

Human Sciences Research Council

**Monitoring and Evaluation of
Human Resources Development Support
Education and Skills
Development (HESD) Programme**

Second formative impact assessment

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Human Sciences Research Council

Monitoring and Evaluation of
DANIDA Support to Education and Skills Development (SESD) Programme

SECOND FORMATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Synthesis Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

O.1 The Scope and Design of the Second Formative Impact Assessment

Five formative impact assessment studies and a summative impact assessment follow the baseline study that was conducted in February 2003. This report, which is the second in the series of formative impact assessment studies, synthesises the findings of the individual college reports and presents the reports on the provincial FET Directorates, the national Directorate, SAQA Southern Regional Office and the Department of Labour components of the SESD programme. Visits to research sites took place during February and March 2004. The seven college reports, on which section 2 of this report is based, are an integral part of the overall documentation. They provide detailed information that cannot be adequately represented in a synthesis report.

Following the recommendations contained in the Review Mission Team's report, more substantive information has been included in the college reports. As college FETMIS systems are not yet geared to supply ongoing quantitative data about student numbers this information could not be included. The summative impact assessment report will, however, return to the statistics gathered during the baseline study. Official statistics released by the national Department of Education during the evaluation cycle will be used to analyse shifts and changes that occur during this three-year period.

In the interim two other sets of information have been included. The first is a description of the college's organisation structure at the time of the assessment visit. While many of these structures are still provisional they provide a snapshot of the way in which central offices/corporate centres are taking shape and the extent to which posts have been filled, are still vacant, or are currently filled by senior staff members in an acting capacity. Changes in organisation structure will be monitored on an ongoing basis to provide insight into the different phases of organisational change.

A curriculum profile for each college is also included. At this stage the information contained in the profiles cannot be verified independently as provincial FETMIS systems are not yet geared to record all the curriculum activities undertaken by FET colleges. What colleges could provide is information on NATED programmes; on programmes offered in partnership with higher education institutions; on SETA-accredited qualifications and skills programmes; on learnerships; on non-accredited short courses; on subjects offered in schools; as well as on any other form of provision offered by a college. Their responses to questions about which courses attract the highest and lowest student numbers, which courses have the greatest or least growth potential and other patterns are also included in the college reports. The curriculum profile will be up-dated during each subsequent visit and regularities and/or shifts in patterns of provision will be noted. The initial information shows that some colleges already offer a diverse range of programmes. In these cases the conventional wisdom that colleges offer mostly business and engineering studies no longer holds true.

0.2 The Structure of this Report

The report starts with a section that again outlines the objectives and outputs of the SESD programme. Thereafter the *impact* assessment logic is discussed. Given that the aim of the evaluation exercise is to assess the *impact* of the SESD programme it is important that readers of the report should understand how ratings are allocated. This assists with the interpretation of the graphs presented in section 2. Section 1 concludes with a few guidelines on how the findings contained in the report should be used.

The next five sections report on the various dimensions of the SESD Programme. In section 3 comparative data is used to show trends that have developed since the baseline study. In sections 4 and 5 the provincial and national FET Directorates are discussed, followed by a report on the SAQA Southern Regional Office in section 5 and on the Department of Labour component in section 6.

Section 7 contains general overall findings and recommendations.

0.3 The FET Colleges

Overall trends are positive and reflect growth in most of the dimensions assessed. Whereas *Leadership and Management* was the strongest *emerging* dimension in the baseline and first impact assessment studies, *Knowledge Sharing* is the strongest dimension in this round. Although *Learner Support* still scores the lowest of the seven dimensions it started from the lowest baseline rating and has, since then, achieved the highest overall growth.

At the level of individual characteristics, *Horizontal Knowledge Sharing* achieved the strongest rating followed by *Enhanced Human Resource capacity*. *Quality Assurance* is the only characteristic that has decreased its rating and moved back into the *weak* category.

The composite graph shows that all dimensions have shown upward movement over the twelve-month period since the baseline study. While three dimensions started off in the *weak* category and most of the others (except *Leadership and Management*) started off on the boundary between *weak* and *emerging*, the Second Impact Assessment shows that all dimensions are now in the *emerging* category and moving steadily towards the higher end of this category. *Learner Support* is still lagging behind the others but, as was mentioned before, this is also the dimension that has shown the biggest overall growth.

A fuller discussion of these trends is presented in section 2.

0.4 The Provincial FET Directorates

Given that the three provincial FET Directorates are at different stages of development and implementation, section 3 of the synthesis report contains a separate sub-report on each provincial FET Directorate. All three Directorates have made progress since the last impact assessment and it is clear that, given support, they are capable of playing an important role in the FET colleges sector.

The fact that the FET Directorate in North West Province has not had a permanent FET Director since October 2002 has constrained the alignment of the strategic priorities of the Directorate with those of the FET colleges. New appointments are however, imminent.

Kwazulu-Natal and Western Cape have both been particularly successful in implementing strategies that have improved both vertical and horizontal knowledge sharing and communication. Staff development remains a priority in all provinces.

0.5 The National Directorate

There is a clear indication that the DoE's concern about maximisation of the systemic impact of the SESD Programme is being addressed as the Programme develops and extends its activities. Piloting of units such as Linkages and Programmes Units, Student Support Units and Marketing and Communications Units are viewed as assisting the DoE in its strategy of support for the college sector. Other initiatives in this regard are also noted in the more detailed report in section 4.

While a National Steering/Co-ordination Committee is not yet functioning it is reported that regular meetings take place between the Director for Public Colleges and the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), and that meetings with the Chief Director are scheduled at regular intervals. There appears to be a growing and mutual understanding between the DoE and the SESD Programme of the challenges and possibilities that the Programme provides. Even though the limited staff capacity in the Directorate continues to constrain the direct supporting role that the Programme is able to play, there is ongoing work being done to ensure that the broader work of the SESD Programme has an impact that reaches well beyond the targeted colleges. Instances of such initiatives include support to best practice forums, the commissioning of research to examine emerging practices in particular areas in both SESD-supported and non-supported colleges and the sharing of findings across the system.

0.6 The SAQA Southern Regional Office

The SAQA Southern Regional Office participates in the SESD programme on a year-to-year basis. Since the baseline study and first impact assessment there has been a shift in the activities of this (SAQA) office in relation to the SESD Programme. The first year's participation in the SESD Programme focussed on training interventions that were intended to prepare college staff members for implementation of programmes aligned to the NQF, and to assist them to translate unit standards into learning programmes. These activities met with varying degrees of success, due to a number of

constraining factors. While the objective remains the same, the focus of activity in 2004 has shifted to the production of materials in Mathematical Literacy and Communication Studies that relate to the Fundamental component of SAQA-registered qualifications. This work is being undertaken under the auspices of the Colleges Curriculum Committee that is convened by the FET Directorate of the Western Cape Education Department. At the same time colleges are focussing on the Core and Elective components of NQF qualifications.

The location of the SAQA Southern Regional Office's contribution to the SESD programme within a broader systemic landscape has led to the identification of a curriculum need that this office is well placed to address. This is not a stand-alone intervention but one that is embedded within existing structures. It is anticipated that the materials development activities will make a substantial impact on colleges' ability to develop programmes that are NQF-aligned and responsive to the needs in the region, as well as to their ability to develop appropriate materials for the delivery of new programmes in the future. The indicators for assessing the activities of the SAQA Southern Regional Office have been changed to reflect this shift in focus. Materials development is currently in progress and a progress report will be submitted during the next round of assessment.

0.7 The Department of Labour

The Department of Labour's has made considerable progress towards implementation of New Venture Creation Learnerships (NVCLs). A steering committee has been formed on which four different government departments are represented. Design work is also underway. Finally, colleges that will offer these learnerships are being prepared for implementation. A co-ordinating agency will soon be selected and it is expected that the delivery of learnerships will start in July. In addition to the NVCLs, the development of four further learnerships has been approved.

While a late starter, this component of the SESD programme is close to going into the field. NVCLs are well integrated into the overall vision of the Department of Labour, with the championing role played by the Deputy Director-General viewed as an indication of national commitment to the endeavour to get people into sustainable self-employment.

0.8 Overall findings and recommendations

In the final section of the report two systemic issues are noted, both of which are having a constraining effect on the impact of the SESD programme. The first is under-resourcing in terms of staff and facilities, and the second is the extent to which classroom-based National Department of Education (NATED) programmes will be replaced by NQF-aligned programmes based on SETA-accredited qualifications and unit standards. The overall finding is that the multi-layered approach being taken by the SESD programme is starting to show positive benefits and that valuable lessons have been learnt that have helped the Programme to adapt some of its initial strategies and to pursue new avenues of support.

Recommendations are that the SESD Programme should continue to strive for maximum flexibility within the parameters set by the stated objectives and outputs. The SESD Programme should also be careful not to foreground support for OBE and NQF-directed staff development and thereby perhaps overlook the development needs of staff who deliver NATED programmes. Colleges need to be encouraged even more strongly to pay attention to quality of delivery and to the development of quality assurance systems. While provincial initiatives are being undertaken to ensure uniform standards across all colleges and to avoid duplication of curriculum development in relation to new qualifications, there is still a need for greater inter- and cross-provincial coherence.

Overall, the report finds that the SESD Programme is definitely reaching all levels of the college community and that its impact on the development of a more responsive and labour market-orientated FET colleges sector is starting to show.

SECTION 1

How to read this report

1.1 Background frames

The report firstly needs to be read against the background of the aim of Danish assistance to education and skills development in South Africa (2002– 2006). The aim is set out in a broad development objective and two immediate objectives. They are:

| |
|---|
| DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE |
| <p>The SESD Programme will increase the employability of male and female youth and adults through supporting the delivery of practical and labour market oriented education and skills training provided mainly within the FET band.</p> |
| IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 1 |
| <p><i>The institutional and financial sustainability of the FET colleges in general and the targeted provincial clusters in particular will be enhanced through the establishment of a supportive and conducive enabling environment, which will also serve to advance the objectives of the NQF.</i></p> |
| IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 2: |
| <p><i>The FET colleges in general and the targeted clusters in particular directly supported to deliver quality programmes responsive to the needs of the world of work including the SMME sector, in accordance with the needs of the society at large.</i></p> |

The outputs that will lead to the realisation of these objectives, as listed in Appendix A, provide the parameters within which Programme activities take place. The monitoring and evaluation task is to assess the impact that achievement of these outputs has on the ability of the SESD colleges to conduct their core business of education and training provision. The ultimate aim is to develop effective and efficient FET institutions that, in their turn, develop college graduates who are both employable and adequately prepared for further study and learning.

For the purposes of assessing impact seven key variables or dimensions were identified in which improvements at the college level are likely to result in better education and better employability of learners. A 'best practice' outcome was stated for each dimension to indicate the optimum end result

envisaged. Both the national and provincial Departments of Education play an important role across all seven dimensions and their contribution to the SESD programme is evaluated on this basis.

Within each dimension, a number of characteristics were identified as constituting important elements that provide the basis for the evaluation of impact. Over the three years of the evaluation cycle changes occurring in the rating of each dimension and its related characteristics thus point to the way in which change is occurring in the FET college sector.

The set of dimensions and related characteristics are set out in the table below.

| Dimensions | Outcomes | Characteristics |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Values and Vision</i> | A strong vision and a lived set of values drive colleges' transformation processes towards fulfilling their developmental mission. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practices guided by a clear institutional vision • Inculcation of a value system throughout the institution |
| <i>Leadership and Management</i> | Strategic leadership supported by effective management and governance systems, operationalises the transformed vision of the FET college system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-functioning systems of governance, including college councils and academic boards • Effective institutional leadership • Effective management systems |
| <i>Knowledge Sharing</i> | College and system performance enhanced through better flows of knowledge horizontally and vertically within the system, as well as with external stakeholders. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective vertical knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system • Effective horizontal knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system • Effective external knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system |
| <i>Institutional Health</i> | The financial health and physical infrastructure of colleges contribute to their proper functioning in supporting employability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment and maintenance of financial health • Adequate infrastructure • Enhanced human resource capacity • Quality assurance system |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>Responsiveness</p> | <p>Employability enhanced through colleges' greater responsiveness to the needs of learners, their communities and the labour market.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good relationships with business • Good relationships with local communities • Good relationships with other state bodies • The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes • The development, provision and evaluation of SMME programmes • The development, provision and evaluation of short courses/ skills programmes |
| <p>Teaching and Learning</p> | <p>A culture of learning promotes both employability and personal development. Strong systems of curriculum development classroom pedagogy and staff development support quality learning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functioning curriculum development processes • Quality curricular delivery • Well-functioning staff development processes |
| <p>Learner Support</p> | <p>Learner support systems improve labour market and life outcomes through support to learners' health, learning and insertion into the labour market.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development, implementation and evaluation of academic support programmes • The development, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS awareness interventions • The development, implementation and evaluation of guidance and counselling systems |

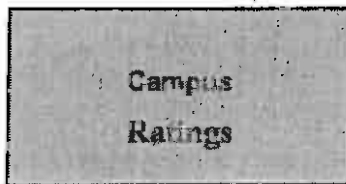
For each characteristic a developmental scale is used that allows for improvement within a category and movement across categories, over the three-year evaluation period.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>A weak characteristic. Mostly not present, or very limited.</p> | <p>An emerging characteristic. It is present but not yet stable or consistent</p> | <p>A strong characteristic. A distinguishing feature.</p> |
| <p>1 – 3</p> | <p>4 – 6</p> | <p>7-10</p> |

1.2 Impact assessment procedures

At each of the SESD colleges two campuses, as initially selected by the provincial FET Directorates, are visited during each round of assessment. The evaluator spends approximately two days at each campus. Focus groups are conducted with three representative groups as shown in the table on the next page. The evaluator also observes classroom practices, visits the resource centre and other facilities and talks to people informally. The same evaluator visits a college every six months. Even though a few changes have been necessary since the baseline study, due to HSRC staff changes, consistency is regarded as crucial and evaluators are only shifted when it is absolutely unavoidable.

Group rating: campus management



Group rating: lecturers

Independent assessment by Evaluator

Student/learner views

A focus group discussion also takes place at college level, supplemented by individual interviews with departmental or unit heads. In this last round it was decided to involve the provincial technical advisers (PTAs) more actively. They gave generously of their time to brief evaluators about SESD developments since the last assessment. PTAs also established initial contact with colleges and campuses and helped to organise visits.

Triangulation of the different group ratings obtained helps evaluators to make a balanced assessment of progress or lack thereof.

Group rating: College management



Group rating: Campus 1

Independent assessment by Evaluator

Group rating: Campus 2

A detailed report is prepared for each of the seven colleges. The report shows the ratings given by the various focus groups so that the basis of assessment is clear. Evaluators are guided by focus group ratings but they retain an independent stance and they use their professional discretion to make a final rating that fairly represents the views expressed by all participants.

Evaluators responsible for impact assessment at provincial and national DoE level use standardised questionnaires to ensure consistent enquiry and interpretation. Evaluation visits to the SAQA Southern Regional Office and to the Department of Labour are more loosely structured as these areas of the SESD Programme do not have a comparative dimension.

All reports are sent back to research sites and to PTAs in *draft form*. While respondents may not necessarily change the ratings finally allocated by the evaluator they are given the opportunity to comment on the report and to provide additional information that may not have emerged during the visits. Once the college reports have been finalised they are distributed to colleges and campuses (with each college and campus receiving the report for that college). Each provincial Directorate and PTA receives a copy of the reports for the colleges in that province. The national DoE, the NTA and the SAQA Southern Regional Office receive a copy of the full set of college reports.

In addition to individual college reports a synthesis report is prepared. The core of the section of the synthesis report that deals with FET colleges is based on statistical analysis of the average ratings obtained from the SESD colleges. Included in these graphs are group ratings obtained on an annual basis from the respective provincial FET directorates. These ratings differ from the college ratings in the sense that focus group respondents are asked to give a collective rating of all FET colleges in the province, not just of the SESD colleges. The mean that is provided by the provincial FET Directorates' ratings establishes a basis for the interpretation of college ratings. The synthesis report is sent to all participating institutions.

1.3 The evaluation process

The participatory process embarked upon has the intention of ensuring that a representative sample of the members of a particular college community gets the opportunity to express their views. A secondary intention is that the process should provide a model for the participatory culture that colleges are trying to build. It has been particularly noticeable how respondents who have participated consistently in focus group discussions, have grown into this process. In the baseline study respondents would often express views that showed political, competitive and also racial tensions between campuses and between colleges. They were protective of their own territory and critical of those outside of their immediate environment. Some of these tensions remain but there is now a far stronger sense of a 'college identity'. Respondents have also commented that they now look forward to impact assessment visits as they provide an opportunity to stand back from immediate operational issues and reflect on overall achievements and obstacles that remain. It has also been reported that the regular return to the same evaluation dimensions has prompted colleges and campuses to pay more attention to areas in which they rate themselves as low. They also turn their attention to areas where there is a marked discrepancy between the ratings and views given by college management, campus management, lecturers and students.

The process of evaluation is thus as important as the outcome of each round of impact assessment. The process itself should be regarded as a making an essential contribution to overall capacity building in terms of reflection and analysis.

1.4 Interpretation

The six-monthly college and synthesis reports play a very particular role in the SESD Programme's implementation. They are not appraisal reports on individuals such as CEOs, provincial and national technical advisers; nor are they 'league table' reports that set out to rank colleges in a particular order of achievement or to compare one provincial FET Directorate against another. The reports are developmental tools and they should be understood and used as such. They assist in building a picture of the effect of support given in relation to particular development areas.

It was stated at the outset that improvements in relation to the assessment dimensions used cannot be ascribed solely to a programme such as SESD. Many contextual factors play a role and a range of other initiatives are simultaneously in progress. Much can, however, be learned about successes and obstacles that are connected to the shift from policy planning to policy implementation. Such information is valuable in terms of providing a basis for ongoing adjustments to the SESD Programme itself. The information is equally valuable in terms of building an archival record that will prove useful to policy planners and implementers in the future. The report should be interpreted in this light.

SECTION 2

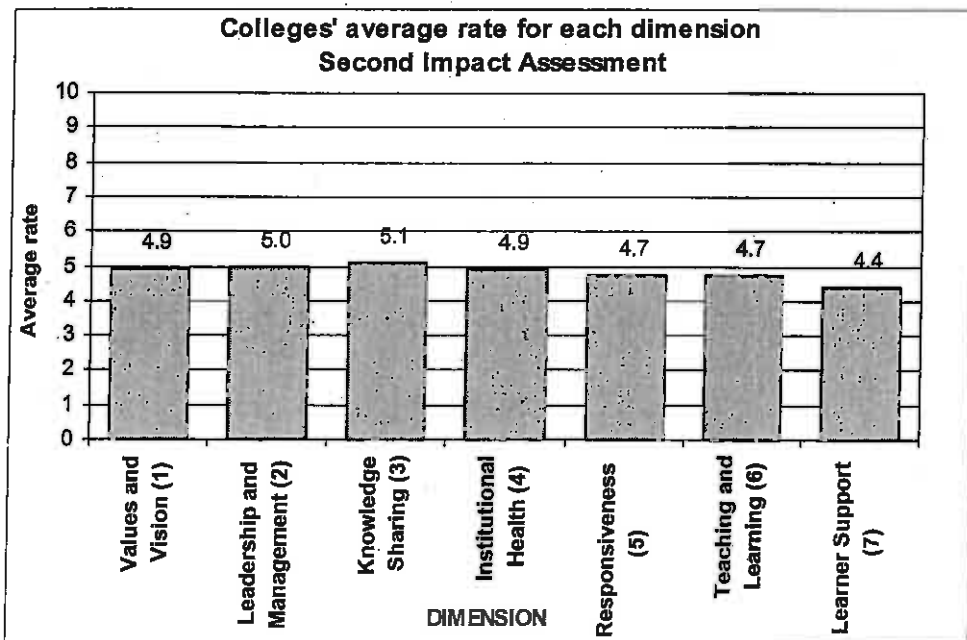
FET Colleges

2.0 Introduction

In this section the ratings for the second impact assessment are presented and then compared to the ratings obtained from the baseline study and the first formative impact assessment. The graphs thus cover a period of twelve months from February 2003 to March 2004. Each graph is followed by an analysis of pertinent features that highlight emerging trends.

The first section shows the ratings for the second formative impact assessment. The next section shows composite graphs that indicate the increase or decline in average ratings over the last year for all seven colleges supported by the SESD Programme. Thereafter each evaluation dimension is presented individually, with a separate graph for each province. These graphs compare college ratings to the ratings given by each provincial FET Directorate for all FET colleges in a particular province. It is hoped that by presenting the data in this way the tendency to view the results of the study as an inter-provincial 'league table' will be overcome. Colleges are encouraged to look at positive and/or negative fluctuations in their own impact patterns and to consult their college reports for more detailed assessment discussions.

2.1 Results of the second formative impact assessment



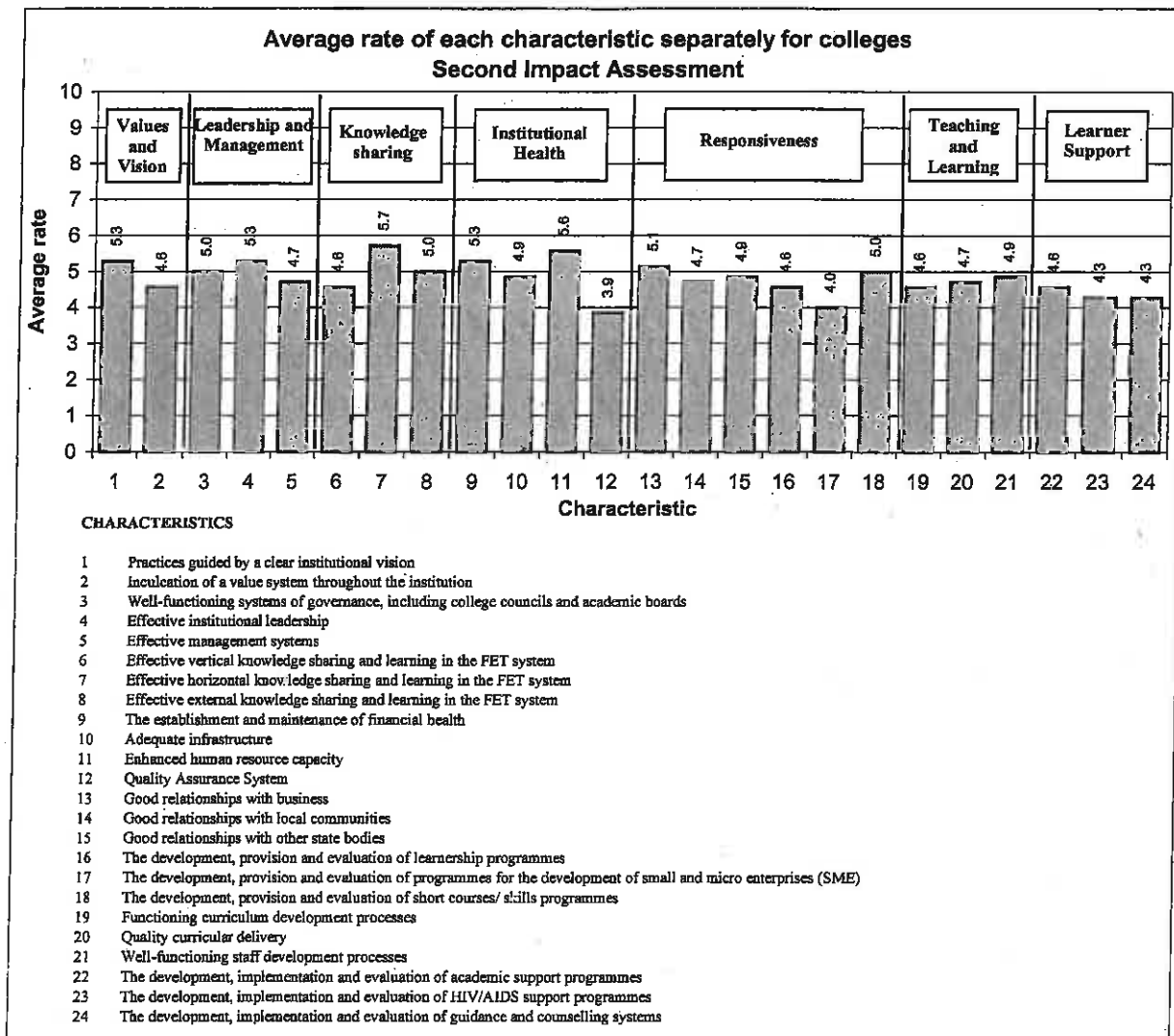
The overall trend is positive and reflects growth in most of the dimensions assessed. What is also important is that this positive trend occurs against a background of focus group respondents having become far more realistic in their assessment of institutional efficiency and effectiveness. They are no

longer as reluctant to propose lower ratings in areas where they feel that progress has not been adequate or where decline has occurred.

Whereas *Leadership and Management* was the strongest *emerging* dimension in the baseline and first impact assessment studies, *Knowledge Sharing* is the strongest dimension in this round, with *Leadership and Management* declining slightly from 5.1 to 5.0. College reports show that some colleges now acknowledge that they tended to be over-optimistic about what newly appointed CEOs could achieve in a short space of time. Concerns about the financial and staffing implications of central office establishment also emerge as a reason for the slight decline in this rating.

Learner Support still scores the lowest of the seven dimensions but the composite graph in the next section shows that it started from the lowest baseline rating and has, since then, achieved the highest overall growth.

The next graph, which shows the average ratings of the 24 characteristics that make up the dimensions, offers a more detailed break down of the trends noted above.



It is significant that *Horizontal Knowledge Sharing* has increased by a full percentage point. The influence of provincial 'best practice' forums and, in the Western Cape, of the Colleges Curriculum Committee (CCC) are clearly discernable in this substantial increase; as is the social impact of training interventions that provide college staff from the different campuses with opportunities for interaction and discussion. *Vertical Knowledge Sharing* also shows an increased rating, which refers predominantly to improved communication flows between provinces, colleges and campuses. *External Knowledge Sharing* has, however, declined slightly by 0.2, and is explained as the uneasy translation of previous strong campus marketing and external communication relations into strong external knowledge sharing at college level. While it can be expected that the efforts of centralised marketing and communication units as well as those of linkages and programme units (LPUs) will soon have greater impact, streamlining of what it is that campuses will continue doing and what will be moved to college-level has not yet been optimally achieved. It should also be taken into account that particular relationships in specialised areas are often initiated and maintained through the commitment of individual staff members. It will take some time for these relations to be duplicated at central level, or for new relations to be forged.

Given the emphasis placed by the SESD Programme on human resource development it is pleasing to note that characteristic no. 11 (*Enhanced human resource capacity*) is one of the strongest emerging characteristics. The work done on systematising human resource procedures was mentioned in a number of college reports as the main reason for the increased rating. A comparison between characteristics no. 21 (*Staff development*), which rates at 4.9 and no.11 (*Enhanced human resource capacity*), which rates at 5.6 shows, however, that the emphasis that the SESD Programme has placed on staff training has not yet had the impact intended. While it should be acknowledged that colleges tend to rate themselves favourably in terms of human resource capacity, they remain concerned about the generic nature of much of the training offered. Concern was also expressed that the training provided does not always meet specific training needs in terms of strengthening of subject expertise and gaining of workplace experience. It was mentioned that staff members often attend training events while on short-term contracts or while holding positions in an acting capacity. This lessens motivation, as staff members do not have a chance to put the training received into practice before being moved elsewhere or before returning to their previous positions. A third reason for the disjuncture between staff development initiatives and enhancement of human resource capacity lies in the current policy hiatus with regard to a shift from NATED to NQF-aligned programmes, as well as with regard to the balance between them. While colleges have received a fair amount of training in assessment, moderation, verification, outcomes-based education and related topics, they say that this training does not capacitate them if their curriculum is not NQF-aligned. By the time such moves may come about, staff members would probably have to be retrained.

