

Strengthening local curricular capacity in international development cooperation

Corine Vis

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Strengthening local curricular capacity in international development cooperation / Corine Vis – Utrecht: Freudenthal Institute, Faculty of Science, Utrecht University / FI Scientific Library (formerly published as CD-β Scientific Library), no. 94, 2017.

Dissertation Utrecht University. With references. Met een samenvatting in het Nederlands.

ISBN: 978-90-70786-38-0

Cover design: Vormgeving Faculteit Bètawetenschappen

Printed by: Xerox, Utrecht

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Strengthening local curricular capacity in international development cooperation

Versterken van lokale curriculaire capaciteit in
internationale ontwikkelingssamenwerking

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Utrecht
op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof. dr. G.J. van der Zwaan,
ingevolge het besluit van het college voor promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen
op maandag 11 september 2017 des middags te 2.30 uur

door

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geboren op 14 oktober 1976 te Alblisserdam

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This thesis was made possible with financial support from the Netherlands UNESCO Commission and SLO.

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Preface

Working in international development has provided me several opportunities to collaboratively work on complex educational and curriculum reform issues, and to support endeavours to improve the quality of education in often challenging contexts. At the same time, it raised a number of recurring questions related to issues such as sustainability and proper stakeholder involvement, which fed a certain aspiration to further enquire into these complexities. Against this backdrop, the idea of embarking on a PhD trajectory arose at a Surinamese kitchen table somewhere in 2012, where a wise woman fired a number of probing questions at me related to possibly doing a PhD. Over time, the idea began to crystallise and an itinerary slowly unfolded. Eventually, the research plan took solid shape during a meeting with three highly esteemed men in a deserted university restaurant in Berlin in August 2012, and the rest is history. This remarkable PhD journey officially took off at the beginning of 2013 in Amsterdam and brought me to several corners of the world, starting in Mozambique. Next, an unexpected hurdle resulted in a surprising detour, which led to a long-term stay on a Golden Rock in the Caribbean. Before eventually returning to Amsterdam, there was a short stopover in Uganda, a beautiful last destination was added to the list. Looking back, it has been a very exciting, challenging, rewarding and sometimes downright tough trip that was more than worth the effort.

Along the road, I have met many different people who have contributed to this research and to my personal development in a variety of ways. First of all, my sincere gratitude goes out to the anonymous benefactor who left the Netherlands UNESCO Commission a legacy earmarked for education development research. Through this grant, and in close collaboration with the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) the research was made possible. In particular, I would like to thank Jan van den Akker (SLO), Greetje van den Bergh and Marieke Brugman (UNESCO) for enabling this research, and for their confidence in me in bringing it to a good end.

I could not have carried out this research without the invaluable input of my supervisory team: Wilmad Kuiper, Jan Berkvens and Nienke Nieveen. Thank you for your on-going support, for encouraging and challenging me, and for lifting my academic thinking and practice to the next level. I highly appreciated the many meetings and discussions we have had over coffee, especially the ones with cake and stroopwafels in Enschede, Utrecht and through skype from all over the world. Without your involvement and your continuous critical, but constructive feedback I would never have come this far.

I am greatly indebted to all who contributed so generously to this research by participating in interviews, in meetings, by filling out questionnaires, etc. I would like to thank IIEP and the NPOs for their valued input during the first stage of the research. Further, I am very grateful to the working group members, teachers and principals of Statia, including Angela Dekker, who all worked with tireless effort on the curriculum reform and who provided much appreciated input to this research in various ways. I am also greatly indebted to my former colleagues Jan Berkvens, Mariette Hoogeveen, Anita Lek, Wout Ottevanger and Mieke Smits, from whom I learned so much over the years in the different projects. It was a privilege and great fun working with you all! Also a big thanks to Ria Benamirouche and Irma Munters for their much appreciated long-distance administrative support. In Uganda, I would like to thank CURASSE advisers and specialists, and in particular all NCDC staff and Mrs Angela Kyagaba for such a warm and accommodating welcome back in Kampala. In Mozambique, my sincere thanks go out to all the NGO staff and advisers who worked so hard to make the project a success under challenging circumstances. Without the valuable contributions of all these different people, this research could not have been carried out.

Finally, my sincere thanks go out to friends and family all over the world for all sorts of on-going support throughout this trajectory. A special, big thank you to a number of valuable sparring partners and faithful supporters, including Jozien (the best self-appointed paranimf one could wish for), Mert, Moederoverste, Sjaan, and Vis. Thank you for your never-ending believe in me, even at times when I felt like throwing my laptop into the ocean. This fascinating journey has now almost come to an end, I'm looking forward to embarking on new ones!

