had some influence on the introduction of WSD in the country. I have mentioned in Chapter 4 how special provision was made for schools and teachers of the poor and deprived areas in the form of incentive packages such as accommodation, radios and bicycles to help bridge the rural-urban gap in the delivery and financing of education. The provision of accommodation in the rural areas was a necessary attempt at addressing the problem of teacher accommodation because lack of accommodation invariably militates against the attraction of not only adequate but also qualified teachers to these areas. However, it appears the problem of accommodation was so severe and extensive that the attempt made by WSD produced very little, if no impact. Most of the participants expressed deep concerns about lack of qualified and adequate teachers in schools in rural areas when questions about the availability of resources as well as what can be done to improve teaching and learning arose. Whereas some blamed it on the lack of accommodation in the rural areas, others were so perturbed by the problem that they merely expressed their concerns without considering the fundamental causes. The following quotations capture the predominant views:

> *Now too, those rural areas, we are lacking teachers. You see all the trained teachers who are handling the various subjects, you see them in the urban areas. But within the rural areas ... they have neglected them, you see this youth employment and untrained teachers handling the kids. So I see that this type of education is actually ... benefitting those who are in the urban areas. This is how I see the whole thing* (Teacher A).

> *We need the teachers but we need the quality ones.... They should train them and bring them because like in the cities, the materials are there. The rural areas, we don't have the materials so it is the quality teachers who will be able to perform. But unfortunately, those weaker ones are the ones that they push to the village so they go and worsen the situation* (SMC/PTA Chairperson).

But that can't help us. They opened school here – we have JHS, we have primary school here. And if the teacher is not available, it won't help us because the syllabus they learn ... at big town, the same thing they learn ... here. And when you go to big cities, they have more teachers. Every subject, they have teacher for that. But here, you go to JHS they have 3 teachers to teach about 9 subjects. It won't help. That's our main problem; the major problem is teachers. (Teacher B).

In the opinion of Teacher A and the SMC/PTA chairman, there is a wide gap between the rural and urban areas in terms of teacher quality. Teacher B also laments over inadequacy of teachers in the rural areas.

However, it came to light that even where teachers are available, some prefer to stay in urban areas and commute to their schools of work in the rural area because of lack of accommodation in the rural areas. A CS therefore expressed urgent need for accommodation when explaining what can be done to motivate teachers to reside in the rural areas:

Accommodation, so that they [teachers] *will be able to stay in the community in which they work. If* [a teacher is in a rural area] *he wants to stay at* [an urban] *place because he thinks he hasn't got the accommodation in the rural area. If the government will be able to provide very good accommodation in those communities, then they will be motivated to stay there.* (CS).

Another CS recounted the consequence of teachers not staying in the villages where their schools are located:

If we look at the ... Municipality, many of the schools are doing very well but still need to buck up, especially in the rural areas, where most of the teachers don't stay there. They stay outside the village. In fact getting car to the village is very, very difficult. So lateness to school is a problem, and sometimes absenteeism. So I think the other time ... I even wrote in my report that the Director should do something about it because the number of instructional hours missed a year is a

contribution of the factors of low performance in the rural areas. (CS).

For this CS, the rural schools are not performing as expected because the teachers from these schools stay outside the villages and commute to school and this creates lateness and absenteeism of the teachers. Responding to the question as to what she is doing to resolve the accommodation problem, she said:

> *The teacher accommodation problem is, where there is no electricity, the teachers don't want to stay. And for the electricity, we the circuit supervisors, we can't do anything about it; is up to the government to do something about it* (CS).

The CS has now revealed another problem, if not a different one: the teachers do not want to stay in the rural areas because of lack of electricity. Thus it seems even where accommodation is available in the village, the teachers prefer to stay in an urban area and commute because of the problem of lack of electricity and other social infrastructure. And indeed, comments from most of the teachers confirmed this. For example, the following comments emerged from teachers in a group interview when they were asked to explain why they do not want to live in the village in which their school is located:

> *Because there is no light; there is no pipe-borne water. And that is a problem. Because you have to get light. And when even you want to get out of this town to, may be,* [town B] *you have to stand here for about hours before getting a vehicle. And that is also a problem* (Female teacher).

> *My reason for not staying in this community is due to the course that I'm taking at* [university]. *Now I'm commuting here because there is no electricity here and I can't study on my own. So we have formed a study circle. So after classes at 3 O'clock we have to meet at a certain point and then we discuss issues....* (Male teacher).

The female teacher says she does not want to live in the village because of lack of pipe-borne water, electricity and transportation difficulty and the male

teacher assigns his reasons to lack of electricity and the problem of getting a study group for his academic pursuit.

Transportation difficulty and/or inaccessible roads

The female teacher mentioned above has complained of transportation difficulty. The SMC Chairman of the community in which this teacher teaches also complained that their road becomes inaccessible during the rainy season and creates transportation difficulty:

> *Another problem is inaccessible road to the village. You may have noticed it as you travelled to the village. When it rains, the road becomes unusable. There was a time when the Assemblyman's wife was bitten by a snake. We had to carry her to the main road before getting transport to the nearby clinic because no vehicle could use our road. If we hadn't done that she would have died.* (SMC Chairman).

CSs also complained that the problem of transportation difficulty makes it impossible for them to work as expected. In the words of a CS,

> *Visiting schools, we don't have transportation. Access to transport, sometimes to get to a village is a problem. You may be at a particular station and you will be there for almost 2 hours – you will not get car to go. And even if you get car, for passengers to come and fill the car for the driver to go is also a problem. So transportation is a very major challenge to me as a circuit supervisor. If I have my own means of transport, I would like it* (CS).

Another CS expressed his feelings in the following manner while responding to questions about the challenges he faces:

> *In fact, one major challenge is lack of resources especially and transport. I have a motor bike here but I don't want to ride.* [Why?] *I know how to ride ... but I don't want to ride.* [Was it given to you by the Municipality or you bought it yourself?]. *By the District Assembly.* [The motorbike was given to you by the District Assembly?]. *Some others were provided by the GES. But the challenges are that: one,*

some of us don't even know how to ride it; not all of them do have the motorbike. Now if you don't have the motorbike and you want to go to a school to supervise, sometimes what happens is, you go and stay in the car, especially in the rural areas, for about one hour the car will not be full. So you stay in the car and by the time the car gets to the place or the station, whatever you want to do, there is no time (CS).

This CS shows concerns about constrictions placed on the time available to CSs by transportation difficulties to the rural and remote areas. He mentions that some CSs including himself have been given motor bikes to ease the difficulty but he does not want to use his. He does not explain why but it is probably because it is risky for him. His main concern however is about those who have not been given motorbikes and have to visit schools in the rural and remote areas.

In any case, with regard to the problem of constraining factors in the rural areas, another issue which emerged as a major concern for teachers and headteachers was senior education officers' habit of discrimination in the posting of teachers and of transferring teachers to rural areas as punishment. For example, teachers in a group interview commented:

... when we came here a certain teacher or some teachers had been posted to this school. They came here and looking at the environment here, they went back and the office accepted and re-posted them. It looks as if we those over here we've been punished. You see, it's not fine. We are all teaching; we are all teachers .... In a nutshell we are all human beings. Whoever is teaching in the village, I don't think it's punishment for that person to be there. So in everything, we should all be given equal attention.... (Teacher A).

What he has said reminds me that when a teacher does something in his so called town, they transfer the person to a village. So it means they are punishing the teacher with transfer. It means therefore that, it tells those of us here that, we are under punishment, which is very unfair (Teacher B).

Teacher A's complaint is about discrimination in the posting of teachers. According to him, some teachers who were posted to the village reported and looking at the unpleasant conditions there went back to the Municipal Directorate and were re-posted, probably to an urban area. He therefore considers this action discriminatory and feels as though those in the rural areas have been sent there as punishment for no crime committed. Teacher B followed up and raised the issue of transferring teachers to villages as punishment.

A headteacher also poured out his frustration over the issue of transferring teachers to villages as punishment and complained of the difficulties he is facing as a result:

> *So this is what is going on; this is what is within us now. They punished her so she is there and because she is in a remote area, we have about four teachers; quack teachers; stubborn teachers. How can that village get better results? They won't get. So it means you are going to place burden on the head. This is what I am facing. I'm suffering there because of what ... the Director is doing. Post people there for me to suffer.... Co-curricula activities, we are all supposed to be there and supervise and they won't do it. So you headmaster doing everything. They are stubborn teachers from another place. So she should put the stubborn teachers around the office.... Even if you put time book at the office for them to come and sign; after school they come and sign them so that they have close marking.* (Headtecher).

According to the headteacher, a teacher was sent to his school as a punishment and because this teacher knows she is in a remote school where the CS rarely visits, she engages in all sorts of malpractices and poses problems to him. He says there are four other teachers there who behave incompetently and pose similar problems. He adds that sending teachers to rural areas as punishment aggravates the problems that schools and headteachers in such areas already face and impacts negatively on the children's performance. He is therefore suggesting that such teachers should rather be put in schools quite close to the DED so that they can be closely marked.

Thus, it appears rural areas are relegated to the background in terms of distribution of resources and so the wide disparity between the rural and the urban remains. Narrator One highlighted this in his response to my question regarding efforts at bridging the rural-urban gap:

Now ... you raised the issue of: are we closing the gap between the rural and the urban? The past government will tell you "Yes, we are." And the present government will tell you "Yes, we are." But I will tell you "No!! We are not; we are only fooling about; we are deceiving ourselves." If we have 490 plus secondary schools and out of this we have almost 300 in the urban areas, and all resources are concentrated on these good schools and yet we expect them to write the same exams with the good schools; nothing is being done. Even if you say you have upgraded schools in the districts, one school per each district, it doesn't take care of the rural schools. All the schools that have been upgraded are better schools within the vicinities they are. The rural schools that have been improved in the rural districts are the best schools in those districts; are the best schools in those regions. So it is not addressing the gap between rural-urban; it is not. It is not. For me it is not!! Alright, let us look at the remote schools - the schools where teachers don't want to go; the schools that have no resources; the schools that have no infrastructure and give that provision. Then we can talk about addressing the gap between the rural and the urban.

Summary and conclusion

The implementation phase of WSD was saddled with several problems, some of which led to the official ending of WSD. Those that led to the official ending were lack of commitment on the part of DEDs, misappropriation of funds by DEDs, lack of cooperation between the DCEs and DEDs (which resulted in rifts between the DCE and the WSD Team) and difficulties relating to donor support and flow of funds. The data suggest that the desire of those

in authority to maintain the status quo in favour of their personal interests resulted in the collapse of WSD.

Other problems were noted albeit such problems, according to the data, have nothing to do with the collapse. Among them was lack of parental responsibilities in honouring the educational needs of children. Study participants blamed this on the introduction of public policies and discourses that espouse the goals of free and compulsory education for all by successive governments, claiming that for this reason many parents, guardians and communities have relegated their children's educational needs to the government. A few of the study participants were sympathetic towards the government and expressed the feeling that there should be cost-sharing in education between the state and parents in order to relieve the former.

Again, the data suggest that there were deeper problems in the rural areas and that these problems existed even before the emergence of WSD and continued thereafter. In particular, besides the consistency among study participants on what they considered to be the parents' responsibility, there were articulations of financial constraints of the rural poor parents and of how the educational background of these parents affected their ability to honour such responsibility. There were also articulations of unfavourable internal structural features in the rural areas, such as inaccessible roads resulting in transportation difficulty, as well as lack of teacher accommodation, piped water supply, electricity and health care, problems of teacher absenteeism and paucity of school supervision and gross teacher shortages, all of which undermine the learning environment and result in excessive drop-out rate and poor learning outcomes of pupils, with only a few reaching the post-basic education level.

In view of the problems of education in the rural areas, one may argue that the desire to maintain the status quo in favour of personal interests need not take priority over the task of improving education quality and delivering and financing education equitably and increasing access to education. Increasing access to education entails not only opening the doors of (basic) education to all children but also addressing issues of equity in education delivery and

financing so as to open the doors of institutions of higher learning as well to every child and ultimately create equality in employment and other opportunities. Besides, addressing issues of equity in education delivery requires a fair distribution of social infrastructure and educational resources including qualified teachers to both the rural and urban schools. Indeed, the gap between the urban and the rural areas cannot be exterminated and therefore the problem is not so much about equality. Rather it is the extent of the wideness and the continued widening of the gap which need addressing. Hence, ignoring issues of equity in educational delivery and financing perpetuates the widening of the gap between the rural and the urban areas.

THE AFTERGLOWS OF WSD: WHAT HAVE REMAINED, WHY THEY REMAIN AND HOW WELL THEY ARE FUNCTIONING

Introduction

In Chapter 4, I discussed the systems, structures and practices that were instituted to ensure the successful implementation of WSD. In this chapter, I present an analysis of what elements have survived of WSD, the circumstances that have created room for their survival, and how well they are functioning.

6.1 Structures, systems and practices that have survived

Teaching, leaning and assessment techniques

WSD aimed to improve child-centred primary practices in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving and in the quality of teaching and learning. It also aimed to promote competencies in teaching and learning through school-based in-service training (GES WSD Report: 2004). With these in view, special teaching and learning techniques were introduced. Assessment techniques were also developed for purposes of periodic evaluation of teaching and learning processes. According to a headteacher, one teaching and learning activity that has remained is Literacy, Numeracy and Problem Solving:

> *We are still doing the Literacy and Numeracy and the Problem solving – using those techniques.* (HeadTeacher).

A circuit supervisor (CS) also mentioned Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs):

> *... supporting the school in making the TLMs is something which has kept on going.* (CS).

Another CS mentioned Classroom Observation Instruments:

... we also have this Classroom Observation Instruments that we are
still using, which have come from the WSD programme. Assessing the
reading ability of children – the pupils. We also have that – it is still in
place (CS).

In a teachers' group interview, one of the teachers was very emphatic about
the existence of Continuous Assessment techniques which is operated in
conjunction with School Performance Appraisal Management (SPAM) teams:

In fact when the project started, teachers were made to do continuous
assessment. A series of assessments was being conducted in schools.
And with that knowledge ... teachers are also keeping up with
assessment ... just to get results and write reports on them.... So even
though it [WSD] is facing out, teachers are now careful with how to
assess ... and give results about what is happening in the school....
And we have been doing SPAM, we meet the stakeholders, we tell them
the results, we discuss and we look for how to improve upon them....
Formally when they are vacating, when we were very, very young, they
would call the parents, announce – this person was first, second and
that is the end. They would clap and give you award. But now, they
will announce the results, critically analyse the results, devise a way of
improving it, and whether the results is good or bad, find out the
causes and devise a way of improving it.... (Teacher).

Cluster-based and School-based INSET; Lead Teachers; DTST; Regional Management Team (RMT); and DEPT

As I have mentioned in chapters 1 and 5, an important issue Coleman *et al*
(1966) raised in their report was that "improvements in school quality will
make the most difference in achievement" (1966: 22) for the most
disadvantaged students, that is, the low achieving students as well as those
who come to school least prepared for the demands of schooling. I have also
noted that the area that was considered by Coleman *et al* to be the most
important in quality improvement and in having the most significant effect on
achievement for all students was teachers. Again, I have indicated that when

Coleman *et al* discovered that the effect of good teachers was greatest on children from the most educationally disadvantaged background, they suggested that: "a given investment in upgrading teacher quality will have the most effect on achievement in underprivileged areas" (1966: 317). Thus the professional development of teachers is a pre-requisite for improvement in educational quality and so WSD was committed to INSET of teachers and their heads with the involvement of lead teachers, DTSTs, RMTs and DEPTs.

During the field study, there were several affirmations and allusions to the continued existence of the type of professional development activities introduced under WSD. In a teachers' group interview, one of them pointed out that INSET is sometimes organised for them and when she was asked to indicate what they do during the session, she went ahead to offer a description which is suggestive of the kind of school-based in-service that was instituted during the era of WSD:

> *O.K. the INSET, once a while, we do that.* [What do you do at the INSET?]. *Well, we deliberate on some difficult topics. We all come together and then may be try to find solutions.* (Teacher).

A headteacher also emphasised that the DTST is still functioning together with INSET for teachers and headteachers. He was even of the view that all the activities of WSD are still in operation but they seem to be overridden by new interventions:

> *With the DTST ... They do come round to assess the teachers; have regular interaction with the teachers.... They assess our teaching. And then ... where we faulted, the point that they need to upgrade you on and all that. So at least, in the end you know that, oh, I do very well; I didn't do well, I need to improve upon this. So it's very good. Then with the INSET too, we need to actually upgrade. Most of the teachers need to actually have all these things: we have the school-based, we have the cluster-based etc. All these things are also on-going, so they are there. But because of the intervention that we think they are no more* (HeadTeacher).