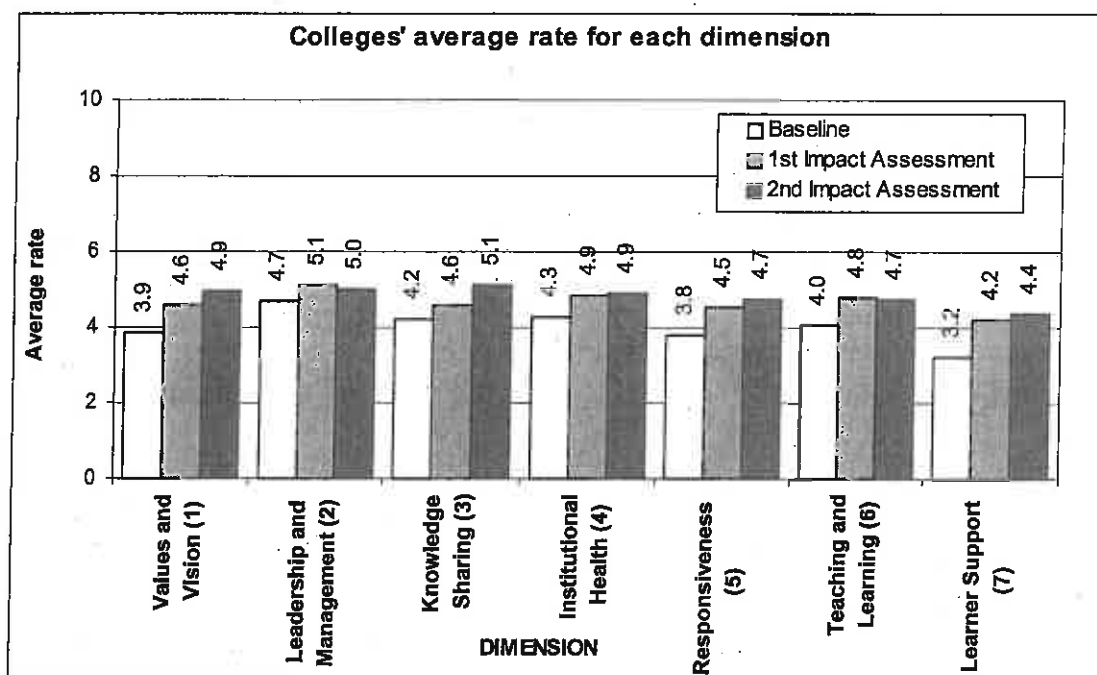
The above discussion is not intended to convey the message that the training offered has been of little value. Individual college reports indicate an appreciation for the training offered, singling out in particular management training. The concern of this evaluation is, however, with medium to long-term

impact. From this vantage point lack of staffing stability and lack of clarity in terms of curriculum policy show themselves to be negative factors in relation to the link between staff training and development and enhanced human resource capacity as an important dimension of the SESD Programme.

It should also be noted that characteristic no. 12 (*Quality assurance*) is the only characteristic that has a decreased rating that places it in the *weak* category. While colleges have, understandably, been immersed in urgent merger-related operational issues the low rating for no. 12 issues a warning about the need to balance quality with efficiency from the outset. The decrease in characteristic no 20 (*Quality curricular delivery*), from 5.1 in the previous assessment to 4.7 in this round, confirms that quality of programme provision is one of the challenges of the future.

2.2 Average ratings for all colleges: Composite graph

The next graph and table are particularly important to an analysis of initial trends.

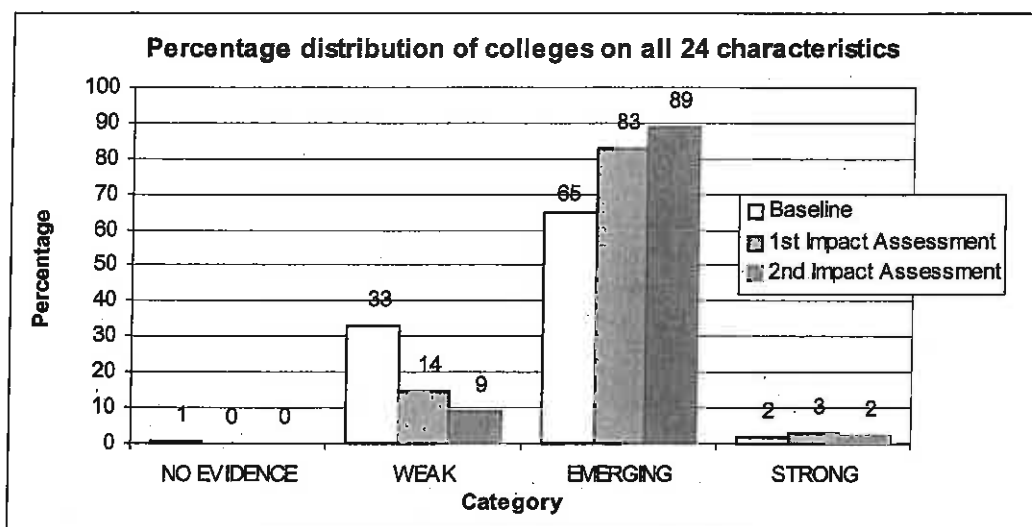


| DIMENSION | Baseline | 1st Impact Assessment | 2nd Impact Assessment | Difference |
|---|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Values and Vision (Dimension 1) | 3.9 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 1.0 |
| Leadership and Management (Dimension 2) | 4.7 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 0.3 |
| Knowledge Sharing (Dimension 3) | 4.2 | 4.6 | 5.1 | 0.9 |
| Institutional Health (Dimension 4) | 4.3 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 0.6 |
| Responsiveness (Dimension 5) | 3.8 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 0.9 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Teaching and Learning (Dimension 6) | 4.0 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 0.7 |
| Learner Support (Dimension 7) | 3.2 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 1.2 |

The first notable trend is that all dimensions have shown upward progress over the twelve-month period. While three dimensions started off in the *weak* category and most of the others, except *Leadership and Management*, started off on the boundary between *weak* and *emerging*, the Second Impact Assessment shows that all dimensions are now in the *emerging* category and moving steadily towards the higher end of this category. *Learner Support* is still lagging behind the others but, as was mentioned in the previous section, this is also the dimension that has shown the biggest overall growth.

The next graph shows the movement between the three assessment categories.



While the progress achieved has not been spectacular these results are better than they appear at first glance. College reports show that where focus groups have remained reasonably stable, the basis for the ratings given has become more realistic. As mentioned before, the results should also be understood in the light of continued problems of understaffing, inadequate resources and insecurity experienced by those on short-term contracts. The fact that colleges have managed to show progress in all areas can be linked directly to substantial SESD support, as is discussed and acknowledged in each college report.

2.3 Analysis of each dimension

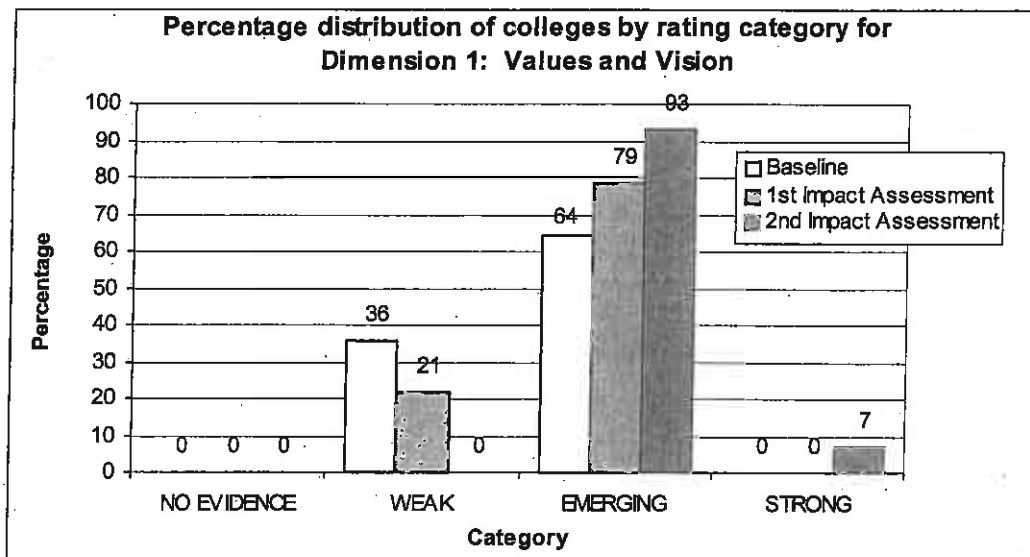
The next set of graphs provides a more detailed interpretation to show how each dimension rates at college and campus level. The first graph presented for each dimension shows the percentage distribution in terms of the three categories: *weak*, *emerging* or *strong*. This composite graph shows how each dimension has moved between the three categories over the last twelve months. In the

graphs that follow each province is represented separately. The aim of these graphs is for colleges to be able to assess themselves in each dimension against a rating given by the FET Directorate. This rating is based on the Directorate's view of the performance of all colleges in a province. In relation to these graphs it should be noted that provincial ratings are only obtained at the beginning of each year. Provincial ratings for the first impact assessment (September 2003) are thus reflected as 0.

2.3.1 Values and Vision

| Outcome | Characteristics |
|--|--|
| A strong vision and a lived set of values drive colleges' transformation processes towards fulfilling their developmental mission. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practices guided by a clear institutional vision Inculcation of a value system throughout the institution |

2.3.1.1 Distribution trends

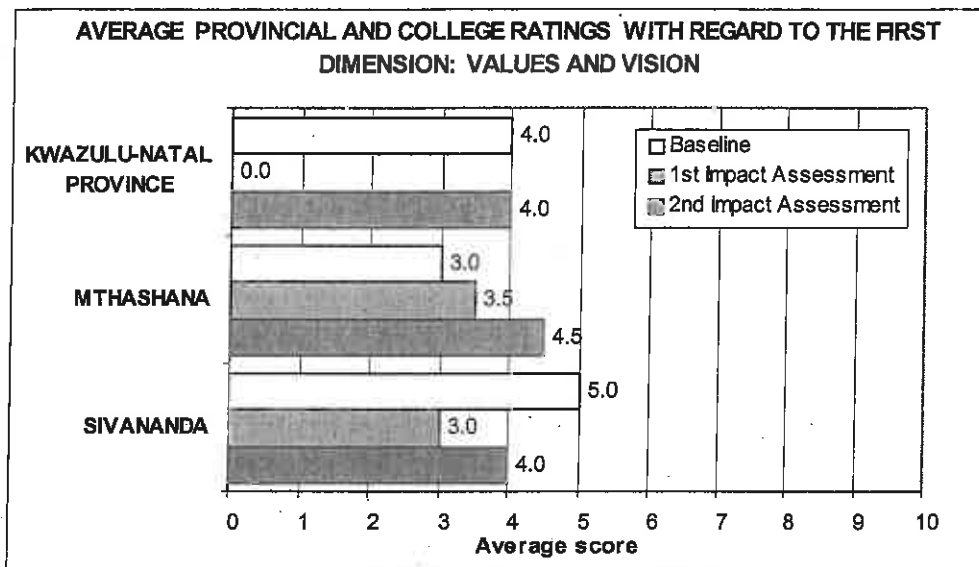


The composite graph in 2.2 above shows that there has been strong positive movement in this dimension (from a baseline rating of 3.9 to a second impact assessment rating of 4.9). All evaluators report evidence of more cohesive college identity formation even though, in many instances, it is still at the level of awareness rather than evidenced through positive commitment. The establishment of central offices/corporate centres and ongoing strategic revision have contributed to this improvement.

A question that arises from the reports is the extent to which all staff and students in a college can ever really share a common vision and values other than at special moments. It is likely that staff members in a particular subject or practical area will have more in common with colleagues in the same field than with other colleagues who may be on the same campus. In this regard the traditional divide between Engineering Studies and Business Studies is an obvious example. It is also clear that students identify more strongly with their own campus than with the new college (often to them no

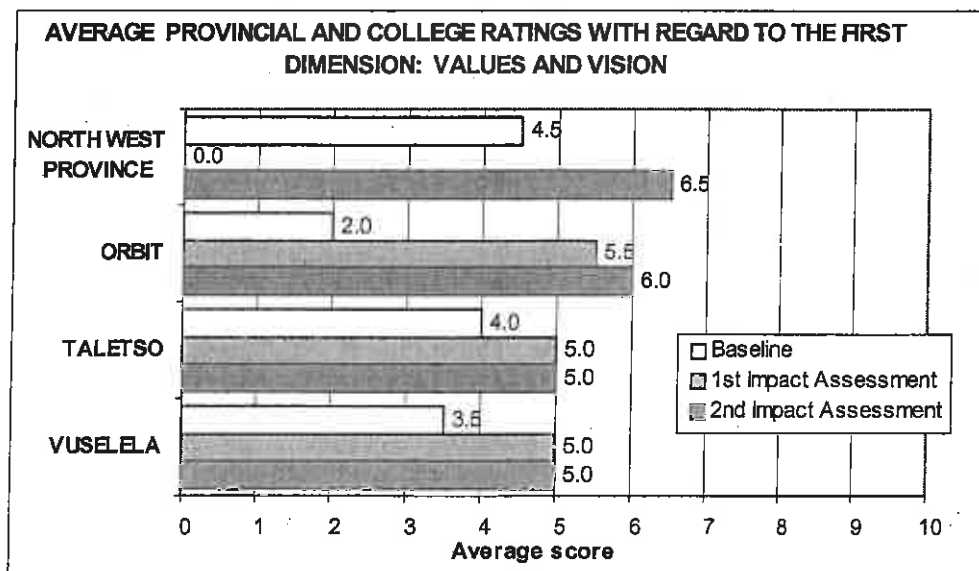
more than a logo). The general view is, however, that as long as broader values of democracy, constitutionalism and social justice, and the overall goals of the FET sector, guide institutional vision colleges will be able to accommodate and appreciate diverse values and motivations, and that this is a positive rather than a negative trend.

2.3.1.2 Kwazulu-Natal Province



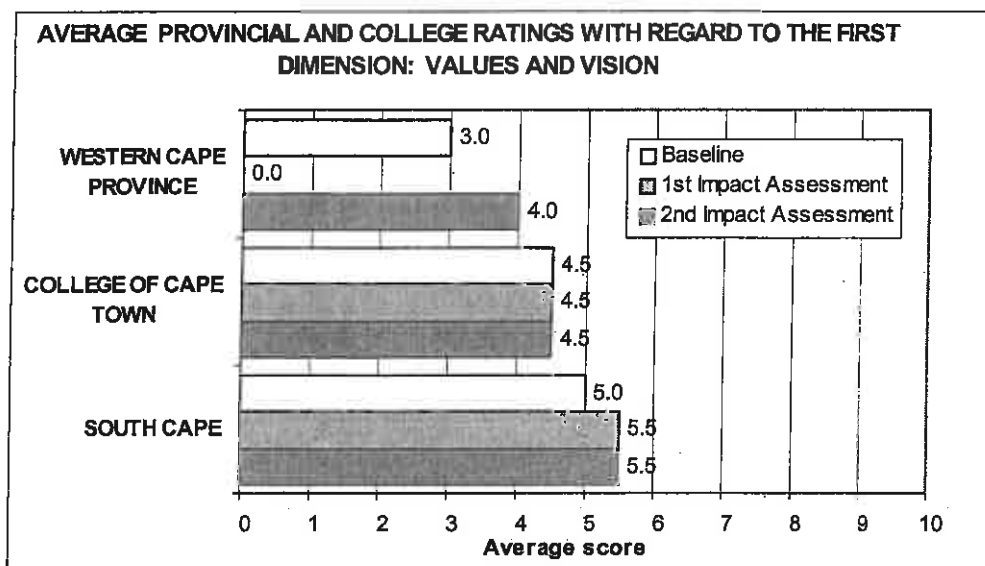
The two SESD colleges are close to the *emerging* rating given by the Provincial Directorate in KZN. The college ratings show that Mthashana is moving forward at a slow but steady pace and Sivananda is regaining the ground lost at the time of the first impact assessment. The provincial view is that underlying tensions are still undermining the progress being made in many colleges.

2.3.1.3 North West Province



The provincial FET Directorate in North West province has a more positive view of the colleges in terms of values and vision than the colleges have of themselves. The fact that NWDoE posts have been frozen and that many staff are in acting positions and have to carry increased work loads in addition to their normal duties, are cited as reasons for the ratings given by colleges. If the difference between college baseline ratings and second impact assessment ratings are however taken into account then it is clear that despite these problems a great deal of progress has been made over the last twelve months. This is undoubtedly linked to the identity cohesion brought about by the appointment of the CEOs.

2.3.1.4 Western Cape Province

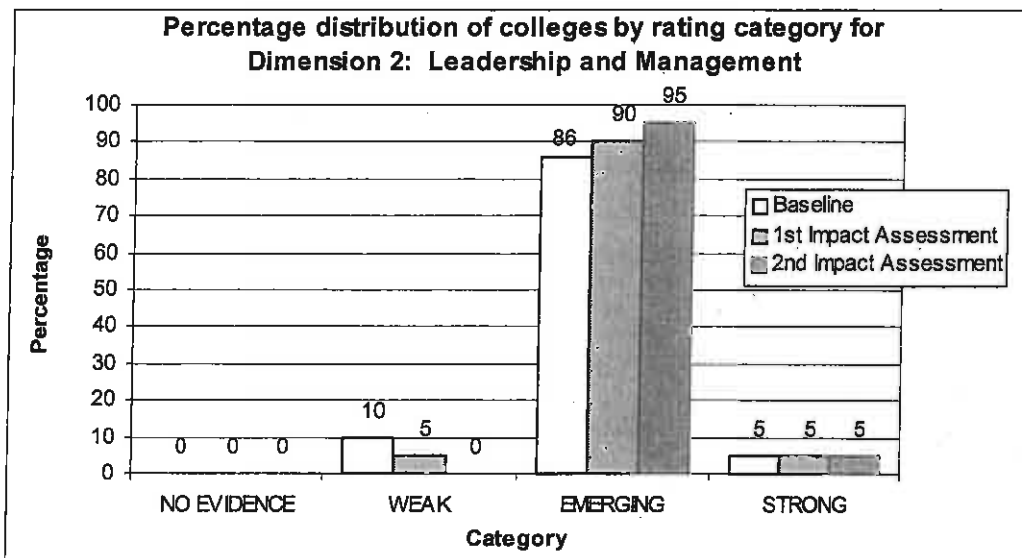


In the Western Cape the two SESD colleges rate higher than the average rating given by the provincial FET Directorate. The provincial rating reflects the province's view that vision and values are no longer mainly located at management level but that they are also not yet 'shared' by all. The ratings for the two SESD-supported colleges, however, reflect greater movement in the *emerging* category. It is also reported that the fact that many staff members are waiting to see where they will fit into the new structure has had a negative impact.

2.3.2 Leadership and Management

| Outcome | Characteristics |
|---|--|
| Strategic leadership, supported by effective management and governance systems, operationalises the transformed vision of the FET college system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-functioning systems of governance, including college councils and academic boards Effective institutional leadership Effective management systems |

2.3.2.1 Distribution trends



It has already been mentioned that the overall average rating for the *Leadership and Management* dimension declined slightly in the latest round of impact assessment (from 5.1 to 5), even though the distribution pattern has improved.

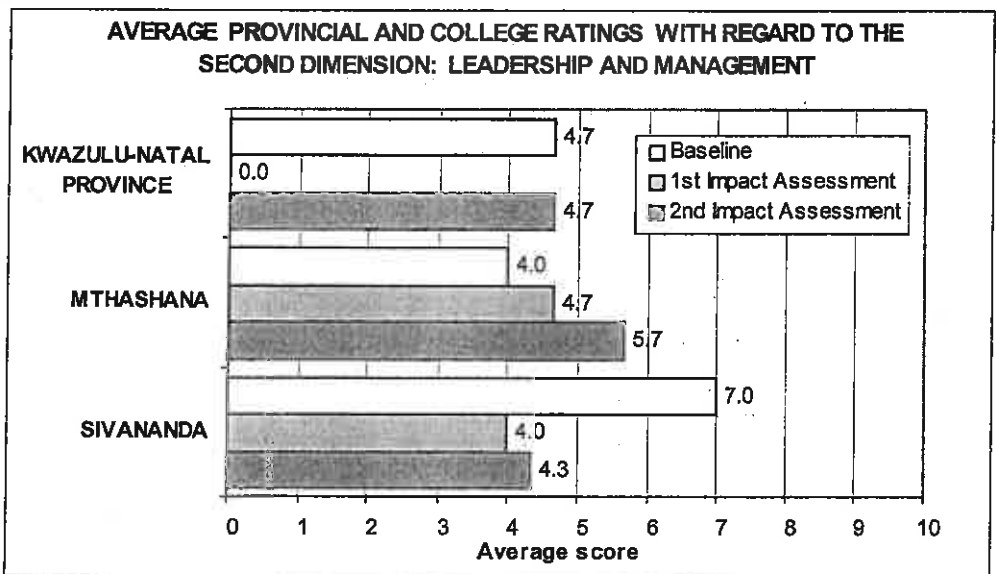
Well functioning systems of governance, including college councils and academic boards (characteristic no. 3) remains at a rating of 5. While most colleges now have councils and academic boards in place these structures are not yet functioning smoothly. Tensions between councils and CEOs are evident in some of the reports, with the distinction between governance and operational management not yet fully clarified. Some campuses also still resent the loss of their own councils and the close relations they had built up over time with council members from their particular geographical areas. They suggest that this has led in some cases to a lowering of commitment by some council members.

The fact that the rating for characteristic no. 4, *Effective Institutional Leadership*, has remained at 5.3 is not a reflection on the tremendous effort put in by CEOs and staff who have moved to central offices/corporate centres. It is rather an indication of the staff establishment problems that are still being experienced in all provinces. The fact that the level of senior management just below the CEO is not yet in place inhibits a strong display of institutional leadership and places a heavy burden on CEOs and staff members who serve in acting capacities.

The decline shown in characteristic no. 5, *Effective Management Systems*, (from 5 to 4.7) can largely be attributed to the fact that the introduction or updating of systems such as PERSAL and COLTECH and DB2000 has not yet resolved the lack of up-to-date management information. This impacts on effective decision-making and strategic planning. There is consistent evidence that the FETMIS environment requires further strengthening.

All characteristics related to the evaluation dimension of *Leadership and Management* will have to strengthen considerably before colleges are able to meet the goals of a renewed and transformed FET college sector.

2.3.2.2 Kwazulu-Natal Province

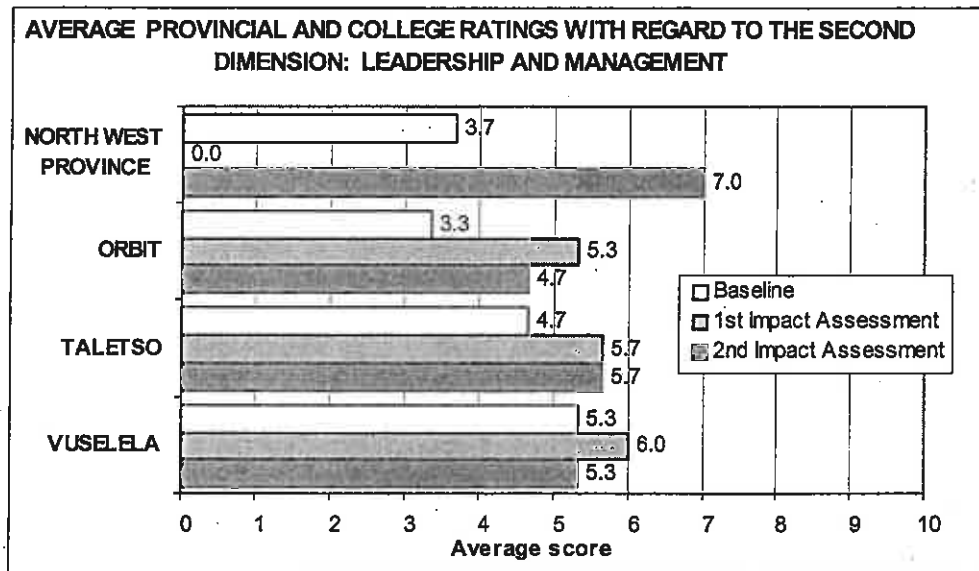


The provincial FET Directorate’s rating is based on a view that the new councils are beginning to function well, but that greater knowledge and experience are required for strong functioning. There is still tension between CEOs and councils at some colleges. CEOs also need further opportunity and time to settle fully into their jobs. Information systems have improved but remain a challenge.

The Mthashana rating exceeds the general rating provided by the provincial FET Directorate, with *institutional leadership* (characteristic no. 4) rating in the *strong* category. *College councils and academic boards* (characteristic no. 3) and *management systems* (characteristic no. 5) remain in the *emerging* category.

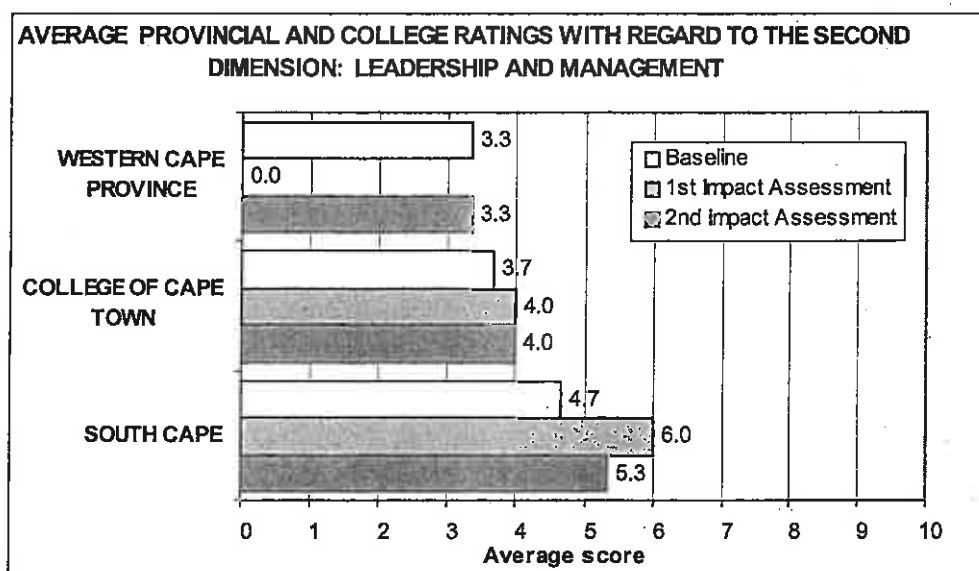
While the work of the college council was commended by all focus groups at Sivanda College, the academic board is not yet functioning. The ratings for *college councils and academic boards* (characteristic no. 3) and *institutional leadership* (characteristic no. 4) remain at 4. An improvement in the capturing of student registration data has pushed *management systems* (characteristic no. 5) up to a rating of 5.

2.3.2.3 North West Province



The FET Directorate place this dimension in the *strong* category, with the colleges taking a much more conservative view. Delays in the constitution of Section 9 councils and the retraining required to get new council members to be fully functioning are mentioned as frustrations at college level. There are also key differences in perception between college management and staff members further down the command chain about the extent to which democratic participation and consultation take place. College reports state that this is not because of lack of intent but rather as a result of a 'knock on' effect created by time constraints, lack of adequate staffing at second tier college management and the long absences of senior staff from campuses. *Effective management systems*, characteristic no 5, was also rated lower than in the first formative impact assessment in two of the three SESD-funded NW colleges.