Vientiane, 22 May 2017

CHAPTER 1 ORIGIN AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This introductory chapter sets out the origin of this study, starting with a description of challenges encountered with educational and curricular reforms in international development cooperation (section 1.1.1). Previous experiences with international curriculum reform interventions worldwide learned that such interventions were often not as successful as envisaged, and lacked sustainable outcomes. This seems to be caused by too narrow curriculum development approaches, as well as by insufficient focus on the process of capacity strengthening. A more comprehensive perspective is needed to enhance sustainability of interventions. The available curriculum literature does provide insight into what such comprehensive curriculum development entails (section 1.1.2 – 1.1.4). However, these kinds of approaches do not appear to be widely adopted yet, assumingly due to a lack of comprehensive curricular knowledge, skills and the capacity to support such trajectories in often challenging contexts. That raises the question how curricular capacity can best be strengthened, while aiming for the development of quality curricula (section 1.1.5), which is at the heart of this study. The second part of this chapter elaborates on the research approach (section 1.2) and the overall research design (section 1.3) applied in this study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of this study (section 1.4).

1.1 ORIGIN OF THE STUDY

1.1.1 Challenges of curriculum development in international development contexts

Many curriculum development interventions where developing countries work with international organisations lack sustainable outcomes, often as a result of a too narrow focus on curriculum, and ditto approaches to curriculum development. Well-intended curriculum projects of all sorts and sizes are designed and carried out worldwide, but the results are still too often disappointing, with initiatives easily fading into oblivion and educational life carrying on as usual. This appears to be associated with discrepancies between local and international knowledge, between approaches and cultures, but also between expectations of involved stakeholders. There are seemingly insurmountable gaps between globally propagated theories and policies on the one hand, and the realities on the ground in certain parts of the world on the other. Poverty; lack of schools and (educated) teachers; gender inequalities; violence and harassment in schools; hunger and malnutrition to name a few (Harber, 2014), make educational developments in such contexts extremely complicated. Too often, there is a drive for quick fix solutions for ultimately complex issues like curriculum reform

in ditto contexts, not least because of political motives and because of limited knowledge regarding the context and regarding curriculum development on both ends.

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (UNDP, 2015), curriculum is prominently back on the educational agenda. The fourth goal, with a strong focus on educational quality raises the need for curricular capacity strengthening, since quality education requires quality curricula. However, the necessity and importance of strengthening such capacity is often not aligned accordingly, with undesirable consequences as a result. For example, Berkvens (2009) illustrates what can happen if such alignment is absent. *“Although the result was impressive, questions can be raised as to the applicability of the curriculum. When experts are invited to work together, sometimes the outcomes are very high-level, but difficult to implement”* (p. 69). This observation was made during a science curriculum development intervention in a lower income country, supported by foreign experts. These experts came with examples that may have been well applicable to their own advanced context, but hardly to the reality of the country in this example, where the necessary resources and expertise that are needed to teach the new curriculum were virtually lacking. Unfortunately, this example is neither new nor unique, and seems to run parallel to identified gaps that came to the fore in post-2015 discussions, such as a too narrow, one-size-fits-all approach to education; inadequate attention to human capital and resource constraints, including an inadequate focus on teachers as key agents for quality education (UNESCO & UNICEF, 2013). Curriculum development could thus play an important role in enhancing the overall quality of education.

The Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) was regularly involved in curriculum development interventions worldwide on request, because of its expertise in this field. Such requests usually originate from a perceived lack of, or limited curricular expertise, and often took place within the context of international development. Experiences in this area learned that curricular capacity strengthening is usually insufficiently embedded. Curriculum perspectives are often narrow and aim for quick results, frequently at the expense of quality and sustainability. It is believed that curriculum development could and should play a more prominent part in educational reforms. However, this immediately raises two main issues. First of all, it is believed that this requires a more comprehensive perspective on curriculum and curriculum development. Secondly, it raises the question how best to enable countries to make their own relevant curricular choices and decisions suiting their specific context, and how to optimise the processes of such curriculum interventions. For the first issue, the existing curriculum literature can help to frame and articulate a more

comprehensive perspective on curriculum as will be set out below. The second issue is at the core of this study.

