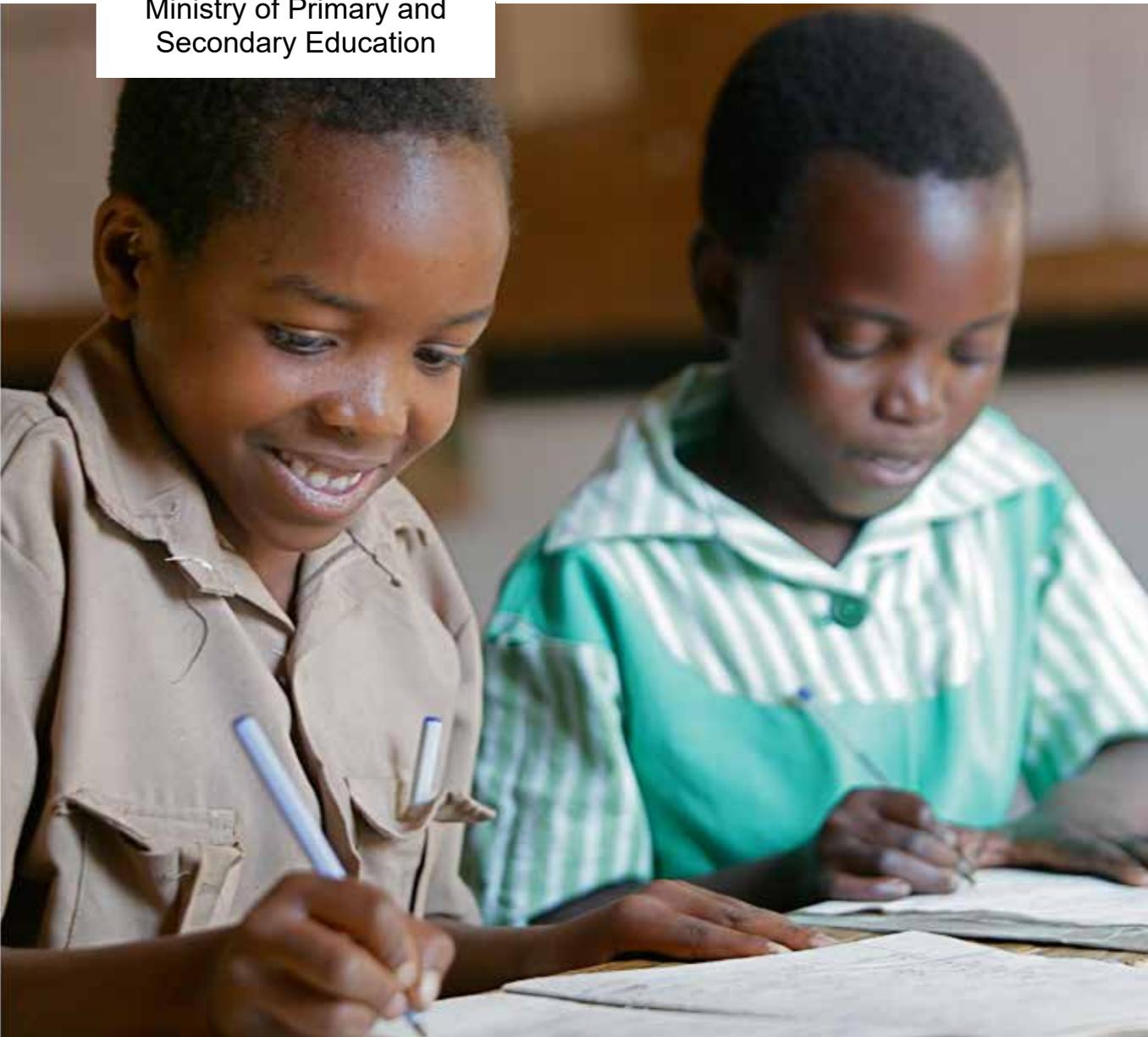




Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES HANDBOOK





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	vii
PREFACE.....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ix
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	x
ACRONYMS.....	xii
HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES.....	xiii
PREAMBLE.....	xiii
OBJECTIVES.....	xiv
UNIT 1.....	1
1.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Objectives.....	1
1.3 Legal Framework.....	1
1.3.1 Importance of the Legal Framework.....	2
1.3.2 Tenure of SDC Office Bearers.....	2
1.4 Composition of the School Development Committee.....	2
1.4.1 Disqualification from the School Development Committee.....	2
1.4.2 Managing and Conducting Annual General Meetings.....	3
1.4.3 Committee Meetings.....	4
1.4.3.1 Preparation of the Committee meetings.....	4
1.4.3.2 Notice period of Committee Meetings.....	4
1.4.3.3 Quorum for a Meeting.....	4
1.5 Hand-over-take over.....	5
1.6 Summary.....	5
UNIT 2.....	7
2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICE BEARERS.....	7
2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.2 Objective.....	7
2.2.1 Duties and Responsibilities of the Chairperson.....	7
2.2.2 Duties and Responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson.....	8
2.2.3 Duties and Responsibilities of the Secretary.....	8
2.2.4 Duties and Responsibilities of the Treasurer.....	8
2.2.5 Duties and Responsibilities of a Committee Member.....	8
2.2.6 Duties and Responsibilities of the Representative of the Responsible Authority.....	9
2.2.7 Duties and Responsibilities of the School Head.....	9
2.2.8 Duties and Responsibilities of the Deputy School Head.....	10
2.2.9 Duties and Responsibilities of the Senior Teacher.....	10
2.3 Summary.....	10

UNIT 3.....	13
3.0 FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.....	13
3.1 Introduction.....	13
3.2 Objectives.....	13
3.3 School Development Committee Constitution.....	14
3.4 School Development Planning.....	14
3.4.1 School Targets in the School Development Plan.....	14
3.4.2 Purpose of School Development Plan.....	15
3.5 School Development Planning Process.....	15
3.5.1 Short-term and long-term School Development Plans.....	15
3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation.....	16
3.6.1 Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation.....	16
3.7 School Development Committee Projects.....	16
3.8 School Infrastructure.....	17
3.8.1 Role of SDCs in School Infrastructure Provision and Maintenance.....	17
3.8.2 Requirements for Construction of Infrastructure in Schools.....	18
3.8.3 Construction of School Infrastructure Projects Process Flow.....	18
3.9 Establishment of New Schools: Primary and Secondary.....	18
3.10 Registration of New Schools.....	20
3.10.1 Type of Forms to Register School.....	20
3.10.2 Registering Primary Schools.....	21
3.10.3 Registering Secondary Schools.....	21
3.10.4 Primary Schools.....	21
3.10.5 Secondary Schools.....	22
3.11 The Satellite School Phenomenon.....	22
3.12 Provisional Registration.....	22
3.12.1 Primary Schools.....	22
3.12.2 Secondary Schools.....	23
3.13 Specialist Rooms and Sporting Facilities.....	23
3.14 Maintenance of School Infrastructure.....	23
3.15 Financial and Asset Management.....	23
3.16 Composition of the SDC Finance Sub-committee.....	23
3.16.1 Functions of the SDC Finance Sub-Committee.....	24
3.17 Committee Meetings.....	24
3.18 Minutes of Meetings.....	25
3.19 Collection of Funds.....	25
3.20 Payments.....	25
3.21 Signing Arrangements.....	25
3.22 Financial Reporting.....	25
3.23 Appointment of Secretary to the Sub-Committee.....	25
3.24 Auditing.....	25
3.25 Management of Assets.....	26
3.26 Procurement.....	26
3.27 Resource Mobilisation.....	26
3.27.1 Resource Mobilisation Planning.....	26
3.27.2 Resource Mobilisation Activities.....	26

3.28 Conflict Management.....	27
3.28.1 Causes of conflict.....	27
3.28.2 Strategies for managing conflict.....	27
3.29 Challenges that may be faced by School Development Committees.....	28
3.30 Summary.....	29
UNIT 4.....	31
4.0 Learner-Teacher Friendly School.....	31
4.1 Introduction.....	31
4.2 Objectives.....	32
4.3 Learner Welfare.....	32
4.4 Characteristics of a Learner-Friendly School.....	32
4.5 The role of the SDC in promoting Learner-Friendly Schools.....	32
4.5.1 Inclusive Education.....	32
4.5.2 Quality Teaching and Learning Processes.....	32
4.5.3 Health and Safety of Learners.....	32
4.5.4 Gender Sensitivity.....	33
4.5.5 Family and Community Involvement.....	33
4.5.6 Teacher Welfare.....	33
4.5.7 Support Staff Welfare.....	33
4.5.8 Disaster Risk Management.....	34
Signage.....	34
Emergency assembly points.....	34
Key Safety Instructions.....	35
School Disaster Management.....	35
Risk Reduction and Resilience Education.....	36
4.6 Common Disasters.....	36
4.7 Role of the School Development Committee in Disaster Risk Management	36
4.8 Summary.....	37
4.9 Conclusion.....	37
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	38

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Short term SDP.....	15
Table 2: Long term SDP.....	16
Table 3: Role specification.....	28
Table 4: Examples of disasters.....	36

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: A school built by a School Development Committee in a rural area.....	17
Figure 2: School Development Committee meeting in progress.....	24
Figure 3: Learning in progress at a learner-friendly school.....	31
Figure 4: A school block destroyed by a cyclone.....	34

FOREWORD

It has always been the Government's thrust to harness local communities' desire to develop their schools. Accordingly, this led to the establishment of School Development Committees (SDCs) at every school in terms of Section 36 of the Education Act Chapter 25: 04 of 2006.