And a headteacher who was quizzed on the kind of INSET activities he gets with his teachers said that the cluster-based system of in-service training, in particular, is still in existence:

> *We attend, especially, cluster meeting. We meet here and the other schools they all come and have this thing, and so it's ongoing* (Headteacher).

Lead teachers were added to the list by one headteacher:

> *We have teachers we call Lead Teachers. In the primary school, we have one for literacy ... one for problem solving ... one for numeracy....* (HeadTeacher).

A CS also offered his response in the following way:

> *Well, we can talk of this DTST ... concept. We also had the CSA but that one of late it has subsided. [What is CSA?] Community School Alliance. It also came as part of the programme for the WSD, but that one is not there. But the DTST concept is still there* (CS).

Narrator Two also pointed out that:

> *The structures are in place – SPAMS, SMCs, DEPTs, DTSTs. All the things that were introduced, many of those still exist* (Narrator Two).

Comments from Narrator One reveal structures not mentioned so far, as well as those that were introduced but were faced out:

> *You see, what we did was, I have already recounted how we put in place a number of structures. I talked of the District Support Team. That one has phased out. And in their place, we have the Regional Management Team, which is supposed to go round and do exactly what the District Support Teams were doing. Now at the district level, we also had District Teacher Support Team, who would again be doing the same work the District Support Teams were doing by providing in-service training to the teachers.... Now the District Teacher Support Team is still in place today* (Narrator One).

According to Narrator One then, District Support Team was also created but was phased out and replaced with RMT. He does not state categorically whether the RMTs still exist. However, response from a headteacher who failed to mention the existence of RMTs and DEPTs in her account and was quizzed whether these continue to operate, suggests that they do exist and that the DEPTs are also in operation.

> *Yes, the RMTs still operate. Yes, the DEPTs still function* (Headteacher).

In fact, the continued existence of DEPT was confirmed by Narrator One:

> *We have the District Education Planning Teams. They were to support the district to plan education. They were made up of people from the district education office and district assembly. Where the district chief executive and the district directors are proactive, they are continuing* (Narrator One).

SMCs and CG

A comment from an executive member of SMC in a relatively urban area suggests that SMCs, which are run in conjunction with PTAs, are still operating in their school-community relationships:

> *At times when they call us, even to make, let's say, a meeting like that the heads will call us and we are among the parents of the children. Then we will put down agenda. Then we will start thinking about it. Let's say, to give an example, the school children will have this and if the government can help us, it won't be sufficient. So we ... the community should help.* (PTA chairperson).

As stated by this SMC executive member, even in the planning of the agenda for School-PTA meetings, the parents are invited. In her illustration, she also makes an indirect reference to CG and says that where it is inadequate the community make a contribution to supplement.

Several direct references to the operation of CG were made when questions about the availability of textbooks and stationery arose. For example, there was one from a headteacher in a village school:

> *Anyway, the stationery, in terms of exercise books, they are provided by the parents. And then teaching materials and writing materials are provided by the members of staff ... through the capitation grant.* (HeadTeacher-PickedFlour School)

And there was a passionate remark from Narrator One, which confirms the continued existence of what the other participants claim. Narrator One was then responding to a question regarding the relationship between the New Educational Reform and WSD and he chuckled before articulating his response probably because he was unhappy that the current government has plagiarised virtually all the WSD structures, systems and practices.

> *Well, how can I say it? The New Educational Reform borrowed a lot from the Whole School Development but refused to acknowledge and they don't even want it to be known.... Take the capitation grant. The capitation grant is the direct moneys that we were sending to the schools. All the guidelines for the capitation grant is the WSD guidelines. Unfortunately they even left out some of the guidelines.... We also developed Self-assessment Instruments for the teachers and headteachers.... These instruments were merely changed; the titles were changed and so forth and being used as if it's for the new reform.... In fact ... the only changes that are not associated with us is the 4 years, and the changes in the name of the reform. But most of what they are doing on the ground, is Whole School Development* (Narrator One).

Thus, the structures, systems and processes of WSD were found to be so useful for school improvement strategies that the New Educational Reform, which was introduced by the government under whose regime WSD was terminated, could not resist borrowing from them.

Therefore in a nutshell, responses from study participants confirm that most of the structures, systems and processes of WSD are still in existence: the CG; SPAMs; Lead Teachers; DTSTs; Literacy, Numeracy and Problem-solving; Teaching Learning Marterials; Assessment and Monitoring systems; RMTs; DEPTs; INSET - School-based and Cluster-based; and the SMCs together with the support of the PTAs. One question that immediately comes to mind then is: "What factors have contributed to their survival?" This is the issue I focus on in the next section.

6.2 Factors that account for the survival of the structures, systems and practices

The role of sensitisation and capacity building
Comments from participants suggest that WSD has succeeded in leaving indelible traits because of the degree to which people were sensitised at the implementation level. For example, the DED illustrated how communities were sensitised:

> *For example, maintenance of the school building, we needed to really sensitise the community to accept that "Yes, this thing is for us. If it is for us, then let's maintain it for other generations to come and access this one* (Senior Education Officer).

Quizzed on whether enough time was allowed for developing, introducing and institutionalising WSD, she remarked:

> *Yes, I think there was. That time was the time they used to do the training to get the people to be sensitised. We had community meetings. They came out with the idea as to how to improve the educational system in the communities. And ... those who volunteered to be key persons in the project implementation were identified. And there were various training sessions ... before the implementation took off* (Senior Education Officer).

A headteacher echoed the senior education officer's words and complemented them with details about the role of capacity building:

In fact, it was very fine plan in the sense that they encouraged the community ... to actually get involved.... Those who were interested in participating ... entered into Diploma in Distance Education. So through that they were giving us in-service training that we are coming to train the people ... so they organised a course for us at the University of Cape Coast (Headteacher).

Thus, apart from the sensitisation of communities, training programmes were organised for those who were interested. These facilitated the acceptance of WSD and consequently a realisation of its inherent benefits.

A realisation of the benefits of WSD

Narrator One made a comment which confirms this:

... if you remember, I told you the Whole School Development was a process.... If it is a process, it is there and it will continue. So after 2003 Whole School Development did not phase out.... If you go to some districts, where they have seen the benefits of Whole School Development, they are still practising it. They still have school-based INSET, they still have their cluster system, they still have moneys from the districts.... (Narrator One).

Thus, it is the feeling of Narrator One that WSD is still being practised by districts that have realised the benefits of it. This suggests that the institutionalisation of WSD was not successful in some districts. This suggestion gains support with a remark from a headteacher who was commenting on the future of WSD:

I think the future of the Whole School Development reform is very bright. But I think they have to expand it more to embrace many schools. I think not all schools are embraced. So I am suggesting that all schools in Ghana should be embraced so that they all benefit from what they are doing (Headteacher: PickedFlour School).

The headteacher suggests that WSD should be extended to other schools to enable such schools also to benefit from its inherent advantages. As indicated

earlier in the previous chapter, when WSD started, it was piloted in some twenty districts. Later, it was extended to cover other districts. However, it appears it was not readily embraced or effectively practised by some districts and/or communities, as evidenced in Pryor's (2005) study. And it appears in some districts or communities, participation must have been so minimal that it must have looked as though WSD was not in existence there.

The DED also commented that even though WSD has phased out, it is still in use because of its benefits. She therefore feels there is a need to be tenacious regarding it and ensure its improvement:

> *WSD has faced out ... But it's only that we saw the good aspect and we are still retaining it. So ... it's not a question of facing out. It's a question of making sure we sustain it....* (A Senior Education Officer).

Development of a sense of ownership, commitment and responsibility

Some participants described the kind of benefits:

> *What I can say is that is very, very good policy because it has educated the parents, the teachers and the pupils the role that they can play to develop their own community.* (Headteacher: StopOneGive School)

> *... I think it has brought us so many things and we have realised how useful those practices are to us and to the schools.... Because we have been trained to implement the policies outright, we need to sustain it and then keep it running. So there is a bright future because of the training to the office staff and the teachers and the headteachers* (Circuit Supervisor).

> *As I have already indicated, giving some aspects of the development to the parents is very, very good. It has kindled the spirit of the people in community involvement and other involvements. This time it is not: you will be sitting down and everything will be given to you on wholesale. No!! You will be asked also to be involved. So that has*

kindled the communal sport in some communities and they are doing better than before. (Teacher).

Let's say six years coming, then we are dull in the school because I've been into the PTA nearly ten years. So I can see that from 4 years coming now, the school is brightening. (SMC member: DwowDrink)

The future is bright. Because if I take our time to the present, there is different improvement coming into education. (SMC member: ChairUnder)

In the view of the headteacher, WSD was good because it educated providers and recipients of education about their responsibilities towards the development of their communities. According to the CS, WSD has continued to operate because of its accrued benefits and the desire to retain it for a long-life enjoyment of the benefits. For the teacher, WSD has sensitised local communities about their roles and responsibilities. And for the SMC members, they have realised some improvement in education as a result of the emergence of WSD.

Improvement in school management and administrative practices

Narrator One also presented an illustration of a realisation of the benefits of WSD. He began by describing the moribund situation of management and administrative practices in schools and how the introduction of training and sensitisation helped to produce positive changes:

You see, before the Whole School Development, interestingly you walk into a school and you ask a teacher or a headteacher. How many children are in this school? He would say: "Eh..mm, wait a minute. Hey bring me the registers." But because of the training and the sensitisation that we gave them, they now have this at the tips of their hands. You could ask a headteacher, without any reference, he could tell you ... everything about the school. Record keeping, was improved (Narrator One).

In effect, one major achievement of WSD, according to Narrator One, is the improvement in school management strategies and administrative practices. And there was an ancillary achievement, namely improvement in financial management.

Improvement in financial management

> *And financial management was also improved. Before the Whole School Development moneys that were generated internally seemed to be additional allowances for the headteacher. But because of the transparencies that the Whole School Development insisted on, whatever moneys you got had to be recorded. Unless you team up with all the teachers, there is no way you can spend the money. And when you spend the money, the interesting thing was that you may even have receipt for them. But as soon as we get to the school, we'll have one teacher who would say it is not true. Then further investigation would reveal what you have done. And then we would give you time to refund the money to the school. Or we ... ask the district director to deduct it from your salary for the school.* (Narrator One).

Thus, apart from improvement in school management strategies and administrative practices, financial management was improved because headteachers, according to Narrator One, were encouraged to be more efficient and open as well as refrain from misappropriation and embezzlement and adopt a more positive participatory management style.

McLaughlin (1993) notes that change involves the capacity as well as the will of the people. There were capacity building training activities. So also were attempts at developing the will of people. In particular, the development of capacity at the school level was imperative because the success of schools depends on competent leadership and efficient management. Schools need clear and consistent organisational patterns to enable them to sustain the rhythms of teaching and learning. Building the organisational capacity of schools therefore is not only an important aspect of schools development but also effective way of improving the organisational competence of the school

and of helping to maintain stability and confidence of the school staff. The problem however was with the "will" of the people because whereas capacity could be changed relatively easily (for example through good quality training or "capacity building"), *will*, which involves beliefs and motivation, is much harder to change. In Chapter 5, I demonstrated that changing the will of the people was something that proved quite difficult. In any case, as noted by Narrator One, there were some successes at ensuring some amount of transparency at the school level.

Change in donor support strategy

In addition, Narrator One remarked passionately that WSD made tremendous successes and left indelible impressions because of the kind of support strategy that its donor agency – DFID – used and for that matter the nature of relationship that was established between DFID and Ghana in the funding process:

> *Let me say that if I look at all the support we are receiving from development partners, the one support that has come closer to our owning the thing is the DFID support. It is not a question of imposing. Right? We have requested: "Give us somebody to help us do this." We have provided the expert for it. With him together, we have fashioned a concept note. Then they say: "Here is the money. Give us your plans and we will give you the money to implement your own plans." It is not plans that they have drawn and given us. So that was why the Whole Development was succeeding and people didn't understand. It is not self-imposed. It is what the people want to do and they don't have money, which the British government has supplied the money for them to do it and they are doing what they themselves would have done if they had their own money. And that was why it was moving. That was why when they even sent people down to come and check, they were surprised at the rate at which we were moving. If we had the money ourselves what we wanted to do was what we are being supported to do, so why wouldn't we do it? (Narrator One).*

Narrator One continued that there have been failures in development partners' relationship with Ghana because Ghana accepts reforms brought in by a development partner just to get what they need and throw them away when the development partner leaves. WSD reform has succeeded because unlike the American reforms it did not assume this trend. He closed his remarks with a description of the case of the Americans:

> *The Americans have failed. They have brought a lot of interventions and they have failed. But we refuse to tell them they have failed. They don't even recognise that they have failed. Because they design the things themselves [and] come.... We'll take it. But it is not what we want. And they drive it.... Because they drive it, we wait and when the funding is exhausted and they are no longer there, we say good day to what they have done. That is why you can still have traces of the Whole School Development today.... Notwithstanding those problems I have recounted ... it's still there because the British supported what the people wanted.... If we can have that type of support, then they will not be surprised. Let them come, if they want to help us. We are interested in people who will help us. But when they come to help us, they should have the patience to find out what help we need....* (Narrator One).

In sum, the use of appropriate support strategy that was driven by the needs and aspirations of the populace has made a tremendous contribution to the success of WSD. And a manifestation of the successes is the continued existence of most of WSD structures, systems and practices. In the next section, I dwell on how well these remaining structures, systems and practices are functioning.

6.3 How well the structures, systems and practices are functioning

Responses to this question suggest that the degree of operation and effectiveness of the structures, systems and practices differ from school to

school and from one teacher or headteacher or community to the other. However, in the case of CG, the degree of effectiveness is the same across the board.

CG

CG was introduced during the era of WSD in order to remove financial barriers of the poor families and thus ensure that every child of school going age attends school. The grant is expected to be used for purchasing teaching and learning materials and for carrying out school quality improvement activities such as school repairs, cultural and sporting activities for which, before the introduction of the CG, pupils were being levied. It is thus a way of relieving pupils, particularly the poor ones of the payment of levies.

According to Penny (2007) evidence on the operation of CG in countries where WSD operates often reveals, in practice, delays in transmission. Penny explains that in most cases the grant is received in quarterly batches but because of delays, the bulk of the amount is received well into the school year or sometimes at the beginning of the final school term. And sometimes the transmission of the grant is less than the entitlement the schools expect because the funding that local districts or local bodies receive "is intermingled" and distributed against a district plan rather than the national one (2007: 7).

The case of Ghana is no exception to Penny's information. Towards the close of a teachers' group interview, a female teacher poured out her frustration over delays in the issuing of CG after inquiring whether CG is part of my study:

> *Is the Capitation part of your work?* [The Capitation, yah]. *That one too they should bring it earlier because at times ... we need something and the capitation is not ready. We depend on the capitation so they should bring it earlier; they should bring it earlier!! The time that they are supposed to bring, they should bring it!!* (Female Teacher).

As remarked by the female teacher above, there are delays in the transmission of CG and she is not happy about it because they depend on it to run the school.

Other evidences reveal that even though the capitation is still in existence, there are delays. For example, a headteacher in a relatively urban area pointed out that:

> ... initially when they started, it was coming regularly. Every term, it was coming. But after the first year, could you believe that we are in the second term and ... the first term's hasn't come? So we are borrowing moneys either from my own resources or we go and credit the things and when the moneys come then we ... go and pay (HeaddTeacher).

The headteacher explains that when WSD started in Ghana, they received the grant every school term and on regular basis. However, after the first year of the operation of WSD, the grant ceased to be regular and because of delays the bulk of the amount is received well into the school year. They therefore had to resort to borrowing money or to buying goods on credit. He however does not deny the usefulness of capitation grant to schools, even though the delays put pressure on the headteachers:

> So in fact, it's good, it's good. The capitation is good. But only that how it comes; the period that we are supposed to get, we don't get it at the right time. So it's putting pressure on we the heads (HeaddTeacher).

In isolated cases, however, complaints about CG were directed to lack of transparency rather than to delays in its transmission. For example, a CS made the following remarks while responding to the question as to whether teachers apply what they gain from INSET:

> They are not applying. Majority of them are not applying, just because they always complain of financial problems, because these teaching-learning materials will need some financial support. And how do you get those moneys? The money should come from the capitation

grant.... And some headteachers are not transparent enough to the teachers so that they prepare [the CG] *... alright but the implementation becomes a problem. If moneys are released alright, teachers will have no problem* (CS).

Concerns about the insufficiency of the CG also emerged. For example, a headteacher conveyed his thus:

The Capitation is woefully insufficient. We thought that exercise books and school uniform and bags will all be provided together with the Capitation so that parents in this part of our country – poor parents, will be comfortable sending their children to school. There is nothing like that.... Sometimes we have to spend over one-third of the whole Capitation for books for teachers (Headteacher).