2.3.2.4 Western Cape Province

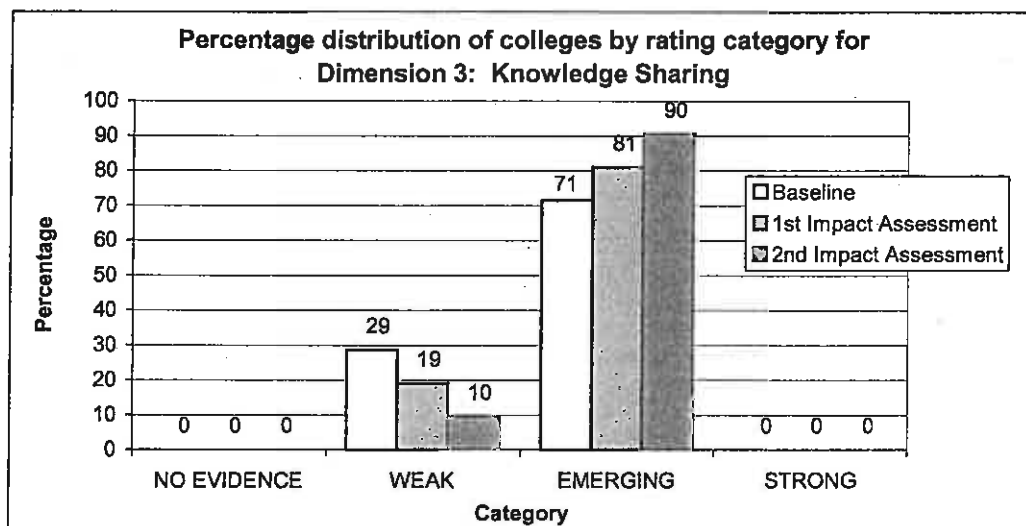


The provincial directorate has kept its rating in the *weak* category, based on the fact that college councils and academic boards are not yet fully in place or functioning effectively in all colleges; that adequate staffing and infrastructure, including FETMIS systems remain under-resourced areas and that CEOs have not been in place long enough to build a fully participatory culture in all areas. College of Cape Town has a rating of 4, in the *emerging* category, for all three characteristics included in this dimension. While slightly stronger than the provincial average the CCT report describes many of the problems noted by the provincial Directorate. South Cape has a fully functioning council and academic board, but the college has to fill senior management positions with staff members that act in an acting capacity. Management information systems also remain inadequate. It is expected that the introduction of a wide area network (WAN) later this year will improve information and financial flows between campuses and the central office.

2.3.3 Knowledge sharing

| Outcome | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| College and system performance enhanced through better flows of knowledge horizontally and vertically within the system, as well as with external stakeholders. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective vertical knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system Effective horizontal knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system Effective external knowledge sharing and learning in the FET system |

2.3.3.1 Distribution trends



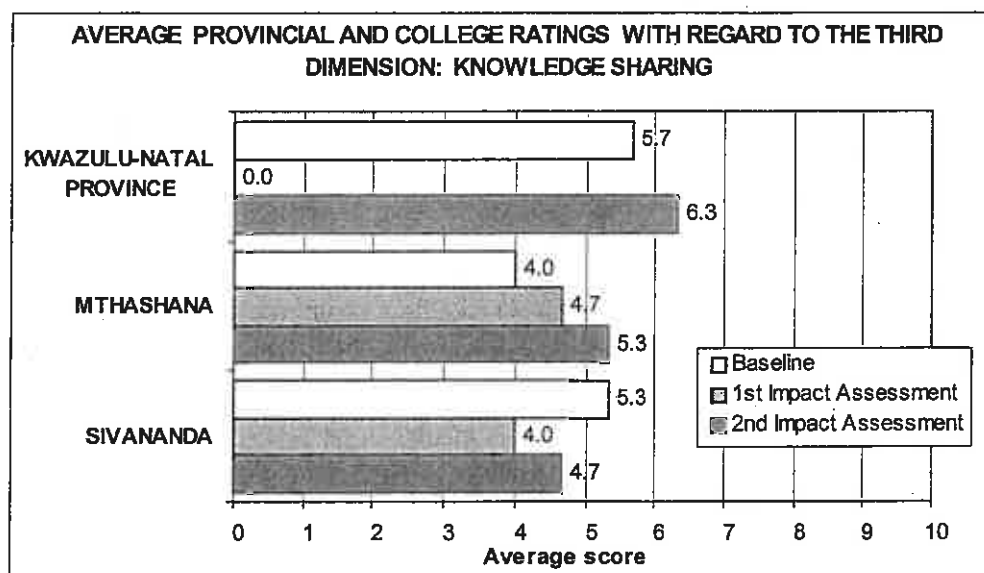
While the percentage distribution of the *Knowledge Sharing* dimension has not yet moved into the *strong* category there has been a 20% shift between the *weak* and *emerging* categories over the last twelve months. This can be attributed in part to the improvement in *vertical knowledge sharing* (characteristic no 6) between some provincial FET Directorates and colleges and the link that these Directorates provide to the national DoE through the participation of Directorate staff members in, for instance, standing committees on Institutional Development and Curriculum Development of the

Heads of Education Committee (HEADCOM). The downward conduit so created ensures that the colleges that benefit from these links gain access to current policy thinking. Although the rating of this characteristic has improved from 4.1 in the first impact assessment to 4.6 in the second impact assessment it remains the weakest of the three characteristics included in the *Knowledge Sharing* dimension.

The strongest improvement has occurred in *horizontal knowledge sharing* (characteristic no. 7). The introduction of SESD-supported 'best practice' and other forums in some provinces as well as the introduction, in some provinces, of regular meetings between colleges and FET Directorates has strengthened perceptions of inter-college and college-province communication. The SESD Programme has clearly played a major role in this regard. A significant feature of the programme is also the extent to which it is trying to reach out to non-SESD colleges through invitations to attend workshops and seminars arranged by Provincial Technical Advisers (TPAs), as well as through the funds made available by some provincial FET Directorates to enable non-SESD colleges to respond to such invitations. Many of the major initiatives undertaken at provincial level with SESD support also benefit all FET colleges in a province and not only those that are supported by the SESD Programme.

External knowledge sharing (characteristic no. 8) has moved from an average rating of 4.7 to 5 in the second formative impact assessment. This movement, while not yet significant, can be largely attributed to the establishment of centralised marketing and communications units (MCUs) and linkages and programme units (LPUs) in some SESD colleges. It is too early to report on the impact of these units but it can reasonably be anticipated that further improvement will soon become manifest. Although concerns expressed about potential loss of marketing and partnership-building capacity at campus level may be unnecessarily pessimistic, they serve as a reminder of the importance of immediate contact and communication. The extent to which external knowledge sharing initiatives operate within particular understandings of the business and community sectors of geographic regions is an ongoing challenge in this area.

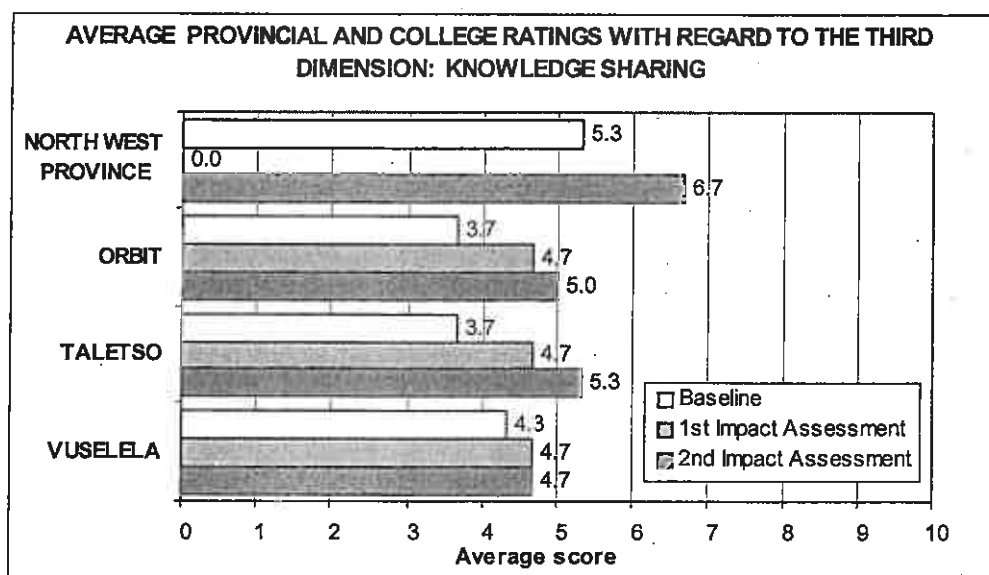
2.3.3.2 Kwazulu-Natal Province



The ratings of the two SESD colleges in KZN are not equivalent to the perceptions of the FET Directorate of the extent to which knowledge sharing is occurring in the province. Both colleges are nevertheless making steady progress with an improvement in average ratings of 0.6 and 0.7 respectively. In Mthashana's case this is due to an improvement in both *horizontal knowledge sharing* (from 4 to 5) and *external knowledge sharing* (from 5 to 6). The challenge of achieving broad-based knowledge sharing that is inclusive of all communities in this rural environment was indicated as one that still remains.

Sivananda's shift from 4 to 5 for *vertical knowledge sharing* is attributed to an improvement in communication with the provincial FET Directorate. *Horizontal knowledge sharing* remains at 6, but external knowledge sharing has decreased from 4 to 3. This places this characteristic in the *weak* category. With regard to the latter characteristic all focus groups reported that contact with local communities and/or business has decreased since the merger. Respondents, however, also indicated time constraints rather than lack of willingness as the reason for this deterioration.

2.3.3.3 North West Province

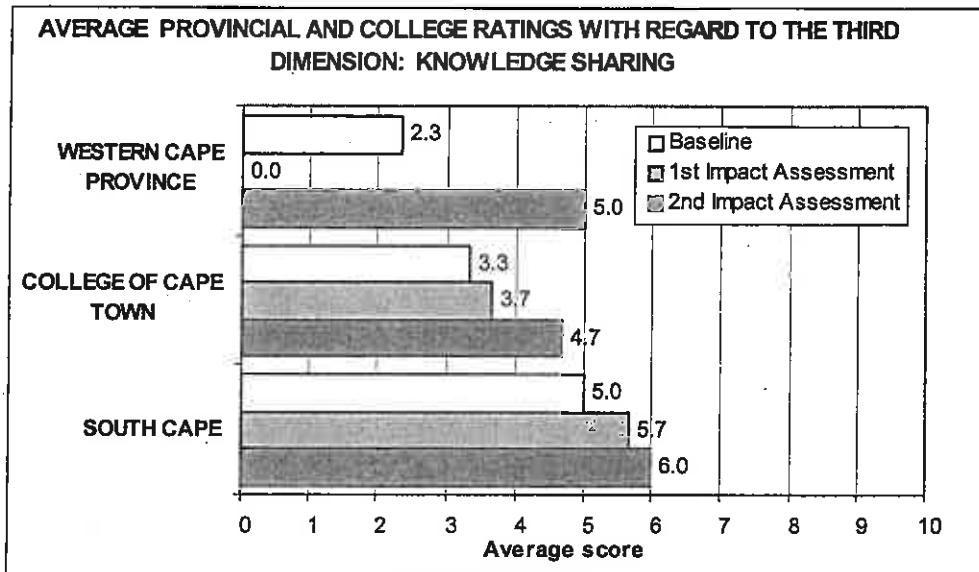


In North West province the Provincial FET Directorate similarly rate the impact of knowledge sharing initiatives considerably higher than the colleges. Taletso has achieved the strongest improvement in the *Knowledge Sharing* dimension, with a movement from 4.7 to 5.3 in the average rating; followed by Orbit where the increase in average rating has been 0.3.

Vuselela has maintained its average rating of 4.7. This rating reflects a slight improvement in *external knowledge sharing* (from 4 to 5) and a slight worsening of *vertical knowledge sharing* (from 4 to 3). The shift in the latter rating is important in so far as it places this characteristic in the *weak* rather than in the *emerging* category – a downward slide mainly attributable to difficulties experienced with the service provided by the provincial FET Directorate. Structural problems and lack of capacity and

expertise in the provincial FET Directorate were given as reasons for this deterioration, even though the corporate centre of this college is doing its best to facilitate communication flows.

2.3.3.4 Western Cape Province



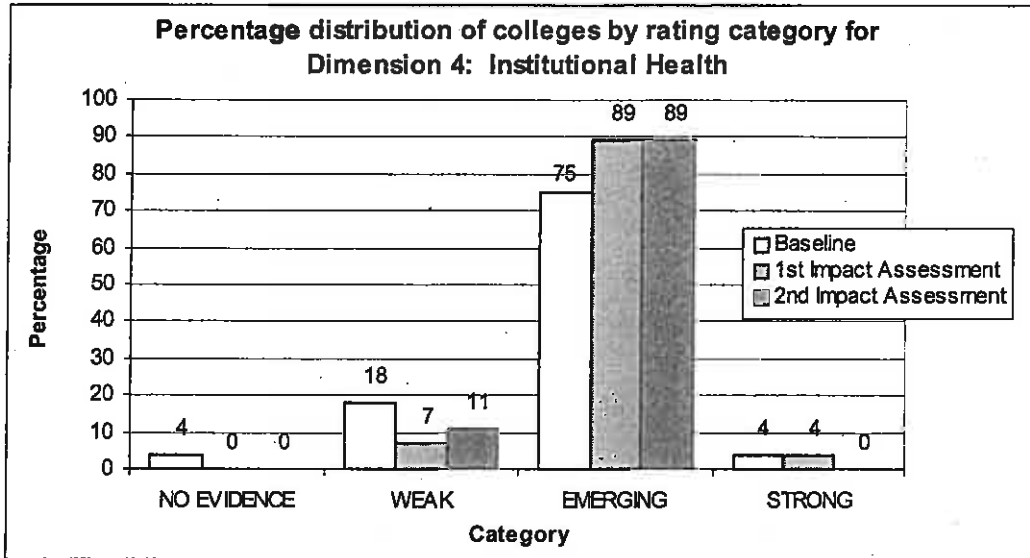
In the Western Cape the provincial FET Directorate has considerably increased its rating of the extent to which knowledge sharing is occurring in the province. While the average rating for College of Cape Town has increased substantially, by one percentage point, the overall rating still falls below the norm provided by the provincial rating. For this college all three the characteristics included in *Knowledge Sharing* have, however, moved from the *weak* category to the *emerging* category

An improvement (from 5 to 6) in South Cape College's ratings for *horizontal* and *external* knowledge sharing has meant that the *Knowledge Sharing* dimension has moved into the *high emerging* category. This is higher than the provincial rating.

2.3.4 Institutional health

| Outcome | Characteristics |
|--|--|
| The financial health and physical infrastructure of colleges contribute to their proper functioning in supporting employability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment and maintenance of financial health • Adequate infrastructure • Enhanced human resource capacity • Quality assurance system |

2.3.4.1 Distribution trends

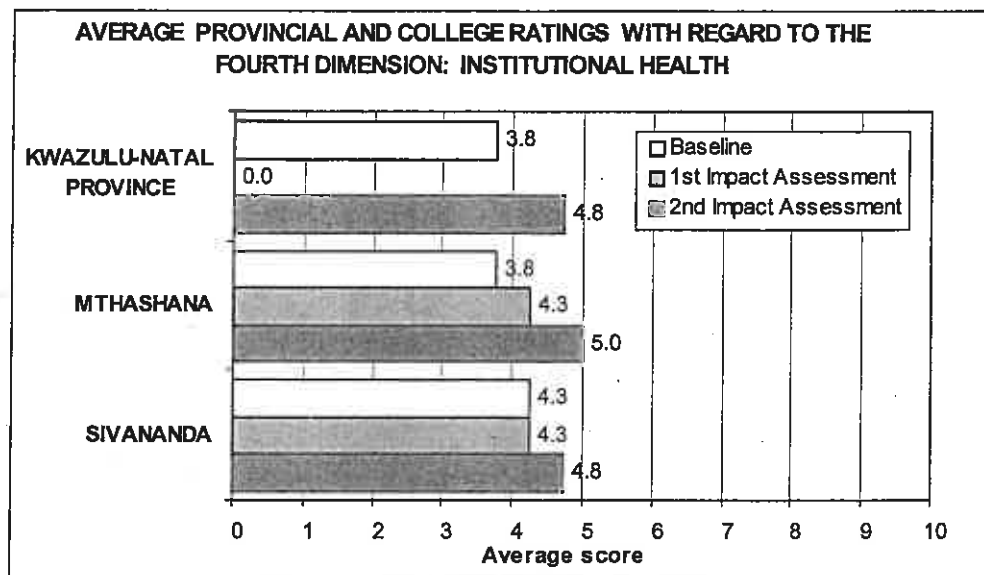


The average percentage distribution for *Institutional Health* shows interesting variations. While the percentage distribution in the *emerging* category remains constant there has been movement from the *emerging* category back into the *weak* category, as well as movement from the *strong* category back into the *emerging* category.

In terms of average ratings (across all SESD colleges) for each characteristic *establishment and maintenance of financial health* (characteristic 9) has an improved average rating of 5.3 (up from 5) and *enhanced human resource capacity* (characteristic 11) shows an improvement from 5.4 to 5.6. *Adequate infrastructure* (characteristic 10) has, however, remained the same, with an average rating of 4.9 and *quality assurance systems* (characteristic 12) has decreased from 4.1 to 3.9 to make this the only characteristic that has returned to the *weak* category (as mentioned previously).

While these statistics may make it look as if the distribution pattern should not have changed so radically, it is particularly with regard to this dimension that increases in the ratings of some colleges have been countered by decreases in the ratings of other colleges. Reasons given relate to what some focus groups called 'unrealistic earlier ratings'. Evaluators thus had to make adjustments in certain instances.

2.3.4.2 Kwazulu-Natal Province

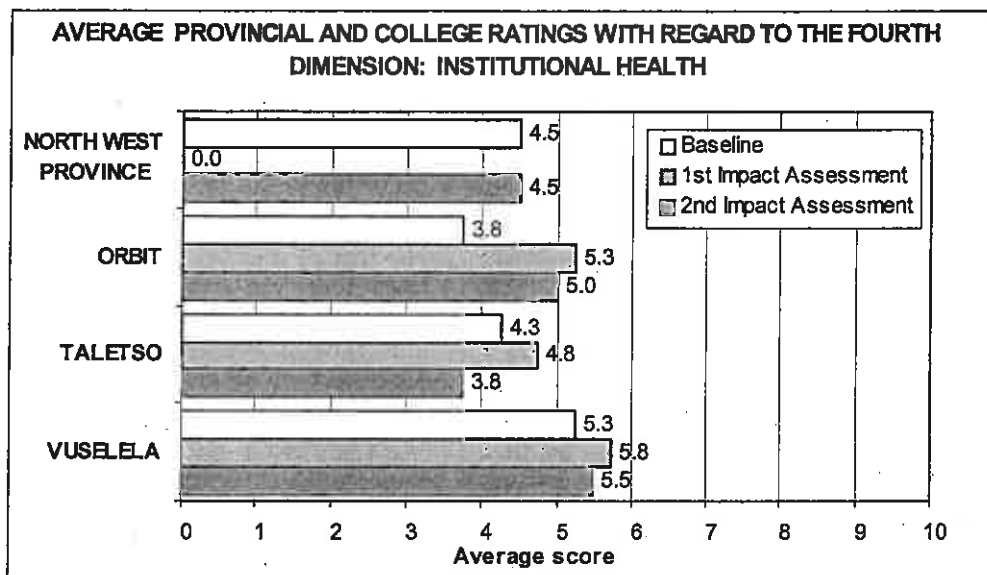


There has been an improvement in the ratings given by the provincial FET Directorate for all four the characteristics included in *Institutional Health*. The Directorate is, however, aware that college practices are still uneven, especially in relation to *quality assurance*.

Mthashana has improved by one point in relation to three characteristics (*financial health* from 4 to 5; *infrastructure* from 3 to 4; *human resource capacity* from 5 to 6), but remains at 4 for *quality assurance*.

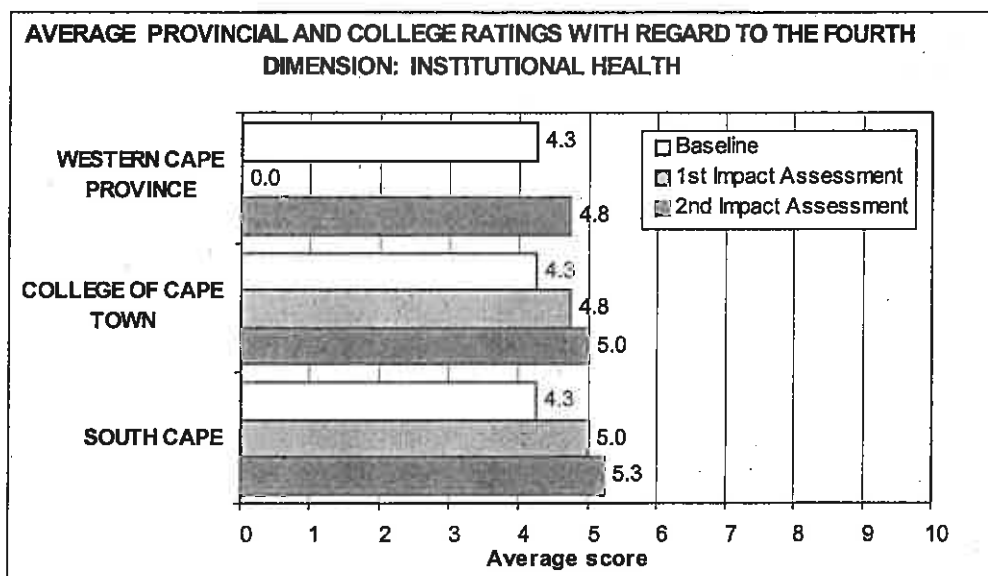
Sivananda remains at 5 for *financial health* and *human resource capacity* and at 4 for *quality assurance*. There has, however been an increase by one point (from 4 to 5) with regard to *infrastructure*, which is based on the purchase of a building to house the central office, improvement of one of the staff rooms, the building of a skills centre and an increase in the number of computers available to students. The latter category includes the computers for PLATO that is sponsored by the SESD Programme.

2.3.4.3 North West Province



The ratings of two out of the three colleges in North West province exceed the provincial norm as characterised in the FET Directorate's rating. Taletso's rating has, however, dropped back into the *weak* category on the basis that what is seen 'on the outside' does not reflect the true state of physical, technological and telecommunications infrastructure at the college. It was also reported that administrative staff members need further capacity development. The rating for *quality assurance* has dropped back to the *weak* baseline status of 3.

2.3.4.4 Western Cape Province



There is only a difference of 0.5 between the average rating for all colleges in the Western Cape province and the highest rating of 5.3 achieved by South Cape College. For this college the rating of 5

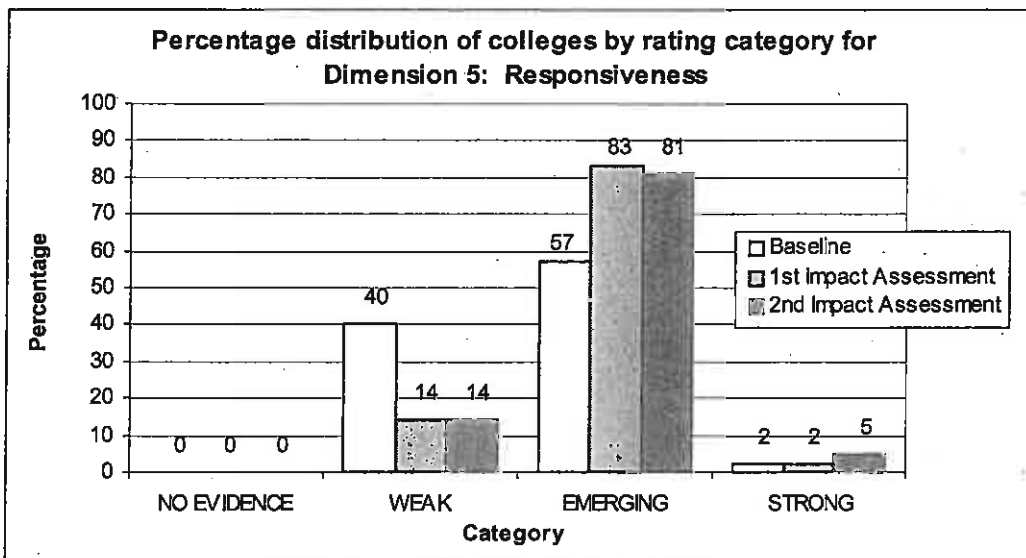
achieved in relation to three characteristics was slightly boosted by the rating of 6 for *enhanced human resource capacity*.

College of Cape Town show similar ratings, except for *quality assurance* being rated at 4 rather than at 5. While this is an improvement on the baseline rating of 3 for *quality assurance*, the system is not yet deemed comprehensive enough to justify a further increase in rating.

2.3.5 Responsiveness

| Outcome | Characteristics |
|--|---|
| Employability enhanced through greater responsiveness of colleges to the needs of learners, their communities and the labour market. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good relationships with business • Good relationships with local communities • Good relationships with other state bodies • The development, provision and evaluation of learnership programmes • The development, provision and evaluation of SMME programmes • The development, provision and evaluation of short courses/ skills programmes |

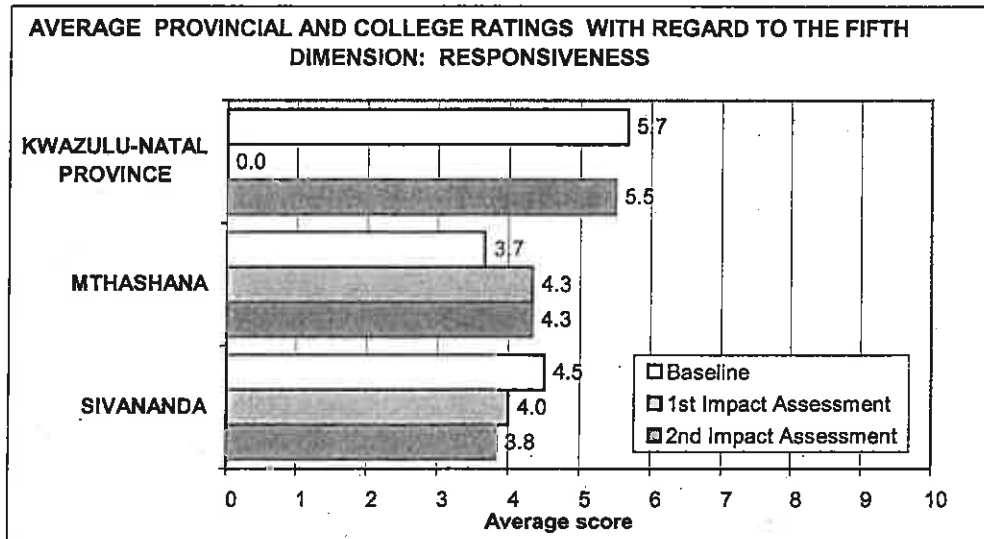
2.3.5.1 Distribution trends



The *Responsiveness* dimension is divided into six areas of responsiveness: to business, local communities and state bodies, as well as in terms of the development, provision and evaluation of learnerships, SME development and short courses/skills programmes. Having started off in the baseline study as the dimension with the second lowest average rating (at 3.8 in the *weak* category) the shift to 4.5 in the first formative impact assessment and to 4.7 in the second formative impact assessment shows that SESD colleges are taking up the challenge posed them to become more responsive, even though they are not yet strong in all areas.

The introduction of marketing and communication units (MCUs) and linkages and programme units (LPUs) in certain SESD colleges has brought about an increase of 0.5 in the average ratings for *relationships with business* (characteristic no. 13) - from 4.6 to 5.1; and for *relationships with other state bodies* (characteristic no. 15) - from 4.4 to 4.9. This increase can be seen in the second formative impact assessment's distribution pattern for the *strong* category. Unfortunately the *weak* category remains at 14%.

