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EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

REPORT TO TRUSTEES OF MAJOR INITIATIVES - OCTOBER 1992

INTRODUCTION :

At the September meeting, Trustees requested an up-date of the various initiatives under the Education Portfolio. These are outlined below :

POLICY DEVELOPMENT :

The work around the Policy Options Tools development has now proceeded to the extent that various groups around the country are keen to buy into the process. The Policy Options Model demonstrated to the Trustees around a year ago has been widely workshopped and the methodology accepted with a number of initiatives springing from it. With joint funding from USAID, the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) has initiated the following three models apart from the original one :

- Education Financing
- Education Governance
- Tertiary Education.

The same process as with the first is followed with all, with a wide workshopping of initial findings, the refining of assumptions and the introduction of additional parameters into the model as these are produced out of the workshops. It is clear that a policy development capacity is now being built around this process. The consultative work is spearheaded by the Education Foundation under a grant from the IDT.

The original Policy Options Model now needs to move from an Options Model into definite policy positions. For example, it has become clear that changing things like pupil:teacher ratio can get significant gains in the amount of years that the State is able to fund from even its present budget. Work is now going on in developing these into policy positions for debate in the wider South African community.

A serious impediment to this work is the fact that after two years of providing us with the services of RTI, the USAID now insists on a tendering process being initiated for further work which has already been commissioned. With the new Director in place it has become difficult to circumvent the bureaucratise implicit in USAID funding. An approach will now be made through the Chairman to the US Ambassador to see if it is not possible to continue with a process which they were party to beginning. A time lapse of nine months at this crucial stage will seriously impede the policy capacity of all not part of the government sector.

THE EDUCARE FIELD :

All 5 regions (Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Natal, OFS, Transvaal) have now been funded. Feedback that we have received indicates that the consultation process has been widely welcomed. This is reflected in the fact that the SAAECE membership has grown exponentially over the almost two years of the process that the IDT has put in place. It has also become apparent that the regional strategy adopted by the field has really borne fruit. Each region has now gone further in dividing its region into districts (for example, the Transvaal - 10 sub-regions). But the process has created demands far beyond the original capacity of the field to respond.

Considerable work needs to be done to continue to develop this field. Some of the issues which need to be dealt with are :

- 1) Creation of the proper administrative infrastructure. This needs to be done both nationally and regionally with people employed full-time who can devote their attention to the way in which the whole process is developing.
- 2) Solidify delivery capacity. This is crucial in the light of the greater demands placed on the field because of the consultation process which IDT has initiated.
- 3) A meeting has been set up with major funders of the Educare field for 30 November. This meeting has been called by the IDT together with the National Educare Forum (NEF) set up out of the IDT sponsored consultation. One of the issues relates to the gaps not covered in the present IDT funding and how other funders might supplement that. There is also a need to enhance the understanding of all of the requirements of Educare.

- 4) Position the field to absorb future State funds. As with the NGO initiative highlighted below the future sustainability of the Educare field will depend on its ability to access State funds in a future dispensation. We need to ensure that the field is both efficient and effective in the way it uses the R70M from the IDT and in its positioning with regard to the future State.

Given the need for the IDT to continue to involve itself in the development of the field now that its R70M is beginning to circulate, it has become essential to appoint a person to the Education Portfolio to co-ordinate the IDT involvement. The duties of such a person will include:

- 4.1 Pro-active involvement with the field in general. Developing the initiative - both nationally, regionally and sub-regionally.
- 4.2 Researching the effectiveness of approaches in different areas.
- 4.3 Linking pre-school and school building, if appropriate.
- 4.4 Looking at the effectiveness of present training.
- 4.5 Establishing relationships with funders of educare.
- 4.6 Channelling international resources into the field.

A suitable candidate has already been identified who has both the perspective and standing to do this work on behalf of the IDT. It is hoped that she will be appointed within the next two weeks.

It is encouraging to see the way in which the process has worked out. There is much more certainty about the direction in which the field is moving and far less in-fighting. The Portfolio will approach the Trustees at the November meeting about an allocation outside of the R70M to take up funding of national bodies which it has been difficult to include in the regional consultations.

SCHOOL BUILDING :

A detailed status report is included with the papers for the October meeting. This discussion will focus on how the programme is developing.

Regional/Local Trusts :

The establishment of the Regional Trusts has now reached an advanced stage with functioning Trusts in Transkei, Border, OFS, Eastern Transvaal. Co-ordinators have been appointed in these regions with offices, etc. Trusts are close to establishment in Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Western Transvaal with activity in the other regions developing rapidly.