It is my firm belief that SDCs play a critical role in the achievement of goals set out in the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2016-2020. That can only be realised if its members are conversant with their duties and responsibilities as office bearers and the functions of the SDC as an entity. SDCs play a critical role in:

- creating conducive, inclusive, learning–teaching environments for learners, teachers, staff and parents.
- developing infrastructure.
- mobilising resources.
- managing school finances.
- managing conflict.

This Handbook is welcome as it will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of SDCs. The Handbook also comes in handy to the SDCs as it tackles issues to do with Resource Mobilisation, Inclusivity, School Health Policy, Disaster Risk Management and the need for Learner-Teacher friendly school environments.

I therefore commend this Handbook to all SDCs as they execute their duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, this Handbook will go a long way in facilitating the full implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC).



Hon. Ambassador Ndabazekhaya Cain Ginyilitshe Mathema
MINISTER OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

PREFACE

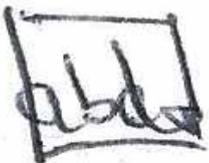
The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) is mandated to provide quality, inclusive and holistic education to all Zimbabweans. To achieve this, the Ministry found it necessary to involve parents to augment government efforts in meeting the costs of education.

This Handbook clarifies the roles of office bearers in the SDCs with a view to improving school governance and minimising the potential for conflict. It is in this spirit that the Ministry produced this Handbook for SDCs to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in school governance. The Handbook provides guidelines on the duties and responsibilities of the SDCs.

Schools charge tuition fees and levies and also get donations to ensure the provision of goods and services for the teaching-learning processes. However, it is when goods and services are not properly procured that conflict may arise. This Handbook provides guidelines on standards and methods of acquiring goods and services in a transparent manner. Thus, the Handbook becomes a handy tool with which members of the SDC, old and new, should be fully acquainted.

Furthermore, the school community comprises people with diverse views on issues affecting the school. This Handbook offers suggestions on amicable conflict management. It is hoped that learner-teacher friendly schools will be efficiently managed to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

It is, therefore, critically important that all schools have functional SDCs as they are an important factor in school improvement and school effectiveness.



T. Thabela (Mrs)

SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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The School Development Committee(SDC) Handbook is a product of collaborative work by many stakeholders.

Profound gratitude goes to the following: The Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Hon. Ambassador Ndabazekhaya Cain Ginyilitshe Mathema; Deputy Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Honourable E.Moyo MP; and the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education, Mrs T. Thabela, for their guidance, expert advice and assistance.

Special thanks go to the following for participating in the development of this School Development Committee Handbook: Mr T. Doba, Mr E. Shumba, Mrs A. Magwada, Mr I.Chigaba, Mr P. Musakanya, Mr A. Chinoona, Mr D. Nkomo, Mrs I.Cosma-Ndlovu, Mr I. Chishumbah, Mr S.Gubi, Mr H. Mashava, Mr A. Tabe, Mr E. Mavheneka, Mrs W.Chipfunde, Mr M.Mashamhanda, Mr. B.T. Mandiya and the Secretariat.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Communication: Passing and receiving information

Conflict management: Recognising and dealing with disputes in a rational, balanced and effective way

Constitution: A legally binding document which stipulates the way the SDCs operate

Feasibility study: An assessment of the practicability of establishing a school/development project at a proposed site

Fund: An amount of money legally saved, collected or provided for a particular purpose

Inclusivity: Inclusion of all learners and stakeholders in a school system

Learner–teacher friendly school: A school that offers a supportive learning and teaching environment

Minutes: Written records of the proceedings of a meeting

Needs assessment: A systematic process for determining and addressing needs between current conditions and desired conditions

Procurement: The process of acquiring goods and services for teaching and learning

Responsible authority: The person, body or organisation responsible for the establishment and management of the school

Private School: A school registered with the Government and run by independent private entities/ individuals, but does not enjoy Government assistance of any kind

School infrastructure: Facilities such as buildings and playgrounds that facilitate teaching and learning

Strategy: A plan of action designed to achieve desired outcomes

Disaster: A serious occurrence/happening/event, natural or human made, sudden or progressive, which disrupts the normal functioning of a society causing material or environmental damage/losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using its resources.

Risk: The degree of negative change anticipated when hazards occur under conditions of vulnerability

Hazard: Process, phenomenon or human activity that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation.

Disaster Risk Reduction: Provisions aimed at preventing new and reducing existing disaster risks and managing residual risks all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable development

Disaster Risk Management: Application of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies to prevent new disaster risks, reduce existing disaster risks and manage residual risks, contributing to the strengthening of resilience and reduction of losses. Disaster risk management actions can be categorised into prospective disaster risk management, corrective disaster risk management and compensatory disaster risk management.

ACROMYMS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CAO	Chief Accounting Officer
CBC	Competence Based Curriculum
DDF	District Development Fund
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EMA	Environmental Management Agency
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
HOD	Head of Department
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MLGPWNH	Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing
MOLARR	Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement (Zimbabwe)
PMD	Provincial Medical Director
RDCs	Rural District Councils
SDC	School Development Committee
SDP	School Development Plan
SIDO	Schools Infrastructure Development Officer
TIC	Teacher-in-Charge

HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

PREAMBLE

The establishment of effective SDCs is one of the most critical factors for successful implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum. SDCs have a direct impact on the core business of schools which is mainly teaching and learning. Effective and democratic school governance can be achieved when the committee members are procedurally and democratically elected and have a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities. In addition to this Handbook, members of the SDCs can derive tremendous benefits from familiarising themselves with the contents of the relevant Statutory Instruments, the Public Finance Management Act, Treasury Instructions and the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act.

This Handbook gives guidelines on the roles that SDCs play in school governance and school improvement.

It covers four units, namely:

- establishment of the SDC
- roles and responsibilities of SDC office bearers
- functions of the SDC
- roles of the SDC in the creation of a conducive learning–teaching environment

OBJECTIVES

It is important for the SDC to understand its roles and responsibilities in school development and improvement. This Handbook helps members of the SDC to discharge their duties effectively and efficiently.

Therefore, the objectives of the SDC Handbook are to:

- provide information on the establishment of the SDC
- outline the functions of the SDC
- guide the SDC members on their roles and responsibilities
- develop a school development plan based on assessed needs of the school
- build SDC capacity for sound resource mobilisation
- capacitate SDC members to effectively provide, develop and maintain school infrastructure
- capacitate the SDC members on proper management and allocation of school financial resources
- give guidance on welfare and support systems in the school
- guide SDC members on conflict management in the school set-up
- expose SDC members to how ICTs are used in School Management and Administration

As the SDCs discharge their duties and responsibilities, they should be conscious of some of the principles and values that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education cherishes. These include the following:

- transparency
- accountability
- inclusivity
- equity and fairness
- gender sensitivity
- respect: Ubuntu/Unhu/Vumunhu
- teamwork

It is critical for SDCs to use participatory approaches as they plan and implement school development projects. Such approaches empower the parents or communities as they can make informed choices about the sustainable development of their schools. Ultimately, participatory approaches enhance the chances of successful project implementation.