This headteacher belongs to a semi-rural school and is complaining that the CG is inadequate for his school so one may imagine the effect of the inadequacy on the rural areas. The point I am driving at is that the way CG currently operates is rather inequitable. According to Narrator One, when WSD began, special provision was made in favour of the poor - *guidelines* [were given to districts] *in terms of how to spend the money: ... provision of exercise books for the poor, provision for needy students in terms of their uniform, school bags ... and then paying their school fees. All this was taken into account. And there was a guideline for the selection of those who were actually poor and needy to ensure that the system was not abused....* But currently, as noted by a headteacher, *the total amount for each school is calculated on the enrolment of the school by GHS4.50 for both rural and urban areas.* Thus, in terms of equity, CG is not operating the way it was initially planned.

In sum, the system of CG is not functioning as effectively as expected because it is currently not being operated on equitable basis and there have been delays in its release, especially after the collapse of WSD. Besides, there is a problem of lack of transparency in certain quarters and the grant is woefully inadequate especially for schools in the rural areas where part of it has to be used for securing teaching and learning materials.

SMC and PTA

SMC was created to support the PTA and the school and to help run CGs. In most of the areas in which I conducted the interview, study participants indicated that SMCs and PTAs have been functioning well. In particular, one rural community provided responses which suggest that there has been improvement in pupil attendance and examination results because of the favourable relationship between the school and the community. In a teachers' group interview at this rural community, the teachers attributed this to their efforts. One of the teachers stated that they have gone a step further to encourage the parents whose children have performed creditably well to endeavour to further the education of the children:

> *Now, we've done our best .... You see ... those who we said they've gone out and they performed creditably, they are the first people who completed their school in this town. And when they passed, it was a blow to a lot of parents here. Because they don't value education or they don't know much about education, they didn't prepare for them. And so when it was time for them to go to secondary school, there was no money. So teachers had to go in, convincing their parents – since they've passed and they've got admission to schools and others they should try their best and help them* (Teacher).

The teacher further contended that the improvement in examination results is encouraging some parents to respond actively to the education of their children:

> *So because of that and others you can see that now some of them, especially those whose wards are in current JHS, they are making some kind of preparation. So in a way, there is a change now, of which we can say things are changing.*

The chairman of the SMC and PTA of the school also commended the efforts of the teachers in producing good examination results and remarked passionately that part of the commendation must go to the SMC/PTA of the village for their effective supervision:

... in terms of performance, in fact I will fist give credit to the teachers. And on the other hand, I may say our supervision is also good because I am ... here and we sit down with them and we tell them: "my friend, after all here it's a village. I wasn't born here. I'm just doing a project here.... So since I'm in this town, what I was enjoying in the city, if there is none here, then it means I have to fight so that we will have the same thing here so that I can have a comfortable stay in this town.

Quizzed on how the community have been functioning to help the school, he went on to make statements which suggest that through their efforts, the parents of the village are beginning to get actively involved in the education of their children:

Last year was our first JHS group. We were meeting the parents every month.... At a certain point we told them that no child in JHS should go to the farm. They should give them time to study. We talked to the parents ... and you will be surprised: the whole ... district ... we have 120 JHSs and we placed 20 ... and we took 13 children and only one failed. You see? We concentrate on them. Now we have a programme: those in JHS3, they come to class 6.30[am] ... up to 7.45[am] then they break .... Eight O'clock, back to the class. Then up to 2.30[pm] or so, they would go .... Come back [at] 4 O'clock. They will study up to six O'clock [in the evening]. They would go; come back Seven [O'clock]. So all these things are put in place ... because you have to let the child know what is ahead of him. You talk to the parents; you talk to the students.... So this is what we are doing.... We meet all the time, we talk, either be it private, be it official – everywhere: "How can we do this?" Then we start discussing. We don't wait ... like: "Let's wait in 2 months' time then we shall meet. No, no no!! If we see any problem, at once, we come in (SMC/PTA Chairperson).

Thus the WSD objective about the promotion of community participation and involvement in education delivery seems to be working well in this village.

However, the response of the SMC Chairman suggests that the teachers and the community have to work extra hard to achieve successes, especially when the children are in their final year and are getting closer to the examination period, as was the case at the time I was conducting the field study. But with the pain of hard work aside, this situation demonstrates the reality of the research results and for that matter the contention of the School Effectiveness Movement that schools do make a difference (Sammons *et al*, 1995). At the same time the situation adds credence to the claim of Dembele (2005) that "will" is a defining characteristic for school effectiveness in developing countries because parental push for schooling in these countries makes a difference to school effectiveness.

The headteacher of the school also made a remark which demonstrates the weight of Coleman *et al*'s conjecture: "it appears that a pupil's achievement is strongly related to the educational backgrounds and aspirations of other students in the school" (1966: 22). In other words, peers can have a strong influence on the attitudes and achievements of students. The headteacher was responding to the question regarding what changes she would recommend for quality improvement in schools:

> *When you come to the rural area, because when they complete JHS, they send them to Accra or Kumasi* [that is, to the cities] *to go and sell things, they know that "when I have completed JHS this is what my mother is going to ask me to do ...." So some of them think there is no need for them to try to learn. So if I am the Director General of Education, I would say they should make it compulsory that when somebody completes JHS, the person must be sent to secondary school* [that is, SSS]. *Because when they do that it is going to promote the quality of learning in our rural areas. Because right now my first batch ... they were 13 in number. 11 of them are in secondary school right now. One failed and one person didn't get sponsorship to secondary school. When they came during the vacation, I saw some changes in them. Because when they are going out they don't even want to speak Fante* [that is, the vernacular] .... *So when they* [their peers] *see that they might say "when you complete school and you*

further your education you become somebody in the community". So I
think when they make it compulsory that when the child has completed
JHS, they must send [them] *to secondary school, I think they will be a*
total change in our community (Headteacher).

According to the headteacher, (some) pupils do not value education because
they are aware that after all the greatest reward, on completing JHS (Junior
High School), is the profession of petty trading in the city. She therefore
recommends the introduction of compulsory post JHS schooling as a means of
improving education quality and injecting some value in education to motivate
pupils in the rural areas to value education. To substantiate her point she cites
the example of the achievement and the scholarly behaviour of the pupils who
had returned to the village for vacation some months after graduating
successfully from her school as enticement.

Coming back to the issue of favourable comments on school-community
relationships, a headteacher in another village also made the following remark:

> *Looking at the students population, I would say somehow they have*
> *increased in number – they are coming. On two occasions they have*
> *come to the meetings and we have encouraged them that they have*
> *done well. And they have even promised to pay some duties to support*
> *the school project....* (Headteacher).

As indicated by the headteacher, the school's population is increasing and the
parents have began attending PTA/School meetings in their numbers and
promised to offer financial support to the school. This is a demonstration of
the fact that change occurs with time (Fullan, 2001), as rightly mentioned by
one CS when expressing her views of the WSD reform:

> *I can say that the reform is good. At least it has made some changes.*
> *Some improvements have taken place. But in every reform, there are*
> *some constraints. One is that people find it difficult accepting the*
> *change when it comes at the initial stages. But as time goes on they*
> *get used to it and the programme takes off* (CS).

Besides, in some semi-rural areas, school-community relationships appear to have been fostered, thus enabling the community to contribute their quota to the education of their children. Reference has already been made above to the comment from a PTA Chairperson who is also an executive member of the SMC to demonstrate that even in the planning of agenda for School-PTA meetings, the parents are invited. This Chairperson also recounted how the school encourages them to participate in the education of the children:

> At times when we meet, the teachers always tell us to come and visit the school as we are SMC and PTA executives so at times we are often helping the schools and we get some information from the teachers - how school is going on and the children how they are behaving. And even as I am here the school feeding programme brought me here, as I am one of the executives of the SMC. So I came here to help. So when we come we can see what the teachers were saying. And we also go inside and we go to the ... parents and talk about that your children are learning or not; they are weak or something like that (SMC/PTA Chairperson).

However, it is not in all communities that favourable comments were heard. Some teachers in other rural communities lamented in a group interview:

> The community are not helping in the sense that they know what they are supposed to give to their children when they are coming to school. And some, they don't care. And now too you cannot sack a student that go home because of this and that .... So the community actually are not performing what is expected of them. Though they are doing a little. But is not enough (Teacher).

> The community ... are not helping at all. More times, when we have PTA meetings, we ask them to put up some structures for their kids to sit under it for studies, they promise they will do but they will never do it. So we have to call on the students to do that. So actually the community, they are not doing the best (Teacher).

In effect then, the degree of operation and effectiveness of SMCs/PTAs differ from community to community. Whereas some are active, others are dormant or virtually so.

Teaching and assessment techniques and SPAM

The question of how well Literacy, Numeracy and Problem Solving, Classroom Observation Instrument, Teaching Learning Materials, Continuous Assessment techniques and SPAM are functioning are dovetailed in the discussion of INSET below because INSET activities are based on these. In other words, if INSETs are functioning well, then there is a high probability that the above activities are also working satisfactorily.

INSET: school-based and cluster-based; Lead Teachers, DTST; RMT and DEPTs

According to a headteacher, his teachers make use of the in-service training he gives them and he gets to know this when he visits their class and look at the children's output of work:

> *Yes, they apply it; they apply it. It's very effective. I visit the classrooms when they are teaching and the way they are teaching portrays that they are doing well. On some occasions, I collect the children's exercise books and go through and see the number of exercises that they have been doing. And there is improvement in it, which shows that they have been working hard.* (HeadTeacher).

If the teachers have been working hard because the headteacher sees evidence of the quantity of work done by the pupils, then the question however is whether the quality of the output of work is good because quantity is not the same as quality.

A headteacher also stated that with close supervision, she is able to get the teachers to do what is expected of them:

> *Really yes, if you'll be on them. They need constant reminding. Teachers of these days, they are not all that hard-working. But if you are on them they try to do it....* (HeadTeacher).

A CS confirmed the headteacher's response:

No, we have not faced problems like we don't understand this, we don't understand that, we can't implement this, we can't implement that. But the problem that we face is that when we meet at workshops we sell ideas to teachers. But their implementation of the new concept that they have learnt is the problem. They will go and sometimes they will do the same thing in the same old way. So if visits are not very frequent, it means things will lapse. (CS)

According to this CS, if training skills acquired through INSET are to be applied in the classroom, then there is a need for frequent supervision to ensure that teachers do what is expected of them.

Elaborating on the kind of in-service training he organises for his teachers, he mentioned that they have been organising school-based in-service training for teachers instead of a broad-based one because of logistical constraints and the DTST have also been working in tandem with them to resolve teachers' difficulties:

Well, you'll not have the chance to organise a broad-based in-service training for your teachers because of logistic constraints. For instance when teachers are called to a workshop, they expect to be fed, they expect their T and T [that is, to be reimbursed their transportation cost] *and so on and so forth. So what we do is that we pay a visit to a school. And after your work, whatever you went to do, you meet the teachers, you give them your findings. And when there is a general problem you identify with a large number of teachers, then you discuss it at the meeting. And that is a way of giving them some in-service training. We also have in place a group of District Teacher Support Team. We recommend this to the DTST and they factor it in their in-service training programme. They have cluster and school-based meetings that they organise from time to time with the teachers. So we can also factor that in and then it helps at the appropriate time* (CS).

This suggests that the DTST in the Municipality in which the CS works has been functioning reasonably well.

And when a headteacher in a semi-rural school was asked to describe the kind of WSD INSET activities that his school participates in, he mentioned school-based and cluster-based, of which his school is used as a centre, and proceeded to explain the support offered by the LEAD Teachers and DTST in this regard, which is suggestive of how well DTSTs are functioning:

> *We have the school-based, which is done internally in the primary school.... But ... when it is being conducted, the JSS teachers are also included. So we hold it four times in a term.... And the other one, cluster-based ... consists of five schools. Right now, in our area, our school is a centre.... Clusters are held after a series of the School-based one. We have teachers we call Lead Teachers. In the primary school, we have one for literacy ... one for problem solving ... one for numeracy.... After several school-based ones, we hold the cluster-based ones. And these lead teachers from other schools converge at one centre of which mine is one. They come with the problems identified in the course of teaching. Sometimes in the conduct of the school-based one, teachers come with problems identified. Headteachers also come with problems identified. So whatever problems that are identified, we discuss them at the in-service. And the problems that are also identified in the school-based ones are taken to the cluster-based ones by the Lead Teachers. And as a whole school, the headmaster is supposed to be present, including the lead teachers. The Lead Teachers from the other schools ... come at a particular time. And we draw our plans.... The cluster, they give us a range of time within which to hold the cluster meetings. And then it is these cluster meetings that are supported by the DTST....* (HeadTeacher).

This response from the headteacher also suggests that DTSTs are functioning quite well, as far as his school and the sibling cluster schools are concerned.

Comments from another interview with a headteacher who is also a member of the DTST, suggests that INSET for school-based and cluster-based as well as DTSTs are functioning well in areas that are still using them:

> *At least ... in their time they emphasised more on this in-service training and then cluster-based INSET. And they also created this DTST ... of which of course I am a member. That one also is still in operation. The School-based system, they emphasise it ... and they are still doing it. And this Cluster too ... what happens is, teachers from, may be, 5/6 schools, they will meet at a centre. My school is one of the centres. So ... they all come here. We meet. Then we discuss problems from individual schools; individual teachers, may be a topic or a subject area which a teacher is finding it difficult and is not able to solve it at the school-based INSET, then they bring it at the Cluster. Then they discuss it among themselves. Then if they are not able to solve too, we the DTST members will go there as resource persons to give them support. If we also are unable to help, then we take it to the District level, or may be consult our Circuit Supervisor. But most often in fact, we are able to ... solve some of these problems and then we send the report to the District Office* (HeadTeacher).

However, there were other responses which indicated that the situation is negative. A headteacher who was formally a DTST officer cited an example of a literacy programme being offered by a donor agency and pointed out that in spite of the effective in-service training given to teachers, it has been realised that teachers are not applying what is expected of them and then went on to mention that a similar thing was happening even at the time of the existence of WSD:

> *In fact, they are very effective. Only that sometimes, when we come down, its implementation, it becomes a little bit difficult; difficult on the part of teachers that what we are supposed to do, some of them they don't do it. Right now this exercise that we are doing, the workshop, the Director is saying that the EQUAL people, they've gone round to check and they have seen that the teachers are not*

incorporating it in their lesson notes; they are not using the strategies that they've been taught to teach, especially from the KG to class 3, the lower primary. And it was happening in the Whole School this thing, it was happening – the same thing. (HeadTeacher).

A CS indicated that teachers in the urban areas do work hard, as opposed to their rural counterparts. He said teachers in the rural areas are noted for their fondness of giving insubstantial excuses for their failure to work as expected of them:

For the urban areas, we have no problem with them. But for the rural communities, they would come and complain – "We went to the bank.... There is no money. Our moneys are exhausted at the bank". So in fact they are not implementing them. For the rural communities, they are not implementing them. (Circuit Supervisor).

Asked whether the problem is attributable to their non-professionalism, he exclaimed:

No; that is not the cause; that is not the cause!! It's financial problem – it's financial.... Even go to the banks and see. Someone is not qualified and he is working there. Because he is motivated, he gets the power and he enjoys the work. But since they are not motivated enough, they cannot enjoy the work.... So it's not the type of professionalism but commitment; commitment!! (CS).

In the view of this CS, it is not a problem of non-professionalism that causes teachers in the rural areas to work below expectation. Rather, it is due to lack of commitment resulting from lack of motivation and financial constraints. As a matter of fact, suggestions of the truth of the CS's remark came from many other participants who were answering a question on the major changes they would recommend for quality improvement in schools, particularly in the rural and deprived areas. Below are a few of the predominant ones:

... in fact, teachers in these deprived areas must be well motivated ... because you go to these remote areas, they lack water and transportation.... There is no accommodation at those places so

[teachers] have to commute. So transportation and then financial resources must be provided to those teachers in the rural areas (CS of CountryBig).

My little experience in the field has revealed to me that if the government wants to achieve a lot of stuff, then there should be the need to motivate the teachers in the rural areas. There should be incentives for teachers in the remote areas. [What kind of incentives?] *One, something like motorbikes and something like additional money for them to feel motivated.... Then two, if the government will be able to give them some additional incentives like money, then they will say that well, I'm not in [urban area] but because of this small additional income that I get in addition to my salary at the end of the month, is better for me to stay in a rural area and use it for something. Until that is done, the disparity between the rural and the urban areas will continue to exist* (CS of MouthStone).

One, most of the teachers there stay somewhere and travel to the place everyday.... So I would suggest that there must be teachers bungalows well furnished to attract the teachers to stay on campus so that evening classes can be well organised. As at now, when we close everybody goes away, leaving the children alone in their communities. And two, there must be electricity – there is no electricity there. So the children, after the day's work, they don't do anything again until the next morning. So it's affecting their performance badly. So I'm saying that there should be teachers bungalows for the head or the teachers to supervise evening classes. And there must electricity for the teacher to prepare lesson notes and to read to upgrade himself. And the children also must have light to learn in the night. And I have also observed that water is also a problem there. There is no proper water. So these are the factors that do not help teachers to choose the place even to teach there. That is why we are lacking professional teachers. After training, he just looks round and finds that these facilities are lacking. He will prefer going to the urban centre where he will have access to these things. (HeadTeacher).