2.3.5.2 Kwazulu-Natal Province

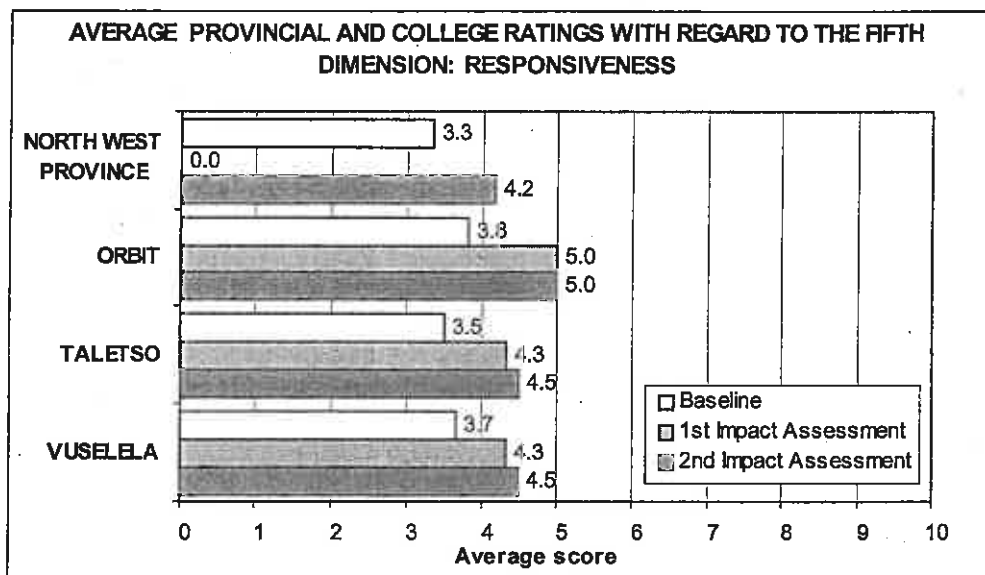


The FET Directorate's average rating for all colleges in the province has decreased slightly, from 5.7 to 5.5. This rating is as a result of the absence of dedicated staff in relation to linkages and programme units in non-SESD colleges, which decreased *relations with business* (characteristic no. 13) from 6 to 5. All other characteristics were rated at 5 or 6 (in the *emerging* category), with the exception of *short courses/skills programmes* (characteristic no. 18). This characteristic was rated 7 (in the *strong* category) in the baseline study a year ago and has maintained this *strong* rating in the present round of impact assessment. Neither of the two SESD colleges measures up to the average provincial rating.

Mthashana achieved its highest rating (6 in the *emerging* category) for *relationships with local communities* (characteristic no. 14). Although this rating is the same as in the first impact assessment, the consensus opinion was that, although there have been new initiatives and activities, the rating should not yet be moved into the *strong* category. *Learnerships* (characteristic no. 16) and *SME development* (characteristic no. 17) remain in the *weak* category (both with a rating of 3). The rating for *relations with business* (characteristic no. 13) remains at 4; *relations with other state bodies* (characteristic no. 15) remains at 5, with *short courses/skills programmes* (characteristic no. 18) also remaining at 5. The college reports detail major developments that have occurred in the domain of linkages and relationship building in a short space of time, but they also report that the foundations laid have not yet translated into sustained impact.

Sivananda's ratings for *relationships with local communities* (characteristic no. 14), *relations with other state bodies* (characteristic no. 15) and *learnerships* (characteristic no. 16) have all moved from the *low emerging* category (previously rated at 4) into the *weak* category (now rated at 3). This is attributable to the decline of previous initiatives and the impact of the newly established linkages and programmes unit (LPU) not yet coming through. While there are presently no learnerships at Sivananda the college has been selected as a pilot site for roll out of the New Venture Creation learnerships. It is anticipated that the rating for *learnerships* will soon improve. *Relations with business*, (characteristic no. 13), has moved from the *weak* into the *emerging* category (from 3 to 4), while developments in *SME development* (characteristic no. 17) has pushed up the rating from 4 to 5. There has been progress in *short courses/skills programmes* (characteristic no. 18) but not yet sufficiently so to warrant a shift from the rating of 5 achieved in the first formative impact assessment.

2.3.5.3 North West Province



In relation to the dimension of *Responsiveness* the average provincial rating has moved from the *weak* to the *emerging* category. This positive move has also occurred in the rating of all three colleges since the baseline study. While the provincial rating remains at 4 for *relations with business* (characteristic no. 13), the provincial rating has moved from 4 to 5 for *learnerships* (characteristic no. 16), as well as for *short courses/skills programmes* (characteristic no. 18). It has also moved from 3 to 5 (a significant move) for *relations with other state bodies* (characteristic no. 15). Where it remains *weak* (with a rating of 3) is for *relationships with local communities* (characteristic no. 14) and for *SME development* (characteristic no. 17).

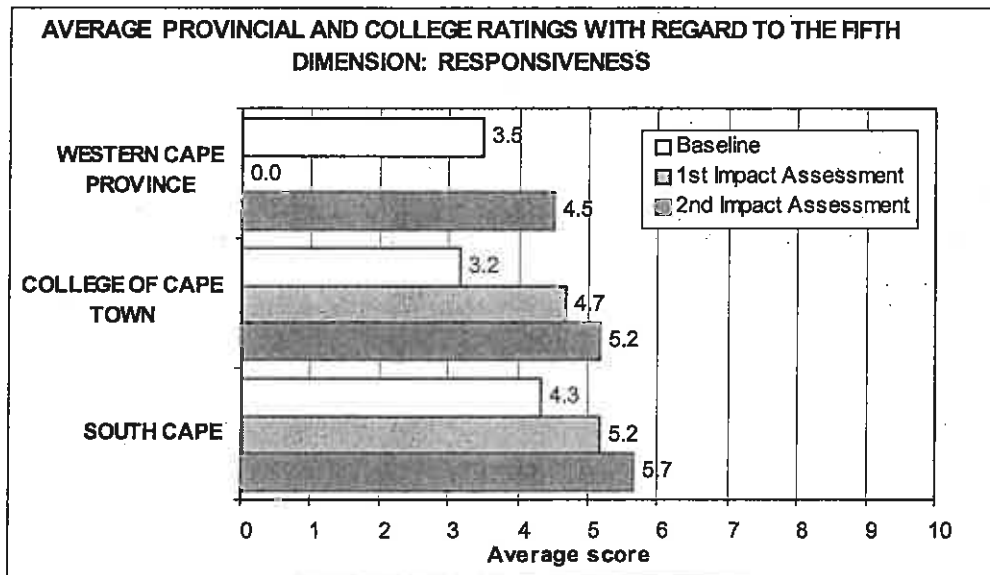
Orbit's average rating of 5 reflects its performance in relation to most of the characteristics included in this dimension, with *relations with business* (characteristic no. 13) coming through more strongly at a rating of 6. *Learnerships*, (characteristic no. 16), has decreased from 5 to 4. Although the college still has to be accredited before any learnerships can be implemented, Orbit has been identified as a

college that will join the New Venture Creation Learnership pilot in 2005. More activity can thus be expected in this area.

Taletso's slight average improvement is due to an increase from 5 to 6 for *relations with other state bodies* (characteristic no. 15) where increased levels of engagement with government departments were reported. There has also been an increase from 4 to 5 for *learnerships* (characteristic no. 16), with more activity now reported in this area. Infrastructural shortcomings that undermine SETA accreditation and certification are responsible for the decrease in the rating for *short courses/skills programmes* (characteristic no. 18), from 5 to 4. The other three characteristics have maintained the ratings given in the first formative impact assessment.

Vuselela has similarly maintained the ratings of the first formative impact assessment for five of the characteristics. Despite the frustration reported in relation to ineffective procedures currently in place in the province in relation to contact with SETAs a number of examples of shifts in relationships with state bodies justified an increase in the previously *weak* rating of 3 to 4, which now places *relations with other state bodies* (characteristic no. 15) in the *emerging* category.

2.3.5.4 Western Cape Province



The increase in the FET Directorate's average rating is due to an increase of one rating point in four of the characteristics included in the dimension of *Responsiveness*. *SME development* (characteristic no. 17), which was rated at 4 in the baseline study, remains at 4. *Relations with other state bodies* (characteristic no. 15) which was given a weak rating of 2 in the baseline study has moved into the *emerging* category with an increase rating of 4. This move is ascribed mainly to an increase in partnership building with local authorities.

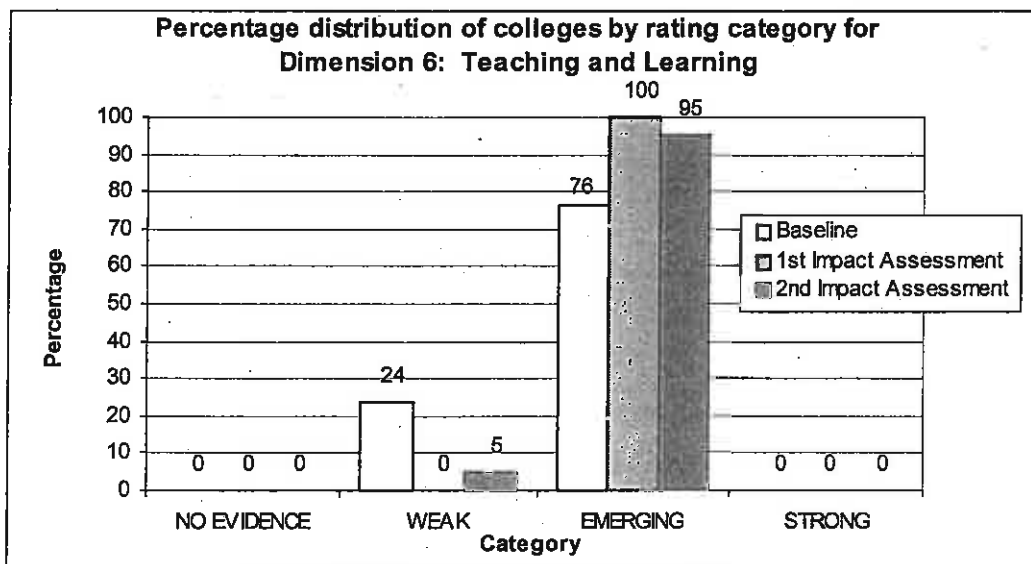
Given its baseline rating of 3.2, College of Cape town has made great strides in terms of *Responsiveness. Relations with business* (characteristic no. 13), *learnerships* (characteristic no. 16) and *short courses/skills programmes* (characteristic no. 18) are the strongest areas and rate at 6. College of Cape Town has also been selected as a pilot site for roll out of the New Venture Creation learnerships.

South Cape College has achieved a *strong* rating of 7 for *relations with business* (characteristic no. 13) and *learnerships* (characteristic no. 16). This college has become an Employment Skills Development Lead Employer (ESDLE) for the Department of Labour's roll out of learnerships for the unemployed. Two hundred and fifty learnerships for the unemployed have been allocated to South Cape College. The other four characteristics are all in the *emerging* category.

2.3.6 Teaching and learning

| Outcome | Characteristics |
|--|---|
| A culture of learning promotes both employability and personal development. Strong systems of curriculum development, classroom pedagogy and staff development support quality learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functioning curriculum development processes Quality curricular delivery Well-functioning staff development processes |

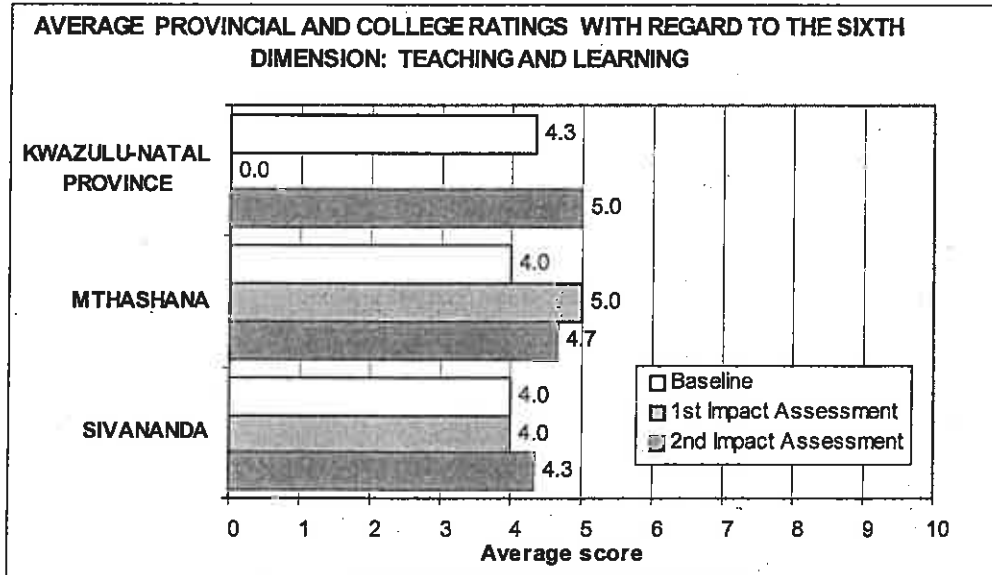
2.3.6.1 Distribution trends



The distribution pattern for the dimension of *Teaching and Learning* shows a backward movement of 5% from the *emerging* to the *weak* category. Given the strong focus that has been placed on institutional development this is perhaps understandable, but at the same time the SESD programme has also put a lot of resources into staff training and development. If this is linked to the fact that *Teaching and Learning* is, after all, the 'core business' of FET colleges then this is a worrying trend –

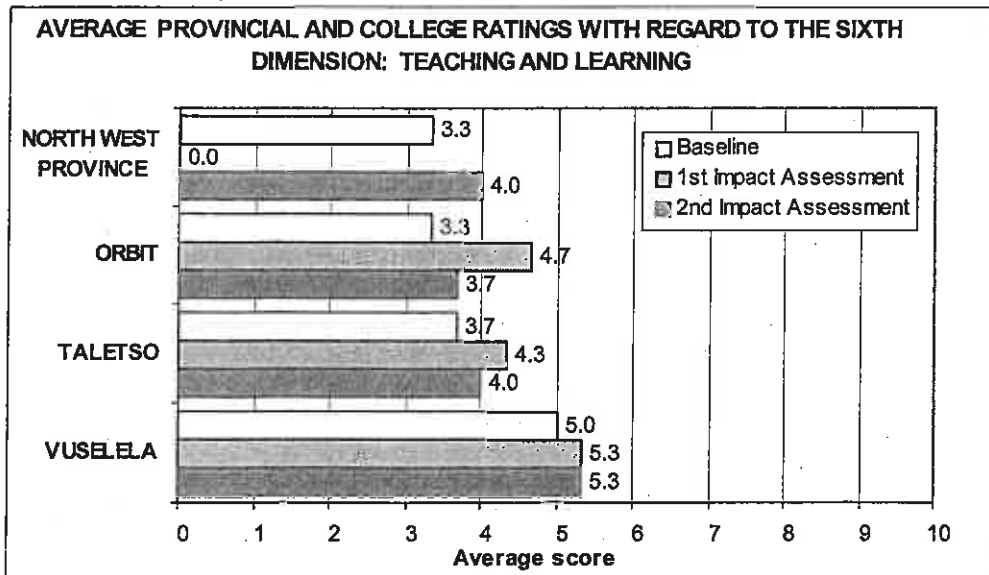
especially if it is interpreted in terms of the average rate (in relation to all SEDS colleges) for this dimension. In the twelve months since the start of the monitoring and evaluation process the average rate increased from 4 to 4.8 and then decreased slightly to 4.7. All three these ratings remain below the mid-point of an evaluation scale of 0 to 10.

2.3.6.2 Kwazulu-Natal Province



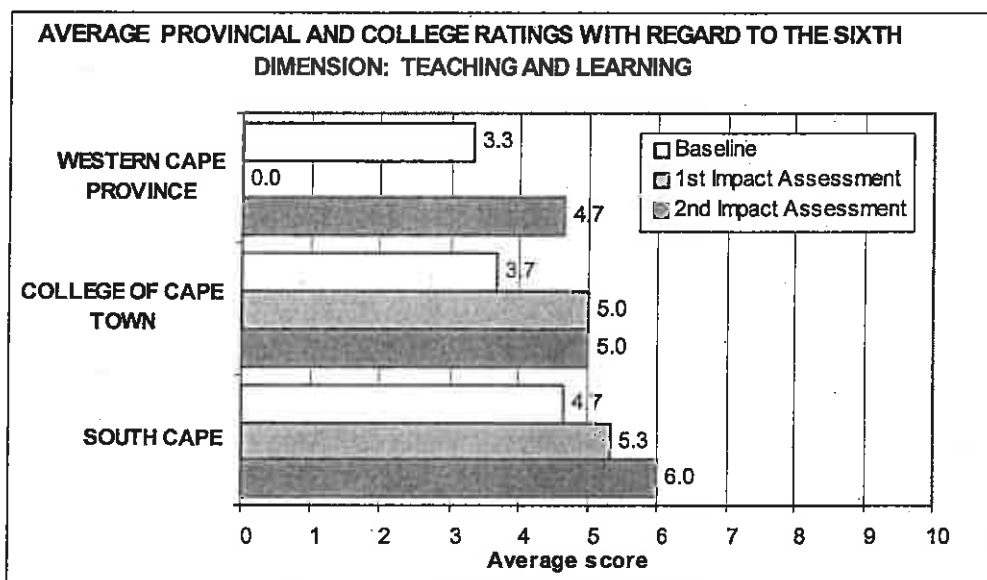
The average provincial rating for *Teaching and Learning* is higher than the ratings achieved by both SEDS colleges. The province bases its assessment on the fact that the SEDS Programme and the FET Directorate itself have been active in this area. Improved ratings for *staff development* (characteristic no. 21) in both SEDS colleges acknowledge these initiatives, but at the same time the reports present limited evidence of work done in relation to curriculum revision or innovation.

2.3.6.3 North West Province



The improved rating given by the FET Directorate in North West province is an acknowledgement of the training provided through SESD-supported and provincial initiatives. Lack of systematic plans, processes and structures are, however, deemed stumbling blocks in the quest for improvement of the quality of curriculum development, delivery and staff development. While Vuselela has maintained its average rating of 5.3 for this dimension, the ratings for both Orbit and Taletso have declined. In Orbit's case an overload of provincial training is reported to have led to recurrent absences of teaching staff, with a resultant negative impact on quality of teaching and discipline. Students choose to stay at home rather than do unsupervised work when educators are away. It was suggested that better planning of staff development courses would ensure that the impact of such absences on a campus with a small staff is not so drastic.

2.3.6.4 Western Cape Province



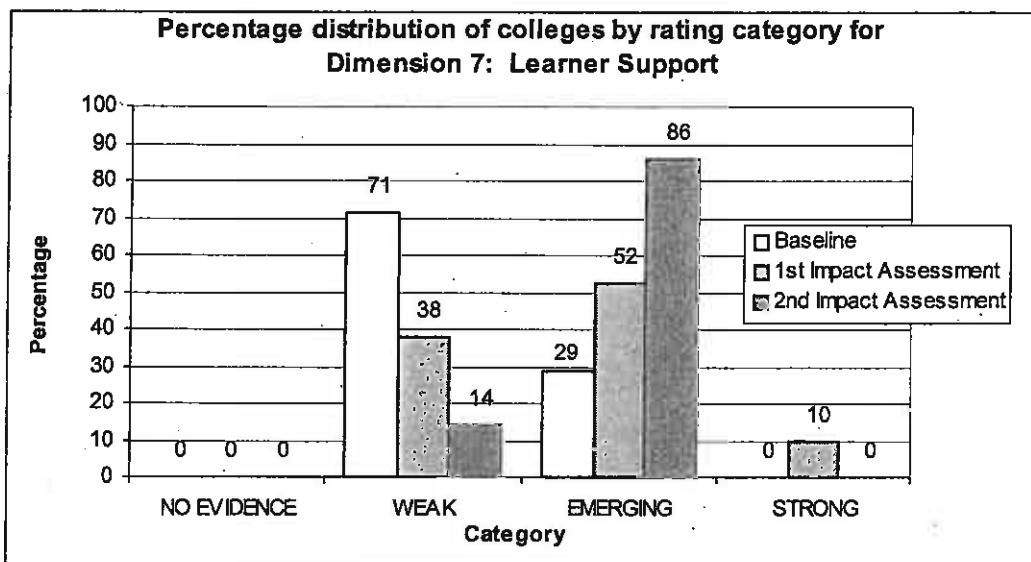
An increased focus in the province on curriculum issues has brought about an improvement in the average provincial rating. The FET Directorate feels however that the quality of curriculum provision is only in the early emerging stages and that, although there has been vigorous activity in terms of staff development, a lot still needs to be done in relation to the strengthening of subject expertise and increased levels of workplace experience.

The ratings of both SESD colleges are above the provincial mean. The need for performance appraisal guidelines was mentioned in both reports and the appropriateness of some of the training offered was questioned.

2.3.7 Learner support

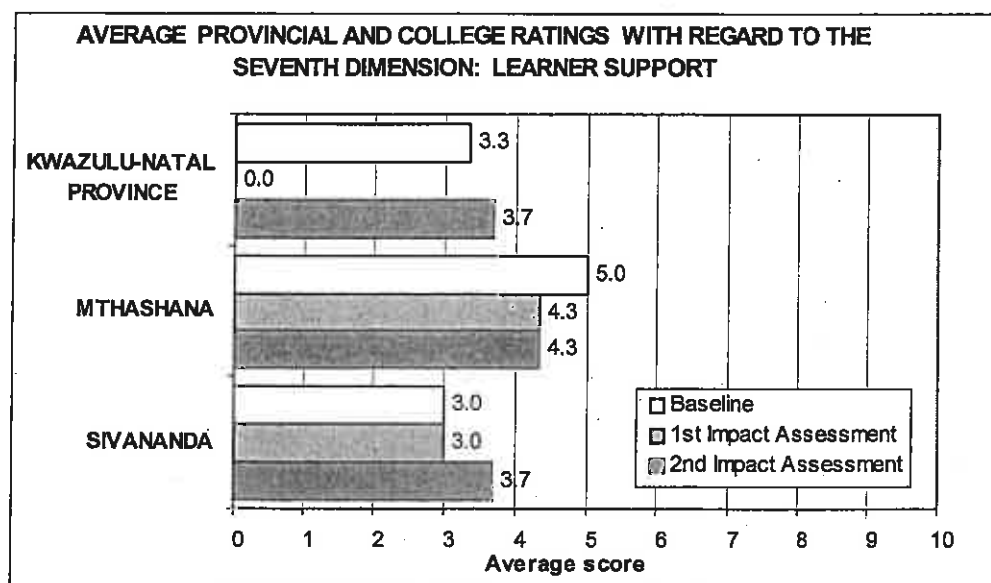
| Outcome | Characteristics |
|---|---|
| Learner support systems improve labour market and life outcomes through support to learners' health, learning and insertion into the labour market. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development, implementation and evaluation of academic support programmes The development, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS awareness interventions The development, implementation and evaluation of guidance and counselling systems |

2.3.7.1 Distribution trends



The distribution patterns for *Learner Support* show interesting shifts. Since the baseline study there has been a significant swing from the *weak* to the *emerging* category, with the average rating for all SESD colleges showing a similar shift. The 10% backward shift from the *strong* to the *emerging* category is ascribed to the fact that staff members responsible for student support remain overloaded with teaching and other duties, as well as to the fact that newly introduced systems need to become more stable and consistent before they can be described as *strong*. While it is too early to assess the impact that the newly established Student Support Units (SSUs) are having, increased activity in this area was consistently reported. The introduction of PLATO was mentioned as another positive development.

2.3.7.2 Kwazulu-Natal Province

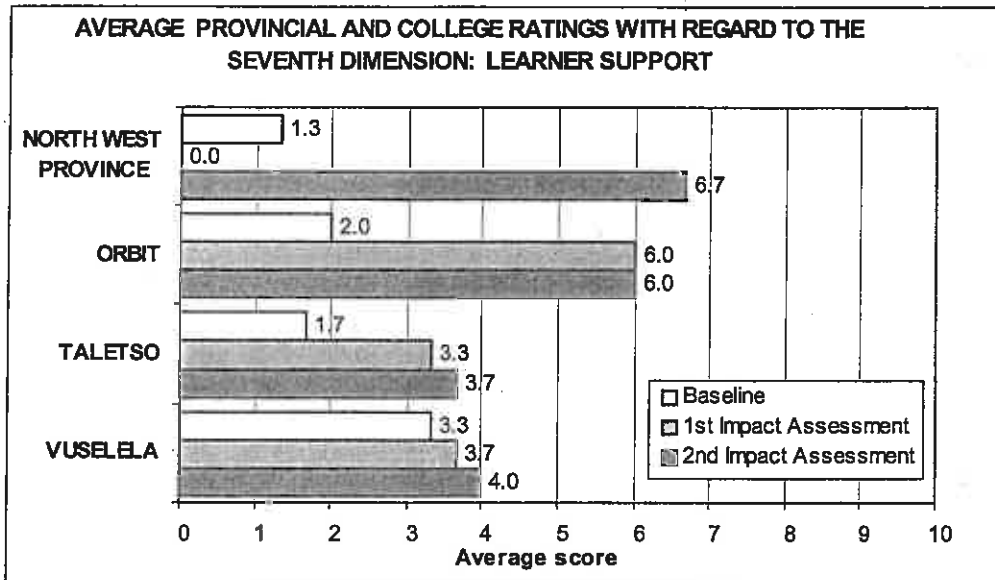


The provincial norm for *Learner Support* still locates this dimension in the *weak* category, with not a great difference between the ratings achieved by colleges and the average provincial rating for all colleges in the province.

In Mthashana new developments were noted in relation to all three characteristics included in this dimension, namely *academic support* (characteristic no. 22), *HIV/Aids support* (characteristic no. 23) and *guidance and counselling* (characteristic no. 24). Most of these developments are, however, still in the planning or early implementation stages, with increased pressures on staff members noted as a cause of decline rather than growth in some areas.

While Sivananda's average ratings for *academic support* (characteristic no. 22) and *HIV/Aids support* (characteristic no. 23) have increased from 3 to 4, *guidance and counselling* (characteristic no. 24) remains at 3, thereby keeping the overall average in the *weak* category. Staff reported that guidance and counselling prior to enrolment currently occurs at one campus, while the rest of the students still tend to enrol for courses that their friends are taking.

2.3.7.3 North West Province



In North West province the average provincial rating has increased dramatically from 1.3 to 6.7, with *HIV/Aids support* (characteristic no. 23) and *guidance and counselling* (characteristic no. 24) rated at 7 in the *strong* category and *academic support* (characteristic no. 22) rated at 6 in the *high emerging* category. The establishment of SESD-supported student support units (SSUs) and the training and support offered in relation to getting systems for HIV/Aids support in place are mainly responsible for this shift.

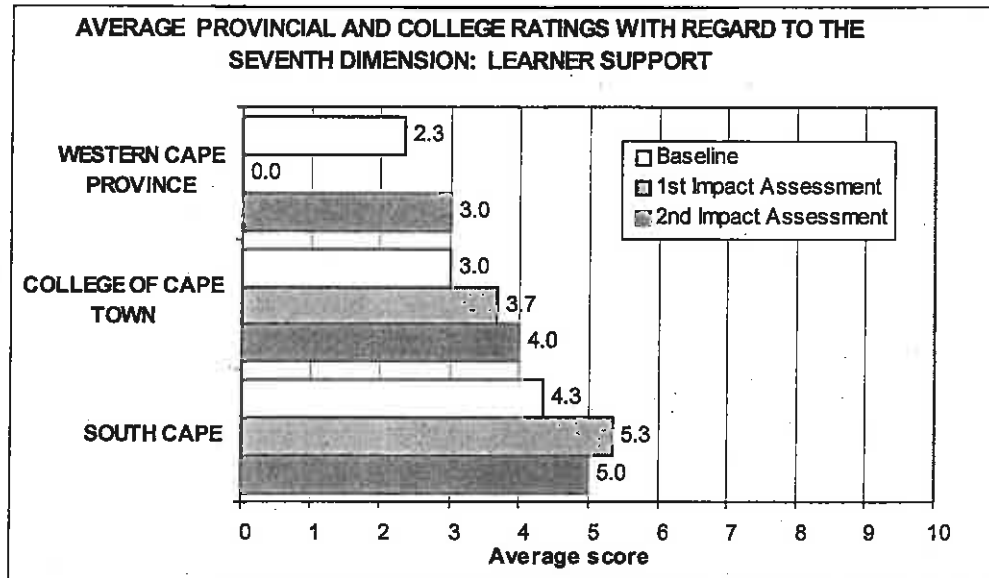
Orbit’s average rating comes closest to the rating given by the FET Directorate. The college report details a range of new initiatives in relation to all three characteristics, yet also indicates that there is still unevenness across campuses regarding implementation.

At Taletso the introduction of PLATO at the Mafikeng campus and Reading Excellence at the Lehurutshe and Lichtenburg campuses have resulted in a shift in the rating for *academic support* (characteristic no. 22) from 3 to 4 with student demand for both programmes already reaching high levels. While the rating for *HIV/Aids support* (characteristic no. 23) shifted from 1 to 4 in the previous impact assessment as a result of counselling training workshops attended by both staff and students. While awareness raising and the dissemination of information about HIV/Aids are reported in this round the rating has remained at 4, with further plans and initiatives in this area anticipated to have made an impact by the time the next impact assessment takes place. The college attaches a high priority to *guidance and counselling* (characteristic no. 24) but until current plans are implemented and sustained the rating remains in the *weak* category.