1.1.2 Curriculum at the core of education

‘Change in education is easy to propose, hard to implement, and extraordinary difficult to sustain’

This quote from Hargreaves and Fink (2006, p.6) accurately expresses the challenges related to curriculum development, a point of view shared in many parts of the world. There is wide agreement that curriculum development in general is a complex matter. Such understanding related to the level of complexity of developing curricula usually refers to curriculum development within the boundaries of one country only, let alone within an international setting as this study is aiming for. Curriculum and curriculum development are much discussed and widely researched concepts. There is abundant literature available on curriculum and its development, including a myriad of definitions, which implies there are various ways of looking at curriculum. Among others, Thijs and van den Akker (2009) cast light on curriculum from its etymological Latin origin ‘currere’, which means ‘to run’ (verb) and ‘course’ or ‘vehicle’ (noun), simply and concisely defined by Taba (1962) as ‘a plan for learning’. Curriculum development aims at the improvement of education, and may relate to different levels and products, ranging from the supra, macro and meso, to the micro and nano, see table 1.1. (Thijs & van den Akker, 2009).

Table 1.1 Curriculum levels and products

Level	Description	Examples
Supra	International	Common European Framework of references for Languages
Macro	System, national	Core objectives, attainment levels Examination programmes
Meso	School, institute	School programme Educational programme
Micro	Classroom, teacher	Teaching plan, instructional materials Module, course Textbooks
Nano	Pupil, individual	Personal plan for learning Individual course of learning

To what extent the different levels influence each other usually depends on how compulsory a curriculum is described at the higher levels. The next section

describes in further detail what a curriculum contains according to this study, and which core activities are related to the development of a curriculum.

1.1.3 The curricular spider's web

This study considers a curriculum to encompass a number of interdependent components that need to be planned or outlined to facilitate learning processes. This interdependency and coherence of these components is well visualised by the metaphor of the curricular spider's web (van den Akker, 2003), see figure 1.1. The spider's web consists of ten components: rationale; aims & objectives; content; learning activities; teacher role; materials & resources; grouping; location; time and assessment. Nine of the components are grouped around the rationale – why are students learning - in the middle, and are connected to each other through the threads of the spider's web.

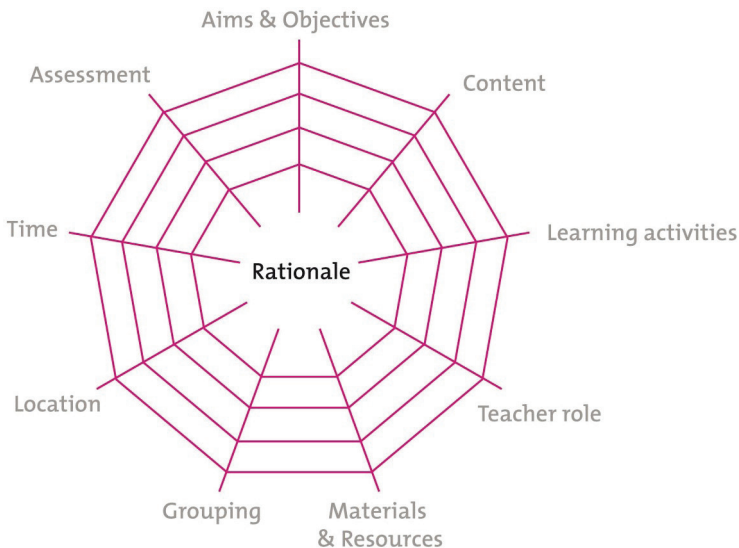


Figure 1.1 The curricular spider's web (van den Akker, 2003)

The rationale serves as the focal point that holds the components together, and feeds into the other parts. The metaphor of the spider's web visualises the connection and need for coherence between the components, while at the same time also expressing the possible vulnerability of a curriculum, including a need for balance. If there is too much emphasis on one of the threads (i.e. the components), the web (i.e. the curriculum) gets out of shape up until the point where it eventually breaks. Coherence between the various curriculum components is of great importance for reforms to be successful and sustainable. The curricular spider's web provides a comprehensive and more systemic

perspective on curriculum, implying that curriculum development goes way beyond decisions on what content needs to be taught only, which still seems to be a common interpretation. It transcends this somewhat narrow view by touching upon and involving many layers and facets of education, to the extent where it could be regarded to relate to the wider field of educational development. The relevance of and emphasis on certain components may vary per level, as depicted in table 1.1. At supra and macro level, the focus is usually on rationale, aims, content and assessment; at micro level on all components.

The curriculum literature provides several design models that can be used to improve education. Research (e.g. van den Akker & Kuiper, 2008) shows that within such models five main activities can be distinguished: analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation. These five core activities that should guide the curriculum development process are depicted in figure 1.2 (Thijs & van den Akker, 2009).