I guess there should be incentives for teachers in the rural areas because to stay in a rural area is something not unusual but sacrifice that some of us are trying to undergo. So I would advise that the teachers in rural areas should be seen as a sort of yardstick for rural development. So I would urge that government should be very sensitive to teachers in rural areas and boost their moral in the form of incentives like bicycle and what have you. And that will keep us going.... (Teacher).

In the view of the CS of MouthStone, there is a need for motivation of teachers in rural areas in the form of provision of financial reward and a means of transport. He feels that financial reward is necessary because of the lack of infrastructure in the communities in which the teachers work and the means of transport will enable the teachers to commute to their schools from the places they live with ease. The CS of MouthStone also feels that incentives such as means of transport and financial reward will motivate teachers to help the government achieve many of its objectives in education and in attempting to bridge the rural-urban gap. He adds that financial reward will prompt teachers to consider the opportunity cost of staying in the rural rather than the urban areas. The headteacher traces the origin of lack of professional teachers in the rural and deprived communities to factors that discourage teachers from working in these areas, namely lack of teacher accommodation, electricity and clean water and suggests that these be made available in the village. In the opinion of the teacher, teachers who accept to stay in the rural communities in which their schools are located do great sacrifice to the nation because they are a manifestation of instrument for rural development and should therefore be rewarded accordingly by the government.

However, not all the calls for teacher motivation were intended for teachers in the rural and deprived areas. Some of them were general, that is, for all teachers. For example, a headteacher of a rural school was so agitated about the lack of teacher motivation and commitment that he poured out his frustration unexpectedly thus:

And then teachers must be motivated in this country – in terms of salary, in terms of other things!! Master, I am telling you, children do not do very well because teachers do not teach well. That is another major thing. We are all teachers, we have to confess..... Children will do well if teachers are doing well.... Well, you did not ask how teachers feel – their living standard – you don't know. I have a lot of concerns but that is one of my concerns. Teachers are relegated to the background as far as I'm concerned. As far as Ghanaian workers are concerned, teachers are not being treated well at all. Every government that comes have very nice policies and all of them will not take the teachers concerns into consideration. They will come: "Oh we have provided so many infrastructure here, we have provided so many books, we have brought so many this, so many that...." And nothing of a teacher will be mentioned. They will pretend putting some items on: "We have decided to see to the conditions of teachers and make sure that they are motivated enough. That is just said to please some people. And at the end of the day teachers struggle. When you came here, I wasn't here. I had taken a newly posted teacher to me here to town to look for a room.... Not a single teachers' bungalow for teachers to even come and occupy one room – just a single room for him to be in for a while until he gets a bigger place for himself/herself.... All plans being made about education or development of education in Ghana is minus the teacher. Whatever the teacher is going through – how he is going to get accommodation after being posted, how he is going to get fed ... that is never part [of the plan]. Meanwhile, after being posted, his salary will take about 7 months, 8 months, a year before he will start getting his salary. How do you expect the person to rent a room, pay for the room, eat, go to school until that one year that you pay that teacher? I mean that is the worst.... Educational standard is falling because teachers are disgruntled, teachers are disenchanted – they are very sad. That is it; that is it!!

Other remarks came from a teachers' group interview at AfetchMix School. A typical one was:

> *... the salaries of teachers is so meagre. If the salary cannot be increased, there should be other incentives to support the teachers. In fact, the teachers are crying. Both youths cannot get married because they cannot cater for their children. It is embarrassing!! In fact, if you ask the children when they grow up, when they complete the school, what they will be, they will never mention "teacher". Only few; if you take hundred you get one, which is very bad. And we are standing right before them. Why should that be the case? So in fact, teachers must be motivated.* (Teacher: AfetchMix School).

Immediately, a teacher in the group who had been nodding in concurrence exclaimed:

> *Yes. They have to motivate us!!* (Female Teacher: AfetchMix School).

And another teacher in the group added:

> *I want to conclude or add to what he's just said that whoever has taken teaching as his/her profession, the person should be encouraged; they should be motivated. And, may be, let there be a scheme that if you'll be in the system for say five to six years, you'll be given this – motorbike – or anything of that sort. If the person knows that if I only teach for about six or seven years I have this thing as a motivating factor, I think the person will see that as a target. And after six or seven years there is another. A colleague of mine was saying that every person has a birthday in a year. So in the form of motivation, once a year, the person should be paid twice.* (Teacher: AfetchMix School).

For this teacher, all teachers should be motivated. He suggests incentive schemes such as long service rewards, which he feels can motivate teachers to stay longer in the teaching profession. He backs his suggestion with another example of incentive package from a friend, namely the institution of a double pay in a month of every year for all teachers. In actual fact, the issue of lack

of teacher motivation and commitment was a recurring feature in virtually all the interviews I conducted.

In any case, coming back to the issue of INSET, the study has revealed that in spite of the favourable comments about its effectiveness, many teachers are not applying what they gain from it and that, generally, teachers in the urban areas do work hard, as opposed to their rural counterparts.

Again, comments emerged that in general, WSD was failing in both rural and urban areas. As mentioned by Narrator One, not all districts took WSD serious and so its practices seem to be dormant in some areas, be they urban or rural. Further responses even indicate that the systems, structures and practices of WSD seem to have been eclipsed by other educational interventions in certain communities. A CS who speculated that WSD had collapsed gave the following response when he was quizzed to explain why:

> *Actually, I cannot tell why it has faced out. When EQUAL also came into the scene, it looks like there was more emphasis on the coming of EQUAL than some of the issues that WSD brought up and it looks like we have allowed that to patronise with time.* (CS).

This CS expresses his lack of knowledge about the reasons for the collapse of WSD and speculates that WSD is entering into oblivion because EQUAL – a new educational intervention – seems to be overshadowing its activities.

In fact, other responses suggested that it is not EQUAL alone which is eclipsing WSD. One such response came from a CS . When this CS was quizzed about the fate of WSD, she exclaimed:

> *Oh!! It hasn't faded out completely but there are new programmes coming in so it hasn't died off at all. But some of the new programmes have overshadowed the activities of WSD* (CS).

The fact that the activities of WSD are being eclipsed by other educational interventions was confirmed by some teachers in a group interview. These teachers remarked that they have not heard of WSD for some time past:

When it came at first, I think we were invited to attend a course. But after that we have not heard anything again. So everything is collapsing. So I'm thinking that if we are continuously invited to give us more in-service training and we get to know what is going to happen, then is good. But this is not happening (Teacher).

Me, I even thought it has stopped because I haven't heard of it for a long time (Teacher).

Yes, I also thought it has stopped because when they started ... [there were] workshops, supplementary readers [etc] But now we don't even hear of them (Teacher).

I was therefore inclined to conclude at this stage that the systems, structures and practices of WSD are still functioning in many of the schools and communities of the District. However, they are running in tandem with other educational interventions.

The problem however is that, things seem to be reverting to the original state at the time before the introduction of WSD, namely the emergence of proliferation of development partners and their disjointed activities. I have discussed in Chapter Four how these activities were pieced together to create WSD in order to inject greater realism into intervention goals. This seems to have worked as the above responses regarding the factors that account for the survival of the WSD systems, structure and practices suggest. I have also discussed in Chapter One the problems involved in change, in particular the fact that change takes time and that the change can be complex, if not contradictory. There is therefore the possibility that, if the changes that these new educational interventions bring are not well managed, some amount of confusion can arise. As a matter of fact, at the time of the field study, most of the participants raised concerns about the proliferation of reforms in the country and the problems that arise from this. For example, teachers of TownPeople School moaned thus:

There are just too many problems. Because today you will be teaching this and tomorrow they would say there has been a reform. So all

*what you are teaching you have to leave: textbook and those topics –
you have to leave them. And the books they have to bring, they will
never bring those books. Even the new reform that has recently been
introduced, the syllabus, you don't even get them. You have to find
your own way and means of getting the syllabus. So the school has to
go, photocopy the syllabus which the office provided – one for all the
teachers, which cost us. And the textbooks, up till now we have no
textbooks – they have not provided. And this one is affecting the
teachers and the pupils* (Teacher, TownPeople School).

*And the textbooks and the syllabus too, sometimes the textbooks given
are the old ones that sometimes we are compelled to use. They are not
in line with whatever is in the new syllabus. And sometimes too like
this new reforms, as we are saying, they have added this BDT, a
combination of Technical and Home Economics, visual Arts and all
those things. Now we don't have the various teachers in the various
schools. So it is creating a whole lot of problems for teachers.
Sometimes you need to go extra mile to may be do some research on
certain topics as to how to teach it, of which you may not be all that
competent as your own area* (Teacher, TownPeople School).

*Now they have introduced ICT – Information Communication
Technology - where no school has been provided with computer. And
before you can even teach it, you have to be expert. And over here we
have no teacher to handle that. And even we don't even know whether
it is examinable or not. And now the kids are now in Form Two. Next
academic year they will be in Form Three. We don't know whether
they will write or not. And if it comes that they will write, I don't know
what they will write.* (Teacher, TownPeople School).

*I think they have to consult the implementers. You see, we are going to
implement. They've now introduced it. Who are going to implement it?
The teachers and may be other people. So you have to consult them
before you introduce it. Because you will introduce and who are those
to teach? They wouldn't know anything about it. And now they say*

reform, educational what, what, what. If it happens that way we suffer. (Teacher, TownPeople School).

Some participants remarked frustratingly that the politicisation of the country's education is to blame for the proliferation of educational reforms and its accompanying problems. For example, a CS presented hers thus:

Education system in Ghana here, we don't know what the politicians are trying to do. Whenever there is a new government, they bring in a new reform. Instead of them to continue what is there, every government want to introduce something new. So at the end of the day, the teachers get confused, the children get confused and we don't know what to do. Right now when the previous government was there, they said that many of the JHS are not passing, may be because the number of years is too short, so they should increase it to 4 years. But right now, when another government came they said they should go back to 3 years. Meaning teachers who are teaching these children have to do more extra work. If still they want to maintain the 3 years, then they have to come back, cover all the topics that they thought they were going to use 4 years to cover. So it's a tedious work that they are going to give to the teachers, and the children too are going to get confused. And sometimes, if you are not lucky and the teachers say, "O.K., our salary is still what it is and you are not thinking of our salary and you think of implementing, bringing in new reform, we will still teach what we are teaching. At the end of the day the child will suffer. The children will go [for the exam] *and they will not pass. And the parents will suffer.... At the end of the day, if the child doesn't pass, is the parent who is going to pay another fee to a teacher to give another tuition. So ... if they* [that is, governments] *really want a better future for children, they should forget about playing politics with education.*

Others, in presenting their frustration on similar remarks, suggested the institution of a national education policy guideline. For example, Narrator One remarked:

You see? We should stop meddling politics with education. We should have a national policy for education, which would ensure that irrespective of any political persuasion or political group that comes to power, they would still follow the same education policy. Alright. Take the issue of number of years for the secondary school. The question is: is it a change of name from Junior Secondary School to Junior High School that will bring about improvement? When we have problems besieging education delivery, is it the mere change of the name that will solve the problems? Do we have to address the problems or we merely change the name and create more problems? What was wrong with the 3 years? It's all documented alright. How have we addressed them? And then we say we go for 4 years. And did we think of the problems that the 4 years is going to create? Do we have the additional classrooms that will be required by all the 400 plus secondary schools? Have we thought of the new set of textbooks which should be written in the 4 series for the different year groups? Have we even been able to provide for the 3-year group? The syllabus: up till today, no syllabus has been prepared. As far as the teachers are concerned, no syllabus has been prepared. I here know there is a syllabus. But it has not been released to the teachers. And they have not received any training. We were supposed to have provided a training for them ... but because of sponsorship, it has not been done. Now we have written all the manuals and the teacher guides for the use of the new syllabuses and we are expecting that ... if the Ministry is able to raise funds, then we provide the training to the teachers in the Senior High School.

Now let us look at the new curriculum that has been designed. No one is saying that ICT is not good. But with teachers who have no basic knowledge of even how to use the phone, cell phone, and then you are asking them to teach ICT. And in any case our concept of ICT is just this computer only. What are we able to use the computer to do apart from word processing?.... What training, what provision have you made for teachers to enable them do that? And then you have a

syllabus for the Basic and you quickly introduce ICT and ask them to go ahead. How many of the teachers in the field can do it? How many of the teachers themselves are even computer literate, even granting that ICT is nothing but computer as we understand it here? Are you getting what I am trying to say? Mmm? [I do; I do. And are the pupils going to write examination on that?] *Yes; why not? Eh?*

You see, we do the wrong things at the right time. For political reasons we jump into anything, any van wagon that will give us a credit of doing this, this, and that. That is why I say one thing is for the whole country to sit down and have a national policy on education, spelling out the number of years which should be acceptable to any government that comes to power and cannot change it. The only thing you can do is to address the weaknesses of the system. Already we don't have teachers even in basic schools and in the secondary schools. If we move away from 3 years to 4 years, where are we going to get the teachers?.... What guides us is politics. Everything is reduced to politics.... So the policies should actually look at how to address teasing problems within the education system rather than creating more problems. The 4 years is only creating more problems. We need teachers, we need furniture, we need textbooks, O.K? (Narrator One).

Narrator One was even of the opinion that the lack of a succession plans aggravates the problems presented by politicisation and proliferation of education:

Then the other observation I have made ... is that there is no succession plan. And sadly too, people do not leave adequate information on what is taking place, what has been done, what is left to be done. Even handing over notes are much to be desired. The information in handing over notes is scanty at all levels. If you go to the classroom, a teacher leaving a class to another class will not leave any handing over notes to inform the teacher coming to take the class how many people for example can read, how many can work

Mathematics of 2/3 digits etc., what topics have been covered; it is not there. And at the top through to the Director–General, that is not even there. Where they even have scanty notes telling them what to do, any new Director coming into office brings his own ideas. There is no continuity of anything. All that the previous people have done is thrown overboard and a new thing is taken. Similarly the same thing happens when a new Minister comes to office. The only thing they are able to follow are aid memoirs of development partners because the development partners are there to insist and because if they do not follow the development partners, they are not going to get the money they will require for the implementation, they are forced to. But if they had their own way, they would even ignore them. (Narrator One).

Supervision

One issue which could not be left out of consideration, as far as this study is concerned is inspection, or what is usually referred to as supervision. This is because supervision has a key role to play in the twin responsibilities of quality control and quality improvement of education. To ensure that supervision plays this key role in WSD, efforts were made at the time of the implementation of FCUBE and WSD to establish clear guidelines on supervision and inspection for CSs and to equip them with the requisite skills for effective supervision, monitoring and evaluation of schools so as to enable them to offer the needed support to teachers and headteachers (GES: 2002). Among the guidelines, circuit supervisors were expected to visit each of their allocated schools regularly and submit a written report for follow-up. At the time of the field study, a few of the study participants remarked that supervision was going fine. But these favourable comments came from the peri-urban schools. For example, in a group interview of teachers, two of them remarked:

In fact what I would say here is that CSs ... come to supervise and they come to see if we have prepared our notes, if we are delivering. Sometimes they do come and sit - may be when we are teaching, they

observe how we teach and how certain things should go. Sometimes they recommend; they suggest and other things. (Teacher: TownPeople School)

In addition to that sometimes they look at the output of work. They come and sit down and they look through the number of exercises you have given for a certain period of time. (Teacher: TownPeople School)

However, the majority of the study participants expressed contrary feelings. In an electronic interview, one of the policy makers involved in the introduction of WSD in Ghana contended:

For WSD to be effective, it needs to be sited within a strong support network, especially from district level. The great weakness is the feeble role of circuit supervisors in all of this. They are a byword for ineffectiveness, despite their job descriptions encouraging support for exactly this kind of initiative, with its strong quality-enhancement intentions. (WSD Policy Maker)

This contention was shared through a variety of remarks and complaints from other study participants during face-to-face interviews. For example, a complaint presented about a CS by his headteacher in a rural school was:

He's not been visiting the school. That's the only problem that I have. He should visit because the teachers are doing their own thing. They are not cooperating with the head - with me. (HeadTeacher).

As indicated by this headteacher, his teachers do as they like and have not been cooperating with him because of lack of supervision.

Another headteacher of a rural school remarked:

Even though our circuit supervisor is very regular here, in terms of checking actual output of work and taking action, that one is quite of a suspect. He used to come, check on lesson notes: "teacher let me see your lesson notes...." But at the end of the day, that is it!! Whatever

problems he finds, no action is taken and teachers go back to relax
after he has gone. That is the problem. (Headteacher).