UNIT



01

Establishment Of School Development Committees

1.1 Introduction

Registered government, non-government and satellite schools should establish a School Development Committee (SDC) whose members are parents or legal guardians of learners enrolled at the school. A legal guardian is the person who signs the learner's enrolment form. Legal guardians act as the primary caretaker of the learner and have the legal authority to do so. This Unit gives guidance on the legal framework of SDCs, the management of Annual General Meetings (AGM), the election process and the hand-over and take-over-process.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this unit are to:

- explain the legal framework governing SDC operations
- describe the composition of SDCs
- explain how AGMs are conducted
- guide SDCs on preparing and conducting successful committee meetings
- guide SDCs on how to conduct the hand-over-take-over process

1.3 Legal Framework

The Legal Framework entails working within boundaries defined by applicable laws and ethical teaching standards. The applicable law on the establishment of SDCs in Zimbabwe is currently found in Section 36 (2) of the Education Act Chapter 25:04 which provides that:

“The responsible authority of any registered school shall cause the School Parents Assembly to establish a School Development Committee.”

The SDC is a body corporate which is capable of suing and being sued in its own name. The Chairperson is the one who is sued in his or her official capacity as the Chairperson of the SDC. Property procured by the SDC and donated to the school becomes school property and must be recorded in the

school's asset register. When an SDC is sued at law, such property should not be attached by the Sheriff. It is therefore imperative that all the property acquired by SDCs be donated or handed over to the school immediately upon acquisition. In the case where school property is to be attached, the School Head should notify the Ministry's Head Office of the indexing of the school property. An application to have the order of the execution stayed is made urgently by the legal division to stop the removal and subsequent sale of the property. It is pertinent for schools to keep an asset register where all school property is entered so as to use this as proof of ownership. Ownership is transferred to the school once a donation has been made. It is important for the asset register to reflect that the asset now belongs to the school.

1.3.1 Importance of the Legal Framework

The objective of the Legal Framework is to guide School Heads, Deputy Heads, Teachers-in-charge (TICs), Senior Masters/Women, Heads of Department (HODs), all teachers and the SDCs on the relevant law that governs the establishment of the SDCs. They should follow the applicable law and not use repealed or outdated statutory instruments, policies and circulars.

1.3.2 Tenure of SDC Office Bearers

The tenure of office of the SDC office bearers is as provided for in the relevant statutory instrument.

1.4 Composition of the School Development Committee

The SDC comprises at least nine members who include:

- Five parents elected by the parents or legal guardians at an AGM
- The School Head and Deputy Head as ex-officio members. Ex-officio means that they are members because of their official positions. They are not elected.
- A Senior Teacher at the school
- A representative of the Responsible Authority

It is critically important to ensure that the composition of the SDC is gender sensitive.

1.4.1 Disqualification from the School Development Committee

A parent or guardian is disqualified as an SDC member because of the following:

- The member or their spouse has financial or business interest that is likely to interfere with their impartial discharge of their duties.
- The member has been declared insolvent and has not yet been rehabilitated.
- The member owes the school overdue levies and fees.
- The member has a criminal record and has been imprisoned for more than six months without an option of a fine.
- The member is quarrelsome and likes fighting during and after meetings.

- The member is intolerant of other members' views.
- The member comes to meetings intoxicated.
- The member is absent for three consecutive meetings without any reasonable explanation. The SDC may co-opt another eligible parent to replace the member who has been disqualified.
- Disqualification is made by the SDC after a resolution in a meeting.

1.4.2 Managing and Conducting Annual General Meetings

Annual General Meetings are essential. The Chairperson of the outgoing SDC presides over the AGM. Attendance of all SDC members, parents and guardians must be emphasized. This is when progress in the development of the school is discussed and future plans are prepared. AGMs are governed by the school's Constitution but follow a different agenda from that of Committee meetings. AGMs are there to promote improvement on the quality and quantity of work done by the outgoing SDC.

The following should take place at an AGM:

- All parents or legal guardians should be invited and at least 20% should attend the AGM for a quorum to be realised. If there is no quorum the decisions or resolutions of the meeting are not binding.
- Parents or legal guardians should be given a notice period of at least seven days before the meeting. This can be done through: -
 - informing learners at assembly or in class
 - letters to parents from the school through the learners
 - advertising in the newspapers
 - electronic media
 - newsletters

- The outgoing Chairperson should preside over the meeting.
- The Chairperson of the outgoing SDC must present their report for the past year.
- The School Head must present a report on the school's activities over the past year with emphasis on infrastructure development, challenges and projections for the future.
- The Treasurer of the SDC must present a finance report of the past year.
- The outgoing SDC must be dissolved by the representative of the Responsible Authority.
- Elections must be conducted and presided over by a representative of the Responsible Authority by end of February of each new year.
- Parents nominate candidates and cast only one vote for each candidate. Parents nominate a minimum of 6 candidates, but not more than 10 candidates.
- Each parent can cast up to a maximum of 5 votes.
- Each candidate should be nominated by not less than two parents.
- Voting can either be through secret ballot or show of hands.
- Drawing of lots shall be made where two or more candidates have an equal number of votes.
- Soon after the election of the SDC members, the presiding officer shall preside over the election of the office bearers from the SDC members elected by the parents. They include the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and a committee member from the parents.
- Elected members should hold office until they are succeeded by new elected members at the next elections before the end of February of each year.

- The School Head, Deputy Head and the Senior Teacher remain members of the SDC for as long as they retain their positions as Head, Deputy Head and Senior Teacher of the school.

1.4.3 Committee Meetings

The following procedures are to be observed when carrying out committee meetings:

1.4.3.1 Preparation Of The Committee Meetings

It is important to prepare for the meetings in order for them to be meticulous and successful. The Chairperson and the Secretary must work together in preparing for the meetings. For the meetings to be successful, attention should be paid to the following:

- clear purpose of the meeting;
- preparation of an agenda;
- securing a date and venue for the meeting;
- inviting members to attend on time by

circulating the notice of the period and agenda;

- availing the minutes of the previous meeting;
- observing the frequency of committee meetings, that is, at least twice a term;
- distributing the minutes of the meeting within seven days after the meeting.

1.4.3.2 Notice Period Of Committee Meetings

A notice should clearly indicate the date, time, place and agenda of the meeting. Meetings should be held at least twice a term and the SDC members must attend. They are notified through e-mails, letters, social media, school websites and the telephone. Members must be given reasonable notice period before the meeting.

1.4.3.3 Quorum for a Meeting

A quorum is the minimum number of members that should be present at a meeting for that meeting to legally take place. The Committee



needs to clearly state the size of the quorum needed for various meetings. Usually it is 2/3 of the standing committee. At all meetings, each SDC member has one vote in determining an issue under debate including co-option of members into the SDC.

1.5 Hand-over-take over

At the end of the tenure of office for the outgoing SDC members following an AGM, hand-over-take-over is mandatory. A representative from the Responsible Authority presides over this process. The following should be conducted:

- checking and handing over audited books of accounts and all registers of books of accounts;
- checking assets and handing over asset registers;
- apprising incoming members on on-going and completed school projects;
- the outgoing SDC must surrender all books, cheques and registers;
- signing a hand-over-take-over

certificate to officially cede powers and responsibilities to the new SDC.

1.6 Summary

This Unit explains the law that governs the establishment of the SDC, as well as the legal framework to guide SDC members as well as the parents of learners at a school on how SDCs are run. The Unit also emphasises that it is of vital importance to take committee meetings as well as the Annual General Meetings seriously in order to continuously develop and improve the school for the benefit of the learners. It also reiterates that it is important to follow correct procedures in conducting elections of the SDC members as well as the hand-over-take-over process and procedures. Close adherence always helps with smooth management of both relationships and school projects.



UNIT



2.1 Introduction

The SDC is a very critical component of school governance. The role of SDC members and the school administration is to contribute positively to the school's improvement. It is the School Head's role, as an administrator and SDC member, to facilitate the induction of the elected members so that they can assist in the operations, development and growth of the school. Each of the members should be fully aware of their duties, roles and responsibilities so that they can build an effective team that works together in harmony.

2.2 Objective

The objective of this Unit isto assist the SDC members to know and understand their roles and responsibilities so that they can work effectively and smoothly as a team.

Below are the duties and responsibilities of SDC members:

2.2.1 Duties and Responsibilities of the Chairperson

The Chairperson:

- presides at SDC meetings and AGM or other meetings of the committee;
- invites members of the SDC or parents assembly, in consultation with the School Head, to meetings, giving adequate time as prescribed by law and in the event that the Chairperson fails to do so, the School Head, in consultation with MoPSE, shall call for the AGM and chair the meeting;
- prepares the agenda for SDC meetings and parents' assembly in consultation with the school administration and other SDC members;
- is a member of the Finance Sub-Committee which prepares budgets and authorises expenditure;
- ensures that Financial Statements are audited;
- is a member of every sub-committee except the Evaluation Committee;

- prepares and delivers the SDC annual report at the AGM;
- prepares and presents, in SDC meetings, reports on infrastructure development, projects and any other developmental aspects in the school, highlighting challenges and suggesting solutions;
- ensures that all property acquired is donated to the school timeously and is entered into the school's asset register;
- is the SDC spokesperson.