At Vuselela the ratings for all three the characteristics included in *Learner Support* are in the *low emerging* category (with ratings of 4). Potchefstroom campus has made more progress than the other

campuses in terms of *academic support* (characteristic no. 22) and *guidance and counselling* (characteristic no. 24) and Jouberton campus has set up a counselling and HIV/Aids support office since the first impact assessment visit. This is still a very new initiative of which impact cannot yet be assessed.

2.3.7.4 Western Cape Province



The rating allocated by the provincial FET Directorate for *Learner Support* has increased but remains in the *weak* category. *Academic support* (characteristic no. 22) is deemed to be the weakest characteristic (rated at 2). *HIV/Aids support* (characteristic no. 23) remains at 3 although a major SESD-supported capacity intervention is planned for later in the year. SESD-supported training in terms of *guidance and counselling* (characteristic no. 24) has resulted in an upward shift in the rating from 2 to 4.

At College of Cape Town the ratings for all three the characteristics included in *Learner Support* have shifted from the *weak* category to the *low emerging* category (with ratings of 4). A student support unit is currently being put in place and the fairly *ad hoc* student support practices of the past are slowly being systematised and placed higher up on the college agenda.

At South Cape College there is a marked discrepancy between the rating for *academic support* (characteristic no. 22) and *guidance and counselling* (characteristic no. 24) that are both rated at 6 (in the *high emerging* category) and *HIV/Aids support* (characteristic no. 23) that remains in the *weak* category with a rating of 3. While recent developments in the first two areas are not yet stable and consistent, the SSU is definitely starting to make its presence felt on all campuses.

4. Conclusions

The graphs and analysis presented in this section shows the impact of the SESD Programme at college level. The difference between training and awareness raising and sustained implementation that leads to tangible impact is also starting to be understood better. While a focus on certain types of activities has emerged as a common thread that links the SESD colleges together, there is clearly a difference in the pace at which colleges are proceeding. Contextual factors have to be taken into account in understanding why some initiatives have been more successful at some colleges than at others. Staff capacity and infra-structural resources are two such factors, while the capacity of the provincial Directorates is another. The timing of SESD-supported interventions is also crucial, given that colleges have to attempt to respond to many priorities at the same time. Many challenges remain, but if the upward shift in average ratings across all seven dimensions from the time of the baseline study to the time of the second impact assessment is taken as a yardstick, the steady and consistent improvement in ratings that has been reported bodes well for the achievement of long-term impact. The tireless work of the provincial technical advisers (TPAs) and the chief technical adviser (CTA) provides an invisible backdrop to the activities on which this section reported. While it has already been noted that this report is not an appraisal of their efforts, it needs to be borne in mind that none of the initiatives that have taken place in each province could have happened without their dedicated input and constant attention to detail.

SECTION 3

PROVINCIAL FET DIRECTORATES

3.0 Introduction

The college sector in South Africa has historically shifted between being a national and provincial responsibility. Since 1994, the FET sector has been a concurrent competence between the two levels and has experienced a number of teething problems. Importantly, many teething problems have been specific to individual provinces. Unlike the approach in the previous (September 2003) evaluation where the provincial directorates were discussed together, the section below separately describes developments at the FET Directorate level for the three provinces funded within the SESD Programme.

The core functions of FET Directorates are to:

- Co-ordinate the development of FET institutions
- Build effective democratic FET institutions
- Develop and implement funding strategies and mobilise resources
- Implement planning and monitoring processes in FET institutions
- Ensure that programmes offered at FET institutions are responsive to community demands and relevant to the labour market

In the above regard, a number of trends pervade the three FET Directorates. Firstly, capacity needs within FET Directorates still need further attention. Secondly, FET Directorates have to urgently finalise the make-up of college staff establishments and complete the absorption and placement process currently underway. Thirdly, the relationship between schools and colleges needs to be addressed at the policy level to free up resources for the respective sub-sectors, and to resolve curriculum concerns. Fourthly, FETMIS systems that adequately support strategic planning processes in the respective provinces are not yet in place. These systems are critical if the provincial directorates offices are to be effective.

3.1 FET DIRECTORATE: KWAZULU NATAL

3.1.1 Overall comments

There is continuing evidence of the strong commitment and vision shown by the Director for FET Colleges and the PTA. Crucially, the Chief Director for FET supports their work in a very active way. There are also signs of important progress in certain areas, such as learnership development. However, progress in the sector in KZN remains constrained by capacity issues within the Colleges

Directorate and by the failure to date to finalise the staff establishments of the colleges. It is expected the latter issue will have been addressed by the time of the next research visit.

3.1.2 Capacity

The Provincial Management Unit is fully functional and meets regularly. It comprises the relevant Chief Director and Director and one of the Deputy-Directors in the FET College Directorate, as well as the PTA. There is also a Coordinating Committee, which also includes the CEOs and SESD Coordinators of the two programme colleges; and a Provincial Steering Committee, which has representation from all the colleges in the province and from the SESD's DoL component. All of these bodies meet regularly and appear to be both well run and highly productive.

The FET Director has consistently highlighted the need to orientate staff members to public service requirements. The attempt to shift staff mindsets must also be seen in the light of a broader provincial and national concern with reorienting the culture of public service and delivery, and to reorient the directorate to operate in a new relationship with the colleges. The Director argues that inducting new staff into the new style of working is relatively easy. What is more challenging is reorienting long-serving staff. Staff training remains on going and there are well-developed plans to offer a new learnership for those involved in administering in the FET college sector.

The significant progress made in regards of the provincial communications and advocacy strategy was reported in the First Formative Assessment. The provincial FET colleges website has gone live since then. An Annual Report, as per the FET Act, is being written at present. It is being focused on communicating about the sector to key roleplayers such as the Premier. Structures such as the annual provincial conference and the Best Practices Forum (see below) are also important communications and advocacy tools.

The capacity of the Directorate to function as intended is supported by the positive attitude of the relevant Chief Director. The visit of senior management to Deeside College in Wales has also provided some better buy in from this level. However, the Directorate remains rather marginal to the overall concerns of KZNDEC. Advertisements have been placed regarding the unfilled Deputy Director post. However, there is a real concern that the Directorate will be unable to find suitable candidates with experience of the college sector.

Capacity building of the FET Directorate remains a major area of challenge as reported in previous evaluations. However, this is largely to be seen in terms of overstretching of the competent staff; with some posts still unfilled. One example here is that one of the Deputy Directors presently covers 6 portfolios, several of which could plausibly be full time jobs. Nonetheless, understanding of the system and enthusiasm for the college transformation programme are probably comparatively stronger than most provinces.

3.1.3 Supporting mergers

Monitoring and evaluation of college merger process is an area where tensions are evident. On the one hand, the Directorate continues to show a willingness and ability to shape the further development of the colleges; on the other, there is a clear acceptance of the need to grant greater autonomy to individual institutions.

There is a well-functioning series of regular meetings with colleges with some chaired by the Chief Director and others by the Director. The Directorate has shown a clear strategy of placing the SESD Programme at the heart of its strategy for building the merger process and much of what takes place in the two Programme colleges is replicated, with Provincial funds, in the other colleges.

Through the SESD Programme, the Directorate has set up a series of nine committees under an overarching Best Practice Forum. All nine colleges are participating to some extent, with a strong involvement in evidence from seven. In addition, there are a series of other provincial task teams with good college participation. The annual provincial FET college conference (see below) is also seen as a tool for improving college development.

As a means of further strengthening the emergence and dissemination of good practices in the merged institutions, the MEC has asked for the introduction of a set of provincial awards that will mirror the national awards process.

There are a wide number of training activities that are focused on management functions and, hence, support the merger process. This includes training on how to manage new functions; training for the PAs of CEOs; training for human resources units; etc.

Monitoring of colleges is maintained through a quarterly reporting process. The monitoring of performance of CEOs is focusing on five issues:

- Harmonisation of mergers (breaking down cultural and other divisions within colleges)
- Financial system development
- Consolidation of poverty
- Further clarification of the relative functions of management and governance
- Strategic plan strengthening.

The Directorate is committed to finding a solution to the challenge of real time interconnectivity between campuses. It has begun a tendering process in this regard, but the financial challenge is likely to be serious.

However, the Directorate's ability to support mergers has been compromised by the failure to get the new staff establishments fully in place for the new academic year. Crucially, there have not yet been

appointments to the new management posts linked to the new college functions. It appears that the Directorate has struggled to get the KZNDEC Human Resources Management Department to process the recruitment process timeously. Moreover, there remain uncertainties as to how the new staff establishments are to work, as there is no compulsion for staff to move to what may be adverse pay and conditions.

Quality assurance processes remain very uneven across the colleges. A draft policy in this area was published in late 2003 but has not yet been ratified through a process of consultation with the colleges. There remain inconsistencies of approach to quality assurance between and even within colleges. However, one new innovation of the Directorate is to roll out PERSAL personnel management software to all colleges.

3.1.4 Councils

The strengthening of councils remains an on-going challenge. This may be further complicated by the imminent round of elections for council members (who have renewable one year terms). It is possible that there might be quite a large turnover of council members, necessitating new training from scratch. There is also some further training required as a result of an extra campus being added to Mthashana College and new council members being appointed to represent this campus.

Both SESD and the CCF continue to train council members and the PTA is deliberately focusing the SESD intervention as something that builds on that provided by the CCF. There is a particular focus on the laws that are relevant to the work of council members. However, it was noted that not all colleges are choosing to participate in the programme in equal measure.

There remains a particular issue of the relations between CEOs and their councils and both parties' understandings of their respective roles. The Director noted that this is often an issue that arises in provincial meetings. These meetings, therefore, serve as an additional, informal form of training in this area. He has also engaged researchers to carry out an investigation into the tensions between councils and CEOs across the province.

3.1.5 College management

Some of the key problems in this area were already noted in the previous section. However, another pressing challenge is the failure to get the new staff establishments for the management posts in place. This was due to be finalised by April 1st but there still needs to be consultation with both the ELRC and the KZNDEC EXCO.

The process of developing strategic plans was very uneven. Often participation and/or quality were poor. The Director and the PTA have identified a need to support colleges into further elements of this process. It is important, for instance, that strategic plans be turned into viable operational plans.

However, the devolution of budgets to colleges from April 1st 2004 is seen as limiting the ability of the Directorate to lead the colleges in a strong manner in this regard.

Much of the training focus under SESD in its first year was directed at the management levels. In year two this focus has shifted more towards lower ranked staff. The new financial powers of the colleges have led to plans for further training in this area.

3.1.6 Knowledge sharing

KZNDEC and the PTA led the Province to be the first to launch its Best Practices Forum and this process continues to have widespread college involvement, with nine committees active at present with college and Directorate participation. This model is seen as central to the conscious attempt of the Province to avoid the SESD Programme remaining isolated in only two out of the Province's nine colleges. A full programme of budgeted meetings of the committees is in place for 2004 and all these committees table reports to the Provincial Steering Committee.

A large-scale provincial conference with over 1 000 participants took place in mid-2003 in order to introduce the new CEOs to other provincial stakeholders. A less ambitious, but more focused, conference is planned for mid-2004 and terms of reference for it are currently being developed. This conference will be highly action-oriented and will focus on the area of curriculum development. The Directorate has undertaken to fund the participation of colleges from other provinces (both SESD and non-SESD).

Marketing Units are present in all colleges. However, the lack of dedicated posts due to delays in introducing the new staff establishment means that progress here is less strong than was expected. However, these Marketing Units are able to benefit from the marketing work driven by KZNDEC and the SESD Programme during 2003 as well as the greater progress being achieved by the Linkages and Programmes Units (see below).

The leadership that KZN has given within the SESD Programme in terms of knowledge sharing has been reflected in a new initiative where the KZN PTA will support the development of best practices fora in both the Eastern Cape and the Northern Cape.

3.1.7 Linkages

Linkages and Programmes Units are present in eight of the nine colleges to date. They are SESD funded in the Programme colleges but are still not on a proper footing in the others due to the staff establishment issue. There is strong and active support from the PTA and the Directorate to this work.

The SESD supported units are beginning to develop research capacity on their local labour markets. There is a growth of collaboration with SETAs, supported by the Directorate and resulting in an increase in learnership offerings (see below). There is an expansion of placement agreements with industry and training provision for other government departments and public institutions (e.g.,

hospitals). Delivering programmes of relevance to community development remains a strong provincial and institutional commitment.

The Directorate is seeking to set up a new structure that will approve new programmes to be offered in colleges, so that this can be seen to be done in a transparent and consistent manner. It is envisaged that each college should, in the medium term, offer 30% NATED; 30% learnerships; 20% skills programmes and 20% programmes in partnership with schools and higher education institutions. It is also envisaged that programmes will be better articulated with the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy.

3.1.8 College staff development

As noted above, there has been a relative shift of emphasis within the SESD Programme at the provincial level to the support of the professional development of lecturing staff. A series of booklets on OBE have been developed for the colleges and training is being delivered to support this. Training is also being delivered in other areas. The annual conference (as noted above) will focus on curriculum development. It is reported that most staff are already trained as assessors in NQF aligned programmes and a number are also trained as moderators. The University of KwaZulu-Natal is developing a programme to recognise prior learning of staff and to develop relevant interventions based on this exercise.

The establishment of Human Resources Units has taken place at each college, subject to the same establishment problems as elsewhere in the case of non-Programme colleges. These units will monitor who is getting training, and what types, at each college. This is intended both to eliminate duplication and to avoid repetition of contestations regarding who gets access to training. It is envisaged that these units will play an important role in developing equity plans for colleges.

3.1.9 Learnerships

Several initiatives of note are being developed regarding learnerships and the Province is showing significant innovation in this regard.

The Directorate is in the process of agreeing Memoranda of Understanding with TETA and the Services SETA and plans to agree further MOUs with the other SETAs relevant to the Province's colleges. In addition, several colleges are already in discussions with SETAs, most notably MERSETA.

The Province is developing FET college related qualifications for both college staff and administrators. The latter will be in the form of a learnership; whilst the latter will be NQF-aligned.

Sivananda College has been chosen as one of the pilot sites for the SESD-supported Venture Creation Learnership, to be piloted from April. In addition, the Province is also planning to develop the

three learnerships (organic farming, hospitality and auto mechanics) previously present in the SESD plan, but which have since been overtaken by the VCL initiative.

3.1.10 SMT development

Clarification of curriculum regarding science, mathematics and technology remains poorly developed. This is perceived in the sector primarily as being a schooling issue. Equally, there has been little progress against the intended clarification of the meaning of technology in the FETC context. There has also been little progress regarding staff development in SMT, although training workshops have taken place early in 2004 at both the Programme colleges.

PLATO has been introduced into one campus in each of the SESD colleges and is proving both popular and useful. The Directorate is committed to increasing access to PLATO in the pilot campuses and to spreading access across all campuses, and to the school sector. However, this is likely to be costly and a fully budgeted plan has not yet been developed.

3.1.11 HIV/Aids

There has been progress at the college level, but this remains uneven in the face of no further development of a provincial strategy and the lack of provincial capacity to drive this issue dynamically. Whilst HIV/AIDS clearly is of importance to the college sector, it appears that it is a less pressing issue at present than many others. However, the PTA is driving hard in the two Programme colleges.

3.1.12 Learner support

Learner Support Units are operational in the two Programme colleges, where their infrastructure is supported by Danida. The appointed staff (two per unit) are performing well. The Programme is supporting SRCs in leadership training. There are strong interlinkages developing between these units and the LPUs.

However, the roll out of LSUs to the other seven colleges has been affected negatively by the staff establishment issue. Colleges typically are doing something but lack proper strategies, facilities and staffing.

3.1.13 Summary table

| AREAS OF ACTIVITY | RATING PHASE 2 | RATING PHASE 3 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Capacity building in the FET Directorate | HIGH EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Supporting mergers | HIGH EMERGING | HIGH EMERGING |
| Communications and knowledge sharing | EMERGING TO STRONG | EMERGING TO STRONG |

| | | |
|--|---------------|------------------|
| sharing | | |
| Linkages and responsiveness | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Learnerships | WEAK | EMERGING |
| FET college staff development | HIGH EMERGING | HIGH EMERGING |
| Staff development in mathematics, science and technology | VERY WEAK | WEAK |
| Learner Support | HIGH WEAK | WEAK TO EMERGING |
| HIV/AIDS | WEAK | WEAK |

3.2 FET DIRECTORATE: NORTH WEST

3.2.1 Overall comments

The report that follows describes key changes that have taken place in the province since September 2003. These changes suggest that the North West FET Directorate is gradually shedding its relatively marginal status in the province and becoming more embedded in the mainstream of its (education) departmental vision and activities. A closer relationship between schools and FET colleges is developing and it is hoped that more resources will be allocated to FET colleges as the nature of their contribution to human resource development in the province is realised.

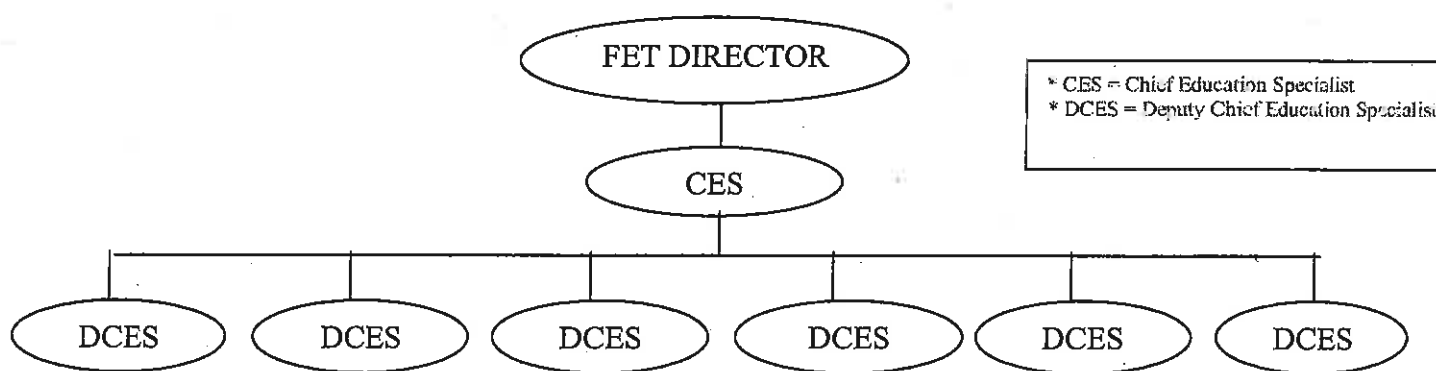
There are, however, still a number of weaknesses that practitioners in the FET sector readily acknowledge. Firstly, post structures at college level remain incomplete and are impeding implementation. Secondly, provinces still do not have provincial FETMIS systems that support strategic planning processes. Lastly, the articulation between colleges and schools that provide FET remains at the developmental stage. Much progress is however anticipated by the next impact assessment visit.

3.2.2 Status and capacity of the FET Directorate

Before the promulgation of FET Colleges in 2001, technical and vocational education institutions were overseen by a sub-directorate of the Educator Training Directorate and focused largely on educator development. In that respect, the needs of such institutions were dealt with in much the same way as the needs of schools were dealt with. The subsequent restructuring of the North West Department of Education has seen further education and training become a full directorate within the Chief Directorate: Professional Support Services. The FET Directorate has two sub-directorates that, on the one hand, focuses on FET curriculum within ordinary schools, and on the other on the needs of FET colleges.

The task of managing the North West FET Directorate is made more difficult by the province not having had a permanent/official FET Director since October 2002. In the interim, a number of officials have taken responsibility in acting roles for leading the FET sector in the province. The most recent official that has overseen the FET sector served in the capacity of FET Coordinator. With the impending appointment of a FET Director and the appointment of a Chief Education Specialist (CES) to serve directly below such an official, the current FET Co-ordinator is expected to revert to her position as Deputy Chief Education Specialist (DCES) within the FET Directorate from 1st June 2004. Importantly, lack of capacity and absence of staff in key posts have constrained progress in the North West FET sector since 2002, especially with regard to the regulation and further development of individual colleges. Of an expected complement of eight, only 4 staff members have worked within the directorate during the past year.

Notwithstanding this lack of permanent senior personnel in the FET Directorate, both the Chief Director under whom the NW FET directorate falls, the Danida Provincial Technical Advisor (PTA) and the present FET Coordinator, have displayed considerable commitment and vision with regard to FET Colleges. They have been the main drivers behind FET developments that have emerged in the province over the past year. Importantly, the appointment of a permanent FET Director and CES will start resolving the main long-standing problem in the province, namely the hands-on capacity to monitor and co-ordinate the FET Colleges effectively. In that regard, while the FET Director normally manages the sector mainly at the strategic level, it is the CES along with the six DCES officials that is expected to manage the sector at the operational level, overseeing the key monitoring, implementation and co-ordination functions associated with the Directorate.



Importantly, the FET Directorate appears to be markedly underfunded and heavily under resourced with regard to infrastructure. Indeed, the North West FET Directorate has not been in the ideal position to monitor or build FET Colleges over the past year, nor to fully implement planning and monitoring processes in FET institutions. The above two aspects are purportedly being addressed, however, with the search for separate offices for the FET directorate in the heart of Mafikeng. The fitting of the offices with desks, computers and other critical infrastructural and operational requirements that have not been freely available until now, along with the appointment of new staff

members, suggest that the provincial department of education is making more funds available to the directorate.

With regard to the management of the provincial FET sector, a Provincial Management Unit is fully functional and meets regularly. It currently comprises the relevant Chief Director, the Danida Provincial Technical advisor (PTA) and the three college CEOs. Then there are regular meetings between the PTA and a SESD Steering Committee that consists of SESD co-ordinators at each of the three FET Colleges. Through these structures, knowledge about the sector and recent developments therein is passed down and cascaded to staff members at the various colleges and campuses. Further structures that are expected to facilitate communication and advocacy within the sector are the annual provincial conference and the Best Practices Forum. Crucially, the capacity of the FET Directorate to function according to intended guidelines is supported both by the positive attitude of the relevant Chief Director, the innovative approach of the PTA, the experience and vision of the three incumbent CEOs, and the hard work by respective individuals within the various structures in contributing to the growth of the sector.

However, capacity concerns with regard to the effectiveness of the FET sector have to be understood to occur at a number of levels. Firstly, at the FET directorate level individuals are expected to fulfil too many functions, which, along with little experience of the emerging FET environment and inadequate training to cope with new and wide-ranging tasks, do not provide them with the opportunity to settle and get to grips with some of the key issues within the sector. This new environment has embraced change both at the FET College level (where colleges are being re-orientated to act more like businesses) and the national and provincial levels (where staff are being re-orientated to new public service requirements focused on service and delivery).

Secondly, because management structures have co-opted members with vast experience and expertise from the previous system but have asked them to operate in significantly different circumstances, a flexible approach has been taken with regard to their capacity needs. Cognizant of why particular individuals were co-opted into management (for their experience), training has focused on technical matters such as finance and change management rather than activities like orientating management personnel to provincial priorities and key social and political concerns.

Moreover, management and staff at the FET College level have been particularly challenged by the new ethos of responding to the diverse needs of students. They have had to rethink the ways in which they deal with issues of student support, multiculturalism and student orientation to labour and employment concerns. In this regard, they have not been helped by the fact that staff placement and absorption processes have still not been finalised. Thirdly, most lecturers do not have the practical capability and experience to train and capacitate artisans or skilled workers. Moreover, their workshops are often highly deficient or simply do not exist. In the latter regard, capacity development has to take place at a number of levels:

- The NWDoE simply has to throw money at the colleges to build up and upgrade infrastructure and supporting equipment
- Contracts with service providers have to ensure that supporting staff, lecturers and equipment remain trained and upgraded
- Follow-up support must be ensured at all times
- Lecturers have to be trained in industry related environments or where there are updated technological provisions. With regard to the latter, the NWDoE have recently entered into an agreement with the Pelindaba Skills Institute to provide training to and development of engineering lecturers in FET Colleges in the North West. The Institute is very well resourced given its previous links to the nuclear energy sector.
- There also needs to be a renewed focus on further training administrative and other support staff through structured programmes and learnerships rather than current quick-fix workshops. This will ensure that they have access to ongoing training and able to readily upgrade their skills.

Lastly, while there has been significant training on how to develop College strategic plans, there remains little way of verifying whether colleges are indeed following their individual strategic plans or even whether a common message or culture is being preached across the NW FET College sector. Undoubtedly, the capacity of the sector has been greatly enhanced by training around strategic plan development. However, the upcoming evaluation of strategic plans at both the provincial and college levels will have to ensure that (during this round of planning) the strategic plans of the province, the FET Directorate and the three FET Colleges are adequately synergised.

3.2.3 Supporting mergers

The continued monitoring and evaluation of the college merger process is an area where there seems to be some confusion. On the one hand, the FET Directorate in the North West is intent on further shaping and co-ordinating the development of colleges; on the other, the directorate is keen to allow individual institutions greater autonomy to fulfil their respective mandates.

In that respect, colleges are not provided with specific guidelines on how to go about developing learnerships, industry partnerships or marketing strategies. While there are regular meetings between college CEOs and attended by high-ranking provincial department officials, the failure to absorb staff at the FET Directorate level has meant that it has navigated with discretion. Crucially, as long as there is no money to address redress concerns and infrastructural upgradings, the FET Directorate has to rely on FET Colleges making themselves viable entities and funding themselves and their respective growths through fulltime equivalent (FTEs) enrolment. This dependence on colleges means that the directorate has to be more circumspect on how it enforces equity targets in the sector and how it intervenes around questions of how to spread staff across institutions in the province, or whether to deliberately implant a bias in the system to address the needs of previously disadvantaged groups.

While it was expected that greater co-ordination and cohesion would occur in a province where all three its colleges and the FET directorate are supported by Danida funding, the previous make-up of

the sector in the North West, along with the overall lack of funds and poverty-stricken environments, have conspired to make the merger process and growth of the FET sector a very slow and uneven exercise. This has ultimately meant that within the province, the key mechanisms of college sharing have been around Best Practice Forums and the provincial FET College conference. Importantly however, the NWDoE is keen to invest in the newly emerging sector and has initiated visits to colleges in other SESD-supported provinces to understand how they have developed programmes and interventions to grow their respective sectors. In this regard, the relevant Chief Director and PTA have visited colleges both in the Western Cape and KZN to get a better perspective of how mergers have taken place there, how colleges have responded to the myriad challenges associated with such processes, and how to best model initiatives in the NW around some of these learnt experiences.

These fact-finding exercises have occurred alongside a wide-ranging number of training activities around management functions and the development of capacity within colleges in developing information systems and financial infrastructures, and responding to divergent human resource needs. Training certainly has played a key role in supporting mergers. However, there still needs to be a full evaluation of the merged colleges to determine the extent to which the mergers have been successful.

The Directorate's ability to support mergers has been significantly compromised by the failure to confirm new post structures, and place and absorb members of college staff establishments. This has inserted a level of uncertainty at the institutional level, which has not assisted processes of change.

One way of supporting mergers is thought to be through the development of common programmes across colleges and campuses. Importantly in the North West however, the envisaged roll out of a common quality assurance mechanism across the three colleges has been very difficult to manage. While funds have been allocated to purchase QMS systems for the three colleges, quite different concerns have determined how colleges deal with the issue of QMS. For example, formal links between Vuselela College and the Durban Roodepoort Deep (DRD) Mine have meant that the college was required to apply for its training centre to be provisionally accredited by the Mining Qualification Authority (MQA). This has highlighted a number of key problems, namely:

- To be accredited by the MQA Vuselela College is required to use the ISO 9000 system
- This has meant that an outside assessor has played a key role in determining the quality assurance system employed by the college
- Moreover, through a mechanism like QMS a SETA has had a critical say in the way a college post merger has developed. Importantly, the Vuselela College sought accreditation for its training centre from the MQA notwithstanding a requirement that memoranda of understanding be signed between the provincial DoE and the various SETAs (before colleges interact with any of them).