This headteacher is complaining about a lack of reporting and follow-up from their circuit supervisors. According to him, he gets regular visits from his circuit supervisor but he suspects a credibility gap between his visits and what supervisory responsibilities demand because the circuit supervisor just comes to the school and pretends to be serious with assessment of teachers' work and thereafter presents no report for the necessary follow-ups to occur. As noted by (Carron and De Grauwe, 1997) the efficacy of supervision services depends greatly on supervision report and follow-up. Regular visits are needed but there is also a need for an intense form of monitoring both during the school visits and thereafter. An immediate feedback to teachers and schoolheads as well as follow-up on the supervision either by giving special attention especially to the needy schools or by informing the relevant authorities about issues that require immediate attention are necessary in order to ensure effective supervision. For a circuit supervisor to visit a school and just demand to see a teacher's lesson notes and then leave without submitting report and making a follow-up on the teacher's work therefore undermines the objectives of school supervision.

There were other comments from other teachers. In a group interview at a rural school, one teacher remarked:

I think supervision from GES is not regular.... So public school
teachers stay a bit relaxed, as compared to private schools. Because
in the private school the proprietor will not allow you to sit down
without doing what you are supposed to do.... (Teacher).

GES is the body responsible for education policy implementation in Ghana. According to the teacher, because supervision from this body is irregular, there is laxity in public schools, as opposed to vigilance in private ones. This adds credence to the statement above that supervisors are a byword for ineffectiveness. However, a teacher in the same group interview mentioned above made a follow-up on the statements presented by his colleagues and

defended supervisors, explaining why supervision in public schools is not as effective as expected:

> *To add something to what he is saying, if you take a private school, may be it's just at one place, so that the proprietor can be at that particular place. But ... our circuit supervisor he has about 10 or 15 schools under his supervision. So how can one person go round? Even the schools are scattered around. So if effective supervision should be made, I suggest more circuit supervisors should be employed. And even the schools that should be allocated to a circuit supervisor should be somehow manageable so that if a day he can go round all the schools, I think that will be better.... So more circuit supervisors should be employed so that a school that should be given to a CS should be somehow manageable. And that can improve supervision of the public schools. (Teacher: TownPeopleEkEfl)*

It is implicit in this teacher's defence and suggestion that supervisors are overloaded with tasks and this is true to a large extent. The fact is, generally, supervisors are known to perform three core functions:

1. inspectorial role (to ensure quality control)
2. liaison role (to transmit decisions taken by the central education decision making body to schools and to inform the former of what happens in the latter) and
3. support and guidance role (to be pedagogical advisers in charge of support, impacting through teachers in order to help maintain and raise standards of performance of pupils by systematically monitoring the instructional processes in schools, guiding teachers to achieve higher teaching standards, and evaluating the teaching-learning processes).

However, studies have shown that besides these, supervisors have other numerous tasks to perform and are used for all sorts of other jobs, some of which have little to do with supervision as such (Carron and De Grauwer, 1997). For example, research results in several European countries highlight the fact that the involvement of supervisors "in so many tasks and activities results in [their] being seen too infrequently in schools...." (Hopes, 1992: 21).

And in developing countries such as Ghana, the need for quantitative expansion of primary and secondary education in the 1960s and 70s has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of teachers and of schools without a corresponding increase in the number of supervisors, thus increasing the workload of CSs.

It therefore stands to reason for this teacher to suggest an increase in the number of supervisors employed. However, there is little doubt that in Ghana financial constraints would militate against such lofty suggestion. At the same time, if the problem of lack of proper supervision is not resolved, it will be difficult for educational reforms to achieve quality improvement in education. It is for this reason that WSD sought to lay emphasis on in-school quality improvement mechanisms and on pushing supervision closer to schools in order to improve the efficiency of the existing external supervisory system through CSs by creating ancillary-oriented supervisory services such as DTSTs, School-based and Cluster-based INSET in between school and district administration levels.

In any case CSs, on their part, expressed the problems they face which make it impossible for them to work as expected and I have discussed this in chapter 5 under the sub-heading 'Transportation difficulty and/or inaccessible roads'. In a nutshell, supervision is not functioning as expected in most of the schools in the rural areas.

Summary and conclusion

I have presented an analysis and discussion of the WSD structures, systems and practices that have survived, why they survive and how well they are working. According to the data, those that have survived are the CG, DTSTs RMTs, DEPTs, School-based and Cluster-based INSETs, the SMCs together with the support of the PTAs, teaching-learning techniques in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving, techniques in the preparation of teaching learning materials and assessment and monitoring systems. The data, in the main, suggest that these structures, systems and practices continue to exist because of the benefits that have been realised from the implementation of

WSD. More importantly, the data suggest that it was something that Ghanaians wanted because it was a reform that was driven by their needs and aspirations. However, how well the structures, systems and practices are working differs from community to community, school to school and circuit to circuit, albeit in the case of CG the degree of effectiveness is the same across the board, except for the problem of inequity due to equal distribution per pupil and a few isolated cases of lack of transparency.

CHAPTER 7

Key findings, reflections, significance, implications, recommendations and conclusions

Introduction

My primary objective for embarking on this study was to ascertain the reasons why in spite of the official ending of WSD, most of its systems, structures and practices remain and to explore which of them remain and how well they are functioning. Consequently, I designed specific questions for the study (see Introduction for the questions).

These questions were essential, at least, at the initial phases of the research process because I needed a conceptual frame that will enable me to strive for thoroughness and explicitness during the data gathering phase. However, this does not mean that I skewed the research process to answer these questions. Rather, I aimed at the contextually-situated knowledge and experiences of the study participants. For this reason, the findings have moved beyond the boundaries set by the questions I designed initially and provided additional significant information such as the causes of the official ending of WSD, which some of the study participants regarded as critical issues that hampered the smooth running of WSD and which, as far as this study is concerned, have helped to offer a holistic understanding of the WSD process and provided an important instrument which could be used for addressing future problems of similar magnitude.

Therefore in this chapter, I have summarised the key findings together with the salient emerging issues and reflected on these in conjunction with the literature. I have then used these to make some recommendations and drawn some conclusions about the study. Besides, as a way of engaging in self-reflection and self-evaluation of the research process, I have discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the research methods and methodologies, taking into account the contextual background of the study. In addition, I have indicated the contributions which I feel this research/thesis has made to

knowledge and captured the need for further studies and potential areas for further research with the key issues that have cropped up from the study.

7.1 Summary of the key findings

The origin, purpose and the implementation

According to the findings, WSD emerged in Ghana out of the necessity to address the country's education system through a process of decentralisation by enhancing the role of the regional and district offices and by involving the active participation of local communities in education delivery and financing with direct funding to schools through the districts. Out of this necessity, the efforts of the development partners who had introduced numerous educational intervention programmes to help improve education in the country were amalgamated through collaborative meetings of consultants, the development partners and personnel from the MoE and the GES. This culminated in the emergence of WSD. To ensure a successful institutionalisation of WSD, its entire aims and objectives as well as its development and organisation and management were geared towards the needs and aspirations of the Ghanaian populace and requisite structures, systems and practices were put in place.

Challenges of the implementation and the collapse

The findings indicate that WSD faced numerous challenges some of which led to its official ending. Those that led to the official ending were lack of commitment on the part of the DEDs and misappropriation of funds by them, lack of cooperation between the DCEs and the DEDs and difficulties relating to donor support and flow of funds. With reference to these challenges, evidence from the study points to the fact that the desire of those in authority to maintain the status quo in favour of their personal interests resulted in the official ending of WSD.

Among the challenges that did not have any direct link with the official ending was lack of parental responsibilities in honouring the educational needs of children. Study participants blamed this on the introduction of public policies and discourses that espouse the goals of free and compulsory education for all by successive governments, claiming that for this reason many parents,

guardians and communities have relegated their children's educational needs to the government. A few of the study participants were sympathetic towards the government and expressed the feeling that there should be cost-sharing in education between the state and parents in order to relieve the former.

Besides, the data reveals deeper problems in the rural areas, which existed even before the emergence of WSD and continued thereafter. In particular, there were articulations of financial constraints of the rural poor parents and of how the educational background of these parents affected their ability to honour their children's educational needs. There were also articulations of unfavourable internal structural features of the rural areas, such as lack and/or weak infrastructure which undermine the learning environment and result in excessive drop-out rate and poor learning outcomes of pupils, with only a few reaching the post-basic education level.

In any case, the study shows that despite the official ending and the challenges, most of the structures, systems and practices have remained.

Structures, systems and practices that remain and why they remain

The study has revealed the existence and use of CG, SPAMs, lead teachers, DTSTs, RMTs, DEPTs, School-based and Cluster-based INSET, techniques in the teaching of literacy, numeracy, problem-solving and in the development and use of teaching and learning materials, as well as the existence of SMCs together with the support of the PTAs.

In terms of the reasons for the survival of the systems, structures and practices, evidence point to the development of strong organisational capacity and a sense of accountability, purpose, responsibility, commitment, professionalism and a change of mind-set during the implementation process. In particular, the mechanisms of ensuring effective and efficient financial management of resources and the special attention that was given to the rural areas in the provision of resources in order to help bridge the gap between them and their urban counterparts have made a tremendous impact. The findings show that the introduction of SPAM has enabled schools to meet their communities to

monitor student achievement and for teachers to take responsibility of their role in student performance and this has promoted access and community participation in the delivery of education at the local level and has been continued by districts that have realised the benefits. School-based and cluster-based INSET activities are still being practised because they have made a positive impact on the level of teacher supervision and support. Human capacity development has been improved at the district level, where education personnel have been sensitised into adapting their operations to address issues relating to school improvement.

Furthermore, through the WSD programme, the Teacher Education Development (TED) of the GES has been supported to train headteachers and DTSTs in order to enhance primary school practices in literacy, numeracy, problem solving as well as preparation of teaching and learning materials. Special training has also been given to headteachers in the use of performance appraisal instruments. Alliance has been struck with NGOs and development partners to provide training for DTSTs, Zonal co-ordinators and circuit supervisors in the promotion of management efficiency (GES: WSD Report, 2004). All these are benefits that cannot be allowed to go waste. Hence, the degree of tenacity relating to the institutionalisation of WSD.

Again, the system of cluster-based and school based INSET, Lead Teachers and DTSTs have thrived because it has developed a sense of strong professional communities that can help teachers develop high expectations of themselves and their learners. The headteachers and teachers emphasised that the INSET offer them opportunities for working within and across schools and is contributing to their professional development. All the schools I visited are still playing an active role in the cluster system of professional development and some have one or two of their teachers as leaders.

The institutionalisation of CG has also made an enormous contribution. As a result of direct funding to schools a range of school and community initiated activities have been facilitated. Schools use the CG to purchase teaching and learning materials as well as supplementary readers. The data reveals that

schools are benefitting from the CG, which ensures direct financial support to them through their municipalities.

At the time of the field study, participants commented that even though WSD has been officially ended, there is a need to be tenacious in relation to its legacy and ensure its improvement because of its benefits. Some made mention of the fact that it has sensitised providers and recipients of education to their responsibilities towards the development of their communities. There was the feeling that WSD is something valuable and those who did not know that it had been ended officially remarked that it has a bright future and so provided there are funds, it must be continued, otherwise things will get worse. In particular, there was a feeling from the study that the structures, systems and processes of WSD were found to be so useful for school improvement strategies that the New Educational Reform, which was introduced by the government under whose regime WSD was officially ended, could not resist the inclination to borrow virtually all of them.

Quite apart from the evidence collected verbally from study participants, documentary evidence suggests that WSD has made a positive impact on primary school achievement. In a World Bank impact evaluation support to primary education in Ghana, which included analysis of the effect of various inputs into the quality of primary school measured in terms of test scores, a national sample that included all children aged between 9 and 15 who had recently attended or at the time of the survey were attending primary school in the locality of residence was drawn. The survey used only children with a minimum of 3 years of schooling. The impact study revealed, among school characteristic variables, that first, a high pupil-teacher ratio is detrimental to English test scores, but involvement in the WSD programme improves them and, second, participation in WSD has positive effects on both English and Mathematics scores (World Bank, 2004b)

In sum, WSD has achieved successes and its systems, structures and processes have survived because of a realisation of their accrued benefits, which meet the needs and aspirations of the Ghanaian populace. Besides, its donor agency – DFID – applied a strategy that was driven by the needs and aspirations of the

populace. And a manifestation of the successes is the improvement in school management and administrative strategies and practices among others.

How well are the structures, systems and practices working?

The data reveal that for CG, when WSD started, it was delivered in a timely way. However, there have been delays in transmission since WSD's official ending. Also, the CG is meagre and equal across the board, irrespective of schools' circumstances, and some headteachers are not transparent with its management. However, schools cooperate thoroughly with their communities in its acquisition and effective use.

With reference to decentralisation, the data show that attempts were made to make WSD a success through a policy of decentralisation. However, this gained unfavourable consequences and eventually WSD was officially ended. Notwithstanding that, elements of decentralisation practices operate at the district and school-community levels, as exemplified in the use of SMCs, SPAMs, DTSTs and CG.

At the school level, in terms of levels of resources, the data show that there is glaring educational inequities at the expense of rural education improvement. Unlike urban schools with virtually all the education resources, most of the schools in the rural areas are resource strapped. The headteachers and teachers complained of under-provisioning of teaching and learning materials and others complained of delivery of materials other than what was ordered. Teachers have difficulty in teaching subjects in the field of technology because of lack of practical equipment such as computers.

Many of the schools in the rural areas complained of poor performance of pupils and attributed this to poverty, conditions at home and lack of parental support and care. The lack of resources such as electricity and water in the rural areas, as complained by the study participants, also has impact on the performance of the learners. What is worst is the problem of transferring teachers to villages as punishment. There were complaints about the transfer of decadent and incompetent teachers from the urban to the rural schools as punishment. This, as intimated by the teachers, needs to stop.

In terms of community involvement, communities vary in their nature and support to their schools. According to the data, some schools feel supported by their communities while others do not. However, it emerged that one of the schools in the rural areas is able to achieve good examination results because the teachers and the SMC/PTA are committed and dedicated and they lay emphasis on work ethics. Teachers devote extra time to teaching and assessment. Learners are motivated by parents and the SMC/PTA are prepared to give extra time to studying. The teachers, together with the SMC/PTA and the learners, have a sense of responsibility in working towards the common purpose of achieving good results. For the community members, the sense of commitment moved beyond the boundaries of simply being SMC/PTA members to the larger goal of contributing to the village's future.

Weak supervision from CSs was another thing that some of the schools in the rural areas complained of. CSs, on their part, complained of problems of transportation to the schools and teacher lateness and absenteeism and attributed these to weak infrastructure.

7.2(a) Reflections on the literature and the findings
Policy, change and educational reforms

The literature on policy and change, generally speaking, go across all educational reforms. Any educational reform entails the development of policy and policy arises from antecedents and pressures – economic, social and political factors including the role of pressure groups and social movements. This study has shown that WSD in Ghana arose from socio-political environment and that its overarching aims and objectives were formulated within this environment. According to the findings, the desire for quality improvement in education delivery and administration arose because *performance of pupils had reached its lowest ebb; teachers' output of work was too terrible – too bad. Teachers were simply not working.* [There was the need for] *something that would revamp the enthusiasm and the commitment of teachers....* (Narrator One). The lack of teacher commitment and enthusiasm, as the findings indicate, is the result of lack of economic motivation, albeit the professional development of the teachers was also essential, not only for the

teachers but the country as a whole. So teachers, in a way, acted as a pressure group. I have mentioned in chapter 2 how the trajectory of education policy texts of the country was influenced by socio-economic and political events. And Narrator One has also explained in chapter 4 how the 1992 constitution of the country influenced the development of WSD . Thus, issues of policy, change and reform are intertwined.

Besides, issues about the aims and objectives and the values of the WSD policy, whether WSD requires a particular action and if so what type of action and who is responsible for taking the action, emerge in the study. With the WSD, its aims and objectives were defined and structures and systems were developed for its successful implementation. The process of decentralisation centred on building strong organisational capacity at the district levels in order to enhance management and administrative practices at these levels. It also involved local communities in the delivery of education and funding schools directly through their districts with the support and vigilance of the local communities. An important observation over here is that the founders aimed at cultivating organisational cultures or mindsets that would support hard work and instil competence and confidence at the implementation level. Such aims require discussions, negotiation and compromises arising from the needs and aspirations of both donors and receivers rather than unilateral decisions. Consequently, decisions about why WSD was to be embarked upon, what to do to ensure its success, when to do it, how to do it, and with whom, were all considered unanimously. Ghana did not have the money for implementing WSD. It needed the financial support of donor agencies and it got the support. Notwithstanding that all decisions were driven by the needs and aspirations of the local populace rather the dictates of the donors.