2.2.2 Duties and Responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson:

- stands in for the Chairperson if the Chairperson is not present, or for any other reason, if the Chairperson is not able to carry out his/her duties;
- is a member of the school Finance and Procurement sub-committees;
- chairs the income generating projects committee.

2.2.3 Duties and Responsibilities of the Secretary

The Secretary:

- attends to all correspondence dealing with the affairs of the committee;
- dispatches notices and invitations to members as instructed by the Chairperson or the School Head;
- records minutes of the meetings and proceedings of the committee and parent's assembly;
- circulates minutes of previous committee and parent assembly meetings and leads the process for correction, adoption and passing of the minutes;

- carries out any other functions on behalf of the SDC as may be assigned by the committee;
- ensures that all parents fill in the attendance register.

The Secretary carries on with his/her work until the hand-over-take-over is done.

2.2.4 Duties and Responsibilities of the Treasurer

The Treasurer, in consultation with the School Head:

- gives audited financial statement to parents' assembly at the AGM;
- monitors receipts of all money received by the school;
- ascertains that all money received has been banked within the prescribed time;
- works with the Accounting Assistant to ensure that levies and fees are being paid timeously;
- participates in budget preparation;
- works with the Accounting Assistant to maintain proper books of accounts of the school's income and expenditure;
- safeguards school funds from leakages;
- ensures that the committee operates within budget timelines and can be co-opted into the Finance sub-committee meetings.

2.2.5 Duties and Responsibilities of a Committee Member

A Committee Member:

- performs any SDC duty assigned to him/her by the Chairperson or by the committee;
- acts in any capacity or post in the absence of the incumbent.

2.2.6 Duties and Responsibilities of the Representative of the Responsible Authority

The Representative of Responsible Authority:

- represents the Responsible Authority in SDC and school assembly meetings. The Responsible Authority is the custodian and owner of the school.
- interprets Responsible Authority by-laws affecting the school;
- gives direction and expectations of the Responsible Authority on operations of the school to the SDC and school assembly;
- acts as a link between the school and the Responsible Authority;
- conveys concerns of the school to the Responsible Authority and vice versa;
- articulates the school's interests and is responsible for advocacy at all levels;
- presides over the elections of SDC members.

2.2.7 Duties and Responsibilities of the School Head

The School Head:

- is the Chief Accounting Officer (CAO) of the school and chairs the Finance Sub-Committee;
- shall call for an AGM giving adequate time as prescribed by law in consultation with MoPSE and chair the meeting if the Chairperson fails to call for the AGM at the expiry of his/her tenure;
- interprets current statutory instruments and Ministry guidelines to the SDC;
- facilitates the induction of newly elected SDC members on their roles, duties and responsibilities;
- facilitates the hand-over-take-over process within seven calendar days between the outgoing and incoming SDC;
- appraises the SDC chairperson and the entire committee on school concerns during meetings;



- ensures that the school has a cash book and all other necessary books of accounts to be kept for the purpose of recording all income and expenditure;
- ensures that all recordings and entries in the books of accounts are done in accordance with standard regulations;
- ensures that all fees and levies received are receipted timeously and the said money is banked within the stipulated time frame;
- ensures that receipts issued, including cancelled receipts and all paid vouchers, including cancelled cheques, are entered in numerical sequence in the cash book;
- contributes to the agenda of meetings;
- checks all books of accounts on a regular basis;
- holds constant checks on all school assets and buildings;
- presents Head's report at parent assembly meetings;
- proposes to the committee assets that need disposal and advises members on the procedure to be taken in line with current procurement and disposal regulations;
- ensures that all books of accounts, cheque stubs, vouchers and any other financial records relating to the school are kept under lock and key at the school, and only disposed of at the explicit directive of audit or any other regulation that may be proclaimed;
- ensures that all property donated to the school is immediately recorded in the school asset register after authorisation by the Responsible Authority;
- approves recommendations of the Evaluation Committee.
- Day-to-day supervision of workers and receipt of grievances of SDC workers should be done through the School Head.

2.2.8 Duties and Responsibilities of the Deputy School Head

The Deputy School Head:

- assumes the duties and responsibilities of the School Head in the absence of the School Head;
- is a member of the finance sub-committee;
- chairs the Evaluation Committee;
- chairs the Procurement Committee.

2.2.9 Duties and Responsibilities of the Senior Teacher

The Senior Teacher:

- attends all SDC and parent assembly meetings;
- prepares material for use by the SDC;
- prepares the register of attendance for the parents' assembly;
- distributes parents' assembly material to parents attending the meeting.

2.3 Summary

The Unit clearly articulates the duties, roles and responsibilities of each of the nine SDC members to assist the members to know and understand their operational boundaries. If each of the members is clear about their areas of operation, it minimises chances of encroaching into one another's area of operation, thereby significantly reducing instances of conflict. This builds team spirit which creates a motivating and conducive environment for members to contribute meaningfully to the development and growth of the school.



UNIT



3.1 Introduction

The SDCs carry out a variety of critical functions in the development of the school. These include formulation of the School Development Plan (SDP), provision of school infrastructure, resource mobilisation, financial and asset management, creation of learner-teacher friendly schools, as well as managing conflict with the ultimate goal of improving learning outcomes. If these duties and responsibilities are executed efficiently and effectively the desired outcomes of the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) will be realised. The successful implementation of the CBC calls upon skilful and competent SDCs to plan, manage funds and assets, provide infrastructure, mobilise resources and manage conflict. Ultimately this will improve the teaching and learning environment.

3.2 Objectives

By the end of this Unit SDCs should be able to:

- understand the importance of developing a constitution to guide their operations;
- produce an SDP with clear targets to be achieved within a specified period;
- understand their role in the provision and maintenance of infrastructure in schools including sport fields and Visual and Performing theatres;
- follow appropriate procedures for the establishment and registration of schools;
- manage school assets and finances;
- mobilise resources;
- manage conflict;
- create learner-teacher friendly schools.

3.3 School Development Committee Constitution

One major function of the SDC is to initiate and develop a constitution as prescribed by the Education Act.

- A constitution fills the gaps where the Education Act (2006) (Chapter 25:04) and the Statutory Instruments applicable to the SDC are silent.
- It deals with such issues as the objectives of the SDC; membership; committees and their functions; office bearers – their roles and responsibilities as well as their tenure; meetings; elections; finances and resource mobilisation.
- It regulates the day-to-day operations of the committee such as visits to the school by SDC members.
- It captures local circumstances of the school such as geographical location, socio-economic status and qualifications for one to be a legal guardian.
- It gives the Committee its individual identity.

- It is imperative for the SDC members to abide by the Constitution they have crafted.

3.4 School Development Planning

This sub-unit gives guidance on the development of the SDP. It is critical for every SDC to have an operational School Development Plan (SDP) to guide their operations. A SDP is a document that gives strategic direction to school improvement. The plan brings together the school priorities, main measures it will take to raise standards, resources required and the key outcomes, as well as targets it intends to achieve.

3.4.1 School Targets in the School Development Plan

As the SDC develops the SDP action points, they should aim to come up with SMART targets. The targets must be:

S

Specific

- state exactly what needs to be done

M

Measurable

- establish targets or standards to be assessed against agreed timelines

A

Achievable

- targets should be accomplished within the agreed time frame

R

Realistic

- setting goals that can be achieved

T

Time-bound

- decide exactly when to start and finish the project or activity

3.4.2 Purpose of School Development Plan

The School Development Plan:

- creates an opportunity for self-evaluation;
- provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to make their in-put;
- facilitates the identification of key areas for development and planning for the desired improvements to take place;
- brings together all aspects of school planning;
- strengthens the partnership between staff, parents, learners and the SDC;
- ensures the achievement of targets;
- gives direction and guidance in planning;
- ensures the most effective use of the budget and resources;
- ensures effective utilisation of time.

3.5 School Development Planning Process

The process of coming up with a detailed SDP involves:

- identifying the vision and mission of the school which should be aligned to that of the Ministry;
- engaging key stakeholders like parents/guardians, learners and educational partners;
- conducting Needs Assessment Survey;
- identifying goals and objectives;
- outlining Specific Action Steps which should be time-framed.