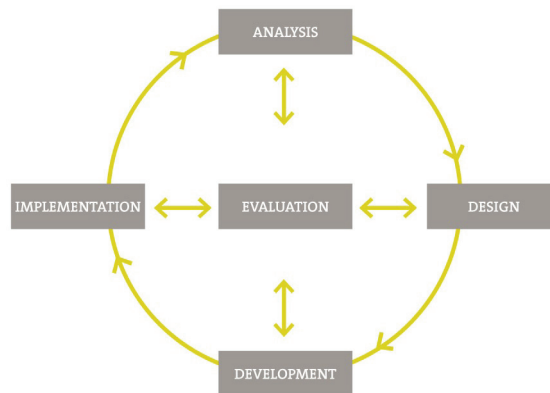


Figure 1.2 Five core activities in curriculum development

The model represents a cyclic process that preferably starts with an analysis of the current and desired situation, including a problem analysis, context analysis, needs analysis and an exploration of the existing knowledge base. The outcomes of the analyses should lead to a first design, which is further developed through a cyclical process of development, implementation and evaluation, to eventually arrive at a relevant and useable product. Evaluation is deliberately prominently placed in the centre, to enable formative evaluation that offers on-going feedback into this iterative way of development during all stages of the process, and thus provides space for adjustments and improvements during the whole cycle (Thijs & van den Akker, 2009). Kuiper (2009) emphasises the need to invest heavily in such cyclic development and implementation of curriculum reforms, stressing the necessity for careful analysis and evaluation in relation to the

design, development and implementation of curriculum reforms, aiming for the zone of proximal development, ownership, and commitment, see also the next section.

1.1.4 Curriculum perspectives and curriculum development approaches

Curricular challenges could be approached from various analytical points of view. Three main design perspectives can be distinguished that are relevant to curriculum development (Goodlad, 1994; Nieveen, Handelzalts & van Eekelen, 2011; Thijs & van den Akker, 2009; van den Akker, 2003). Firstly, the substantive perspective, which focuses on what kind of knowledge and skills are most valuable and desirable for teaching and learning, and thus what aims and content are most important. This usually includes the traditional threefold classification of 'subject, society and student' (see e.g. van den Akker, 2013). Secondly, the socio-political perspective that focuses specifically on the curriculum decision-making process and its politics: how to make sure that divergent ideas and opinions on curriculum satisfactorily can come together? In other words: who should be involved, and in what role; and who makes decisions? Lastly, the technical professional perspective refers to the professional challenge of how to successfully translate intentions into curriculum products. It should be stressed that all three perspectives play an important role in development activities.

How the process of curriculum development progresses depends on the approach taken. Out of a multitude of approaches, four main streams can be characterised (Marsh & Willis, 2007; Visscher-Voerman & Gustafson, 2004), each coming with a specific focus. The first one is the instrumental approach that stresses the importance of a systematic design process. A formulation of clear and measurable objectives is based on an analysis, which form the principles for the design process. The communicative approach stresses the importance of relational strategies. In this approach, designing is regarded to be a social process and therefore building relationships with and involving relevant stakeholders in the design phase is key, in order to reach consensus regarding the best design possible. The artistic approach stresses the creativity of the designer. Designing is regarded to be a subjective exercise, guided by personal views and expertise of the designer. Finally, the pragmatic approach stresses the practical usability of curriculum products. Preceded by a short context analysis, a prototype is designed, which in turn will be developed into a full version of the product. This is done so in an iterative way, based on needs and possibilities of the users and meeting their requirements. Exactly what part of the curriculum should be reformed - which can range from one or more components to a comprehensive national curriculum reform - depends on local needs, wishes and resources available. This also applies to the choice of the most suitable

development approach. However, if the main aim of a curriculum development intervention is to strengthen capacity in order to come to the development of broadly supported, high quality curriculum products, it is likely that the artistic approach might not be the most suitable one, since there would be little room for capacity development of stakeholders and for local needs and wishes. A communicative, pragmatic or instrumental approach, or combinations thereof are probably more obvious, because those approaches provide more room for inclusion of stakeholders, opinions, needs and wishes.