- The lack of capacity at FET Directorate level has meant very little on-site visits or visits to college classrooms, which in turn has opened the way for outside assessors to play a greater role in shaping QMS.

3.2.4 Councils

It was asserted that College Councils and academic boards have long been in place and fully constituted in North West FET Colleges. Student Representative Councils (SRCs) have also been elected in each of the colleges. In that regard, the various governance structures for each of the colleges are said to be firmly in place. The strengthening of governance structures remain however an on-going challenge. In that respect, training activities are currently focused on further inducting and orientating members of governing structures, especially given annual re-election and the possible high turnover of members of governance structures.

While the present role of a structure like a college council is a thorny issue with CEOs, who challenge the current understanding of college council contributions, college councils do play a rather significant role in the running of respective colleges presently. For example, if a college wants to implement a programme, it presents the programme to the academic board that makes recommendations to the college council, which then ratifies the implementation of such a programme once Umalusi has accredited it. Furthermore, the inclusion of a member of the FET Directorate on each college council in the North West means that the province (through the FET Directorate) has hands-on participation in the running of colleges.

3.2.5 College management

College management currently undergo training in finance and budgeting strategies, recruitment policies, enrolment approaches, curriculum management, marketing and communication, and partnership development. They also receive training on labour legislation, human resource policies, and information management approaches. A pressing problem for college management structures in the North West province is that middle management positions have not been filled and thus training may be wasted on incumbent individuals who will not serve on current management structures.

The finalisation of these structures is critical for colleges to be run efficiently. This influences both funding as well as staffing concerns. Firstly, the constant push on colleges to bring in money has meant that colleges have largely turned to providing NQF-aligned programmes for SETAs for added monies. The lack of staff members to oversee this process has mean that little is known about the degree of such provision and its impact on the overall quality of programmes. Secondly, many lecturers have sought to gain further remuneration by teaching such courses mainly during evenings. This has led to less focus on providing quality delivery and on some core lecturer functions. The lack of a middle management to oversee college processes has provided an opportunity for lecturers to teach sometimes 8 hours a day and 4 hours at night. This ultimately affects lecturer performance and effectiveness. FET Directorate staff members know little about the degree of such over-teaching since

they still manually capture programme and teaching data from colleges (by providing template documents via email for return) and have little idea of how colleges are balancing provision of DoE and Non-DoE programmes, nor how they use their staff complements to provide the various courses.

It is expected that the imminent appointment of middle management personnel alongside the reviewing of strategic plans at both the provincial and college levels will help resolve some of the contradictions that pervade the functioning of colleges presently.

3.2.6 Knowledge sharing

The processes of knowledge sharing in the province is weak and is not very inclusive. Strategies are presently being developed that inform the establishment of professional support forums such as a curriculum committee, a Linkages and Programme Unit, and a Learner Support Unit, that will ensure that college staff members play more active organisational roles within colleges and so share knowledge about the sector as part of their work activities. It is expected that their experiences of these engagements will be highlighted through Best Practice Forums that look not only to demonstrate widespread involvement in the process but also to share localised issues with colleges in other provinces. An anticipated annual provincial conference is a further mechanism for knowledge sharing in the province. Indeed, such a conference will be orientated to participation by college personnel and is set to focus on issues of curriculum development.

With regard to knowledge sharing with members outside the confines of the college, it must be said that college marketing has been highly ineffective in the province. There is indeed very little evidence that NW colleges are active or effective in communities, and systems need to be put in place where college staff members go to various schools, businesses, unions and NGOs to market their programmes and highlight the kinds of interventions they can provide.

3.2.7 Linkages

According to Danida funding initiatives, each of the three FET colleges is being assisted in establishing Linkages and Programme Units (LPUs). Assistance entails the SESD Programme funding the salaries of two staff members in each of the three units in the North West for three years, and providing money for infrastructural needs like computers, desks and other such requirements. Crucially, LPUs are still in the process of being established in the North West province.

The LPUs are expected to provide research on the nature of local labour markets, and through collaboration with SETAs, to co-ordinate learnership offerings provided at the three colleges, and develop materials for such offerings. LPUs are also expected to enter placement agreements for learners with industry and training provision for other government departments and public institutions (e.g., hospitals). As the LPUs develop capacity, they will need to address a number of concerns in the province with regard to learnerships:

- Firstly, different colleges with different local labour environments focus on quite different kinds of learnerships. For example, Vuselela College has a sports learnership and skills programmes focused on the needs of the surrounding mines, which is not duplicated at all at an institution like Taletso College which focuses on quite dissimilar programmes. The viability of learnerships are here called into question given that learners would have to move in order to access given forms of work and learning experience.
- Secondly, learnerships are difficult to sustain in financially-deprived environments where there are small student numbers and an absence of formal placement agreements with industry.
- Thirdly, colleges continue to struggle with how to balance NQF-aligned and NATED courses given the impact this has on financial, staffing, curriculum and systemic design. In the North West there remains a firm focus on NATED courses, with less than five percent of programmes being NQF-aligned. That is because colleges continue to mainly advertise according to NATED course provision, and students are still formally tested mainly in NATED courses. While there have emerged many innovative courses that focus on the needs of the unemployed, these are often perceived or rated according to formal testing and thus receive little attention. Local/provincial concerns around the issue of curriculum design within colleges will thus have to be properly addressed if LPUs are to function successfully in the province.

Meanwhile, the provincial directorate has taken a pro-active role in entering into a MoU with the Pelindaba Skills Institute to provide lecturers with training that is industry-relevant and to develop skills that respond to current demands. Lecturers from the institute will also be expected to visit college workshops and work with educators on how to best maximise given environments.

3.2.8 College staff development

There has been a shift of emphasis at the provincial level with regard to support for the professional development of lecturing staff since the baseline study of 2003 (and perhaps because of it). Training is set to focus on how to deliver NQF and outcomes based education (OBE), as well as around teaching and learning pedagogies, and curriculum and programme design by educators. Since a large number of staff members have already been trained as assessors in NQF aligned programmes, and as moderators, greater focus is currently being placed on individual professional development. This focus remains, however, at the level of staff evaluation and needs analyses. Indeed, little structures or processes focus firmly on staff development.

3.2.9 Learnerships

Several initiatives of note are being developed regarding learnerships and skills programmes, and colleges in the province are showing significant innovation in this regard. The key problem is that

these innovations are scattered across the province and are generally uncoordinated. This has not been helped by the provincial directorate not having signed any Memorandum of Understandings with SETAs, allowing individual colleges to enter into temporary and makeshift relationships with the MQA and THETA instead.

The Services SETA has indicated a desire to sign 60 learnership agreements at Orbit College with sponsorship by FEDBEV that will however require a significant shift in the current mindset of the FET Directorate. A changed mindset will play a substantial part in colleges better responding to calls by bodies like Telkom, local municipalities and departments within the provincial DoE to provide short course training provision.

3.2.10 SMT development

While there is a unit in the province that focuses on mathematics, science and technology using Cuban educators, it operates primarily at the schooling level. In this regard, the FET directorate is currently interrogating how to address the specific needs of colleges, especially with respect to engineering lecturers. There is a belief that training around technology and science and mathematics development has to firstly focus on how to use modern apparatuses, computers, e-learning etc, and to develop staff capacity to provide such focused interventions.

Indeed, understandings of curriculum development regarding science, mathematics and technology in FET remain very poorly developed in the province. There has also been little progress regarding staff development in SMT. Also, while the province is committed to using learning systems like PLATO in colleges, little is known how such a programme will be rolled out across the province.

3.2.11 HIV/Aids

A number of training and dedicated workshops have taken place in the province, with the result that designated staff members have been identified and put in place to provide support at the college level. Danida funding has been used to train staff members in peer counselling and how to engage with home based care. In that regard, there has been significant improvement within the province around HIV AIDS issues. While such developments invariably take a back seat when faced with other key pressing issues confronting colleges, the matter is of considerable importance in the province and is driven by dedicated person operating according to a functioning HIV AIDS policy.

3.2.12 Learner support

While the Learner Support Units are currently not in place, similar types of bodies are said to be operating effectively at a college like Orbit, albeit using limited notions of learner support. Importantly, the LSUs will ensure that all components of learner support in their multiple manifestations are addressed. Support thus will no longer be ad hoc but will address provincial need in a pre-determined

way. Recent foci on learner support has led to a unprecedented level of excitement and consciousness, though little is known about the kinds of practices and infrastructures being formulated. Importantly, LSUs are starting to work closely with various other programme units within colleges, and looking at how learner support issues are informed for instance by the kinds of learnerships being provided and the availability of formal links to employers. Indeed, the success of LSUs will invariably depend on a number of other processes taking place at provincial and college level, processes that are firmly bound up in strategic plans, management strategies, available facilities and infrastructure, and not least, staffing issues.

3.2.13 Summary table

| AREAS OF ACTIVITY | RATING PHASE 2 | RATING PHASE 3 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Capacity building in the FET Directorate | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Supporting mergers | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Communications and knowledge sharing | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Linkages and responsiveness | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Learnerships | WEAK | EMERGING |
| FET college staff development | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Staff development in mathematics, science and technology | VERY WEAK | WEAK |
| Learner Support | HIGH WEAK | EMERGING |
| HIV/AIDS | WEAK | EMERGING |

3.3 FET DIRECTORATE: WESTERN CAPE

3.3.1 Overall comments

The FET Directorate of the Western Cape Education Department (WECD)¹ has worked hard to revise its provincial role within a new FET dispensation inhabited by more stakeholders than the national and provincial Departments of Education. In the report that follows various initiatives are described that give substance to the leadership and co-ordination roles that the FET Directorate in the Western Cape is shaping for itself within the national DoE policy framework. While school effectiveness remains the province's most important educational priority in terms of the numbers of learners and educators involved, the FET Directorate is gradually shedding its relatively marginal status and becoming more embedded in the main stream of departmental vision and activities. This can be seen in the 2020

¹ In this report the terms 'FET Directorate' and 'Western Cape Education Department (WECD)' are used interchangeably.

Education Vision draft document, which includes FET schools and colleges in the third priority area. The new FET curriculum to be introduced in 2006 also requires Grade 9 pupils to make a choice about whether they will continue in school to Grade 12, or switch to an FET college, or enter the labour market. A closer relationship between schools and colleges is thus developing and it is envisaged that the WCED will be able to allocate more resources to colleges once significant numbers of sixteen to eighteen-year olds select the college option after Grade 9.

Staff members in the Directorate as well as the Provincial Technical Advisor (PTA) are committed to the advancement of the FET college sector and consistent efforts are being made to overcome conceptual and procedural blockages with regard to aligning programmes with NQF requirements. There are, however, still a number of acknowledged systemic weaknesses. The fact that the post structure at college level remains incomplete is a major factor that impedes merger implementation. FETMIS systems that adequately support strategic planning processes are also not yet in place. Progress in this regard is, however, expected by the time of the next impact assessment visit.

3.3.2 Status and capacity of FET Directorate

The staff capacity of the FET Directorate remains the same as was reported in the Baseline Study and First Formative Impact Assessment. The Directorate has eight professional positions at the level of Deputy Chief Education Specialist (DCES) and upwards, plus one administrative position, giving it a total staff complement of nine. The Quality Promotion position is still vacant, with additional activities added to the six portfolios that are currently operational. These portfolios are:

- Policy and planning
- Programme development
- Skills development and learnerships
- Learner support/ Management of information and databases (FETMIS)
- Entrepreneurship/ Advocacy/Marketing/SIMSA Project
- Learning Technology (DASSIE Project)/ Innovative teaching methods

The province is aware that it is one of the best staffed and most experienced provinces at the FET Directorate level but this means that staff members are called upon to share their expertise in terms of participating in national committee structures; hosting study visits from other provinces and countries and representing the WCED on college councils and provincial forums. In terms of routine operational activities it is also not 'business as usual'. Given that it is a time in which the FET Directorate is revisioning both its provincial leadership role and its strategic and operational functions to complement the increased authority and accountability granted to FET colleges, reports that staff fatigue is creeping in are not surprising.

SESD support for the FET Directorate has focused strongly on introducing service providers to assist with the development of job profiles and individual development plans to help staff members to 'move out of their cubby holes' as one interviewee stated. Building a collegial leadership culture that acknowledges the status of college CEOs while at the same time opening up new leadership space for the FET Directorate has been a major challenge. While it is reported that staff have not always been happy with this process the complexity of a renegotiation of power and authority relations makes this an understandable reaction. The impact of these initiatives will make itself apparent in the longer term and particularly so when a staff appraisal system that integrates the various human resource development initiatives into a coherent system is put into place.

3.3.3 Supporting mergers

The FET Directorate reports that there are still a number of outstanding post-merger issues. While strategic plans are in place and review processes are underway the FET Directorate is of the view that there is still progress to be made before new forms of governance and management really take hold. Resources need to be provided to add value to objectives set out in strategic plans; yet budgetary constraints often prohibit adequate funding allocation. The Directorate is also mindful of the fact that new CEOs have only been in their posts for about six months and that they are still to fully take on the task of building a participatory culture.

College staffing remains a major issue. It is acknowledged that colleges are spending a lot of their own money on staffing rather than on institutional development. Even so, colleges do not have enough staff in terms of both number and quality. While the achievement of stability in terms of staffing is deemed vital it also seems as imperative that new appointments should be made in accordance with changes in colleges' core business and in terms of striving to meet equity requirements and developing educator profiles that reflect student profiles. Directorate staff members are clearly concerned about these issues but the WCED budget has not really increased and solutions are not straightforward. Funds have been committed to what is called 'unfinished merger business' and ring-fenced resources have been made available in relation to certain strategic objectives. External funding, however, remains crucial. Money made available through the *iKapa Elihlumayo* fund of the Western Cape Provincial Government (WCPG) has enabled the WCED to support the merger process by making funds available for a student loan scheme, as well as for programme and infrastructural development. All colleges have benefited from this additional funding.

The FET Directorate has introduced a number of measures that enable colleges to work together around areas of common interest and to streamline procedures. The work of the provincial College Curriculum Committee (CCC) with regard to curricula and programmes, quality assurance and learner support is an example of the new leadership role that the FET Directorate has adopted in this regard. Colleges view joint development of new qualifications and pooling of resources to develop learning materials as positive steps forward. Such qualifications will have greater credibility in the province than each college attempting to develop its own materials for the same qualifications. The SAQA

Southern Regional Office is being supported by the SESD Programme to develop learning materials for contextualised 'fundamentals' while the WCED will receive SESD support to develop the 'elective' and 'core' elements of the identified qualifications.

The WCED has also played an important role in setting in place procedures that alleviate system blockages being experienced by colleges. Through an interim process initiated by UMALUSI the WCED has signed co-operation agreements with three SETAs. In terms of these agreements provincial education departments undertake to monitor the quality of colleges in relation to the criteria set by SETAs, thus enabling colleges to obtain certification for successful students from the relevant SETA ETQA. Internal and external programme approval procedures to regulate the approval of all programmes offered by public FET colleges in the province have also been introduced.

In order to overcome the problem of non-DoE programmes not being included in the calculation of Full Time Equivalent (FTEs) interim arrangements have been set up for the calculation of FTEs in relation to learnerships, programmes based on NQF/unit standard-based qualifications and part qualifications. These calculations are based on institution-based training not funded by SETAs and FTEs calculated on this basis may be recognised for resourcing purposes. Measures such as the two described above have gone a long way towards providing an enabling environment for programme delivery in FET colleges.

Given that the success of the mergers depends on the ability of campuses to operate effectively as one FET institution the introduction of a wide area network (WAN) is regarded as another important area of collective responsibility between the province and colleges. While the WCED will fund the establishment of the necessary infrastructure the colleges will need to pay for maintenance and usage. This is an expensive installation but one that is deemed crucial for linking campuses to their central offices and to the WCED, as well as for the development of adequate FETMIS systems and the establishment of eLearning Sites. The planning and implementation of the network is currently underway.

3.3.4 College councils

The FET Directorate is of the view that college councils are not yet as effective as they should be. If the province is taken as a whole most councils do not yet comply with the requirements of the FET Act, which states that 60% of council members should be from outside a college. A sound knowledge of legislation that affects FET colleges has not yet been established at council level, with some council members still needing to shift their orientation from serving the interests of a particular campus to serving a college as a whole.

The relationship between college management and college council is crucially based on a separation between governance issues and operational management issues. It is especially in relation to this issue that the FET Directorate feels that an optimum balance has not yet been attained and that more time is required to build strong mutual relationships between college management and councils.

3.3.5 College management

While the FET Directorate places institutional leadership in the 'weak' category this is done against the background of an acknowledgement that the management post structure is not yet complete and that new CEOs carry a heavy load. The FET Directorate is, nevertheless, concerned about what they called the 'alarming lack of understanding of national and provincial policies'. The fact that urgent operational requirements have, of necessity, displaced post-merger issues is also viewed as a problem. The view is that this prevents college management from thinking strategically and long-term as CEOs and managers expend most of their energies on day-to-day issues. It also encourages what was termed 'department bashing'.

A range of SESD-supported and other interventions that bring Directorate staff and college management has been introduced. These events are viewed as positive moves towards mediating the building of new relationships between province and delivery sites in the FET college sector.

3.3.6 Communications and knowledge sharing

In addition to the work of the CCC, as described in the previous section, a number of forums have been established to deal with specialised areas such as learnerships, communication and advocacy, FETMIS, the SIMSA project and the DASSIE project. SESD-supported bi-annual meetings between the FET Directorate and senior management in colleges offer further opportunities for making the shift from colleges viewing themselves as competing with one another to seeing themselves as partners in FET.

A more aggressive marketing campaign in terms of newspaper coverage has been undertaken, but the Directorate remains concerned that the FET college sector still has a restricted sense of 'community' and that marketing at campus level remains primarily focused on annual visits to schools in the surrounding area. It is anticipated that a major sectoral marketing and communications strategy will unfold later in the year, with a curriculum and skills development 'best practices' seminar planned for July. It was also reported that a learner support conference was due to take place in May.

3.3.7 Linkages and responsiveness

While the LPU units in the two SESD colleges are up and running the FET Directorate is of the view that this is an area in which all colleges need to develop and grow. An overall increase in partnerships was reported but there is also a view that these partnerships are not yet mutually beneficial to the degree that is required and that movement in this area has, to a large extent, been forced on colleges through learnerships.

The role that the FET Directorate is playing in facilitating relationships with SETAS in areas such as programme approval, quality assurance and the recognition of full-time equivalents (FTEs) in terms of NQF-related programmes and the institution-based component of learnerships (as discussed in a

previous section), is aimed at providing an enabling environment for programme delivery at FET colleges. It is also reported that the *iKapa Elihlumayo* funding has been an encouragement to colleges to be more responsive in the sense that allocation of programme development money is dependent on being able to show that a community need exists. SESD-supported development of guidelines and procedures for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) that will benefit all colleges is in progress and it is anticipated that this development will build colleges' capacity to be more responsive to local needs.

3.3.8 Learnerships

After a relatively slow start rapid progress is now being made in terms of learnership implementation. At the time of the research visit, the Western Cape province was reported as having 1 400 learners in learnerships. The FET Directorate is, however, of the view that the system is not yet stable and that this should be viewed as an 'emerging' rather than a 'strong' area of activity.

Cape Town College has been chosen as one of the pilot sites for the SESD-supported Venture Creation Learnerships, to be piloted from April. South Cape College's appointment by the Department of Labour as an Employment Skills Development Lead Employer (ESDLE) enables this college to move forward in offering learnerships to unemployed people in the South Cape region.

3.3.9 FET college staff development

Various staff development initiatives have taken place in the SESD colleges to create an enabling environment for human resource development. With SESD support job profiles, individual development plans and procedural manuals have been developed to lay the basis for professional staff development. There has also been a lot of activity on the training side, supported by the SESD Programme, by colleges themselves, as well as by the WCED and other donors. While the SESD Programme continues to support direct training a shift has also occurred towards using service providers or consultants appointed as mentors to help colleges build capacity in specialist areas. This has generally been welcomed.

The FET Directorate itself is contributing to staff development through the CCC and the various forums that have been established. The Directorate is of the view that the FET sector is entering a different phase in terms of the levels of expertise required. Strengthening of subject expertise and the gaining of workplace experience are viewed as crucial areas of development. In addition new areas have emerged where colleges do not have sufficient expertise. Areas such as student support, learning technology and curriculum development were mentioned in this regard. The Directorate is also concerned that the widespread use of contract appointments is threatening staff stability and undermining the effectiveness of staff development initiatives. While much has been done to support staff development the need remains great.

3.3.10 Staff development in mathematics, science and technology (M, S and T)

Mathematics and science are not offered by all campuses, which may account for the fact that staff development in this area has not received consistent attention. Current activity centres round learning materials development in Mathematical Literacy being undertaken by the SAQA Southern Regional Office. Some developmental activity is occurring through college staff participating in reference groups set up as part of the materials development process. Given that FET schools will offer a choice between mathematics and mathematical literacy, an increased focus on staff development in M, S and T is an important area of capacity building if colleges are to offer students the same options.

Staff and students are responding enthusiastically to the programmes that have become available through the introduction of PLATO ('people learning and training on line') in each of the SESD colleges. While computer-aided learning should not be viewed as the panacea for low achievement in terms of mathematics, science and technology and while it is too early to evaluate the longer-term impact of this SESD initiative, indications are that PLATO offers opportunities for remedial tuition that can benefit college students as well as school pupils.

3.3.11 Student support

From the FET Directorate's perspective student support is still a weak area across all colleges in the province. Given that student support has many dimensions the establishment of a dedicated Learner Support Unit in the central office of each college is a promising start. It cannot, however, offer immediate solutions in all areas in which support is required. College reports also make it clear that students rate social, sporting and other extra-mural activities highly in terms of what is needed to make campuses vibrant cultural centres. These views have perhaps not been tapped sufficiently to understand the issue from their point of view.

SESD support for the establishment of Open Learning Centres that are intended to offer on-line advice and information facilities such as libraries, internet cafés and call centres is welcomed, as is the SESD-supported training in guidance and counselling that has taken place and the SRC camps that were organised with SESD support.

The FET Directorate identifies academic support as an area that is still very weak. The academic needs of students extend beyond preparation to pass examinations, with issues of language and previous learning histories playing an equally important role.

3.3.12 HIV/Aids

College reports show sporadic attempts by colleges to build a more open culture in which students feel that they can come forward to discuss delicate and confidential personal matters such as HIV/Aids in relation to themselves and/or family members. Although some staff members have played an important role in this regard and off-campus services have been made available a consistent

approach has not yet been developed in the province. The FET Directorate is therefore enthusiastic about the sectoral campaign and capacity building interventions in relation to HIV/Aids that is soon to be implemented with SESD support. This initiative will be driven from a provincial level and includes a baseline study assessing what the current status at each of the six college is; the development of a generic workplace policy for colleges; the design of a policy implementation strategy and monitoring mechanism; the offering of need-specific training to all six colleges; an impact study after all training interventions, and follow-up service (as reported in the SESD Quarterly Report, January to March 2004: 9).

3.3.13 Summary table

| AREAS OF ACTIVITY | BASELINE RATING | RATING: FIRST FORMATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT | RATING: SECOND FORMATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT |
|--|------------------|---|--|
| Capacity building in the FET Directorate | EMERGING | HIGH EMERGING | HIGH EMERGING |
| Supporting mergers | EMERGING | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Communications and knowledge sharing | WEAK TO EMERGING | WEAK TO EMERGING | EMERGING TO STRONG |
| Linkages and responsiveness | WEAK TO EMERGING | WEAK TO EMERGING | EMERGING |
| Learnerships | WEAK | EMERGING | EMERGING |
| FET college staff development | EMERGING | HIGH EMERGING | HIGH EMERGING |
| Staff development in mathematics, science and technology | WEAK | WEAK | WEAK TO EMERGING |
| Learner Support | WEAK | HIGH WEAK | WEAK TO EMERGING |
| HIV/Aids | WEAK | WEAK | WEAK |

SECTION 4

The National Directorate

4.0 Introduction

This section is based on discussions with the Director, Public Further Education and Training Colleges in the DoE and with the Chief Technical Advisor. It is also informed by Programme reports and interviews with provincial directorates, where staff members were asked to also comment on the national picture.

For the DoE, the overall aim of the SESD Programme has always been to help the transformation process in the college sector and progress can be seen in this regard. In particular, there is a sense that college level intervention has allowed good practices to emerge that are now ready for wider dissemination across the sector and for policy level responses. Support has been given to the policy process more directly and the SESD Programme has become incrementally stronger in providing this support through strategic interventions as both parties come to understand each other better. The overall impression of the Programme from a Departmental perspective appears to be that it is an intervention that continues to mature over time.

4.2. Developments within the CTA's office

Initiatives have taken place since the last report to further strengthen the functioning of the CTA's office. A Programme Administrator has been appointed and the position was taken up on 5 January 2004, located within the National Office. The functions of the PA include support to the office of the CTA as well as coordination of the SESD activities that are national in scope. In mid-January 2004 the CTA developed additional comprehensive financial monitoring tools. These tools were implemented in accordance with the recommendations made by the Review Team during October 2003.

4.3. Ensuring that the programme has systemic effects

In the First Formative Assessment, we noted the concern of the DoE that the systemic impact of the SESD Programme be maximised. There has been clear attention to this issue from the CTA and a number of new initiatives have been introduced to address this issue. These are discussed below. However, three points are worth noting here in this regard.

Firstly, a process has recently been put into place for ensuring that lessons from the Programme are disseminated across the system through the HEDCOM FET Colleges Sub-Committee. This brings together the DoE with the nine provincial departments and, thus, is an appropriate vehicle for sharing Programme learning across the sector. However, the programme is in its second to third year and remains to be introduced to this structure. Hence, the support mentioned below does not reflect nationally as yet.

Secondly, the Programme has commissioned a series of research activities that seek to ensure that emerging practices in Programme-supported colleges are examined alongside practices in non-supported colleges and shared across the system. This learning will also be examined for its policy implications as well as its practical replication. This research orientation goes further than the activities described under "Dissemination of Best Practice" below as it is concerned with going beyond the peer-to-peer interchange of the Best Practices For a to a more critical, analytical reading of progress.

Thirdly, overall it is evident that the ability of the Programme to have systemic effects is inevitably increasing as the Programme develops. It may be appropriate to see the first year of the Programme as being largely concerned with getting structures and systems in place across all its levels that have led to more obvious systemic learning opportunities to become visible in the second year. As certain interventions continue to be established in the second year of the Programme, so it is likely that these will have a greater systemic impact in the third year.

4.4. Establishment of the DoE Coordination Forum between provinces and the national department

There has been no progress regarding the establishment of this forum. A structure has been put in place where the CTA and Director for Public Colleges meet with the Chief Director 8 times a year. The Director for Public Colleges and the CTA meet on a regular basis. Meetings are scheduled and minutes exist.

4.5. Establishment of the National Coordination Committee between national DoE provinces, National DoL and SAQA

The programme documents speak of a National Steering Committee. This forum was in March 2003 changed to a coordination committee. The terms of reference for this committee have been endorsed nationally as well as by earlier review teams. However, this forum has not met as yet.

4.6. Strategic Planning and Capacity Building for the Public Further Education and Training Colleges Directorate

As noted in the previous report, the understaffing of the national Directorate is a serious constraint on its ability to deliver. Indeed, the lack of staff also makes it difficult for a capacity development strategy to be acted upon.

However, there is potentially positive news in this regard. Three new appointments within the Directorate are awaiting approval. This is expected to have a significant impact on the performance of the Directorate. Secondly, the imminent establishment of a parallel Directorate for Private Colleges will have the effect of removing that portfolio from the Director for Public Colleges and thus allowing him to concentrate his efforts more exclusively on the public providers. Furthermore, the centrality of

the college sector to the State of the Nation Address of May 2004 and to the first address to Parliament of the new Minister of Education suggest that the Directorate for Public Colleges is likely to be given greater priority within the DoE.

The presence of the Programme appears to have assisted the Directorate and the DoE more generally in its strategy of support for the college sector through piloting of units such as the Linkages and Programmes Units, the Student Support Units and the Marketing and Communications Units. It has also helped through the development of guidelines in some of these areas (e.g., the National Policy for Student Support) and in other areas such as the Recognition of Prior Learning. In addition, the Programme has commissioned an advocacy paper for the DoE on the historical developments of the college sector since 1994; and has provided support to the Directorate in developing proposals for the recapitalisation of the college sector.