Much work needs to be done in :

- enhancing management capacity
- developing organisational skills
- integrating technical capacity

within these Trusts, but we should not under-estimate the importance of these bodies in :

- ensuring real community involvement
- working toward empowerment
- giving people a stake and pride in education
- ensuring real capacity building
- demonstrating democratic principles and illustrating how co-operation can occur despite political differences.

And so, while the process has been slow, it is perhaps worth remembering that the IDT is developing a community-driven vehicle which will not only build schools but also ensure real community involvement in education for some time into the future.

Relationship with Education Authorities :

We have moved over 18 months in relations with DET from total opposition to a willingness not only to acknowledge the importance of IDT's role in this area but also to pay a subsidy (10 - 75%) for schools built which feature on their priority list.

After much consideration, the legal vehicle to enable the IDT to receive these subsidies appears to be a Section 21 Company which will own the schools while the Education authority owns the land to ensure use of the building as a school into perpetuity. The legal agreement has now been approved by all parties and is with the State Attorney. Finality is expected by 7 November.

Since it is likely that Regional Trust and Education authority priorities will overlap significantly, the subsidy will have the effect of expanding the IDT's capital base for school building very considerably.

It is anticipated that since the accent in establishing the Regional Trusts has been on inclusivity, in due course it will be possible to establish the Section 21 Company with a Board which will reflect this and hence have a National Schools Building Trust.

Local Community Involvement :

The Regional Trust is too removed from the local community to have a meaningful ongoing relationship with a particular school. Thus, it is planned that the IDT will cede its rights in a specific school to a governing body of the local school community constituted in representative way.

Through the Regional Trust, the school building team will work to establish a local governing body for each school. To this body, after the school is completed, will fall the task of ensuring ongoing quality within each school.

NGO Involvement in Schools :

Steps have already been taken for school focused INSET to empower governing bodies. At an initial meeting held with major NGO's, they enthusiastically endorsed the idea of adapting their programmes to fit in with the needs of a particular school. In this way, their activities will be focused on enhancing the quality of education in a particular school and will also achieve far greater co-ordination so that teachers and principals are not battered from all sides by a number of conflicting demands. It was stressed to them that the body which would hire them to do the work would be the school governing council rather than the IDT. Their continued activity in any particular school would depend on the effectiveness of their programmes.

The Overseas Development Agency of the British Government has also set aside over a million pounds in this tax year (up to April 1993) to put books into IDT-built schools. It is anticipated that the first books will arrive before the end of year.

What is being attempted here might also provide the way for future funding of NGO's beyond our present commitment to them. Funding will be service-based on specific activities rather than general funding for expansion. The NGO involvement in a particular school also provides an important vehicle for private sector involvement in schools in their area of activity.

National Literacy Programme :

International experience indicates :

- giving NGO's money to scale up does not work
- need to link NGO activity to productivity
- link campaign to major national initiatives

The School Building programme is such a vehicle.

To investigate the way in which major funders might co-ordinate their activities around a National Literacy Campaign, a meeting is jointly planned with USAID for 11/12 February 1993 to which all major funders in the country will be invited. USAID has promised to bring in two international experts who could advise on the best methods of funding possibly related to the ideas given above. It is clear that left to their own devices the literacy field will not get near to establishing a framework for a National Literacy Programme. A paper will be prepared for Trustee consideration in due course.

TERTIARY EDUCATION FUND OF SA (TEFSA) :

It is worth repeating that over the 21 months of this initiative almost all constituencies have come to accept the inevitability of a loan fund. Indeed, in a meeting with SASCO, their major objection to TEFSA was the fact that the IDT did not consult widely enough to establish a National Loan Fund! Discussions with PASO and AZASCO have also revealed support for the loan fund.

A meeting with the Executive of the Committee of University Principals (CUP) also produced unqualified support and the offer of help especially in lobbying government.

A meeting with the Rectors of the Historically Black Universities also produced unqualified support for what they termed a "very large idea". It was interesting to note the number of misconceptions with which they approached the meeting. It is important to take seriously their main recommendation : that the IDT needs to market TEFSA widely and to ensure in the process that the details of the scheme are thoroughly understood and that its developmental potential for tertiary education is comprehended.

A meeting is scheduled with the Committee of Technikon Principals in November. A follow-up meeting with the Department of Finance will take place late in November. We have been assured that the legislation is on track for the next session of Parliament. In tandem with that, TEFSA will need to be registered as a Company - I have given the Interim Steering Committee an undertaking that we will work toward a duly constituted Board by January 1993. Documentation will be presented to the November Trustees meeting.