Regardless which blend is opted for, participation of relevant stakeholders is a requirement. There is wide acknowledgement that participatory approaches are of great importance to curriculum development (see e.g. Fullan, 2007; Thijs & van den Akker, 2009; van den Akker, 2010; van den Akker, Kuiper & Nieveen, 2012). The inclusion of relevant stakeholders and the advocacy for a participatory approach should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a twofold means. It is a necessary condition for a broad-based, and therefore more likely sustainable curriculum intervention; and it opens up space for learning of all stakeholders involved. This duality is defined by Kessels (1999), who advocates an integrated systematic and relational approach as a driving force for successful curriculum design. Both the systematic and the relational part of the approach are related to curriculum consistency, which is considered to be one of the most important attributes that determine the impact of educational programmes. He distinguishes between internal and external consistency and argues that the systematic approach leads to internal consistency, i.e. a coherent and consistent curriculum. The relational approach supports external consistency, which is necessary to come to a consensus on the problem that needs to be resolved and on how to achieve this, and thus to eventually arrive at a broad-based supported curriculum. Curriculum design and development can be approached in a rational, systematic and coherent way based on the ten curriculum components (see figure 1.1) that make up the curricular spider's web, which coincides with Kessels' internal consistency. Internal consistency is also one of the criteria for a high quality curriculum. However, more is needed. In addition to being consistent, a quality curriculum should also be relevant, practical and effective. These four quality criteria (Nieveen, 1999; 2009, see table 1.2) are rather sequential by nature and build upon each other.

Table 1.2 Quality criteria for curriculum development

Quality criterion	
Relevance	There is a need for the intervention and its design is based on state-of-the-art (scientific) knowledge
Consistency	The structure of the curriculum is logical and cohesive
Practicality	<i>Expected practicality</i> It is expected that the intervention is usable in the settings for which it has been designed
	<i>Actual practicality</i> The intervention is usable in the setting for which it has been designed
Effectiveness	<i>Expected effectiveness</i> Using the intervention is expected to result in desired outcomes
	<i>Actual effectiveness</i> Implementation of the intervention leads to the desired outcomes

To promote external consistency, a participatory, or relational approach is advocated. Banathy (1987) stresses the importance of deliberation in curriculum development. He states that deliberation is a process of negotiations between stakeholders with different views and value systems in order to come to satisfying solutions. Earlier, Walker (1971) propagated a communicative approach where deliberation leads to a platform of ideas, serving as a foundation for further decision-making. This corresponds with Checkland and Poulter's (2010) need for finding accommodations instead of trying to reach a consensus. They argue that it is basically impossible to reach consensus regarding complex issues because of different genetic dispositions and worldviews. Instead they suggest to find accommodations: finding a version of the situation all stakeholders can live with, which will include some form of compromising or yielding of position. All state that chances to arrive at successful interventions might increase through a participatory and iterative approach that includes relevant stakeholders.

Which stakeholders could, or should be involved depends on the scope of an intervention; on which level the curriculum developments take place; and which component(s) is/are emphasised.

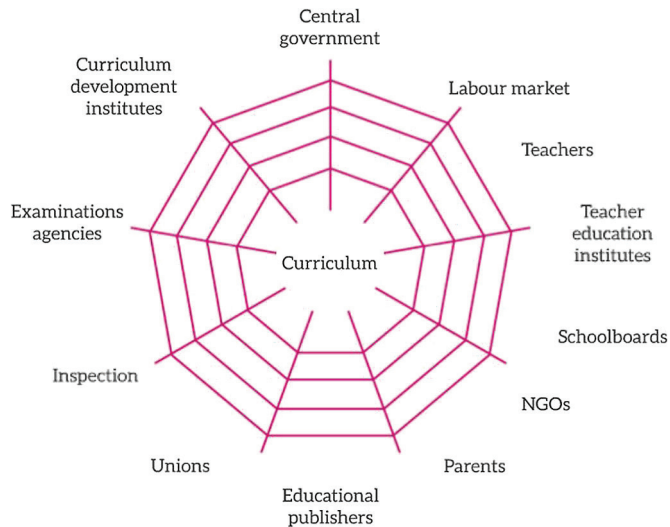


Figure 1.3 The systems web for curriculum development interventions in international development

Figure 1.3 presents the systems web for curriculum development interventions in international development, which visualises different groups of stakeholders that may be affected by curriculum development, and who may need to be involved. The systems web takes the curricular spider's web (see figure 1.1) as starting point, but expands the web with an additional, systemic stratification composed of different stakeholder groups that are most obvious in international curriculum development settings.

There is broad consensus on the need to acknowledge teachers as key stakeholders, since they are the carriers of the curriculum, and should therefore play a prominent role in curriculum development. Kuiper (2009) argues to do so through strategies that combine developing from the bottom up to generate support and ownership; provision of support from the sides, aiming for capacity strengthening of teachers; and direction, including some pressure from the top in the shape of clear and consistent curricular frameworks, based on vision and purpose (see figure 1.4).

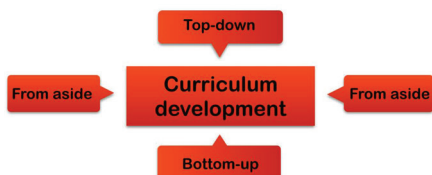


Figure 1.4 Implementation strategy

The described comprehensive and systemic perspective on curriculum and curriculum development is leading for this study, as will be further explained in the next section.