Another important observation concerns the zeal of WSD in helping to address the challenges posed by local specificities. Educational reforms can have some potential benefits for the nation if pursued in a manner whereby policies are driven primarily by the urge to meet local needs and concerns rather than by the desires of the donors and the desire to make the state economy more competitive in the global market. Dei argues: "if education is to be a crucial partner in [the] task of community survival and social viability then it must be

education that responds to the needs of the times. It must be education that is not afraid to address local people's needs, concerns and aspirations as a necessary entry point to the integration of local communities in the global network of nations" (2004: 3). Thus, educational policies and practices need to be appropriately contextualised in local human conditions and social realities. There is a need for plans that recognise the challenges posed by local specificities and would help to resolve the local economic and socio-environmental hardships of the rural poor. WSD aimed at such plans.

However, the study has shown that currently, there is no consideration for the poor in the use of CG. As stated in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the 1961 Education Act legalised the introduction of compulsory education and to enable those incapable of paying fees to attend and to meet the government's most pressing need of providing sound primary education for every child of school-going age, the Act introduced fee-free primary education, albeit parents still had to pay for books (except in the North where more encouragement had to be given for school attendance without any form of fees).

When FCUBE and WSD were introduced, the issue of free and compulsory universal basic education became paramount among their objectives. However, at the time of the introduction of the reforms, the economic situation had forced the government to allow District Assemblies to charge levies so as to raise funds for carrying out school quality improvement activities such as school repairs, cultural and sporting activities. Thus, pupils had to pay fees, albeit not tuition fees, for attending school. However, these levies/fees had the effect of deterring many families, particularly the poorest from sending their children to school. Thus, it was in order to minimise the financial barriers of the poor families that CG was introduced. Now that it is being offered on an equal basis, there is no guarantee of a relief to the poor and the needy because as this study has revealed, pupils still bear several direct costs of education, including the cost of stationery - exercise books, pens and pencils. These are small costs which the rural poor and/or the disadvantaged find difficult to afford. There is evidence in this study about suggestions for cost sharing in education between parents and the government. However, the plight of the

rural poor and/or the disadvantaged needs to be considered if a realisation of the desire for increase in access to education is to be achieved.

Management of educational change

The literature reveals that change is complex and difficult to manage and understand (Fullan, 2001). It is viewed differently by different participants and therefore results in a range of responses (Morrison, 1998). This is particularly so in educational change because it involves numerous and varied stakeholders. To achieve success with educational change therefore, the process requires adequate time, support and continuous review to gauge successes. The data show that enough time was allowed for the WSD policy to develop and get implemented and stakeholders at the implementation level were sensitised and given training and appropriate structures and systems were developed. This is a practice that greatly impacted on the successes of WSD because it is unlikely that the expected outcome of policies would be realised if single or limited multiple interventions were used as means of trying to improve education indicators and quality and learning outcomes. Contextual socio-economic factors are far stronger variables affecting outcome and it is important to recognise this in order to ensure greater realism into whatever is proposed. For the WSD, adequate timescale was required, so also was the need for a sophisticated understanding of the context and the entire delivery chain. In particular, there was the need to pay attention to the institutional constraints that impact on central government policy decisions and to the incentive constraints that influence different layers of government agencies and officials who implement a given policy. There was also the need to consider the actions of ultimate users and beneficiaries such as learners and parents. It appears that the time that was allowed for developing, introducing and piloting WSD and for providing training for capacity building greatly impacted on the ability to sustain the reform efforts and this injected successes into the implementation process.

With reference to the challenges, differences in the implementation emerged because of different interpretations that were given to the policy at the implementation stage in view of competing interests, sets of values and unique

conditions of institutions. WSD developed stringent measures to check all forms of abuses in order to ensure successes but there were some who could not contain the stringent measures because of their peculiar circumstances.

Besides, in a country in which decentralisation is weak, a reform such as WSD which sought to apply stringent measures that were intended to ensure the success of building strong organisational capacity at the district and school levels would not be far from failure because it might not get the state's strong support and commitment. This had a very great unfavourable impact on WSD and contributed to its official ending.

In effect, the power of actors surfaces in the study: WSD Team managed to enforce discipline in the system. Notwithstanding that it was officially ended by a new Director-General of Education operating under a new government that took power from the government under whose regime WSD started. Thus, local conditions have influenced WSD and caused its abrupt ending. In many ways, therefore, the data from this study support Bleiklie's (2000), Ozga's (2000), Bell and Stevenson's (2006) and many others' views of policy as a product and a process because policy involves a constant struggle; a continual push and pull rather than just a mechanical application of means by policy designers in order to achieve a given objective. In particular, education policy involves a host of participants including Education Ministers, Education Directors, teachers, school inspectors, parents and students and so it entails a political process in which competing groups, interests and ideologies struggle over the shape of policy both at the formulation and implementation phases. WSD was subjected to continual push and pull both at the formulation stage (because decisions about why, what, how and when it was to be embarked upon were arrived at through various meetings in order to arrive at a consensus) and at the implementation stage (because actors with access to power decisively shaped the policy implementation process, which eventually led to its abrupt ending).

However, there have been successes. Cluster-based and school-based INSET, Lead Teachers and DTSTs have thrived because of their positive influence on teachers' collaboration and professional development and on learners. I have

made reference in chapter 6 to McLaughlin and Talbert's (2001) study about teacher's work through their study of teacher professional communities in a sample of schools in the United States in which the authors illustrated the importance of the cultural and institutional forms of teachers' work. In the context of WSD in Ghana, the cluster system of professional development was a way of building strong communities among teachers who could then share knowledge about subject content and pedagogical knowledge. It was also a way of having shared norms and values and reflective dialogue around improving learners' learning. Thus WSD has enabled schools to operate as professional learning communities in which teachers could work collaboratively in different ways to improve their knowledge-base in their subjects and thus improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The data on CG provide an understanding of how beneficial funding provided direct to schools can be: placing funding into the hands of the users direct has initiated a difference to the way embezzlement and misappropriation is managed and the way communities perceive their role in the education of their children as they strive to give the children a better future.

Decentralisation

With reference to the use of decentralisation as a tool for embarking on the successful implementation WSD, the data has shown that indeed, as argued by Dunn *et al* (2007), it is much easier to introduce decentralised structures than to change mindset, work culture, the culture of political patronage, and improve accountability and levels of resources. Attempts were made through the use of checks and balances intended to institute accountability, transparency, a sense of discipline and confidence and to break the long-established interests that defend and protect the status quo for the benefits gained so as to create a strong organisational capacity at the district and school levels and to help improve education quality. But the attempts gained unfavourable consequences and eventually WSD was officially ended. However, WSD is still being practised despite the introduction of the New Educational Reform because of a realisation of its constructive contributions. Thus, Ghanaians wish to have the kind of educational reform that can make a

constructive contribution to their lives but the problem is how to withstand the sacrifices that go with it.

The problems at the school level in rural areas are a manifestation of the continued educational inequities, particularly in terms of access and outcomes. The lack of resources such as electricity and water in the rural areas has impact on the performance of the learners. There is therefore a need for plans that recognise the challenges posed by local specificities and would help to resolve the local economic and socio-environmental hardships of the rural poor. Many of the problems have been long standing. However, others can be attributed to the dismal failure of successive governments to change the existing system to enable it to help battle the poverty, social misery and material deprivation of the rural folks. Indeed, problems of budgetary constraints cannot be overlooked. Nonetheless, there is a need to devise means of improving the material conditions of the rural areas.

In terms of teaching and learning, what is exacerbating the predicament of the rural areas is the problem of transferring teachers to villages as punishment. The findings point to complaints about the transfer of decadent and incompetent teachers from urban to rural schools as punishment. This needs to stop.

One significant issue that needs reflecting on is that despite the long standing structural problems that militate against teaching and learning in rural areas, one of the schools in the rural areas is able to achieve good examination results. The data attributes this to commitment and dedication and emphasis on work ethic. This is a proof of what can be achieved through commitment and a sense of responsibility. If this school and others that are performing well are to continue to achieve good results or to improve generally, then appropriate mechanisms would need to be instituted to enable them to have access to adequate resources – both human and material.

Adequate and quality supervision/inspection was another thing that some of the schools, particularly those in the rural areas were lacking and complained about. The schools need inspection, advice and follow-up on reports. Without

these, a significant part of the systematic accountability and improvement system in education will be lacking and success with battling the problems of the rural folks will be difficult to achieve.

Thus there is the tendency for educational reforms in Ghana to succeed if attempts are made to develop a vision of educational delivery, financing and management that benefits the entire populace rather than a minority of individuals and if efforts are made to minimise, if not eradicate, the established interests that defend the 'status quo' for the benefits gained. As the responses show, achieving this in Ghana demands political will and a change of mind-sets that support commitment, a sense of purpose, hard work, the setting of worthy examples and the pursuit of appropriate development priorities by those at the helm of national affairs. These qualities seem not to have been exhibited by those at the helm of affairs, as suggested in the responses. There is a need for improvement in education quality, access and participation. But there is also a need for "a vision of education that promotes structural change informed by the lessons and resilience of local people's knowledge of their place in the world and what is seen as the collective responsibility of everyone" (Dei, 2004: 2). Without these, reforms will not be too far away from failure.

School effectiveness and improvement vis-a-vis policy and educational reforms

I have illustrated in chapter 1 how, in general terms, the literature on school effectiveness and improvement goes across effectiveness and improvement traditions as well as a range of policy, macro- and micro- positions and pointed out that even though a note of caution is necessary when applying international literature in Ghana, it could be said with some degree of certainty that the literature is capable of offering many insights for working to improve schools in Ghana, especially in the rural areas. I have gone further to provide elucidations on this. I have also provided from the data a discussion of the problems of quantity and quality of infrastructure and educational resources in the rural areas. In sum, the literature has implications for the delivery and financing of education in Ghana in terms of equity and efficiency, considering

that all students have to write the same examination irrespective of the degree of their problems relating to availability and quality of resources. Unless there are targeted interventions to address the problems, there is very little that educational reforms can do to bridge the achievement gap between pupils from the rural areas and their urban counterparts.

There has been a longstanding government commitment to improve basic education. Yet, conditions in most rural basic schools remain appalling. As I have noted earlier, there is a need for plans that recognise the challenges posed by rural specificities and that can help to resolve the local economic and socio-environmental hardships of the rural poor. Indeed many of the problems of the rural areas have existed for ages. However, others can be attributed to the dismal failure of successive governments to change the existing system to enable it to help battle the poverty, social misery and material deprivation of the rural folks. Curle says the following about the failure of governments who neglect the underprivileged:

> ... many ... governments have been more or less neglectful of considerable proportions of their population. The reason has by no means always been consciously selfish. Perhaps more often it has been felt that the 'common people' did not 'count', or that education, social services, and political privileges would not 'do them any good', or that they would prefer to be 'left as they were', or that it was just too difficult to do anything about them. The progress of these countries continues, therefore, to be hindered by the fetter of a great illiterate, non-contributory mass, just as a prisoner's escape is hampered by the iron ball chained to his leg. The governing classes, however, may be affluent and contented (Curle, 1963: 28).

For Curle then, the concept of the need to maintain the status quo in favour of the self-interests and the personal benefits gained and through which improvement in educational quality and the general welfare of the rural poor and the disadvantaged is still-born, needs to be widened to include the concept of these poor and disadvantaged ones through which plans that are likely to help resolve their socio-economic and their general environmental hardships could develop. Despite unprecedented international aids such as those which came from development partners mentioned in Chapter 4, too little

improvement in educational quality and the socio-economic and general environmental conditions of the rural areas has occurred. Lack of improvement in the general well-being of the rural poor may only serve to widen the gap between the rich and the poor to the detriment of future developmental possibilities in general.

Furthermore, issues of politicisation of education and frequent reforms have emerged in the study and this also draws attention to the literature on school improvement studies. This literature contributes to knowledge about the complexities of working with schools as social institutions. It shows that change is difficult to effect and sustain and that school culture is an important element to pay attention to when effecting school change because of its immense influence on school performance. Bitter concerns were raised by study participants about the politicisation of education and frequent changes in the education system but the assumption that school change takes time and that the change can be complex, if not contradictory, is something worth giving careful attention. Fullan (2000) notes that changing a primary school can take three years and a secondary school five, depending on the size and complexity of the school. And the change will involve structures and culture of the school. The latter is even more difficult to change because factors such as the nature of leadership and teachers' capacity to execute the desired changes, as well as their professional judgement that the change will be better than what currently exists need to be given attention. Yet, as I have noted in Chapter 2, educational reforms occur in Ghana time and again with unrealised intended outcomes and one wonders whether any attention is paid to the problems involved in change.

Improvement in educational quality cannot be achieved without the right leadership, teachers' capacity to execute the desired changes and without the right kind of mind-set, work culture, accountability, discipline and transparency that education quality requires.

Self-reflection and evaluation of the research methods and methodology

Strengths and limitations of the research methods and methodologies

The first strength of the study relates to the research design I used and the opportunity it afforded me. I used a case study design which application involves a holistic, in-depth investigation and tends to focus on multi-perspective analysis. Be they single or multiple, case studies allow the collection of data from multiple sources and thus offer the opportunity to elicit information from the viewpoint of a wide spectrum of people. My use of case study therefore created room for me not only to do a holistic and an in-depth study but also to expand my sample to cover a wide spectrum of policy implementers from a local area – the DED, CSs, headteachers, teachers and community members. This in turn helped me to broaden the dimensions of the issues I investigated and to consider the degree of interaction and understanding among the participants and thus learn further lessons from them.

The second strength emerges from my use of face-to-face interviews. My major concern, whilst selecting a research method for the study was to obtain in-depth, reliable and quality data. Consequently, I adopted a broad, flexible and interactive approach that can build rapport and trust and put the participants at the central point of the study and advance the frontier of knowledge of the issues under investigation in particular and other relevant issues in general. Thus, my use of face-to-face interviews allowed me to have close personal contacts and to explore issues at a much deeper level and obtain valuable insights into issues than could have been possible through a remote approach such as the use of questionnaire.

However, interview usage attracts questions of trustworthiness and authenticity for various reasons including the possibility of the researcher influencing the researched either wittingly or unwittingly in some direction that would distort their accounts. This could happen because of the researcher having some personal views, knowledge, attitudes and values. However, what

is of paramount importance is the degree to which the researcher manages such personal values in order to minimise the influence of the research process and, thus minimise, if not possible to avoid, bias. Thus, in order to avoid bias, no one other than myself devised the interview schedules, and I constructed the interview schedules in a way that reflects my reading and my own experience. Moreover, during the interviews, I made my position as a researcher clear to the interviewees and avoided leading questions or any reactions to responses that might trigger bias. Furthermore, during the interviews, I made conscious efforts to allow interviewees to discuss their feelings freely, for example, by assuring them of confidentiality. In addition, in the reporting phase of the research, I ensured participants' anonymity by using pseudonyms.

Notwithstanding that, because the study involves a complex situation, especially in terms of my position as a researcher and the phenomenon that I put under investigation, some elements of bias or reactivity must have sneaked into the research process. 'Reactivity' is a term "used to describe the unintended effects of the researcher on the outcomes of the study" (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994: 155). For this case study, reactivity must have occurred because firstly, I began the study with the feeling that education may not be operating as expected in the rural areas and, secondly, the inclination to make a personal contribution to some responses was something very difficult for me to resist. Besides, I must have been viewed as a representative from the MoE or someone in a higher authority/position and so some problems of power relations must have operated stealthily. However, I have made all efforts to maximise the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study and to minimise errors or biases by presenting a detailed account to study participants about the focus and purpose of the study, my positionality in the study, the position of the study participants and the basis for their selection as well as the context from which I generated the data. And I have resorted to the use of triangulation and provided a detailed account of the strategies I used for data collection and analysis to help establish a clear and accurate picture of the methods and methodology for the study.

Significance and uniqueness of the study and its relevance

The data shows that the experience of Ghana in terms of difficulties relating to educational reform implementation is similar in many ways to that of other developing countries. Problems of weak infrastructure and poverty in rural areas which present difficulties in reform implementation have been noted. In particular, Havelock and Huberman (1977) have attested to the fact that most of the large scale educational reforms sponsored by the United Nations run into serious implementation problems such as problems arising from personalities and behaviour of those involved in the implementation process as well as inadequate resources, financial problems and opposition from key groups in society. The data shows that these problems have been encountered in Ghana as well.

Coming down to the national level, the case study district for this study parallels other districts in the country in similar circumstances. The district clearly has many unique features as an example of a disadvantaged district that implemented WSD and still has WSD's systems, structures and practices in place. It is among the poor districts in Ghana, albeit geographically, it is quite close to the richest districts in the country. Therefore this case study has in a way developed in-depth situated knowledge which is unique to this particular context but, at the same time, it has enabled lessons to be learnt which may be applied across the country as a whole and indeed in the wider (global) education system.