3.5.1 Short-term and long-term School Development Plans

There are three types of SDPs, namely; short-term, medium-term and long-term. A short-term SDP should clearly spell out the activities to be done, time required to complete the project and the cost of the project, while a long-term plan specifies the project being done, the steps to be followed to complete the project and how the project will be undertaken.

Tables 1 and 2 below are examples of a short-term and a long-term SDP:

Table 1: Short term SDP

No.	Activities	Number of Days	Cost
1.	Tilling of the staff room	21	\$ 5 232,30
2.	Fencing the school garden	15	\$ 1 200,00
Total			\$ 6 432,30

Table 2: Long Term Sdp

Priority/ Goals	Target	Tasks	WHO	Time Frame	Budget	Source of Funds
1.Construction of 2x2 classroom blocks	24-07-21	1.Parents meeting	SDC	25-02-20		
		2.Quotations	D/Head	04-03-20	\$ 100	Building Fund
		3.Procument committee meeting	D/Head	10-04-20	\$ 50	Building Fund
		4.Construction begins	SDC	25-04-20	\$ 15 000	Special Levy
Total					\$ 15 150	

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a process that helps improve performance and achieve results. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. As such, there is need for M&E by the SDC and the school administration as they implement their SDP to ensure the achievement of set targets. There is need for continuity in project implementation every time a new SDC is established. The projects in the SDP must be completed first before embarking on new ones.

3.6.1 Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation of the implementation of the SDP is important because it:

- ensures accountability;
- enhances performance;
- improves planning;
- ensures effective and efficient use of resources.

3.7 School Development Committee Projects

Schools need income-generating projects for them to develop and it is the responsibility of the SDC to establish such projects as a way of responding to identified needs. It is an attempt to bridge the gap between the funding they receive from government and other stakeholders. Below are some examples of SDC projects:

- procurement of teaching and learning materials;
- construction of toilets;
- tiling classrooms;
- paving around the school premises;
- painting teachers' houses;
- creating opportunities using existing and new resources to generate additional streams that can be added to traditional funding to further a school's objective.

Funding of the projects can be from the following sources of revenue:

- Levies from learners;
- Proceeds from fund-raising activities;
- Old students' associations;
- Donations;
- Support from local community leadership;
- Grants from Government;
- Proceeds from income-generating projects;
- Funds from development partners.

A well-crafted SDP will assist the SDC in planning, mobilising resources and implementing developmental projects in order to achieve the goals and targets of the school.

3.8 School Infrastructure

Quality education delivery requires availability of appropriate infrastructure which is well-maintained. SDCs must be seen to be providing and maintaining sound infrastructure to enable schools to achieve desired outcomes.

3.8.1 Role of SDCs in School Infrastructure Provision and Maintenance

SDCs, as representatives of parents, are central to the provision of infrastructure in schools as well as its maintenance. School infrastructure involves immovable or fixed assets such as:

- classrooms
- teacher accommodation
- specialist rooms
- sporting facilities
- administration blocks
- toilets
- signage and car parks

In undertaking school infrastructure provision and maintenance, the SDC should be guided by relevant instruments and Ministry policies to meet minimum standards. Accordingly, the



FIGURE 1: A school built by a School Development Committee in a rural area

SDC should involve Planning and Infrastructure Development Officers of the MoPSE. The documents to be referred to include:

- Zimbabwe Constitution
- Education Act
- Relevant Statutory Instruments
- All relevant Ministry Policy Circulars including those from the Secretary, Chief Directors and Directors

The afore-mentioned documents should always be available in the school.

3.8.2 Requirements for Construction of Infrastructure in Schools

It is important for the SDC to realise that successful teaching and learning depends to a large extent on the availability of appropriate infrastructure in schools. To this end, it is the mandate of SDC to provide adequate and sound infrastructure in the school.

To provide infrastructure, the SDC should:

- follow guidelines on the requirements for establishment, construction and registration of schools;
- request Planning Officers to vet building designs and monitor the construction of infrastructure projects;
- ensure the availability of funds to undertake infrastructural constructions;
- involve the parent community in infrastructural developments.

3.8.3 Construction of School Infrastructure Projects Process Flow

The SDC should follow the correct stages in the establishment and construction of a school as outlined below in relation to the different types and levels of new schools.

3.9 Establishment of New Schools: Primary and Secondary

The need for a school emanates from the parent community and the Responsible Authority. The Responsible Authorities can be any one of the following:

- Rural District Councils
- Town Councils
- City Councils
- Town Boards
- Central Government
- Line Ministries
- Church Institutions or Church Organizations
- Registered Companies
- Registered Trusts
- Mining Concerns
- Farm Owners
- Individuals
- Communities

After identifying the need, the SDC and or the Responsible Authority should look for land from the Local Authority. Once land is available, a pre-site visit is conducted by MoPSE, the Physical Planning Department of the MLGPWNH, the Local Authority and representatives from the Responsible Authority. In resettlement areas, the MOLARR is also involved. The team engages the local community and its leadership. A participatory approach is strongly recommended at this stage.

A new primary school or secondary school can only be opened provided it has a minimum enrolment of not less than two classes of forty (40) learners, that is, two stream entry.

A proposed primary school must be situated on not less than:

- twelve (12) hectares of land for rural schools;

- three and a half (3.5) hectares of land for urban schools.

A proposed secondary school must be situated on not less than:

- twenty-seven(27) hectares of land for rural schools;
- eight (8) hectares of land for urban schools.

After the pre-site visit, the Local Authority invites the following:

- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education;
- Physical Planning Department of the MLGPWNH;
- MOLARR for resettlement areas;
- The District Development Fund (DDF);
- Environmental Management Agency (EMA) and
- Representatives from the Responsible Authority for siting and feasibility study. This applies to resettlement and communal areas. For urban areas where the site has title deeds, lease agreement of 99 years or agreement of sale, MoPSE conducts the feasibility study.

The feasibility assessment report must include, among others, the following:

- proposed school details such as proposed building structures;
- composition of visiting team including local leadership;
- site location;
- Land tenure size and topography;
- Catchment area that takes into account:
 - feeder villages/suburbs for primary schools to include village/suburb name, distance from proposed site.
 - feeder primary schools, their distances from proposed site and enrolments for secondary schools.

- availability of services to proposed site to include:

- i. access roads
- ii. availability of safe potable water
- iii. electricity
- iv. telephone facilities
- v. health facilities
- vi. shops

- State of preparedness;
- Conclusion and recommendations.

The Responsible Authority makes an application for the establishment and construction of the proposed primary/secondary school on ED 1 forms for primary schools and ED 7 for secondary schools.

The Responsible Authority completes Part (A) of the application form and submits it to the District Office for completion of Part (B) before submitting the form to the Provincial Office for onward transmission to Head Office.

It is critical for application forms to be submitted 18 months before the proposed date of opening of the school. This allows adequate time for the school to be constructed and registered before it can operate. The provisions of Policy Circular 73 of 1991 must be strictly adhered to.

The Application form must be accompanied by the following documents:

- **An Ordinance Survey Map for rural schools and not a School Map.** Ordinance Survey Maps indicate grid references of the proposed school. These can be obtained from the Department of Physical Planning, Lands Offices or Rural District Councils (RDCs).
- Survey Maps must clearly indicate the following:

Primary Schools:

- Location of the Proposed School in relation to other existing Primary Schools in the area;
- The distances between the Proposed Primary School and the existing neighbouring Primary Schools in the area. As a guide, in rural areas Primary Schools should ordinarily be 10km apart. This depends on population density.

Secondary Schools:

- Location of the School in relation to other existing Secondary Schools in the area;
- the distances from the Proposed Secondary School to existing Secondary Schools in the area must be observed. As a guide, secondary schools should ordinarily be 22km apart depending on population density.
- proof of availability of funds for capital development in the form of a bank statement or letter from the bank confirming capacity to fund the project (Private Schools);
- a detailed School Constitution (Private Schools);
- site Plan indicating the position of site in relation to other properties in the area;
- site layout plan indicating the position of all buildings to be erected on site;
- building plans of all structures to be erected on site duly approved by the Local Authority and Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education;
- approval from City Council/Local Authority authorizing the use of the acquired land for purposes of building a formal primary school (Private Schools);
- minutes of meeting of parents where they have resolved to establish a school together with the register of attendance (Rural Schools).