1.2 OVERALL DESIGN OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 Aim of the study and research question

The previous sections set out a comprehensive, systemic perspective on curriculum and curriculum development. Knowledge and skills related to such a way of curriculum development - including proper analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation in relation to such trajectories - is needed to arrive at more sustainable educational and curricular outcomes. Such a systemic perspective on curriculum development calls for curricular capacity of (future) teachers, education managers, school leadership, the inspectorate, etc., and the indispensable inclusion of relevant stakeholders in the development process. SLO's experience with curriculum development in an international development context learns that this capacity is often weak or lacking, which repeatedly led to unsatisfactorily reforms and results below par. Capacity strengthening in this area, which includes capacity to come to more relevant, consistent, practical and effective curricula (Nieveen, 1999, 2009) is needed to arrive at more successful and sustainable outcomes. However, it is widely acknowledged that curriculum development is a highly complex process and that sustainable outcomes are hard to establish (see e.g. Fullan, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Marsh & Willis, 2007; van den Akker, 2010; Walker, 2003). This may become even more complex within an international development context where not only different ideas and worldviews come together, but also different cultures and contexts. Implementation of effective and encompassing approaches still seems rather limited. A more solid and systemic curricular capacity development knowledge base could help in shaping international initiatives supporting curriculum development. These can be projects, programmes, etc., and are further referred to as interventions.

In order to reduce the gap between above-mentioned discrepancies, the Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO and SLO initiated research into optimising curriculum development processes within the context of international development. This research aims to develop an approach that promotes strengthening curricular capacity of local partners. The intended approach should provide change-supporting agents, i.e. external curriculum experts, sufficient guidance to support partners they work with in such a way that it enables them to make informed curricular choices during the entire process, suitable to their needs and context. By doing so, it is assumed that the likelihood of developing and implementing more relevant, consistent, practical and effective curricula that meet the ambitions and challenges of a particular context increases. This could positively contribute to overall sustainability and strengthen the quality of education in these contexts. This study therefore deliberately places curricular capacity development at centre stage, considering it to be conditional for the development and implementation of quality curricula, and investigates which design principles should be underlying such an approach. The research question is formulated as follows:

What are the characteristics of a sustainable curriculum development approach that places local curricular capacity at the centre and is suitable within the context of international development cooperation?

In order to answer this question, the research is divided into two subsequent stages, which are led by the following sub-questions:

Stage 1: Analysis, design and development

What design principles for the intended approach can be derived from theory and practice, and how could the approach be operationalized into a conceptual framework meant to serve as a guiding tool for change-supporting agents?

Stage 2: Implementation and evaluation

What is the quality of the approach and the corresponding conceptual framework, and what are the implications for their application in international development contexts?

This study aims to contribute to:

1. improve curriculum development practice in international development contexts by providing change-supporting agents with a conducive approach to sustainable curriculum development and corresponding framework for guidance;

2. the curriculum knowledge base by linking curriculum development explicitly to capacity development;
3. policy by presenting a clear approach and related framework for thinking systemically about capacity development in international contexts from a policy perspective.

1.2.2 Educational Design Research approach

The attempt to tackle the aforementioned curriculum development issues in international real-world development settings asks for an educational design research (EDR) approach, which allows for the development of research-based-solutions for ultimately complex problems in the field of education in a cyclical manner (Plomp, 2013; van den Akker, 2013). EDR is described by van den Akker (1999) to be a holistic approach, which encompassing features match with the characteristics of the envisaged study:

1. *Interventionist*, aiming to design an intervention in a real-world setting
2. *Iterative*, incorporating cycles of analysis, design and development, evaluation, and revision
3. *Process-oriented*, focusing on understanding and improving interventions, avoiding black-box thinking
4. *Utility-oriented*, measuring the merit of a design by its practicality for its users in real-world contexts
5. *Theory-oriented*, based on theory and aiming to contribute to theory building
6. *Involves practitioners*, to increase relevance, practicality and probability of successful implementation

During two research stages, the approach and the related conceptual framework are first designed and developed based on an extended literature review and exploration of practice, and then validated in practice in a number of case studies. The next section explicates how this process is carried out.

1.2.3 Stage 1: Analysis, design and development

The two subsequent research stages each come with a number of related components, see figure 1.5. The first stage comprised an exploration of theory and practice related to the key concepts for this study: international development and capacity development related to curriculum development in such settings. During this stage, the identification of design principles for a sustainable curriculum development approach, and operationalizing the approach through

a conceptual framework as guiding tool for change-supporting agents was key. In order to tackle this, the following line of enquiry was used.