4.7. Design of a national FET communications and advocacy strategy

As noted in the Baseline Report, a process in this regard had already taken place independent of the SESD Programme. However, SESD has supported the development of a provincial strategy in the Western Cape and has proposed using the methodology from this experience to assist other provinces in the development of their strategies.

Additionally, the Programme has supported the DoE in conceptualising how marketing and communications should be developed at the college level. It is planned that Marketing and Communications Units will be set up in SESD-supported colleges during 2004. The experiences from these colleges will be examined with a view to rolling out this approach to the whole of the sector.

4.8. Evaluation of FET colleges' three-year plans and one-year operational plans

The Programme continues to seek to support the DoE in this regard. The CTA and Director: Public FET Colleges have developed a work plan for linking SESD supports to the DoE's processes.

4.9. Facilitation and monitoring of programmes for building colleges' capacity for management and governance

The previous report noted a range of activities that had been delivered in this regard. The first phase of council induction has taken place and an evaluation report is pending. In furthering this work and making its impact systemic, the SESD Programme has planned the development of a national curriculum for college council training. Training also has taken place for management and an evaluation report on this is imminent.

4.10. Dissemination of best practice

Provincial dissemination events have taken place in two provinces to date and a series of specialised committees are meeting on a regular basis to ensure sharing within these provinces. In the third province (North-West), the process is made less crucial as all three colleges are part of the SESD Programme. Further to this, the Programme has agreed to assist the Eastern Cape and the Northern Cape in developing similar Best Practices Fora.

As noted above, the Programme will begin to report to the colleges' SUBCOM structure. Moreover, discussions are underway to ascertain how best the detailed college-level sharing supported by the Programme in areas such as management information systems or curriculum can best be aligned with existing structures beneath the relevant SUBCOM.

The Programme has agreed to fund research on emerging good practices in the areas of student support; linkages and programmes; and marketing and communication. The outputs of these projects will be disseminated to all colleges and to the national and provincial departments. In addition, college staff will be facilitated to present on their experiences at the national FET Convention in both of the next two years.

A Programme website has been designed by a service provider and is currently being populated. It is anticipated that the website will be live during July. It will include a debate forum and an area where colleges and provinces can share documents in both pdf and word formats.

The Programme is also presently working on a project to improve college staff awareness within SESD supported colleges in the form of a progress magazine. The magazine is in its final stages of editing and will also be launched in July.

4.11. Student support

In early February 2004 Student Support Development workshops were held in the Programme provinces. These workshops were presented by an Inspector on Learner Support Mechanisms in TVET, from the Danish Ministry of Education, and facilitated by the appointed service provider. Positive feedback was received from college delegates across the provinces that attended these workshops.

Student Support Units are beginning to be established in Programme-supported colleges and research is beginning that will examine their development over the next 18 months.

4.12. Coordination with Department of Labour structures

The section on the DoL component will report in greater length on the major progress here in terms of articulation between the DoE and DoL components. Public FET colleges will be involved in the delivery of the New Venture Creation Learnership and College of Cape Town and Sivananda have

already been identified as providers for the pilot phase. Moreover, the Director: Public FET Colleges is a member of the newly established steering committee for the NVCL sub-component. It may be argued that the Programme has played an important role in this regard in assisting the two Departments in their aspirations to work more closely together in practice.

4.13. Development and implementation of a national FET strategy for HIV/Aids

As noted in the last report, the role of the SESD Programme in this area is primarily about developing better practices at the college level. As these emerge, it will be important to ensure that the lessons gained in such a process can be fed into any new policy process.

4.14. The provincial FET Directorates' views of the current status of relations with national Department of Education (DoE)

As previous reports have noted, responsibility for FET colleges has always had provincial and national elements, and the relationship between these two has often changed. It is not surprising, therefore, that there appear to be residual tensions between provincial and national understandings of their respective roles in management and facilitation of the FET college system.

However, it is clear that relations between the two levels are relatively positive and continue to improve as all parties come to better understand the nature of the new college sector and their respective roles therein. There appears to be a good degree of mutual comprehension and collegiality between the national and provincial directorates (although the slow reorganisation of the FET Directorate in the North West continues to be a brake on relationship building in that province).

However, it is important to note that the interviews came shortly before the national and provincial elections. There was some sense in which the provincial officials were waiting to see greater clarity after the elections in certain areas such as the development of a college version of the FET Certificate and a decision on the future structure of the NQF.

4.15. Conclusions

The April 2004 elections and appointment of a new Minister of Education highlight the challenge to the FET college sector (and, hence, to the SESD Programme) of assessing progress so far and developing a renewed vision for the sector. The DoE is already embarked on such processes and the SESD Programme is playing a role in supporting this. Inevitably, the future of the SESD Programme and its relationship to the DoE will be partly dependent on where the revisioning takes the Department. It will be important, therefore, that the Programme retains the flexibility to respond to changes in national strategy, whilst retaining an ultimate focus on the original goals established between Danida and the DoE.

The discussions around this evaluation of the DoE component point to the need to see the SEDS Programme as a dynamic intervention that is evolving over time. The DoE response to the Programme appears to show a growing mutual understanding of challenges and possibilities between the two entities and a maturing strategic element to how they interact. The Programme is increasingly moving into a phase in which interventions on the ground are beginning to appear to the DoE to have wider significance. Moreover, the Programme's support to Best Practices Fora and to research supporting these offers increasing possibilities over the rest of the life of the Programme for impacts that go beyond the provinces and colleges with which the Programme directly works.

This report also appears to illustrate a positive collaborative relationship between the CTA and his counterpart, the Director: Public Colleges. Both are experienced in and knowledgeable about the college sector, and their expertise and collaboration is clearly central to the developing delivery of the Programme.

The impact to date of the Programme has been constrained somewhat by the limited capacity of the Directorate. However, the proposed staffing increase and the high level attention being given to the sector are suggestive of improvements in this situation. Therefore, it appears likely that the Programme will over the rest of its lifespan be increasingly well positioned to give support to a Directorate that is itself better able to use that support to the greatest systemic impact.

SECTION 5

SAQA Southern Regional Office

5.0 Introduction

The SAQA Southern Regional Office (hereafter called the Regional Office) participates in the SESD programme on a year-to-year basis. During the study team's visit towards the end of 2003 it was recommended that a proposal from the Regional Office for the development of learning materials for Fundamentals within NQF-aligned qualifications to be offered by FET colleges be supported. Given that the extended Terms of Reference commenced in January 2004 and that this impact assessment is for a period of six months, from October 2003 until March 2004, the report refers to both the initial and extended Terms of Reference in order to cover the full period to which the impact assessment applies.

A second reason why the previous year's activities are reported on in detail stems from a lapse in protocol on the HSRC's side, in that the First Impact Assessment report was not forwarded to the Regional Office in draft form for their comment prior to it being included in the Synthesis Report and distributed to stakeholders. The Regional Office raised objections in terms of both the process followed and the substance of the report and the HSRC apologized for this oversight. It was agreed that the Regional Office would provide additional information with regard to the previous period of assessment and that the HSRC would use the Second Impact Assessment Report to correct any erroneous impressions created in the previous report. This report therefore replaces Section Five of the Synthesis Report of October 2003.

5.1 Impact assessment in relation to Terms of Reference for 2003

[Output 1.7 'SAQA branch office established in Western Cape to support FET institutions translating unit standards under the National Qualifications Framework into programmes and in other ways to be decided', SESD documentation, Volume 5: 14, February 2002)

In terms of the initial project documentation the SAQA component was intended to assist the colleges to translate unit standards into learning programmes. It was anticipated that staff at the public FET colleges would not have the necessary underpinning knowledge of the NQF to implement programmes aligned to the NQF. Such knowledge would be required of all staff members, given that managers, educators as well as administrative staff would be involved in implementation.

The intended strategy had a number of strands:

- Raising staff awareness around the NQF
- Focussed work with selected educators in terms of developing learning programmes.

- Addressing certain strategic issues through workshops (e.g. quality management systems, assessment)
- Addressing blockages and facilitating linkages in the implementation of NQF programmes

The baseline study put forward the following indicators for assessment of the impact of the Regional Office's contribution to the SESD Programme in 2003.

| |
|---|
| 1. Extent to which a more uniform competence, has been developed at all levels of management and staff on all campuses of the two targeted FET Colleges - in relation to NQF policies, systems and practices; outcomes-based pedagogy and assessment; internal quality assurance mechanisms |
| 2. The extent to which lessons learned from the SAQA component of the SESD intervention have been documented for dissemination to other FET institutions in the province and to other SAQA Regional Offices. |
| 3. Extent to which blockages in the development and implementation of the NQF as a system have been identified and communicated to the relevant parties at provincial level. |
| 4. Extent to which the SAQA Southern Regional Office has succeeded in building a quality assurance network that includes the relevant parties involved in quality assurance in FET Colleges. |
| 5. Scope and level of the SAQA Southern Regional Office's input into provincial quality assurance networks |
| 6. Frequency and quality of feedback about system problems and blockages given to SAQA nationally. |
| 7. Extent to which follow-up to SAQA was undertaken and results relayed back to the FET sector. |

Indicator 1: Building competence in the two SESD colleges in relation to the NQF

A number of factors need to be taken into account in evaluating the extent to which a Regional Office intervention is potentially able to contribute to the development of competence in relation to the NQF in the College of Cape Town and South Cape College. The first factor relates to the dual mode of programme delivery that currently occurs in most colleges. NATED programmes, with a prescribed syllabus that prepares students for national examinations on a semester or trimester basis, has long been the backbone of college provision. There has been no policy decision by either the national or provincial Department of Education that compels colleges to align all their programmes with the NQF. While there are a number of reasons for this it also means that the Regional Office intervention does not take place in a milieu where NQF alignment is a definite or even an imminent requirement. At the moment NQF-alignment occurs at the discretion of colleges when new programmes that have been identified as a need match areas where NQF-registered qualifications are available.

The second factor that needs to be taken into account is that both these colleges have pockets of NQF-related activity that were already in place before the start of the SESD programme. At the College of Cape Town certain departments and units have gone a long way towards NQF alignment while others operate within the NATED system. At South Cape College the Oudtshoorn campus has developed strong relationships with certain SETAs and have also benefited from offering NQF-aligned programmes in partnership with higher education institutions. Other South Cape campuses offer mainly NATED programmes or have only recently started introducing a limited range of NQF-aligned programmes. At the start of the SESD Programme certain staff members at both these colleges were therefore already competently implementing NQF-aligned programmes and learnerships, while those working in the NATED system had no immediate need for NQF training in addition to what was already undertaken in terms of colleges' own training initiatives or offered by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). This does not mean that a need did not exist, but rather that it was perhaps only one need amongst many others.

A third factor to be borne in mind is that the Regional Office has no preferential access to colleges because the SESD Programme supports their work or because they are representative of SAQA. They are viewed as a service provider along with all the other providers that cater for the FET sector. Apart from the workshops offered by the Regional Office college staff members are also called upon to attend various other training events (of which some are funded by the SESD Programme).

Documentation provided by the Regional Office details a number of meetings held with the colleges during the first half of the year to negotiate suitable training content and dates. Three workshops were to be offered by the Regional Office, namely NQF Overview for Administrators, OBE for Managers and Learning Programme Development for Educators in order to address the needs that were identified.

Even though a commitment to certain dates had been made and agreement had been reached that these workshops would address identified needs the 60% participation rate reflected in the table of workshops offered by the Regional Office, as presented below, is perhaps an indication of the difficulties experienced by colleges in terms of releasing staff. The fact that the NQF Overview attracted the least number of participants and OBE for Managers received the strongest support is perhaps also an indication that the colleges were more receptive to certain topics than to others.

| District | Workshop | Month | Date | Year | Expected | Total |
|-----------|--------------------|----------|------|------|----------|-------|
| Cape Town | Fundamentals | November | 27 | 2003 | 51 | 51 |
| | Learning Programme | November | 10 | 2003 | 25 | 11 |
| | | | 11 | 2003 | 27 | 13 |
| | | | 13 | 2003 | 25 | 6 |
| | | | 14 | 2003 | 25 | 3 |
| | | | 24 | 2003 | 25 | 26 |
| | | | 25 | 2003 | 25 | 8 |
| | | | 26 | 2003 | 25 | 10 |
| | NQF overview | October | 23 | 2003 | 60 | 28 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------|----|------|-----|-----|
| | OBE for Managers | November | 25 | 2003 | 35 | 18 |
| | | | 26 | 2003 | 30 | 30 |
| ECD | Learning Programme | September | 1 | 2003 | 25 | 10 |
| South Cape | Learning Programme | August | 1 | 2003 | 25 | 25 |
| | NQF overview | September | 10 | 2003 | 30 | 13 |
| | OBE for Managers | October | 30 | 2003 | 20 | 20 |
| Grand Total | | | | | 453 | 272 |

Most of the workshops listed above occurred in the last quarter of 2003. The Regional Office reports that even though attendance of some of the workshops were disappointing, the workshops served their intended purpose in terms of providing accurate information that allayed confusion and dispelled myths. After the workshops staff members who attended were more positive towards NQF qualifications than some of them had been before. It was, however, clear that in some cases the workshops spoke into a vacuum and it was likely that the knowledge gained would dissipate before college staff would have an opportunity to implement what they had learned. Even though some colleges had been of the opinion that the assessor training offered would induct educators sufficiently into the workings of the NQF, thus obviating the need for an *NQF Overview for Educators* or an *NQF and Assessment* workshop, it became clear during the workshops offered by the Regional Office that there were many areas in which participants' understanding could be deepened and enhanced.

Indicators 2, 3, 6, 7: Communication, dissemination, identification of blockages, feedback and follow-up

As the second, third, sixth and seventh indicators all relate to broader processes of communication and dissemination they are discussed together. Given that no other SAQA Regional Offices have been established this part of the second indicator falls away.

A record of workshop sessions conducted with FET colleges in the province, as provided by the Regional Office, indicate that some of the above workshops were also offered to other colleges in the province. It was reported that questions and queries that were raised by college staff helped Regional Office staff to deepen their understanding of the problems being experienced by colleges and of the interventions required. Good college practices were also discussed and lessons learned from training interventions at one college were passed on to others.

The Regional Office reports that workshops, interventions and consultations undertaken by the Regional Office were recorded in the Minutes of the Provincial Steering Committee meetings, captured in monthly reports to the SAQA National Office and reported directly to the person in the WCED responsible for curriculum and programme development and later to the Provincial Technical Advisor when she returned to office. The Colleges Curriculum Committee (CCC), which will be discussed in the next section, offered another forum where issues were raised and feedback was given. The narrative report provided by the Regional Office provides a thoughtful account of the

activities undertaken and the lessons learned. Various initiatives identified by the Regional Office and communicated to the relevant parties are listed.

- The non-recognition of the NATED Hair Care qualification was communicated to the WCED, the Services SETA and UMALUSI to set a process in motion. An arrangement, which is unique to the Western Cape province, was subsequently brokered through the agency of the WCED to enable accreditation of colleges as sites of learning
- The accreditation of early childhood development (ECD) qualifications by the ETDP SETA was taken up with the ETDP SETA and a meeting was arranged by the ETDP SETA to assist colleges in understanding the requirements of the accreditation packs. SAQA participated in these workshops.
- Capacity constraints around introduction of Fundamentals were noted and taken into the SAQA proposal to develop contextualised learning materials. This was reported to and supported by SAQA Head Office.
- The funding of NATED programmes and the lack of clarity around the funding of NQF-aligned programmes was raised with the WCED and at the SAQA Authority. The WCED developed a funding formula and a curriculum strategy that is unique to the province to enable the delivery and funding of NQF-aligned programmes. WCED and SAQA ran joint workshops with the management of all colleges at which the WCED was able to explain and advocate its funding guidelines and clarify issues.
- Issues about certain standards and qualifications were fed back to the SAQA Directorate of Standard Setting and Development (DSSD).

Apart from these specific issues raised the Regional Office provides systematic feedback to the SAQA Head Office in two ways. Systems problems are fed back by speaking directly to the responsible Directorate at the SAQA head office and secondly they are fed back into a report to the Deputy Executive Officer, which is also tabled at the SAQA Authority meeting. As one component of a system, the Regional Office does not have direct control over the extent to which feedback provided by the office filters through the system but is able to exercise some influence on stakeholders.

Indicators 4 and 5: Building a quality assurance network in the province

While the development of a quality assurance network in the province was initially seen as an important part of the Regional Office's work it was always intended that this work should be part of a broader initiative that would include not only FET colleges but also all stakeholders in the province. The Regional Office's initiatives in this regard were superseded by the initiative of the FET Directorate

in the WCED to establish its own quality management system and an agreement with the SAQA Regional Office that this should be done before a college network could be established. At the same time there was an initiative by the Association of FET Institutions of South Africa (AFETISA) to appoint a consultant to work with colleges on quality assurance. A 'best practices' forum supported by the SESD Programme is currently a third initiative in this area.

A structure to take on the many aspects of quality in colleges has been created by the College Curriculum Committee (CCC) initiated by the WCED, which has a Programmes and Quality Substructure. In this forum colleges are attempting to establish a uniform approach to managing quality at all levels of the college system. SAQA is a member of both the CCC and the substructure.

Given that the average rating for all SESD Colleges in terms of quality assurance (characteristic no. 12) has dropped from 4.1 (an *emerging* characteristic) in the First Impact Assessment to 3.9 (a *weak* characteristic) in the Second Impact Assessment to give it the lowest average rating over all 24 characteristics, it is clear that quality assurance poses one of the biggest challenges to the FET college sector in the province. To date the appointment of a dedicated quality assurance person in the FET Directorate is still outstanding, with a similar situation existing in the SESD colleges. The foundation for systematic quality assurance has therefore not yet been established and the interventions that have taken place are of a preparatory nature rather than being specifically focused on implementation issues. (See paragraph on CCC and substructure above) The workshop on *OBE for Managers* that the Regional Office, together with the FET Directorate, developed and conducted at the colleges, for instance, included a quality assurance dimension in that it aimed to assist college managers to ensure that new programme development, teaching and learning are part of the commitment to promoting quality delivery. While this intervention is clearly a proverbial 'drop in the bucket' in terms of the need that exists, it is difficult to see how the Regional Office can offer much more until such time as a stable systemic environment for quality assurance is in place. The CCC and its sub-structures are important moves in this direction but it will take some time before they are fully effective. In the mean time the strategy followed by the Regional Office is to slot in with existing quality assurance initiatives as they become available (as discussed above).

5.2 Impact assessment in relation to the extended Terms of Reference for 2004

[1.6.1 Main Activity: The production of materials in Mathematical Literacy and Communication Studies, to assist educators in phasing in qualifications registered on the NQF during 2004 and 2005 and the provision of feedback and support mechanisms for educators using the materials developed during 2003 (and 2004 if possible), Draft WC SESD Planning for 2004: 6-7]

Towards the end of 2002 the WCED established a provincial College Curriculum Committee (CCC) that would be representative of all six FET colleges in the province. Colleges, the WCED and the SESD Provincial Technical Adviser would work together in three areas, namely curricula and programmes; quality assurance; and learner support. Although this committee has an advisory

function its influence is enhanced by its direct links to the national Heads of Education Standing Committee on Curriculum Development on which the WCED is represented. The Regional Office was asked to become involved in this committee and, apart from the first meeting, has participated in every meeting.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| College Curriculum Committee | 21 October 2002 (CCC formed) |
| College Curriculum Committee | 08 July 2003 |
| Programmes and Quality Substructure | 05 August 2003 |
| College Curriculum Committee | 09 September 2003 |
| Programmes and Quality Substructure | 10 September 2003 |
| Programmes and Quality Substructure | 30 September 2003 |
| Programmes and Quality Substructure | 07 October 2003 |
| College Curriculum Committee | 25 November 2003 |
| College Curriculum Committee | 09 March 2004 |
| Programmes and Quality Substructure | 05 May 2004 |

The Regional Office's participation in the CCC has been a significant factor in locating the SAQA component of the SESD Programme within the regional system. Part of the CCC's Terms of Reference is to operationalise programme development in all learning fields. One of the challenges in this regard is the inclusion of Fundamentals (Communication and Mathematical Literacy) as a necessary component of SAQA qualifications. As Fundamentals are not currently included in NATED programmes offered by colleges this requires that the capacity of staff be developed through access to learning support materials in the classroom. This need was initially identified in relation to early childhood development (ECD). ECD had begun replacing the existing NATED Educare qualification with NQF aligned programmes at a relatively early stage and ECD educators were having difficulties in introducing a mathematical literacy component. Programmes in hairdressing were similarly experiencing difficulties in gaining accreditation from the Services SETA for their NATED programmes, which led to a move toward NQF-aligned programmes. At the time UMALUSI was arguing that Fundamentals needed to be contextualised within a qualification. Through discussion in the CCC the general nature of the challenges presented by the inclusion of Fundamentals became clear.

In the documentation provided the Regional Office reports on a three-day Mathematical Literacy workshop for ECD that was organised by SAQA. Although attendance was reported to have been disappointing the report comments on the excellent contextual applications for mathematical literacy that were generated by educators to provide a basis for learning material development. It was also reported that educators were able to make a number of shifts in their thinking concerning, for instance, the use of unit standards as the basis for curriculum, the distinction between mathematical literacy and mathematics and the value of contextualised mathematical literacy. It became clear,

however, that educators would not be able to develop materials without support from materials writers/developers.

While colleges could focus on the development of the Core and Elective components of NQF qualifications in terms of their existing programme expertise the Regional Office was well equipped to take on the task of materials development in Fundamentals. Given that the National Access Consortium in the Western Cape (NACWC) in which staff members of the Regional office was previously employed², had already started in 2001 to develop learning materials for Fundamentals for schools at NQF levels 2 to 4, this experience could be used to great advantage. A concept proposal in this regard was submitted at the time of the Danida Review Team's visit in the latter part of 2003 and was accepted and endorsed by the Provincial Steering Committee. The Regional Office reports that materials writers were appointed in January 2004 for Communication. These writers are currently working with college reference groups to develop materials. Materials writers were appointed for Mathematical Literacy in November 2003 and additional writers appointed in May 2004. One Mathematical Literacy pack is close to completion and additional materials writers in this area are soon to be appointed. It is planned that materials will ultimately be developed for eight qualifications in Mathematical Literacy and in Communication giving a total of 16 resource packs in the following areas by the end of 2004:

- Business Studies, at NQF levels 2, 3 and 4 (6 resource packs)
- Engineering Studies, at NQF levels 2 and 3 (4 resource packs) (still to be confirmed)
- Hairdressing, at NQF level 4 (2 resource packs)
- ECD, at NQF level 4 (2 resource packs)
- Hospitality, at NQF level 4 (2 resource packs)

The materials will be placed in the public domain and a strategy for broad dissemination will be developed jointly between the WCED, the national Department of Education, and the SESD programme.

The revised Terms of Reference, as outlined above, is viewed as a logical extension of the first phase of work of the Regional Office. Focussed programme development also has the advantage of being more directly under SAQA's management and more closely aligned to imminent developments within the colleges.

² See Baseline Study: Synthesis Report (2003: 49) for a more detailed explanation of the work of the NACWC and relationship between the NACWC and the SAQA Southern Regional Office.

5.3 Overall impact assessment

In the above review of the activities of the Regional Office over the last year two issues stand out as having an important influence on the extent to which impact can be evaluated. The first relates to the difficulty in attributing improvement in educator practice directly to any particular training intervention. Factors such as an enabling systemic environment, the timing of training in relation to implementation, the degree of existing competence/non-competence in an identified area, the capacity of a college to release staff and the level of staff motivation all have an influence on the immediate, mid- and long-term impact of training. Given that, in the first year of direct SESD support to the colleges staff development was an important overall programme focus, colleges experienced a strong infusion of different developmental and capacity building initiatives. It is therefore inappropriate to single out the workshops offered by the Regional Office and to ask specifically about their impact. They need to be viewed as a component of broader staff development initiatives that are supported by the SESD Programme, other donors, the WCED and the colleges themselves. In terms of all these interventions the longer-term impact will only become visible as implementation issues unfold. While the post-course evaluation done by Regional office staff members who presented the workshops point to immediate benefits for staff who attended, it is clear that NQF-alignment of existing and new programmes is not an uncontentious issue. Although the WCED has done much to find solutions to systems blockages, it cannot be taken for granted that NQF implementation is a straightforward matter, even where colleges are committed to this pathway.

While the impact of the training offered specifically by the Regional Office is subject to the constraints mentioned above, there is, at the same time, a distinctive element about the workshops offered specifically by the Regional Office, which should not be underestimated. This relates to the insertion of the presence of a statutory body such as SAQA directly into the college environment. Even though the Regional Office has no preferential status as a service provider, they do have a special status that is different to other providers in the sense that they act as a direct communication channel in ways that other providers do not. Conversely, contact with the blockages that colleges experience assists SAQA to gain a deeper understanding of implementation issues in the FET college context. In both these senses the impact of the training interventions made should be viewed as positive.

What is strikingly evident from the investigation undertaken is that the impact of training interventions is enhanced when they relate directly to a challenge or new activity that a college is facing. A workshop for educator capacity building that was offered at the time when one of the two SESD colleges intended to start two learnerships serves as a good example in this regard. While the Regional office does not wish to duplicate the WCED's plans to run accredited programmes in learning material development for all educator staff an intervention such as the one described above was timeous and useful. The fact that the Regional office has embarked on this strategy, in addition to the generic NQF-related training offered, is likely to enhance the direct impact of their interventions. Needs identified in the various forums organised under the auspices of the CCC will serve as valuable leads in terms of the identification of areas where Regional Office expertise can be harnessed.

Close co-operation between existing structures is a second factor that enhances impact. In this respect the Regional Office's participation in the CCC is an extremely positive development. The extension of their brief to include the development of learning materials for Fundamentals stems directly from the work that the curricula and programmes committee is undertaking, thus locating the contribution of the Regional Office to the SESD Programme within a broader systemic landscape. This embeddedness led to the identification of a need that the Regional Office is well placed to address.

A conclusion that can be drawn with regard to all the indicators identified in the Baseline Study is that the work done by the Regional Office cannot be seen in isolation from the work of the WCED or of SETAs. While it is too early to form an idea of the impact that the new learning materials will have, this initiative stands a far greater chance of adding value than if it were undertaken as a stand-alone intervention. It is also worth remembering that the Regional Office has limited staff capacity and that their participation in the CCC does not come without a cost in staff time and energy. In order for their contribution to have optimum impact it needs to be located within a broader provincial initiative. The positioning of the Regional Office's work within the broader ambit of the CCC will go a long way towards anchoring the SAQA Regional Office's contribution to the SESD Programme so that it occurs in tandem with college needs and WCED initiatives. The next evaluation report needs to take this location as point of departure to gauge the extent to which impact has been enhanced by closer partnership with the WCED.

5.4 Revision of impact indicators

Given that the Regional Office involvement in the SESD Programme for 2004 is very specific and is directly tied to the work of the CCC the impact indicators to be used for the remainder of the years requires revision. The following areas of impact are drawn from the Draft Western Cape SESD Planning document for 2004.

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| Extent to which SAQA Regional Office project management of resource materials development for Fundamentals in the learning areas identified involves the colleges in the development process through an initial scoping workshop with each learning area reference team and their subsequent involvement in an iterative process of engagement with draft copies and samples until the final versions are approved. |
| The extent to which materials writing and production processes are managed to produce high-quality materials within the specified time lines. |
| The extent to which dissemination to the SESD colleges in the Western Cape and to other colleges takes place, in terms of arrangements negotiated with the provincial and national DoE. |
| The extent to which SESD colleges in the Western Cape are supported in the use of the learning materials as they become available. |
| The extent to which SAQA continues to respond to college needs for NQF-related training, in terms of generic as well as specific interventions. |

While the above indicators are predominantly performance related, each of the above areas contribute crucially to the impact that the development and utilisation of learning materials in Fundamentals are likely to have. The ultimate impact would be that colleges are increasingly able to develop programmes that are NQF-aligned and responsive to the needs of the region. Together with this programme development would be the ability to develop appropriate materials for delivery of the new programmes. Given that the Regional Office has no control over college implementation of NQF-aligned programmes, progress and achievements in terms of the above indicators will need to be considered in relation to reports received from colleges about the extent to which the work done by the Regional Office has assisted in capacity building and increased implementation. In this way a realistic view will be obtained of how the work of this SESD component has contributed towards the achievement of overall SESD objectives.