When the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education grants authority for the establishment and construction of the school, the following ensue:

- the Schools Inspector Infrastructure Development Officer (SIDO) sites the location of buildings on the site as per approved site plan layout (Rural Schools);
- construction of the building structures will then commence and must be regularly inspected at different stages of construction as directed by the Local Authority to ensure compliance with the Local Authority building by-laws;
- MoPSE Schools Inspector Infrastructure Development Officer must also be invited to make regular inspections at the different levels of construction.

3.10 Registration of New Schools

- Once the building structures have been completed as specified in Policy Circular 73 of 1991, the SDC can now apply for registration.
- The registration of all new schools is a legal requirement in Terms of the Education Act [Chapter 25:04].
- No new school shall be allowed to operate until it has been registered.
- A new school can only be allowed to operate after satisfying conditions as specified in Policy Circular 73 of 1991.

3.10.1 Type of Forms to Register School

When the above requirements have been satisfied, the school is ready for registration.

3.10.2 Registering Primary Schools

To register a primary school the following forms should be completed:

- **E.D. 1(A) Application Forms** (*4 Copies each*)

These are titled:

Application for Registration/Re-Registration of Private Primary/Special School

- Part A:** Must be completed by the Responsible Authority
- Part B:** Must be completed by the District Schools Inspector
- Part C:** Must be completed by the Provincial Education Director

- **E.D. 30 Forms** (*4 Copies each*)

These are titled:

Buildings and Furniture Certificate: Private School

- Part A:** Must be completed by the Responsible Authority
- Part B:** Must be completed by the District Schools Inspector - Infrastructure and Development
- Part C:** Must be completed by the Provincial Education Director

- **E.D. 30(A) Forms** (*4 Copies each*)

These are titled:

Application for Inspection: Sanitation and Water Supply: Private School

- Part A:** To be completed by the Responsible Authority.
- Part B:** To be completed by the Provincial Medical Officer.

It is important to ensure that Forms are date-stamped and signed by the **Provincial Medical Director (P.M.D.) The Environmental Health Officer's signature on its own will not suffice.**

3.10.3 Registering Secondary Schools

In registering a secondary school, the following documents should be completed:

- **E.D. 7(A) Application Forms** (*4 Copies each*)

These are titled:

Application for Registration/Re-Registration of a Secondary/Special School

These forms are completed as in the ED 1 (A) above.

- **E.D. 30 and E.D. 30(A)**

All the sections of the forms are completed as above. Registration will only be granted when the following have been satisfactorily completed in compliance with policy circular 73 of 1991.

3.10.4 Primary Schools

To register a primary school the following minimum requirements should be met:

- one Administration Block;
- minimum of 4 classrooms;
- minimum of 5 teachers' houses;
- adequate toilet facilities (depending on Enrolment and the number of staff members). Ratios are provided in the relevant circulars;
- a source of clean potable water.

3.10.5 Secondary Schools

To register a secondary school the following minimum requirements should be met:

- **one** Administration Block;
- minimum of 4 classrooms;
- minimum of 5 teachers' houses;
- adequate toilet facilities (depending on Enrolment and the number of staff members). Ratios are provided in the relevant circulars.
- a source of clean potable water;
- one laboratory;
- at least two specialist rooms.

Application forms should be accompanied by an inspection report from the planning department and the authority to establish and construct the school.

These forms are submitted to Head Office for processing. If the application is successful, Head Office will generate an **ED 10** certificate. A Registration Certificate indicates the new Department/Station Codes of the new school. Copies of the ED 10 will then be distributed to all the relevant authorities.

Private Schools are required to make payments to Head Office Section as detailed below before the ED 10 certificate is issued:

- Establishment fee;
- Registration fee;
- Annual guarantee fee in the case of non-formal institutions.

The SDC should take note of the following:

- schools shall be open to all races and no school shall practise racism overtly or covertly;
- no school shall operate without the express written approval of the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

3.11 The Satellite School Phenomenon

The concept of satellite schools is a phenomenon that came about mainly as a result of the Zimbabwe Land Reform Programme. The resettlement programme resulted in the creation of both primary and secondary satellite schools as a stop-gap measure. These schools operate as semi-autonomous entities under the auspices of established mother schools.

The constraints in these institutions are that they are not registered, they are not eligible for substantive School Heads thereby stifling development and their infrastructure is usually sub-standard.

The SDC should ensure the establishment of a permanent site for the schools and develop their infrastructure for registration purposes.

3.12 Provisional Registration

New schools in resettlement areas and those in the marginalised communal lands which fall short of meeting the mandatory requirements for registration of a school as provided for in Policy Circular No 73 of 1991, may be granted provisional registration on condition that the Responsible Authority must within a period of five years comply with the said MoPSE policy circular and such registration will be granted when the requirements set below have been satisfactorily completed.

3.12.1 Primary Schools

To register a primary school the following minimum requirements should be met:

- minimum of 4 classrooms;
- minimum of 3 teachers' houses;

- adequate toilet facilities (depending on Enrolment and the number of members of staff/using the ratio of 1:20 for Junior and 1:12 for infants);
- a source of clean potable water.

3.12.2 Secondary Schools

To register a secondary school the following minimum requirements should be met:

- minimum of 4 classrooms;
- minimum of 3 teachers houses;
- adequate toilet facilities (depending on Enrolment and the number of members of staff/using the ratio of 1:20);
- a source of clean potable water;
- one Science laboratory.

3.13 Specialist Rooms and Sporting Facilities

The need for well-equipped specialist rooms like laboratories, workshops, libraries and sporting facilities cannot be over-emphasised. They are essential ingredients of quality education. The SDC is therefore required to provide the necessary equipment for the different specialist rooms and sporting facilities.

3.14 Maintenance of School Infrastructure

One of the cardinal roles of the SDC is to ensure that the constructed infrastructure is kept in good state through regular maintenance. Maintenance refers to the process of preserving infrastructure in a good condition or situation. Maintenance must be done to meet occupational, health and safety requirements.

The SDC should therefore arrange for:

- routine inspection of infrastructure - termly or annually;
- dealing with urgent repairs - blown off roofs;
- painting the buildings;
- visits by specialists to assess damages such as cracks and testing fire-fighting equipment.

Once constructed, school infrastructure must be maintained.

3.15 Financial and Asset Management

Financial and asset management is a critical function of the SDC. Accordingly, the SDC, in an effort to provide a friendly learner-teacher environment, should uphold principles of good corporate governance. This includes recognising and respecting authorities, regulations and practices for handling funds.

Funds of the SDC should be administered by a Sub-Committee of the SDC which should be the SDC Finance Sub-Committee.

3.16 Composition of the SDC Finance Sub-committee

The SDC Finance Sub-Committee is made up of four members, namely:

- School Head
- Deputy Head
- SDC Chairperson
- SDC Vice-Chairperson
- Representative of the responsible authority where applicable

The Chairperson of the Finance Sub-Committee is the School Head.

3.16.1 Functions of the SDC Finance Sub-Committee

The following are the major functions of the SDC Finance Sub-Committee:

- preparing an annual budget;
- preparing a statement of financial affairs of the SDC for the year which will be presented at the AGM;
- ensuring that proposals made by the SDC regarding facilities such as classrooms, teachers' houses, school furniture, as well as provision of teaching materials are implemented in compliance with the budget;
- authorising proposed expenditure for which minutes are kept;
- ensuring that no debts are incurred or orders placed in anticipation of funds not yet collected or receipted;
- authorising all payments from the fund by signing the relevant supporting documents. All members of the committee should sign the documents.
- confirming previous payments as reflected in the minutes;

- keeping the bank account in credit;
- investing on a short or long-term basis funds which are not required for immediate use or funds which are being accumulated for a specific purpose;
- upholding statutory and ethical principles to ensure that the benefits of all processes of the committee are ultimately enjoyed by the learners.

3.17 Committee Meetings

The following are considerations for committee meetings:

- meetings must be held monthly, preferably early in the month to allow for payment of accounts and checking of the cashbook;
- no business requiring the authority of the committee shall be transacted unless sanctioned by the committee at a previous meeting;
- decisions of the Finance Sub-Committee must be unanimous;

FIGURE 2: School Development Committee meeting in progress



3.18 Minutes of Meetings

- The minutes of all meetings of the committee must always be recorded in a minute book.

3.19 Collection of Funds

The following is a list of various methods that the school may use to collect funds:

- bank transfer;
- cash;
- mobile money linked to school account and only for receiving;
- electronic transfer.