Literature review

The literature review explored the fields of international development aid and cooperation, capacity and capacity development in this sector, and related concepts including sustainable development, systems thinking, participation, and learning through a systematic search. The literature review into the international development sector was performed to get a firm grip on the overall international development scene by exploring the history of development aid and cooperation, and by mapping contemporary trends and paradigms. The chosen timeframe ran from post-world war II, generally considered to be the start of international aid and development cooperation, until 2015, the so-called expiry date of several leading international initiatives that aim to tackle world-wide poverty, e.g. the Millennium Development Goals. The scope of this review was deliberately broad and focused on the identification of fundamental insights for increased sustainability of interventions in international development in general. It put the general developments and paradigms within this sector under scrutiny for two reasons: in order to learn more about the underlying reasons for success and failure in international development, and to draft potential design principles for enhanced sustainability of future curriculum development interventions.

The literature review continued with an exploration of the third key concept for this study: capacity development. This topic was further explored using the snowball method. The concepts of capacity and capacity development are discussed from an international perspective in more depth, making use of contemporary studies and publications related to these concepts.

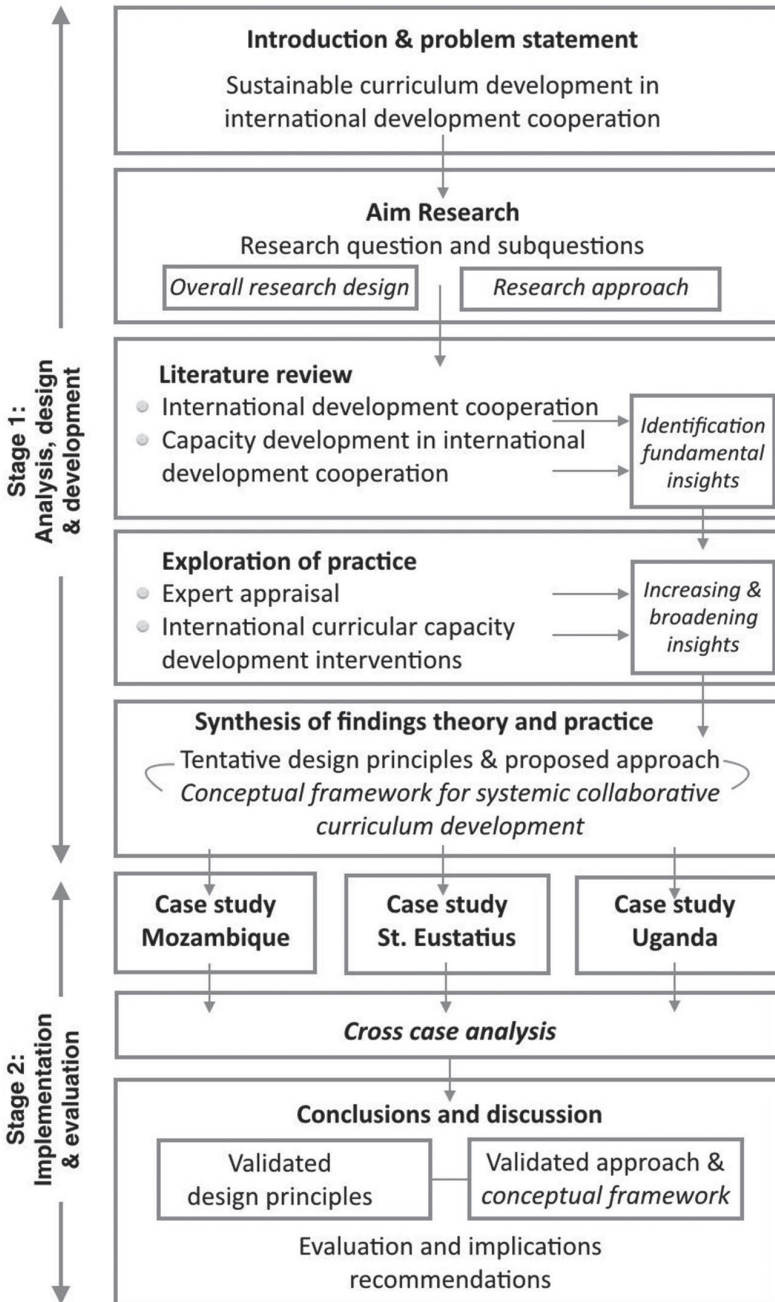


Figure 1.5 Illustration of the EDR-research design

In addition to the assessed academic literature, the review included approximately 40 publications of over 20 organisations and institutes, published by influential and leading multilateral organisations and international initiatives that determine global paradigms, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB); Australian Aid (AusAid); Department for International Development (DFID); European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM); High Level Forums; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA); the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Capacity Development for Education for All (UNESCO-CapEFA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's International Institute for Education and Planning (UNESCO-IIEP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank.