Besides, the research took the form of a case study of a semi-rural district and so it was possible to draw some tentative conclusions in relation to the views of the study sample participants in the district. The district contains few semi-urban towns and many rural villages. It is located in a region with a sizeable percentage of the Basic Education resources of the country and, at the same time, with a fair share of rural communities in which educational standards, particularly at the Basic Education level, are fairly low. This allowed for the

emergence of significant differences in terms of equity and efficiency in the delivery of education in urban and rural areas.

The study is, on the whole, different from other research because, for example, unlike Akyeampong's (2004) and Pryor's (2005) which do not deal with the collapse of WSD, this study has attempted in one case study to investigate the same reform, explaining why and how it was founded, how it was implemented, why it was officially ended and why despite its official ending, most aspects of the reform remain and how well those that have remained are functioning. The study also combines and collects different sets of data on local conditions and on different stakeholders and examines the professional situations of circuit supervisors, headteachers and teachers and the context in which these professionals work as they strive to ensure the success of educational reforms.

Thus, with issues of uniqueness aside, the present study shows that it takes a series of related and sustainable interventions to achieve reform policy objectives. The findings of the study therefore support the view of Fullan (1993) that single-factor theories do not yield success because effective implementation depends on a combination of factors that reinforce or undercut each other as an interrelated system. In sum, it is important to locate and explain how different factors function. The study thus sits well with Elmore (1995) that it is important to first understand what makes people or organisations change their values, attitudes and beliefs and then work backwards to find appropriate supportive structures, systems and strategies in order to effect a successful organisational change.

In sum, there have been few systematic qualitative interview research studies on how educational providers, deliverers and receivers in rural areas understand and assess educational reforms and its benefits, challenges, limitations and the ways to enhance educational quality. This research adds to the collection of such work in order to help offer opportunities for the benefits, challenges, limitations and ways to improve the educational system in the country.

Contribution of the study to knowledge

The study provides a greater understanding of the educational and social needs of schools in rural communities in a country undergoing rapid and radical school reforms. Through this study, I have revealed the impoverished conditions under which rural communities and their schools live and in which they have to cope with the challenging demands of educational reforms and thus provided a unique insight into the extent of the gap between the rural and the urban schools. Only a few such research studies have been carried out in the district I chose for the study and so this study makes a contribution in that regard.

The study has also enabled me to develop further insights into the professional lives and views of teachers working in rural and disadvantaged schools under pressures of demands of rapid and radical educational change. The study thus portrays what it is like to be a teacher in a rural and disadvantaged school and thus provides thick descriptions of the lived experiences of the teachers as well as their thoughts about, and feeling for, their work situation in periods of rapid educational changes.

In addition, even though the research took the form of a case study and has therefore helped to develop an in-depth situated knowledge that is unique to a particular context, it has allowed some lessons to be learnt, which might be quite applicable across educational systems not only in Ghana but also in other developing countries. Indeed contextual differences can impact on research findings. Nonetheless, my experience in rural areas of Ghana suggests that many of the findings are not unique to the rural and disadvantaged schools in the district in particular and the country as a whole. The findings thus provide a platform for the purposes of setting future research questions and a stepping-stone for embarking on an extended future study.

However, the generalisation of the study is limited because obviously, confining a study to a small number of rural schools and their communities in

one district cannot provide a picture that is a replica of other districts. In any case, my intention was to study in depth a sample of schools and their communities from a single district in order to learn and understand their situation and then use the lessons learnt as a step forward for posing further research questions and for developing policy recommendations.

Moreover, the study demonstrates how local conditions can impact on educational reforms such as WSD and produce unintended consequences. The findings show that at the macro (national) level, social (human) factors caused the collapse of WSD. And at the micro (local-community) levels both human and physical conditions create impediments in the smooth operation of the WSD systems, structures and practices that have survived.

Furthermore, the study makes an important contribution to the management of change. It is evident from the findings that timely reviews and feedback on educational reforms to gauge their successful implementation can impact favourably on their intended outcomes. The amount of time allowed for the development, introduction and institutionalisation of WSD has contributed immensely to the survival of its systems, structures and practices, despite its official ending.

Further still he study helps to answer the question "How can developing states be supported to help themselves and take more accountability?" It traces the source, aims and objectives of WSD and the change in donor support strategy for developing countries. Educational reforms in Ghana have usually been engineered by external bodies such as the World Bank and the money for their funding has usually been directed into the coffers of the central government. Such reforms eventually fail for reasons including the fact that they are not driven by the needs and aspirations of the local populace. With the WSD, the idea together with its reasons, emanated from Ghanaians themselves and money for its funding went directly to schools through their districts. This has contributed immensely to the survival of its systems, structures and practices. Thus, the findings of this study prove that placing resources directly into the hands of 'users' can empower and strengthen the capacity of communities to

play a more direct role in the management of their schools and increase the demand for improved provision and delivery of educational services.

Closely related to this is a contribution in terms of the need to develop a vision of educational delivery, financing and management that benefits the entire populace rather than minority individuals. The study shows that there is a need to minimise, if not eradicate, the established interests that defend the 'status quo' for the benefits gained. In particular, the study shows that there is a need for a change of mindset that supports commitment, a sense of purpose, accountability, hard work and a display of leadership qualities worthy of emulation by those at the helm of national affairs, if educational quality is to be achieved. As argued by Dei, "such measures as public accountability, improved economic efficiency in the public sector, rational allocation of resources and cutting unnecessary government waste and spending are relevant for improving the nation's educational system. But it requires ... the setting of worthy examples ... by those at the helm of national affairs" (2004 :48). Thus rational plans for quality improvement in education and behaviour worthy of emulation seem to be subordinated to political actions aimed at maintaining the essential elements of political patronage. This does not auger well for the advancement of the country and a contribution of the findings of the study is the evidence it provides for the possibility of the negative outcomes of up and coming educational policies if such behaviour continues to be nurtured.

7.5 Implications

In my opinion, the fact that WSD has succeeded in leaving indelible traits has implications for future educational reforms in particular and for improvement in educational quality in general. I therefore use this section to draw out some implications.

Implications for future educational reforms

Institution of policy guidelines for succession plans

It is evident from the study that there is no succession plan at the policymaking and implementation levels and so all that the predecessors have done is thrown overboard and a new thing is begun. The resultant effect is the abandoning of projects or programmes which otherwise would have produced profitable results. A useful way of ending this and ensuring the continuity of worthwhile programmes left by predecessors is the institution of succession plans. The plan needs to embody adequate information on the aims and objectives of the programme yet to be taken over by the successor, what has been done, how and when it was done, what is currently being done, how it is being done, when it is expected to be completed, what is left to be done, how it is to be done and when it is expected to finish. However, the plan need not be a rigid instrument for achieving completion and success. This is because prevailing conditions might impact on the programme and produce unintended decisions such as postponements and the modes of completion. Nonetheless, what is important for a plan of this nature is to equip successors with the relevant information which, if it cannot be followed, can act as a guide for ensuring continuity of worthwhile programmes and completing them successfully.

Implications of the study for further research

This study has revealed pertinent issues all of which impact on the delivery and financing of education in the country. However, specific questions on all of them were not captured in the mainstream investigation because all of them cannot be sufficiently investigated in a single study such as this and therefore further research explorations on them are needed to help cope with the problems of educational delivery and financing, especially at a time of major educational reforms. A number of key questions therefore emerge for future research. Among the prominent ones are the following:

1. How far are the views raised at the implementation level (in response to the research questions for this study) representative of other rural districts?

2. How far are the views raised at the implementation level about the constraining factors in the rural areas replicated in well-endowed urban school environments?

3. Which of the WSD systems, structures and practices are good and therefore have to be maintained and why and vice versa?

4. Given that a much fuller decentralisation of education in Ghana has currently been embarked upon, what is the nature of the current relationship between the District Assemblies, DCEs and DEDs in the current system of educational decentralisation in Ghana?

5. Given that a proliferation of development partners with disjointed activities is emerging once again in the country, how can their efforts be amalgamated to inject greater realism into the objectives of their educational interventions?

I would suggest the following approaches for investigating the questions:

A comparative study with a wider sample from other rural or peri-urban districts of Ghana might be used for question 1. Again, a comparative study of rural and urban districs with a wide sample from both districts would be appropriate for question 2. In both cases, the approach could take the form of a wider questionnaire study or a more extensive study. The results will help to, among other things, provide insights into the factors that impede the smooth operation of the systems, structures and practices of WSD in other districts. Again, the results would help to ascertain how well the systems, structures and practices are functioning in other districts. For question 3, group discussions in workshop sessions of teachers and/or headteachers might be appropriate. Participants could be given the opportunity to discuss and present their views on this. Question 4 could also take the form of a comparative study. Besides, a case study approach might be suitable for questions 1 to 4, albeit the findings might not be representative of other districts. Finally, for question 5, interviews with the development partners and policy makers in the MoE and GES might be suitable.

7.6 Recommendations

I have indicated above the need for the institution of a succession plan. While waiting for this, it might be worth considering the following recommendations which have emerged from the study.

Teacher availability, accommodation, absenteeism and lateness in the rural areas

There were frequent references to problems of a lack of teachers of the right calibre, and in some cases a lack of teachers, teacher lateness, teacher absenteeism and teacher accommodation problems in the rural areas. These were traced to weak infrastructure in such areas, which prevents teachers from living there. Improvement in the infrastructure might induce teachers to work there. It might be worth beginning to ease the problem by embarking on on-going building of teachers' quarters in rural areas to help with teacher accommodation. This may ease the problem of teacher lateness to school since most of the teachers do not want to live in the rural areas or villages because of lack of accommodation and therefore commute to school from the towns where they have accommodation.

Teacher motivation

Issues of teacher motivation occur frequently in the findings. Request for teacher incentives was made by almost every participant at the implementation level, with particular reference to money. In order to sustain the teaching force the problem of teacher salaries need addressing. It is my recommendation that a committee be formed to review teachers' conditions of service so as to increase teachers' salaries and develop attractive incentive packages designed to suit their promotion and career development. This is likely to motivate teachers to remain in the teaching profession.

Also, the present scheme of rewarding excellence, professionalism and dedication of teachers through the Annual Best Teacher Awards scheme to the teaching profession at the Basic Education level needs to be sustained without

leaving teachers in rural areas out of consideration. Fees payment or, at least, part of it for teachers who would like to embark on further studies would be desirable because it is more likely to assist them to be more reflective in their teaching practices as they endeavour to apply the knowledge and skills they gain through further studies in a more practical sense and to the context in which they work. In addition it is likely to motivate them or at least some of them to remain in the profession.

Resources

The findings indicate that most schools in the rural areas lack adequate textbooks. A timely supply and distribution of teaching and learning materials such as syllabi and textbooks is recommended to enable teachers to work as is expected of them. The differences in terms of the quality and quantity of resources between rural and urban schools have different impacts on the educational achievement of pupils. Most of the rural schools in the district are operating under poor conditions and there is a wide discrepancy in teaching and learning conditions across pupils in the district. Hence, for the effective implementation of future educational reforms and improvement in education across the country, there is a need to adopt varying support structures that can enable schools in rural communities to perform as expected. In the interim, as already mentioned, there is a need for the mobilization of a large number of incentive packages and continued professional support for CS, headteachers and teachers, who work in the disadvantaged schools, in order to attract more teachers to these schools. Living conditions in rural areas are generally poor, and so teachers are unwilling to stay there and work. There is a need for mobilization of resources that will improve on the living conditions of the rural areas. An ongoing building of classroom blocks and adequate provision of furniture in the rural areas is necessary to enhance the teaching-learning process in those areas.

Professional development of teachers through collaboration

WSD has encouraged collaborative learning or professional learning communities through the school-based and cluster-based INSETs in which teachers work together to accomplish good practices. This is critical to

teachers' professional development and needs to be sustained because professional learning communities can create opportunities for teachers to collaborate and help one another to achieve their purpose. In addition to this, the institutionalization of mentoring in schools needs to be given the boost it requires so as to help facilitate the sharing of experiences and evidence of good practice among staff members. The findings show that already, teachers value a collaborative culture and so this may be fostered through the promotion of action research in local schools and thus encourage a culture in which teachers can experiment and be engaged in their own process of reflection in order to encourage and sustain reform practices.

Supervision/Inspection

The data point to problems of weak supervision in rural areas. Among the reasons were a reduction of supervision to window dressing by CSs, lack of reporting and follow-ups and lack of transportation difficulty which makes it difficult for CSs to get to the schools for supervision. There is a need to ensure that there is adequate and quality supervision as well as reporting and follow-ups. This would require improvement in the working conditions of supervisors and the provision of appropriate database that will assist them to select schools and teachers that require a more intensive monitoring. A more-structured form of follow-up would also be required to ensure that proper reporting and follow-ups are done.

Communication

In all the group interviews, the teachers mentioned that the introduction of multiple educational interventions creates confusion for them in terms of contents and teaching techniques and this suggests a need for national meetings that focus on appropriate and specific educational interventions for teaching and learning. One way of doing this is through the school-based and cluster-based system of INSET. Another way is through workshop-type and through cross-representation on committees and by regular staff liaison. In all cases, the experience and learning of teachers could be accessed and through this, problems of confusion may be addressed.

The study shows that information about the introduction of new educational interventions is not communicated to teachers. Teachers get to know that there has been a new educational intervention only when instructions and guidelines arrive at the time of the implementation of the intervention. This is a major problem for them, particularly for those in the rural areas where the infrastructure leaves teachers isolated. The findings suggest a strong sense of collegiality among most teachers and this in turn suggests that the teachers are receptive to collaboration and working together. This could be an important channel through which communication and support strategies can be effected.

WSD was able to establish a reasonable amount of communication between teachers, Lead Teachers and DTSTs through the school-based and cluster system of INSET. This is something that is worth continuing because institutions in the same district ought not to operate in isolation. There is a need to facilitate regular channels of communication and this calls for broad-based and bottom-up and bottom-down communication in order to ensure that the leadership groups understand teachers' views and the problems they are facing in their local contexts.

Coping with problems of introduction of new curricula and syllabi

According to the data, most of the teachers have very little, if no, knowledge and skills in IT and yet they are expected to teach it. The creation of knowledge base in IT through relevant research for teacher education is therefore recommended so as to make the education of teachers more relevant to meet the demands and challenges of not only IT but also all other subjects. This could be enhanced by re-designing teacher preparation programmes to enable the theories and the skills gained by trainees in their training institutions to be effectively linked and applied to their fields of practice.

External support

Evidence from the study suggests that the proliferation of educational intervention activities which existed prior to the formation of WSD (see Chapter 4) has emerged once again and this has resulted in fragmentation and

duplication of some donor projects in the district and is creating confusion in the minds of some of the teachers and impacting unfavourably on their teaching. Indeed donor agencies have obligations to their own governments and are justifiably restricted by their own interests and regulations by the kinds of assistance they can offer and under what terms (Kandingdi, 2004). However, the MoE also has the obligation to prevent the confusion being created in order to ensure effective teaching and therefore effective coordination of the activities of the donor agencies. The donor agencies have knowledge and experience in policy formulation and implementation and so provided they are ready to share their experience in a spirit of partnership and collegiality, they can make constructive contributions. As noted by Kadingdi (2004), there is a need for effective coordination of external assistance because this is more likely to lead to a reduction of low priority programmes, better planning of aid missions and less duplication of effort with common reporting procedures between governments and donor agencies. In addition to this, there is a need to create institutional channels that are intended to facilitate funding agency participation because this is more likely to help bridge the gap between stakeholders and development partners.

Conclusion

For this study, it was not my intention to explore issues such as the factors that accounted for the official ending of WSD. Such issues were practical moment-to-moment ones that emerged from the data and were of great concern to the participants and could offer a holistic understanding of the problem I put under investigation and therefore I needed to address them in conjunction with the actual issues that formed the task of the study. Having done this, it has become obvious that a number of conditions need to co-exist if improvement in education is to be achieved, and the absence of one or more of these may mean the distortion of what appears to be improvement.

There are political, social, physical and economic factors that are inimical to improvement in educational quality and therefore need addressing with a change of mindset that is consistent with improvement. The intrusion of

politics into plans that are intended to bring improvement in education is detrimental to national development. Obviously, no one would expect that a whole population would be enthusiastic about educational reforms that are intended to bring improvement in education. However, if political interests dominate high rank officials in key sectors, then little can be achieved. People who place their political interests far above their national affiliation are not necessarily against the idea of development, but may not have the inclination to offer adequate support to those national plans that are necessary to it. The worst consequences of all, perhaps, is that even those well-intended individuals might begin to feel that since all effort is nullified in the depredations of the politicians, they might as well remain apathetic.