3.20 Payments

The following are the procedures to be adhered to when making payments:

- the School Head or the Deputy School Head initiates payments;
- Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson certifies payment voucher before payment;
- Chairperson of the Finance Committee (School Head) or Vice-Chairperson of the Finance Committee (School Deputy Head) signs cheques;
- Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson approves all payments.

3.21 Signing Arrangements

For all payments made by the SDC, the School Head or Deputy Head should sign with the SDC Chairperson or the SDC Vice-Chairperson countersigning. The representative of the Responsible Authority may also countersign where applicable. There should be no signing of cheques or withdrawal slips in advance.

3.22 Financial Reporting

The Treasurer shall:

- prepare a financial report as prescribed by prevailing statutes;
- present audited Financial Statements at the AGM.

3.23 Appointment of Secretary to the Sub-Committee

- a secretary, who may either be one of the Sub-Committee members or the Accounting Assistant, shall be appointed by the Sub-Committee;
- the secretary of the Sub-Committee shall inform members of all meetings of the Sub-Committee and notify them of the agenda as instructed by the Chairperson;
- the secretary shall attend all meetings, record minutes of the proceedings and deal with any correspondence;
- given that the Accounting Assistant may be appointed as Secretary to the Finance Committee, he/she may not take part in the deliberations of the committee except to give advice on financial matters when called upon to do so by the Chairperson.

3.24 Auditing

- The SDC shall ensure the auditing of financial books as required by the relevant statutes.
- Special audits can be conducted at any time.

3.25 Management of Assets

- Assets can be classified as movable or immovable and values of such assets should be ascertained.
- All assets must be entered into the School Asset Register.
- The SDC must develop an annual maintenance plan for assets as provided for by the budget.
- The school may establish a School Maintenance Sub-Committee to formulate policies and activities aimed at maintaining school assets.
- Guidance shall be provided by statutory instruments regarding procurement and disposal of assets.

3.26 Procurement

According to Section 18 of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act [Chapter 22:23], there should be an Evaluation Committee that has to be formed for each procurement above prescribed thresholds. Procurement Committees are not prescribed in the Act.

The Evaluation Committee evaluates quotations and bids to make sure that they award contracts that represent the best value for money. Procurement is purely administrative in schools and the role of the SDC is to observe and monitor that schools are following the correct procurement procedures according to the Act. The following constitute the members of the Evaluation Committee:

- Deputy School Head
- Vice-Chairperson
- SDC Committee member
- Senior Teacher
- Sports Director, relevant HODs/TIC and grounds people if there is need

3.27 Resource Mobilisation

SDCs play a very important role in resource mobilisation. Resource mobilisation can be direct or indirect. It is direct when the learners are directly involved and the school directly receives funds, while indirect when it involves donations as well as contributions from non-school participants or outside entities.

3.27.1 Resource Mobilisation Planning

- Cost-benefit analysis shall be carried out by the SDC so as to choose the best possible project or investment from possible options.
- Develop a standard business plan or hire a consultant for such service if expertise cannot be obtained from within the SDC.

3.27.2 Resource Mobilisation Activities

- All resource mobilisation activities shall be conducted in consultation with the School Head.
- The SDC must consider direct resource mobilisation as one of many but not the only source of resources.
- The SDC may initiate and manage business activities for the ultimate benefit of the learner. The following are some examples of resource mobilisation activities:
 - tuckshop
 - branding of sportswear and stationery
 - variety shows
 - room hire
 - wall adverts
 - sponsored walks
 - civilian/career day

- agricultural production
- providing typing and internet services to the community

Resource mobilisation activities should respect Local Authority by-laws

3.28 Conflict Management

Conflict management is a critical function of the SDC. The school as a business entity is not spared from conflict as the SDC is made up of members with different backgrounds, expectations and expertise.

There can be conflict between or among SDC members or with the Responsible Authority. Conflict can be dysfunctional or functional. If properly managed, conflict can be productive. However, when conflict is poorly managed it can stifle development.

Conflict can manifest itself through:

- vandalism
- violence
- disagreements
- sabotage
- arguments
- rumours or back-biting
- poor attendance at meetings
- factionalism
- parents' reluctance to pay fees and levies

3.28.1 Causes of conflict

Conflict can arise from issues such as mismanagement of resources, indiscipline, poor school results, blurred roles, selfishness, inappropriate administrative style or poor communication.

More specifically, the following are some of the frequent causes of conflict:

- administrative style that does not allow for stakeholder participation;
- roles not clearly spelt out especially those of the Chairperson and the School Head;
- poor communication;
- intrusion into someone's area of responsibility without his or her consent;
- dominating meetings;
- differing/divergent perceptions;
- poor people-soft skills that result in poor relations;
- unfair distribution of resources, including space/office allocation;
- Gossip/rumours/backbiting.

3.28.2 Strategies for managing conflict

The following strategies can assist in managing conflict:

- Avoid leadership styles that suppress other people's views. Let guided democracy prevail.
- Clarify the role of each member of the committee to avoid squabbles. The Chairperson and School Head's roles should be clearly defined as suggested in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Role Specification

SCHOOL HEAD	CHAIRPERSON
Ensures enforcement of policy crafted by the committee	Encourages team work
Assists the committee in crafting a SDP	Makes sure that meetings run properly
Provides advice and information on labour, finance and procurement issues	Attends meetings called by stakeholders if necessary
Focuses on professional management of the school	Makes sure that the business of the committee is conducted well
Ensures compliance with Ministry policies	Ensures support for Ministry policies

- **Effective communication:** Research indicates that lack of effective communication is a major cause of interpersonal conflict. To minimise conflict, effective communication requires that each member should be a good listener, manage language barriers, that is, use the language that is understood by all members. Proper communication channels should be followed, for example, who calls a parents meeting, finance sub-committee and SDC meetings.
- **Participatory decision-making:** There should be a conducive environment dominated by trust and belongingness. It engenders feelings of ownership and enhances community empowerment.
- **Thorough induction of members:** When a new SDC is ushered in, it is crucial for the members to be taken through their duties, Ministry expectations, school mission statement, philosophy, vision and values. This helps the new members to appreciate how the system works.
- Each member should feel important regardless of their social or economic status.
- Members should be allowed to express their views without fear of victimisation.
- Conflict is normal and inevitable in any organisation including the school.

However, it is important to manage it well to ensure that productive relationships pervade the school environment.

3.29 Challenges that may be faced by School Development Committees

As School Development Committees discharge their duties and responsibilities, they are likely to encounter challenges which may include:

- Lack of capacity to effectively discharge their duties, for example, inadequate financial management skills.
- Conflict between the SDC and responsible authority; SDC and parents; among SDC members; parents’ representatives and School Head, SDC Chairperson and School Head, and SDC and teaching staff.
- Lack of understanding of roles, duties and responsibilities by SDC members.
- Lack of information and communication technology skills. This makes it difficult for SDC members to appreciate how ICT is used in school administration and management.
- Lack of commitment to pay fees/levies by parents/guardians by the due dates.

3.30 Summary

This Unit deals with financial and asset management, the critical committees to be formed, resource mobilisation, conflict management and the challenges that SDCs may face as they discharge their duties and responsibilities. Their limited ICT skills may make it difficult for them to appreciate how ICT is deployed in school administration and management.



UNIT



Learner-Teacher Friendly School

4.1 Introduction

The school constitutes a very influential social environment in the lives of learners and teachers. A learner-friendly school guarantees an environment that is physically safe, emotionally secure and psychologically enabling. Schools should also be friendly to the teachers and non-teaching staff members. It is therefore the responsibility of the SDC to create schools which are friendly to learners, teachers and the non-teaching staff. This unit covers the following areas:

- Learner welfare
- Teacher welfare
- Support Staff welfare
- Disaster/Risk Management

Figure 3: Learning In Progress At A Learner-Friendly School



4.2 Objectives

The objectives of this unit are to:

- identify the characteristics of a child-friendly school;
- state the role of the SDC in the creation of a school environment that is friendly to learners, teachers and non-teaching staff;
- explain the importance of Disaster/Risk Management as a way of creating environments that are safe for both learners and members of staff.

4.3 Learner Welfare

Learner welfare comprises all the work that the SDC and the school do to support and foster the well-being of the learners. The SDC and the school leadership should create a learning environment that facilitates the achievement of the desired learning outcomes.

4.4 Characteristics of a Learner-Friendly School

Learner-friendly schools are characterised by the promotion of:

- inclusivity
- an all-encompassing curriculum
- quality teaching and quality learning processes
- health and safety of learners
- excellence
- role-modelling
- sense of belonging among learners
- gender sensitivity
- family and community involvement
- effective communication strategies
- responsible learners

4.5 The role of the SDC in promoting learner-friendly schools

SDCs are expected to adhere to the provisions of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in promoting learner-friendly schools. They can achieve this through the principles and practices suggested in the sections that follow.