In parallel with this, the meeting with SASCO produced a suggestion that we convene a national conference on a "National Loan Scheme". While their ideas of an inclusive national guest list and those of the Education Director do not exactly coincide at present, *aluta continua!* Advice received indicates that major issues should be widely workshopped before the conference in an attempt to produce a first level of consensus with position papers being developed which reflect this. Then the conference will not debate "whether" a loan scheme but rather the "hows", "whos" and "wheres" of the scheme. If a significant level of agreement can be reached it could bring external government funding into the loan scheme as well as involve the present government in committing funds. The World Bank has agreed to attempt to bring Maureen Woodward to the conference. The original date - December 1-3 - is too early. March 1993 appears to be more reasonable.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT/DEVELOPMENT :

This is a major focus area with some R15M having been distributed to 13 institutions throughout the country, both universities and technikons. According to the arrangement agreed with the Trustees, the Education Director himself will assess the viability of these programmes for future funding. This has

involved wide-ranging discussions throughout the country with the various institutions. While this process is still ongoing, it is good to be able to report that the initial approach, namely involving the Vice-Chancellor or Rector together with his staff in the preliminary discussions before any IDT funding was made available, as well as insisting on a greater level of co-ordination between the various institutions themselves has produced some marked results. All the programmes are beginning to show signs of :

- 1) Ownership by the institutions themselves rather than regarding it as some peripheral activity to be borne for the sake of bringing the disadvantaged on board.
- 2) An infusion of the Academic Support/Development activity within the mainstream of the institution. Thus, faculties and, indeed, departments are beginning to adjust their curricula, their approaches and (may we say it quietly) their teaching methods. In other words, the funding is beginning to produce real structural change within institutions.
- 3) An awareness by the institutions that they need to absorb within their funding provision the posts in academic development centres. The argument that this is a "not for subsidy activity" is, of course, nonsense. If an academic development activity enables more students to pass then the subsidy as such under the prevailing dispensation means that the institution gets more money.

In short, the size of the IDT funding and its importance to the institutions are beginning to produce real institutional change around what are major issues of importance in South African education, namely greater access and success of disadvantaged students to tertiary study. A detailed analysis of the activities on various institutions will be produced for the Trustees in due course.

NGO SUPPORT :

The IDT's support for this area in education is underpinned by some fundamental ideas. These include :

- 1) There is much in the NGO sector that is innovative and creative.
- 2) This sector may well impact more meaningfully on the quality of education in the classroom than any present or future bureaucracy.

- 3) A meaningful structured involvement of the NGO's in education may help to restrict excessive growth in the public sector.

To enable all this to happen, IDT funding has been designed to assist these organisations to scale up their level of activity for national impact. At the same time, the services they provide have been refined, sharpened and improved.

For the NGO sector to be sustained into the future, it is clear that they will need to access part of the State budget in education. This is an entirely justifiable approach on at least two grounds :

- 1) It is already State practice (worldwide) to purchase learning materials. This accrues significant profits to individuals and companies.
- 2) There is evidence that the NGO sector can supply a superior product at much less cost. The IDT's School Building programme (the refrain goes : a third of ..., at half the ..., with 43% back ...!) has illustrated this. Another example will suffice : the DET paid R31M for a programme - TOP DOWN(!) - to train school principals in management. TOPS has produced a far more voluminous and, we are assured, better quality programme for less than R1M - and this includes significant training and international input.

In a meeting with a Deputy Director-General of the DET recently around the issue of NGO involvement, it was apparent that they accept the need for this as well. The winds of change continue to blow!

There is a major job at hand. The NGO's need to be helped to cost carefully and competitively their services while at the same time funding their ongoing research and development. The NGO involvement in the IDT's School Building programme is a first step in this direction. But clearly the Education portfolio will need some financial expertise to assist it.

Trustees will be interested to know that the IDT funding of the NGO sector now covers the following areas :

- 1) Provision of teacher in-service training
- 2) Primary and secondary Science and Mathematics
- 3) Primary English (bridging from mother tongue to English)

- 4) Literacy and Adult basic education
- 5) Career guidance for secondary students.

etc

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES :

There are a number of additional projects which do not fall into any of the above categories specifically. These are :

1) Educational Technology :

The Portfolio has a small committee looking at the possibilities for educational technology within the schooling and tertiary sector. Some interesting developments in this field have now taken place especially around compact disk and other technologies. We now have access to the entire range of IBM software produced by their Atlanta educational facility, called EduQuest. In an arrangement with the IBM Projects Fund, they will be providing hardware and significant amounts of software from K through 12, i.e. the entire school curriculum in Science, Math and English. They have also developed a highly inter-active learner-centred approach within the classroom itself which is capable of meeting the needs of large class sizes - a South African reality with which we will have to contend in the short to medium term.