5.5 The Western Cape FET Directorate's views of its relations with the SAQA Southern Regional Office

Staff from the FET Directorate in the WCED commented positively on the strengthening of the working relationship between the SAQA Southern Regional Office and the WCED. From within the Directorate and also at WCED levels above the Directorate there are positive expectations about the contribution that will be made by the learning materials currently in the process of being developed.

SECTION 6

The Department of Labour

6.1 Introduction

This section is based on interviews with the Project Manager for the DoL component and the Chief Training Advisor, participation in a series of meetings and workshops during the design phase of the DoL component, and a consideration of the progress reports produced for those meetings. The component is very close to going into the field at the time of writing and it is important that a detailed methodology for the monitoring and evaluation of the component should be in place before the next overall Programme evaluation.

As was noted in the previous evaluation report, the DoL component has become increasingly focused (through wide-ranging and participatory discussions) on the proposed roll out of the New Venture Creation Learnership, piloted with support from Danida's Provincial Skills Development Programme (PSDP). Therefore, this section will primarily address progress in this regard, which has been considerable. However, towards the end of this section, other activities will also be reported upon.

6.2. Roll out of the New Venture Creation Learnership Pilot

6.2.1. Background

An important component of the previous Danish programme of assistance to skills development was the piloting of a new learnership designed to facilitate the transition into self-employment of retrenched workers. Given the indications of success from the Durban-based pilot, it was proposed that it be rolled out nationally as part of the current SESD Programme.

Since the conceptual work on the initial pilot, the DoL have become concerned about the likely employment rates of those enrolled in learnership programmes who were not previously employed. For this reason, the initial target group for the national programme will be those who have already completed a learnership but who have not secured employment. As such, the learnership answers directly to a major policy concern of the DoL.

The design phase of the learnership has been characterised both by a conscious strategy of building from the experience of the pilot (including appointing the same project manager) and a process of engaging with relevant stakeholders, including other government departments and agencies and several SETAs.

The clear national commitment to this sub-component, including championing from the relevant Deputy Director-General suggests that the current design phase will build into an operationalised programme in which Danish funds will provide a catalytic role.

6.2.2. Developing governance structures

A steering committee has been formed and held its first meeting in March 2004. The committee is comprised of senior officials (ranging from Director to DDG levels) from Labour, Education, Trade and Industry and Public Works, as well as the project manager and the CTA. The bringing together of four line departments into the governance structures of the sub-component is an important achievement. Indeed, it goes beyond Danida's initial vision of encouraging programme-related cooperation between Education, Labour and Trade and Industry.

This steering committee is a dedicated structure for the NVCL only and has the following scope:

- Securing coordination between the different Government Departments involved in the model;
- Mainstreaming the model in all departments, and giving feedback on the model to each individual Department;
- Approving the component elements of the model;
- Agreeing on a project plan;
- Monitoring implementation plans with regard to the selection model; and
- Continuously evaluating the implementation of the model.

Beneath the steering committee sits a working committee consisting of the same Departments plus a number of SETAs and other agencies with relevant expertise. This committee has been meeting regularly and its main focus is on the design and implementation of the NVCL model.

6.2.3. Design work

A variety of focus groups have been commissioned to investigate specific matters, such as mentorship, learnership costing, etc. Once the working committee discusses their investigations and recommendations such focus groups dissolve.

Subject matter experts have also been contracted on a short-term basis to get clarity on a range of policy issues and other matters relating to the NVCL. The following studies have already been completed:

- An examination of the appropriateness of the existing selection process and tools;
- A clarification of legal issues around the learnership agreement;
- A study on the mentorship requirements for the NVCL;
- An upgrading of the existing learning materials;

- A scoping of the nature and role of a co-ordinating agency; and
- A legal opinion on the Closed Corporation option for enterprises' legal status.

6.2.4. Progress towards implementation

Three FET Colleges (Sivananda in Durban, College of Cape Town, Tshwane North in Pretoria) are currently in the process of being capacitated to conduct the learner selection and the first phase of the institutional learning. Importantly, the former two colleges are also sites for the larger college component of the SESD Programme. Moreover, Orbit College (another SESD supported institution) has already been identified to join the NVCL process in 2005. Thus, the decision to select these offers the potential for significant synergies between the DoE and the DoL components.

The formal learner selection process starts at the beginning of May. The actual training is planned for the end of June/beginning of July 2004.

Although the main focus is currently on getting the first learners into the system, a parallel process has been put in place to ensure that the arrangements for the next rounds progress smoothly. The DoL has agreed with the DoE on a process to identify the providers for the next round. These must be identified before the end of June in order to ensure that capacity is developed for the next round at the end of 2004.

A decision will be taken at the next steering committee meeting regarding the establishment of the coordinating agency.

6.3. Development of other Learnerships

The Programme's National Implementation Plan speaks of one output being "relevant and gender-balanced learnerships, especially relating to SMMEs, implemented by the FET institutions and other providers".

The last evaluation report noted that there had been little progress in this area, but that the CTA and the DoL remained committed to this sub-component's delivery. Significant progress in this regard can be reported on this occasion.

The DoL has approved that the following four learnerships should be developed:

- **NVCL Level 2:** This would seek to extend the NVCL model by delivering a learnership at NQF level 2 as well as the main focus at level 4. Discussions are on-going between the SESD Programme and the Expanded Public Works Programme about a partnership in this regard.
- **Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES) Learnership – NQF Level 5:** The European Union funded the qualification development of this learnership and the qualification and

standards were submitted to SAQA on 28 February 2004. This learnership is for persons that would be trained to ensure compliance to labour laws. It is envisaged that a large number will be subsequently sub-contracted as SMMEs to conduct this work on behalf of the Department of Labour. The SESD Programme is funding materials and curriculum development for this learnership and the Unisa Institute for Public Management Development has been approved as service provider in this regard.

- **Community Development Worker (CDW) Learnership – NQF Levels 4 and 5:** The Local Government and Water Seta (LGWSETA) requested that the SESD Programme fund the materials development for this learnership, which already has a qualification and standards submitted to SAQA. The request has been approved and the South African Management Development Institute will lead this activity. It is envisaged that a large number of learners would be sub-contracted by local authorities to perform their functions.
- **FET College Administration Learnership - NQF Level 5:** Negotiations are currently under way with the KZN PTA on how to ensure that this learnership is developed. Currently the view is that the University of KwaZulu-Natal would be contracted in this regard, with the colleges playing a large role in the standards generation and materials design processes. It is envisaged that a decision will be taken on the next SESD KZN Steering Committee meeting on 13 May 2004.

These learnerships have been agreed upon with the DoL as responding to the SESD Programme's design in two ways. Firstly, the areas chosen reflect concerns about gaps in capacity that have been identified by DoL and which need addressing in order to achieve both SESD and DoL overall objectives for skills development, as well as DoE objectives in the final case. Secondly, it is envisaged that much of the work done under the IES and CDW learnerships will be out-sourced to small, black enterprises, again in line with SESD's vision.

6.4. Capacity Building in the Department of Labour, especially in the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Office

Whilst the Programme documents contain a vision of capacity development for the Department, particularly in its KwaZulu-Natal, provincial structures, a revision of this objective has been negotiated between the Programme and the DoL. The focus has shifted towards building sustainable capacity with regard to the NVCL approach. This requires that capacity should be developed within the following organisations:

- The Khula Finance Corporation (an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry) to handle the proposed Educational Guarantee Scheme;
- The participating FET colleges, to play the lead service provider role;
- The mentorship fraternity to perform the mentorship role; and

- The coordinating agency. This agency is crucial to the success of the NVCL approach in future, since they would coordinate all activities.

6.5. Supporting the National Skills Development Strategy

The NVCL sub-component appears to be increasingly well integrated into the overall vision of the Department of Labour as it finalises the next National Skills Development Strategy, due to begin in April 2005. The DDG herself presented the model to the National Skills Authority Lekgotla on NSDS planning in February and a specific indicator related to the NVCL approach has been included in the draft indicators for the new NSDS. Moreover, the DoL has committed itself to a major expansion of the NVCL approach and plans a new funding window within the National Skills Fund to support this.

It may also be argued that the NVCL process is serving as an important practical bridge between the work of the DoE and the DoL. Both Departments have made strong commitments to better collaboration but the NVCL approach is a valuable manifestation of this in practice. The DoL component more generally is also developing valuable additional points of collaboration between the Department and DTI and DPW, thus reinforcing relationships that are central to the overall success of the NSDS vision.

6.6. Concluding comments

There has been considerable progress in the development of the DoL component of the SESD Programme since the last evaluation report. It is anticipated that the Coordinating Agency for the NVCL model will be selected imminently and that delivery of the learnership will start by July. The process for developing the NVCL sub-component has also been highly participatory, with considerable participation and commitment from a range of important stakeholders. The challenges will clearly now be to deliver the model effectively and to get learners into sustainable self-employment. The latter in particular is likely to be a serious challenge for the future.

The monitoring and evaluation procedures for the NVCL are not yet in place. It will be important that these are finalised in the next few months in order that the process can start timeously.

The admirable progress in the DoL component has been possible in large part due to the championing of the process by the relevant DDG and by the efforts of the CTA and project manager. However, concerns have been raised as to the extent to which the support given to the project manager is adequate given the considerable demands that are made upon him. Given the importance of the component, it may be important to reconsider the resourcing of the project management element of the activity.

SECTION 7

OVERALL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

This section presents the overall findings and recommendations of the second formative impact assessment. The previous sections show that good progress has been made in a number of areas. Two systemic issues have, however, been found to hinder the impact of the SESD programme in terms of contributing to the development of a new institutional and curriculum environment that supports the delivery of practical and labour market-orientated education and training by the FET college sector. It is important that these constraining factors are taken into account when the Programme's accomplishments are reviewed.

7.1 Systemic factors that are hindering impact

7.1.1 *Under-resourcing in terms of staff and facilities*

The high number of schools in comparison to the number of FET colleges in each province makes it understandable that the provision of adequate resources to make schools function effectively are a priority in terms of provincial funding allocations. Staff establishments in most colleges are however below where they should be in terms of management, lecturing and administrative positions. While CEOs have now been appointed in all colleges it is evident from the reports that most CEOs are battling to put in place adequate staffing structures in central offices or corporate centres. This means that senior staff members (including CEOs themselves) are often required to drive new portfolios from acting positions while still retaining their original job responsibilities; or, that posts that belong to campuses are utilised for the staffing of centralised structures. Colleges also use a significant portion of self-generated income to pay for additional staff, thus not always investing enough in infra-structural development, in the provision of information technology and internet facilities for staff and students, and in the establishment of adequate workshop and laboratory facilities. Students consequently do not get sufficient exposure to practical work that supplements traditional classroom teaching. It is also reported that students are starting to complain about the fact that college fees have risen substantially while facilities remain sub-standard in most cases.

Apart from temporary acting appointments, the use of short-term contract posts are increasingly becoming the norm as a way of responding to calls for the broadening of both the scope and scale of delivery. For many colleges this is a relatively new way of operating and not one that comes without costs. There is resentment about the division that is developing between those who have permanent posts with the accompanying benefits, and those who work under conditions of great job insecurity. Disparity in remuneration between new appointments made at market-related salaries and those who

have to take on added responsibilities while remaining at low post levels in terms of provincial remuneration structures is another cause of discontent.

It is important that the issues raised here should not be interpreted as the views of a few disgruntled individuals. Staffing and remuneration levels are delicate and complex issues, but this report will not do justice to the conditions found at colleges if the matter is not raised. Given that Provincial FET Directorates and the FET Directorate in the national Department of Education are also under-resourced the overall picture is one of an FET college system trying its best to meet new challenges but paying a price in terms of a lowering of morale and increasing staff fatigue.

Both President Mbeki (in his State of the Nation Address to the joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament on 21 May 2004) and the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor (when introducing the Debate on the Education Budget in the National Assembly on 18 June 2004) referred to government's intention of ensuring adequate funding for FET colleges. It can thus be expected that the funding situation will improve in the near future and that provincial authorities will be in a better position to address critical staffing shortages. In the meantime the current unstable situation should be taken as background context to SESD implementation. It explains why SESD contributions to staffing of, for instance, Learner Support Units are highly appreciated and it also explains why colleges have often not made sufficient progress in areas which they clearly recognise as important but are unable to give the attention that these areas deserve.

7.1.2 Curriculum parameters

A second systemic issues which is having an effect on SESD implementation is the ongoing debate about whether classroom-based National Department of Education (NATED) programmes will be replaced by NQF-aligned programmes based on SETA-accredited qualifications and unit standards. Most of the colleges offer predominantly NATED programmes and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future. Given that the new FET curriculum dispensation makes provision for both a vocational and an occupational pathway it is likely that curriculum parameters will evolve in a way that includes both national examinations (on which the NATED programmes are based) and unit standards-based assessment.

There is, however, currently a policy hiatus in terms of how and when colleges will make major curriculum changes. Some argue that NQF-alignment will lead to greater labour market responsiveness. Others argue that employers value nationally examined qualifications. It is also acknowledged that colleges are not finding it easy to translate SETA-registered unit standards into the custom designed programmes that address the specific needs voiced by employers. Colleges have little experience in curriculum development. Even where they have made the shift to NQF-alignment they mostly lack the time and resources required for strong and innovative curriculum development. They often continue to use NATED course materials as part of NQF-aligned delivery. A hybrid system is thus developing in an *ad hoc* manner that does not adequately address the weaknesses of both forms of provision.

Both FET Directorates and SETAs are spending a lot of time and effort trying to make a system that was not designed with the college dispensation in mind, fit into the prevailing parameters. National and provincial FETMIS systems, for instance, report on NATED examination results but do not adequately capture or reflect statistics about skills programmes, learnerships and other new developments. Strategic planning is thus often based on inadequate management information.

A further problem, which has already been mentioned, is that colleges are not automatically SETA-accredited providers. Although they are 'deemed accredited' under the FET Act, such accreditation by UMALUSI, the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, is linked to the examinations model that regulates NATED programmes. Individual colleges and provincial FET Directorates are using limited resources to try to navigate their way through what is repeatedly described as a 'maze of bureaucratic procedures'. Some Directorates have been more effective than others in mediating the difficulties being experienced, but ultimately it has proved more difficult for colleges to gear themselves to the provision of learnerships, skills programmes and NQF-aligned qualifications than was initially anticipated.

In line with the anticipated curriculum changes many of the training interventions currently offered, including those supported by the SESD Programme, aim to prepare educators to work in the new outcomes-based (OBE) curriculum environment. When these educators go back to their colleges, where they often continue to work in the NATED dispensation, they do not have the opportunity to apply what they have learned. In colleges where NQF-aligned programmes are in place staff members sometimes find that the knowledge and expertise already developed within the college exceed the introductory level of the training offered in relation to OBE and the NQF. Those staff members who have had little exposure to OBE and the NQF experience undoubtedly derive positive benefit, but some of those who have worked within the new system also report that they often do not learn as much as they would have hoped.

What the above discussion highlights is that 'resistance to change' is not the only reason why colleges are not as far along to road to a new curriculum dispensation as they would like to be. In some cases resistance to change may well be an obstacle that needs to be overcome. However, the problems of curriculum implementation are more complex than simply being an attitudinal issue. Until systemic problems have been resolved and solid policy guidelines are in place to establish parameters that guide colleges through implementation, the efficiency and effectiveness of college-level initiatives will remain uneven. Training per se cannot alleviate the problems being experienced around systemic issues.

7.2 Overall findings

The comparative findings presented in the previous sections show the impact that the SESD programme has had since the baseline study was conducted twelve months ago. A programme that targets selected colleges in three of the nine provinces may lay itself open to the question about how much systemic impact it can really have in the long term. There may also be a question about whether

the selected colleges may not gain an advantage over other colleges that will later be difficult to even out. The overall finding of this report is that there is much to commend the strategy of supporting selected colleges that has been followed. The explanation for this finding lies in the multi-layered approach taken. Support at a national, provincial and college level within the scope provided by the development and intermediate objectives and the thirteen key outputs, creates the space to try out new approaches and to make adaptations that will later benefit the broader college sector. Lessons learnt from, for instance, the establishment of dedicated Linkages and Programmes Units, Student Support Units and Marketing and Communications Units will eventually help other colleges to replicate and enhance these innovations using the benefit of hindsight to avoid pitfalls previously encountered within SESD colleges.

Even at this early stage the impact of the Programme is not restricted to SESD-supported colleges. There is sufficient evidence of inter-provincial sharing and inter-college sharing through best practice forums, workshops and SESD-supported provincial initiatives to show that the Programme is not operating in a vacuum. Regular interaction between provincial technical advisers (PTAs), and between PTAs and the national technical adviser (NTA), has been an important facilitating factor. Closer linkages between the provincial DoEs and the national DoE have also been forged through provincial participation in national structures. The strengthening of provincial structures is benefiting all colleges in a province and not just the SESD supported institutions. While these are ongoing processes that will ultimately prove themselves over a longer time period, it can be argued at this early stage that the support rendered by the SESD Programme is having spin-off effects that benefit the FET college sector as a whole.

In this regard it should also be mentioned that the continued support given to the SAQA Southern Regional Office has allowed for a change in focus for the office. This change entails shifting from training interventions to the development of learning materials that will again be of benefit to all colleges. Support to the Department of Labour in the national programme of venture creation and four other learnerships that are being introduced at certain colleges allows for expertise in learnership provision to be disseminated and strengthened.

Some of the more general lessons learnt thus far are that once-off staff training that is too generic often does not have the required impact. A strategy that is now being adopted is to supplement training interventions with assistance by specialist consultants who deal with specific problems experienced by a college. This alleviates the problem of a number of staff members being away from the college at the same time to attend a training course, thereby disrupting classes and causing timetabling problems. It also offers opportunities for context-specific issues to be addressed. Colleges have been assisted in (to cite but two examples) the creation of appropriate environments for human resources development and the enhancement of strategic planning processes, but they have done the work themselves and have been able to shape interventions to suit their specific needs.

A further lesson that has been learnt is that process-orientated staff development, such as workshops in learning facilitation and assessment, need to occur alongside longer-term developmental

opportunities that allow staff members to up-date and strengthen knowledge in their subject specialisms. Flexible and responsive delivery that is of a high quality calls for high levels of expertise. Bursary support for further study is a positive mechanism that has been used to encourage the building of a professional continuing education ethos.

A further finding is that colleges are not all able to follow the same implementation trajectory to reach intended goals. Post-merger situations are not identical and developmental needs are driven as much by operational realities as by strategic intent. Given that flexibility in terms of timing and type of intervention is more easily achieved within a smaller sample of colleges than in full-scale interventions, the SESD Programme has the potential to address needs in context-specific ways that lead to broader impact.

7.3 Recommendations

A number of recommendations follow from the above discussion and from the report more generally. The first is that the SESD Programme should strive for maximum flexibility in terms of initiatives undertaken within the parameters set by the stated objectives and outputs. This requires ongoing identification and assessment of immediate and medium-term needs so that a 'more of the same' approach is avoided. An intervention such as the installation of PLATO has, for instance, been very positively received but not all campuses have access to PLATO. It can thus be expected that there will be further demand for PLATO installation. This may well be an effective route to take but it should not be pursued at the expense of creative identification of other initiatives that will improve the quality of mathematics, science and technology in colleges.

A second recommendation is that the SESD Programme should be careful not to foreground support for OBE and NQF-directed staff development and thereby perhaps overlook the development needs of staff who deliver NATED programmes. This may well cause staff members who work in a NATED environment to feel at a disadvantage and to lose interest in the training offered. While this is clearly not the Programme's intention the current undecided policy dispensation makes it easy for this kind of situation to develop.

Given that extensive institutional development and capacity building has taken place the provincial FET directorates and the colleges now need to be urged even more strongly to pay attention to quality of delivery and to the development of quality assurance systems. Staff members repeatedly state that the individual development plans that have been put in place should be linked to regular staff appraisal. Students and their parents also need to feel confident that students are receiving high-quality tuition and not just that which is available in a particular geographic region. There is evidence available from other studies that show that students who can least afford it are often prepared to bypass their local colleges and to travel long distances to register at a college where they perceive the quality to be higher. Provincial initiatives to ensure uniform standards across all colleges, and to avoid duplication of curriculum development in relation to new qualifications, have been established but there is still a need for greater inter- and cross-provincial coherence.

7.4 Conclusion

The final section of the second formative impact assessment's synthesis report has sketched out a general picture of the policy and implementation environment in which the SESD programme is operating. While some of the more problematic aspects may have been overemphasised at the cost of more positive developments, the factors identified and discussed are those that emerged most consistently from individual college reports. Each area addressed by the SESD programme is an area of need and moreover an area that contributes crucially to the development of a more responsive and labour market orientated FET colleges sector. It is clear that foundational work still needs to be done in relation to both institutional and curriculum development, and that the SESD programme may well find itself interpreting the stated output areas in creative and perhaps unexpected ways in order to assist with the ground work that is needed. The Programme is definitely reaching all levels of the college community. When students tell researchers that Danida funded their attendance of SRC camps or that Danida installed PLATO, then it is a sign that the SESD Programme is tangibly making a difference at many levels. This is the Programme's biggest strength.

**DANIDA: SESD PROGRAMME
2002-2006**

| DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>The SESD programme will increase the employability of male and female youth and adults through supporting the delivery of practical and labour market oriented education and skills training provided mainly within the FET band</p> | | |
| IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 1: CAPACITY BUILDING | | |
| <p>The institutional and financial sustainability of the FET colleges in general and the targeted provincial clusters in particular will be enhanced through the establishment of a supportive and conducive enabling environment, which will also serve to advance the objectives of the NQF.</p> | | |
| OUTPUT | INDICATOR | MEANS OF VERIFICATION |
| <p>1.1 The capacity of DoE in the 3 provinces developed to efficiently and effectively support the FET institutions in the provinces in areas such as management, programme design and delivery, creating linkages with the labour market and HIV/Aids awareness.</p> | <p>Training programmes for DoE staff on change management implemented.</p> <p>DoE staff work in accordance with agreed systems and procedures as advocated and promoted by provincial and national DoE.</p> <p>Provincial DoE is actively engaged in dialogue with national DoE on development of best practices for FET colleges</p> | <p>Evaluation reports from the training programmes</p> <p>Management reports by FET branch staff</p> <p>Interview with FET management and staff</p> <p>Communications between national and provincial DoE</p> <p>Minutes of meetings</p> <p>Interviews of DoE staff</p> |
| <p>1.2 Selected FET clusters restructured and the operations cost-effective and cost-efficient in response to the needs of the labour market.</p> | <p>Restructuring plans implemented.</p> <p>Training programmes delivered.</p> <p>Increased success rate for graduates, males as well as females, to get access to the world of work or continued learning.</p> | <p>Reports from the research, monitoring and evaluation system</p> <p>Evaluation reports from the training programmes</p> <p>Gender-sensitive reports from the research, monitoring and evaluation system</p> <p>Gender-sensitive FET college statistics (FETMIS)</p> |

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| | | <p>Tracer studies</p> <p>Interviews with male and female students, enterprises, community leaders</p> |
| <p>1.3</p> <p>The selected FET institutions' governing bodies capacitated to provide good leadership within the pertinent rules and regulations</p> | <p>Training programmes delivered</p> <p>Sound development plans based on agreed policies for FET colleges in place</p> | <p>Evaluation reports from the training programmes</p> <p>Development plans</p> <p>Reports from the research monitoring and evaluation system</p> <p>Interviews with the DoE and FET management, staff and students</p> |
| <p>1.4</p> <p>Management, instructors and other staff of the selected FET clusters capacitated to use up-to-date management methods and best practices</p> | <p>Training programmes delivered</p> <p>Increased success rate for graduates, males as well as females, to get access to the world of work or continued learning</p> | <p>Evaluation reports from the training programmes</p> <p>Gender-sensitive reports from the research monitoring and evaluation system</p> <p>Gender-sensitive FET college statistics</p> <p>FETMIS</p> <p>Interviews with male and female students</p> |
| <p>1.5</p> <p>FET institutions share best practices and are adequately represented in the national and provincial debates on the role of education and skills development in the country</p> | <p>Mechanisms for FET networking established</p> <p>FET colleges actively participating in national and provincial conferences</p> | <p>Interviews with National Board for FET, national and provincial DoE and FET colleges</p> <p>Conference papers and proceedings</p> |
| <p>1.6</p> <p>The capacity of DoL, on the provincial and local level, is developed to institute a monitoring, quality and assessment system to be applied to training providers in the province, including the FET institutions, so as to</p> | <p>Database of service providers in place.</p> <p>Gender sensitive evaluation programme in place</p> | <p>MIS documentation regarding all service providers</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> |

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| support the development and implementation of gender-responsive skills development programmes. | Capacity building programme for DoL staff implemented Assessment and tracer studies conducted | Performance reports Tracer studies' reports |
| 1.7 SAQA branch established in Western Cape to support FET institutions translating unit standards under the National Qualifications Framework into programmes. | SAQA branch office established Unit standards translated under the NQF | Physical inspection FET curricula Interviews with provincial DoE, SAQA and FET staff |

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 2: DELIVERY OF QUALITY PROGRAMMES

The FET colleges in general and the targeted clusters in particular directly supported to deliver quality programmes responsive to the needs of the world of work including the SMME sector, in accordance with the needs of the society at large.

| OUTPUT | INDICATOR | MEANS OF VERIFICATION |
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| 2.1 Mechanisms established for the FET clusters to maintain a close dialogue, co-ordination and placement services with relevant parts of the world of work including the SMME sector, SETAs, and the HE institutions | Increased success rate for graduates, males as well as females, to get access to the world of work or continued learning | Gender-sensitive reports from the research, monitoring and evaluation system Gender-sensitive FET college statistics (FETMIS) Tracer studies Interviews with students, enterprises, community leaders |
| 2.2 Teachers and instructors have professional and pedagogical skills based on modern principles and best practices | Training programmes delivered Improved classroom performance of teachers Increased success rate for graduates, males as well as females, to get access | Evaluation reports from participants and lecturers Class room observations Teaching notes Assessment reports Gender-sensitive reports from the research, monitoring and evaluation |

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| | to the world of work or continued learning | system Gender-sensitive FET college statistics (FETMIS) Interviews with students, enterprises, community leaders |
| 2.3 Relevant and gender-balanced learnerships, especially relating to SMMEs, implemented by the FET institutions and other providers | Gender-balanced learnerships delivered by FET colleges Increased success rate for graduates, males as well as females, to get access to the world of work or continued learning | Partnership contracts and reports Number of participating SMMEs Seminar report Number of FET colleges plan to implement venture creation learnership |
| 2.4 The academic competence of teachers of FET institutions in mathematics, science and technology upgraded to respond to the needs of the society and the world of work | Training programmes delivered Improved classroom performance of teachers Increased success rate for graduates, males as well as females, to get access to the world of work or continued learning | Evaluation reports from participants and lecturers Class room observations Teaching notes Teacher appraisal reports Gender-sensitive reports from the research, monitoring and evaluation system Gender-sensitive FET college statistics (FETMIS) Interviews with students, enterprises, community leaders |
| 2.5 The venture creation learnership piloted under phase 2 of the Danida KZN pilot project mainstreamed | Signed contracts on co-operation Venture creation learnerships implemented Seminar/workshops for sharing learning | Partnership contracts and reports Number of participating SMMEs Number of FET colleges plan to implement venture creation learnership Seminar report |
| 2.6 HIV/AIDS prevention strategies | Training programmes conducted and | Progress reports |

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| <p>among FET students, teachers, and management implemented, inclusive education strategy developed and gender-sensitive practices promoted within the framework of the Learner Affairs and Support Unit</p> | <p>evaluated</p> <p>Learner Affairs and Support Unit, including HIV/AIDS counselling established and functioning</p> <p>Strategy for inclusive education developed</p> <p>Gender-sensitive practices applied</p> | <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Information material</p> <p>Strategy plans</p> <p>Staff appraisals</p> <p>Interviews with male and female students and community leaders</p> |
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