4.5.1 Inclusive Education

- Making sure the school does not exclude or discriminate learners based on their socio-economic backgrounds;
- Making sure that the school provides education that is affordable and learners can access professional help;
- Building infrastructure that is user-friendly and safe to all learners.

4.5.2 Quality Teaching and Learning Processes

- Provide quality teaching and learning resources.
- Enhance teacher capacity, morale and commitment.

4.5.3 Health and Safety of Learners

A healthy and safe learning environment entails the provision of:

- hygienic and safe learning environment;
- school feeding and counselling services as guided by the Ministry;
- adequate water and sanitation facilities;
- appropriate infrastructure for the learners;
- well secured school premises and perimeter.

4.5.4 Gender Sensitivity

Gender sensitivity embraces the following:

- promotion of gender equity in enrolment ;
- elimination of gender stereotyping;
- guaranteeing learner-friendly facilities, in respect of the curricula, textbooks, and teaching learning materials;
- socialising girls and boys in a non-violent environment;
- appropriate dress code for activities;
- encouraging respect for learners' rights and responsibilities, dignity and equality (Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu).

4.5.5 Family and Community Involvement

Family and community involvement include:

- promoting community involvement;
- encouraging local partnership in education;
- taking part in community activities for the sake of learner welfare while ensuring adherence to applicable child and labour laws and children's rights and responsibilities;
- working with other players/stakeholders to ensure fulfilment of learners' rights and responsibilities.

4.5.6 Teacher Welfare

Teacher motivation is a critical factor in school effectiveness. It is therefore important to maintain high levels of teacher motivation. The following are some of the motivational factors that are key in attracting and retaining teachers:

- suitable living conditions;
- teachers' professional support;
- sound teacher-community relations;
- provision of teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, computers and sporting equipment and facilities;
- recognition and celebration of achievement;
- availability of tele-communication systems;
- provision of teas and lunches where budgets allow.

The SDC plays a critical role in promoting teacher welfare.

4.5.7 Support Staff Welfare

Support or non-teaching staff is a category defined as anyone employed by the school system who does not serve as a classroom teacher. This can include administrative staff, librarians, cooks, matrons, security guards, grounds staff and drivers. Their role in creating a learner-friendly environment should not be underestimated. The SDC has a role in making sure that this group of workers is motivated to do their work. Accordingly, the SDC may provide the following to their non-teaching staff:

- suitable living conditions
- protective clothing
- professional support
- clear job descriptions
- legally binding contracts for all its workers
- recognition of outstanding performance
- creating a sense of belonging

FIGURE 4: A school block destroyed by a cyclone



4.5.8 Disaster Risk Management

The integration of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in the education sector is crucial in order to increase awareness of the effects and causes of disasters. Schools that take action to manage risks contribute to a culture of prevention which is critical for sustainable development.

Disaster Risk Management (DRM) refers to activities or programmes aimed at reducing the likelihood of injuries, damage to property or loss of life and valued possessions whether or not there is some impending danger.

- It can be described as a cyclic process involving four critical activities, namely; Mitigation, Preparedness, Relief and Normalization. Mitigation and Preparedness are pro-active while Relief and Normalization are re-active initiatives. Pro-active and re-active activities are respectively done before and after the onset of a disaster.
- In DRM school leaders should map out their situation to determine if they are being pro-active or re-active to a disastrous situation. That way, they will apply the appropriate course of actions which will be effective in minimising loss of life and property.

Schools should have a safe learning physical environment and user-friendly facilities.

Schools should safeguard school communities from death and injuries due to structural collapse, damages or malfunctions. The following guidelines can assist schools in creating safe learning physical environments:

Signage

It is important to clearly indicate:

- Where and How to find the school
- The name of the school
- Public entrance and exist for vehicles and pedestrians
- School's map demonstrating hazard mapping

Emergency assembly points

- The school community should know where the following are located:
- car parking, playgrounds, administration blocks, school hall and other key functional areas;
- hot-line or Emergency contact numbers in case of emergency should be displayed at the school main entrance and exit points;

- warnings and alert messages at hazardous points such as electrical distribution points, chemical storage points and where there is dangerous machinery should be posted at these critical points.

Key safety instructions

The following special places should display safety instructions:

- School transportation zone
- Technical/Vocational practical subject area
- Sports fields
- Laboratories

At these special spaces there should be safety clothing, safety rules, emergency contact numbers for focal specialists, information on how to get help, react, and perform first aid. Involvement of specialist organisations such as the fire rescue department (how to prevent and respond to fires), ZESA company (how to prevent and respond to electrical shock), Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe (how to prevent and respond to road accidents) is encouraged.

School Disaster Management

To mitigate the impact of disasters, schools should:

- assess existing capacity on disaster management at school, sub-national and national level;
- develop their own guidelines for disaster management through participatory Disaster Management activities;
- engage their School Development Committees and other local stakeholders in integrating risk assessment, risk reduction and response preparedness into their educational planning;
- identify and train school-based Disaster Management focal points to engage school-based management in ongoing Disaster Management activities which should be linked to community-based efforts;
- implement mitigation and response-preparedness measures at school level which would minimise both large-scale and small-scale hazards and risks.



Risk Reduction and Resilience Education

Furthermore, schools should enhance the learners' knowledge, attitudes and skills on disaster risk reduction by:

- integrating risk reduction (including climate change and climate change adaptation) topics or subjects in formal and non-formal educational curriculum and experiential learning;
- developing exemplars and teaching-learning materials for DRR inclusive curriculum;
- training teachers and school staff on DRR.

4.6 Common Disasters

Zimbabwe experiences a multiplicity of disasters, including cyclones, droughts, floods and heavy rains. Droughts affect both rural and urban food security, water supplies and livelihoods. Disasters can be either natural or man-made.

A natural disaster is a major adverse event resulting from natural processes like floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions while a man-made disaster is a catastrophic event that is caused by human activity. Table 4 below shows examples of disasters:

Table 4: Examples of disasters

Natural disasters	Man-made disasters
Floods	Veld fires
Cyclones	Electrical faults
Drought	Gas leaks and explosions
Lightning	Makes sure that meetings run properly
Hailstorms	Traffic accidents
Extreme heat	Structural failures
Mud slides	
Outbreak of diseases	

4.7 Role of the School Development Committee in Disaster Risk Management

Whilst SDCs may not totally control the occurrence of disasters, they can play a critical role in mitigating the impact of disasters in schools. The SDC can achieve this by following a risk management process which includes:

- identifying risks;
- identifying risk management strategies;
- implementing the strategies;
- monitoring, evaluating and adjusting where necessary.

SDCs can ensure the following to mitigate risk of disasters:

- using approved plans and designs
- proper siting of buildings
- constructing structurally sound buildings
- proper maintenance of buildings;
- regular maintenance and inspection of buildings, for example covering naked electrical wires;
- crafting a disaster risk management plan;
- providing functional fire extinguishers in all rooms;
- erecting a security fence around the school;
- conducting fire drills at least twice a year;
- sustainable school feeding programme;
- regular awareness campaigns;
- insurance of all movable and non-movable assets;
- installation of lightning conductors on all buildings;
- provision of clean and safe water;
- procuring a fully stocked First Aid Kit;
- maintaining a record of important phone numbers of critical government or non-governmental departments that deal with disasters;
- timely disposal of expired toxic chemicals;
- inviting organisations involved in disaster/ risk management such as the Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe;
- budgeting for Disaster Risk Reduction and mitigation.

4.8 Summary

This Unit emphasises the roles of the SDCs in establishing school environments that are friendly to the learners, teachers and non-teaching staff members. The Unit also gives details on disaster risk management, including identifying and analysing risks and deciding what to do about them.

4.9 Conclusion

This Handbook covers areas that are of critical importance to the SDC for purposes of school development. These areas include: Establishment of SDCs; Duties and Responsibilities of SDC office bearers; Functions of the SDC and Learner/Teacher friendly schools. Hopefully the SDCs will find this Handbook a useful and practical tool for ready reference as they execute their duties and responsibilities. Knowledge and understanding of the critical areas covered in this Handbook will go a long way in assisting SDCs to develop schools with conducive teaching and learning environments in which the staff and learners can operate effectively and efficiently. Such an environment will enhance the implementation of the competence-based curriculum.



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