In association with the Projects Fund, a number of pilot sites are now being established throughout the country involving not only school but job creation possibilities. Significant gearing in this project is being obtained through the IBM Projects Fund. A more detailed report will be given to the Trustees in due course.

2) Historically Black Universities :

After the meeting held with the Rectors of the HBU's and the Vice-Chairman and the Education Director, three initiatives were mounted. These are :

- 1) An analysis of the capacity of these institutions to develop a Financial Aid Bureau for students which can handle loan and bursary funds as well as look at work opportunities for students both within and outside the university. The analysis is being handled by the Kagiso Trust.
- 2) A determination of the viability of the HBU's as a consortium. There was a feeling that a secretariat for the consortium might be a feasible way of co-ordinating much of the disparate activity which takes place on these campuses. An analysis is now being done of the viability of this notion. This is being undertaken by Dr Vishnu Padayachee, Special Assistant to Prof Jairam Reddy of UDW.
- 3) Enhancing the research capacity of these institutions. A preliminary document is being prepared by the Education Policy Unit at UWC.

It is anticipated that these three documents will serve at the next meeting between the Rectors, the Vice Chairman and Education Director of the IDT. At this time, consideration will be given to how this initiative might be developed. At the same time, the Education Director is drawing up a proposal on behalf of the consortium to USAID to fund both the consortium as well as a strategic planning exercise to determine directions in which these institutions might move.

3) Curriculum Materials/Software Repository :

The IDT funds a number of curriculum development programmes throughout the country. One such is that at Sacred Heart College on an integrated curriculum for secondary school. It is apparent that the materials being produced are of very high quality and are commercially viable. However, all publishing is being done by the normal publishing firms who are, in effect, benefitting from all the R & D funds which the IDT puts into this process and not paying for this in any way themselves. Indeed, even the developers of the material receive only a small royalty. The books which are produced are also very highly priced - for example, the single module produced by Sacred Heart costs R25.

In discussions with various groups throughout the country it has become apparent that it might be possible to turn the materials development into an enterprise which could be self-sustaining in its own right. We are, therefore, investigating the possibility of a structure which could take the

materials produced, facilitate their publication in a far less costly manner (for example, using newsprint) and dissemination. The profits which would accrue from such an enterprise would be ploughed back into the R & D function. A similar situation could pertain with software development for use on high-tech equipment. Preliminary discussions have elicited wide enthusiasm for the notion.

4) Productivity and Structure in Tertiary Education :

As an offshoot of the Academic Support/Development initiatives that are funded by the IDT, as well as issues around the Loan Fund, it has become apparent that tertiary educational financing is going to be highly linked to issues such as productivity within the institutions. At the same time, tertiary study continues to show a highly inflexible face to incoming students. Given the realities of our educational disparities and inequalities, it is abundantly apparent that a far more flexible, cost-effective structure needs to develop. The Portfolio has initiated some discussions with cognoscenti around these issues.

5) Evaluation and Monitoring :

Under the general evaluation rubric being undertaken by the IDT in the hands of Prof Nkuhlu, the Portfolio has been looking at education specific analyses of the projects that it funds. There are three phases to the evaluation of major projects. These are :

- 5.1 internal evaluation by the project itself of its own efficiency
- 5.2 a formative evaluation by the portfolio to assist the project in its own development
- 5.3 a final summative evaluation somewhere down the road.

Evaluation is not a very well-developed art in South Africa with few acknowledged international experts in the area. The Portfolio is looking at the development of a far higher level of expertise. More will be reported on this in due course.

6) Documenting :

In harmony with the express desire of the Trustees at a previous Trustee meeting, the Portfolio has put together a small team to look at documenting the activities of the Portfolio over the last two years. It is anticipated that this will result in a number of working papers over the next few months which positions the IDT as a developmental agency in education. These will, of course, be disseminated not only internally but also as a contribution to the development literature in South Africa. A complete list of the working papers will be furnished at a later Trustee meeting.

CONCLUSION :

The above is an attempt to inform the Board of Trustees of the present situation of the Portfolio and the way in which it is perceived to be developing. Direction and guidance would be highly valued.

PROF M C MEHL
EDUCATION DIRECTOR

21 October 1992