On this note, I could say that the study, I believe, has made some contribution to knowledge through the methodology and issues I covered, including the problems I raised and the implications I have established for educational reforms in Ghana as well as the recommendations I have put forward.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Dear Sir/Madam

I am researching the impact of the Whole School Development on schools, particularly in the rural areas, to ascertain what have remained of it, why they remain and how well they are functioning, using a district in the country as a case study.

The research is in fulfilment of the requirement for my PhD study. However, it has potential benefit for education in Ghana: it is likely to provide a better understanding of the basic support needs of the schools and communities of the district/municipality in I will conduct the study. And since the study might help to explain what might be new and unique in a particular district and for that matter what might be expected to be happening in other municipalities, it has a further possibility of yielding productive effects for education in other areas of the country. More importantly, the study will begin to develop discussions and interaction between educationalists and administrators serving the rural schools on one hand and the Ministry of Education on the other about the quality, equity and efficiency of educational delivery, particularly in the rural areas and how, as a result, these areas could be assisted in terms of the quality of education provided.

Data gathering activities will involve interviews and documentary analysis. Each interview will last approximately one hour. All data collected will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be reported in anonymous form.

Below, please find a consent form indicating details of your right as a research participant, which you need to read and if you are willing to participate, complete and append your signature. Both you and I will keep a copy each of the consent form.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

Seth B Ghartey

APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Proposed title of research:

The Aftermath of Whole School Development in Ghana: what have remained, why they remain and how well they are functioning.

Researcher's name: Seth B Ghartey

Supervisor's name: Professor Simon McGrath

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.

I understand the purpose of the research and my involvement in it.

I understand that I may withdraw from the research at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.

I understand that while information gained dung the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.

I understand that I will be ao-taped (if necessary) during the interview.

I understand that data will be stored in locked cabinets by the University of Nottingham and made available only to the researcher's supervisor and the internal and external examiners of the thesis.

I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

Signed: .... (research participants).

Print name...

Date..

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDES

3 (i) Interview guide for policy makers

I am interested in learning about the origin, purpose, the policy-making and implementation process of Whole School Development (WSD) in Ghana.

1. Can you tell me how the Whole School Development (WSD) idea started in Ghana?
   Follow-up questions:
   a) Who initiated it; did Ghana ask for it or was the idea introduced to Ghana by an external/donor agency such as USAID?
   b) If it was introduced by an external/donor agency, then how far should we see it as an external/donor project?

2. What were the reasons for the introduction of the WSD?

3. Who were involved in the formulation of the WSD reform policy?
   Follow-up question: In what capacity did you yourself get involved in the formulation of the policy?

4. How were the final decisions arrived at?

Some questions about the implementation:

5. Can you tell me the kind of implementation proposals that were put into place in the policy-making process in terms of the following:
   a) involvement of inspectors, headteachers, teachers and other stakeholders?
   b) capacity building and professional development of teachers?
   c) resource allocation?
   d) minimising the gap in the delivery of education between the rural and urban areas?
   e) how much time was allowed to get the reform started?
   f) any extensions to the original timeframe?
   g) if there was any extension to the original timeframe, what called for it?

6. What role did you play (as a policy maker) in the implementation of the WSD?

7. With particular reference to the rural areas:
   a) what have been some of the gains in the introduction of the WSD?
   b) what are some of the difficulties in the implementation of the reform?
   c) how have these difficulties been addressed?
   d) what has been the attitude of teachers towards the reform?
   e) how about the community; what have been their attitude?
   f) what special efforts were made to empower the teachers and headteachers in the rural areas? How about members of the community?

8. What did you want to see changed in the implementation of the WSD?
9. What is the continued relevance of WSD: was it a Rawlings (former president's regime under whom WSD was introduced) donor project which is now out of fashion because Rawlings' regime is over? Follow-up questions:
   a) which of the structures, systems and practices of WSD continue to operate?
   b) why do you think they continue to operate?
   c) could you please explain in each case how well they are functioning?

10. How do you see the future of WSD, despite its collapse?

The last two questions – general ones:

11. What major change in policy would you recommend for quality improvement in schools?

12. Is there anything else that you wish to mention, which I have not asked you?

Thank you so much for your time. You have been very helpful to me.

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4 (ii) Interview guide for the Municipal/District Director of Education

1. Can you tell me how the whole idea of the WSD reform developed in Ghana?

2. What were the reasons for the introduction of the WSD in Ghana?

3. In what ways were you involved in the formulation of the WSD reform policy?

4. Can you tell me the kind of implementation proposals that were put in place in the policy-making process in terms of the following:

   a) how much time was allowed to get the reform started?
   b) involvement of:
      a. inspectors
      b. headteachers
      c. teachers *and*
      d. other stakeholders?
   c) professional development of teachers?
   d) resource allocation?
   e) minimising the gap in the delivery of education between the rural and urban areas?

C. District and Circuit Education Officers' role in professional development of headteachers and/or class teachers for the WSD implementation:

4. As a municipal director of education, what kind of professional development or INSET activities did you get for the implementation of WSD?

   - what the activities involved;
   - how useful they were;
   - how well they were able to implement them and why if they were unable;
   - problems;
   - suggestions for improvement.

5. As a Municipal Director of Education, what kind of staff development or INSET activities do you organise for your circuit?

Follow-up questions on:

- what the activities involve;
- who they are meant for (i.e. whether for circuit supervisors, headteachers or teachers);
- how useful they are;
- how well they are implemented and if not well implemented why;
- problems;
- suggestions for improvement.

6. Which aspects of the WSD structures, systems and practices continue to operate in your municipality?

7. Why do you think they are still operating?

8. How well do you think they are working?

9. What did you want to see changed through the implementation of the reform?

10. What changes have you noted so far through the implementation of the reform?

11. Despite the collapse of WSD, how do you see its future, especially in the rural areas?

4 (iii) Interview Guide for Circuit Supervisors

A. How they heard of WSD and their views about it:

1. Could you tell me how you came to hear of the WSD?

   Follow-up questions on: Those who were involved in the policy-making process of this reform and in what ways they were involved.

2. What are your views about this reform?

   Pertinent areas to probe:

   Its effects on schools in your circuit in terms of:
   - availability and use of teaching and learning resources;
   - effectiveness of teaching and learning;
   - supervision/inspection

   Its impact with regard to:
   - relationship between school and District/Municipal Office;
   - relationship between school and Circuit Office;
   - relationship between school and the local community;
   - support from District, Circuit and Community level;

   Problems of its implementation.

   With reference to the problems, any suggestions for improvement locally and nationally.

B. Some questions on capacity building for the implementation of WSD:

3. Can you tell me about any professional development or in-service training (INSET) activities you have had since the introduction of WSD and its implementation?

Probing questions on:

- when it was provided, who provided it, how it was provided, the duration, problems and how useful it was; and how it could have been made more useful/effective;

- and/or whether interviewee is currently undergoing any professional development or INSET activities and if so what kind; who provides it; how frequently it is provided; how it is provided; how useful it is; problems; whether they are able to implement what they gain; and suggestions for improvement.

C. District and Circuit Education Officers' role in professional development of headteachers and/or class teachers for the WSD implementation:

4. As a circuit supervisor, what kind of staff development or INSET activities do you get from the district office?

- what the activities involve;
- how useful they are;
- how well they are implemented by headteachers and/or teachers and if not well implemented why;
- problems;
- suggestions for improvement.

5. As a circuit supervisor what kind of staff development or INSET activities do you organise for your circuit?

Follow-up questions on:

- what the activities involve;
- how useful they are;
- how well they are implemented by headteachers and/or teachers and if not well implemented why;
- problems;
- suggestions for improvement.

D. Feelings about the future of WSD locally and nationally

6. How do you see the future of WSD in this circuit and generally, despite its demise?

E. General issues

7. What major change in policy do you think would result in quality improvement of schools and pupil performance in the rural areas?
8. What is your greatest challenge as a circuit supervisor?
9. Is there anything else that you wish to mention, which I have not asked you?

Thank you very much for your time. You have been very helpful to me.

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4(iv) Interview Guide for Headteachers

A. How they heard of WSD and their views about it:

1. Can you tell me how you came to hear of the WSD reform?

Probing questions on:

- whether circuit supervisors, headteachers and classroom teachers were also involved in the policy-making process of this reform and if so in what ways?

2. What are your views about this reform?

> Pertinent areas to probe:
>
> Its effects on your school in terms of:
>
> - availability and use of teaching and learning resources;
> - effectiveness of teaching and learning;
> - supervision/inspection
>
> Its impact with regard to:
>
> - relationship between your school and District/Municipal Office;
> - relationship between your school and Circuit Office;
> - relationship between your school and the local community;
> - support from District, Circuit and Community level;
>
> Problems of its implementation.
>
> With reference to the problems, any suggestions for improvement locally and nationally.

B. Some questions on capacity building for the implementation of WSD:

3. Can you tell me about any professional development or in-service training you have had since the introduction of the WSD reform and its implementation?

Probing questions on:

> - when it was provided, how it is provided, who provided it, the duration, problems and how useful it was; and how it could have been made more useful;

- and/or whether interviewee is currently undergoing any professional development or in-service training activities and if so what kind; who provides it; how it is provided; how frequently it is provided; how useful it is; problems; how well they are able to implement what they gain; and suggestions for improvement.

C. District and/or Circuit Education Offices' role in professional development of headteachers and teachers:

4. What kind of professional development or in-service training activities do you get from the district and/or circuit offices?

- what the activities involve;
- how useful they are;
- how well they are implement what they gain and why if not unable to;
- problems;
- suggestions for improvement.

5. As a headteacher, what kind of professional development or in-service training activities do you organise for your teachers?

Follow-up questions on:
- what the activities involve
- how useful they are
- problems
- how well teachers are able to implement what they gain and if not well implemented why
- suggestions for improvement

D. Feelings about the future of the WSD reform locally and nationally

5. In spite of the demise of WSD, how do you see its future in this circuit and generally?

E. General issues

    a) What major change in policy do you think would result in quality improvement of schools and pupil performance in the rural areas?

    b) What is your greatest challenge as a headteacher?

    c) Is there anything else that you wish to mention, which I have not asked you?

Thank you very much for your time. You have been very helpful to me.

===

4 (v) Interview Guide for Class teachers: Focus Group

A. How they heard of WSD and their views about it

1. Can you tell me how you came to hear of the WSD reform?

Probing questions on:

- whether circuit supervisors, headteachers and class teachers were also involved in the policy-making process of this reform and if so in what ways?

2. What are your views about this reform?

Pertinent areas to probe:

Its effects on your school in terms of:
- availability and use of teaching and learning resources;
- effectiveness of teaching and learning;
- supervision/inspection

Its impact with regard to:
- relationship between your school and District/Municipal Office;
- relationship between your school and Circuit Office;
- relationship between your school and the local community;
- support from District, Circuit and Community level;

Problems of its implementation.

With reference to the problems, any suggestions for improvement locally and nationally.

B. Some questions on capacity building for the implementation of WSD:

3. Can you tell me about any professional development or in-service training you have had since the introduction of the WSD reform and its implementation?

Probing questions on:
- when it was provided, how it is provided, who provided it, the duration, problems and how useful it was; and how it could have been made more useful;

- and/or whether interviewee is currently undergoing any professional development or in-service training activities and if so what kind; who provides it; how it is provided; how frequently it is provided; how useful it is; problems; how well they are able to implement what they gain; and suggestions for improvement.

C. District and/or Circuit Education Offices' and/or headteachers' role in professional development of teachers:

4. At present, what kind of professional development or in-service training activities are organised for you?

Follow-up questions on:
- what the activities involve;
- how useful they are;
- problems;
- how well they are able to implement what they gain and why if they are unable to;
- suggestions for improvement.

D. Feelings about the future of the WSD reform locally and nationally

How do you see the future of the WSD reform in this circuit and generally?

E. General issues
a) What major change(s) in policy would result in quality improvement of schools and pupil performancein the rural areas?
b) What is your greatest challenge as class teachers?
c) Is there anything else that you wish to mention, which I have not asked you?

Thank you very much for your time. You have been very helpful to me.

===

4 (vi) Interview Guide for community members

A. Knowledge about the WSD reform

1. Have you heard of the WSD reform and if so how did you hear of it?

Follow-up questions on:

- ways in which they have been involved following its implementation;
- how it is helping the schools and/or pupils in their community;
- school-community relationship;
- problems and suggestions for improvement.

B. Feelings about the future of the WSD reform locally and nationally

2. How do you see the future of the WSD reform in this community and other rural areas?

C. Personal information

1. For how many years have you lived in this community?

2. What is your status in this community?

3. Do you have any academic and/or professional qualifications and if so what are they?

4. What is your occupation?

5. Do you have any children and/or relatives in the junior secondary school of this community and if so how many of them?

6. How would you describe their performance?

7. Do you have any other children and/or relatives in other schools elsewhere?

8. How would you compare their performance with those children and/or relatives in the school of this community?

9. What do you think account for their performance?

10. What do you think can be done to enhance their performance?

11. Further questions about age, marital status, and number of children.

D. *General issues*
a) What major change(s) in policy do you think would result in quality improvement of schools and pupil performance in your community and rural school in general?
b) Is there anything else that you wish to mention, which I have not asked you?

Thank you very much for your time. You have been very helpful to me.

==

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRES

4(i) Questionnaire for Circuit Supervisors

A. General professional background information

1. For how long have you been the circuit supervisor of this district?

Please state your response in years   --------------------------------

2. For how many years did you teach before being promoted to a headteacher? ------------

3. How many years did you work as a headteacher before being promoted to a circuit supervisor?   --

B. Qualifications
Which of the following qualifications do you hold? Please tick in the box all those that apply and state the year in which you obtained each.

Qualification	*Year obtained*
Masters degree ⟶ ☐	--------
Bachelors degree but not in education ⟶ ☐	---------
Bachelors degree in education ⟶ ☐	---------
Diploma but not in education ⟶ ☐	--------
Diploma in Education ⟶ ☐	
Specialist Certificate ⟶ ☐	--------
Post-secondary Certificate "A ⟶ ☐	
Certificate "A" Four-year ⟶ ☐	-------
School Certificate/GCE "A" level ⟶ ☐	------
School Certificate/GCE "O" level ⟶ ☐	------

Other professional qualification(s) ---

C. Age and sex

1. In which age group are you? Please circle the letter that represents your age group.

    A. under 30 years B. 30-34 years   C. 35-39 years   D. 40-44 years

    E. 45-49 years   F. 50-54 years   G. 55 years or over

8. Please state your sex by ticking one: Male   Female

4 (ii) Questionnaire for headteachers

A. General professional background information

1. For how long have you been the headteacher of this school?

Please state your response in years   ---------------------------------

2. How many years did you work as a classroom teacher before being promoted to a headteacher?   ---

B. Qualifications

Which of the ollowing qualifications do you hold? Please tick in the box all those that apply and state the year in which you obtained each of them.

Qualification   *Year obtained*

Masters degree   ———————▶ ☐   ------

Bachelors degree but not in education   ———————▶ ☐

Bachelors degree in education   ———————▶ ☐

Diploma but not in education   ———————▶ ☐

Diploma in Education   ———————▶ ☐

Specialist Certificate   ———————▶ ☐

Post-secondary Certificate "A"   ———————▶ ☐

Certificate "A" Four-year   ———————▶ ☐

School Certificate/GCE "A" level   ——————▶ ☐

School Certificate/GCE "O" level   ——————▶ ☐

Other professional qualification(s) ----------------------------------

Age and sex

1. In which age group are you? Please circle the letter that represents your age group.

A. under 25 years   B. 25-29 years   C. 30-34 years   D. 35-39 years

E. 40-44 years   F. 45-49 years   G. 50-54 years   H. 50 years or over

2. Please state your sex by placing a tick in one of the boxes below.

☐   Male   ☐   Female

4 (iii) Questionnaire for class teachers

General professional background information

1. For how long have you been a teacher of your current school?

Please state your response in years   ---------------------------------

2. How many years have you worked as a class teacher? ------------------

Qualifications and experience

Which of the following qualifications do you hold? Please tick in the box all those that apply and state the year in which you obtained them.

Qualification	*Year obtained*
Masters degree	�ㅁ
Bachelors degree but not in education	⬜
Bachelors degree in education	⬜
Diploma but not in education	⬜
Diploma in Education	⬜
Specialist Certificate	⬜
Post-secondary Certificate "A"	⬜
Certificate "A" Four-year	⬜
School Certificate/GCE "A" level	⬜
School Certificate/GCE "O" level	⬜

Other professional qualification(s) ----------------------------------

Age and sex

1. In which age group are you? Please circle the letter that represents your age group.

A. under 25 years   B. 25-29 years   C. 30-34 years   D. 35-39 years

E. 40-44 years   F. 45-49 years   G. 50-54 years   H. 50 years or over

2. Please state your sex by placing a tick in one of the boxes below.

Male ☐   Female   ☐

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