Exploration of practice

After the theoretical discourse, the focus shifted to contemporary education and curriculum development in international development practice. This was done through an expert appraisal and an exploration of a number of recent curricular capacity development interventions in international contexts. This intertwined and brought together the key concepts of curriculum development, international development cooperation and capacity development, further building on the preliminary set of fundamental insights as identified through the literature review. For the expert appraisal, five semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of five agencies that support educational capacity development in international development cooperation. Criteria for selection of organisations included that their work should be related to education and capacity development, and that they operate in middle and low-income countries worldwide. Opportunity sampling was used to identify a limited number of development agencies that matched the criteria. The organisations involved cover a wider range of backgrounds, including a UN-organisation, non-governmental organisations, and non-profit organisations. An extensive, two-day group interview (see annex 1) was conducted with five representatives of the International Institute of Educational Planning (IIEP) in Paris. This agency was selected because of their extensive research into educational capacity development and their wide experiences in this field. In addition, shorter individual interviews were conducted with representatives of four other organisations. All interviews were semi-structured and centred around questions related to capacity development, including how organisations organise and evaluate capacity development activities, who they include and what possible challenges they encounter (see annex 2). Four of the interviews were transcribed and interviewees were provided the opportunity to respond to the transcripts. One organisation did take advantage of this opportunity.

One other respondent preferred to do the interview in writing. Answers to the questions were sent back by this respondent through email. Additional background information of all five organisations is provided in chapter 4.

In addition, three recent relevant short- and long-term international curricular capacity development interventions carried out by SLO were explored: a reform project in Suriname and two curriculum development courses carried out in Uganda, and in the Netherlands with international participants. These interventions were selected because of their specific value for this study. Opportunity sampling was used to select these interventions, based on the criteria that SLO was directly involved in the interventions in the role of leading change-supporting agent. All three interventions were carried out during the preliminary stages of this study, and focussed on participatory curriculum development. Each of the interventions also contained an underlying research strand that investigated the possible interrelationship between curriculum development and capacity development, and served as a prelude to this particular research. Chapter 4 provides more detailed information regarding the included organisations and the three selected interventions.

The outcomes of the expert appraisal and exploration of curriculum development interventions have confirmed, strengthened, extended and further specified the preliminary findings of the literature study. The collected data were analysed using descriptive coding and pattern coding (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014). After the exploration of theory and practice, all derived data were coded, synthesised and have eventually led to the identification of a set of preliminary design principles that guided the design and development of the intended approach. In order to operationalize this approach, a theoretically relevant and consistent conceptual framework based on state-of-the-art scientific knowledge was constructed. This framework consists of five interrelated pillars that each come with a number of heuristics, i.e. guidelines and recommendations that are assumed to contribute to curricular capacity development and to the optimisation of the curriculum development process.

1.2.4 Stage 2: Implementation and evaluation

Framework validation

During the second stage of this research, the tentative approach as expressed through the conceptual framework was validated and implications for application of the approach were identified. In order to do so, three curriculum development case studies were included in this research: a girls' education project in Mozambique; the transition trajectory on St. Eustatius (the Caribbean); and the lower secondary curriculum and assessment reform programme in

Uganda. The quality criteria for curriculum development as described in table 1.2 were utilised to further assess the practical relevance and consistency, and to assess to what extent the approach and framework may be practical and effective. In order to be relevant, there should be a need for the intervention. The framework is consistent if its structure is logical, cohesive, and if it contains the most relevant components conducive to enhanced sustainability of curriculum development interventions. The framework is practical when it is usable by change-supporting agents for different curriculum interventions at different levels, and with different curricular aims. The framework is expected to be usable for two purposes: for the design and development of curriculum development interventions that focus on capacity strengthening and aim for improved curricula; and for the evaluation and analysis of such interventions. The framework is effective when the approach indeed leads to the development and implementation of improved curricula through capacity strengthening of involved partners, and contributes to overall sustainability. In addition to validating the framework, the second stage also looked at the implications for adoption of the proposed approach. Answers to these sub-questions were sought through the individual case studies, followed by a cross-case analysis.

Approach and overall methodology

For this research stage, an integrated case study strategy (Yin, 2003) was adopted. The general line of enquiry for this part consisted of further assessing the approach's and framework's overall practical relevance and consistency, and their possible practicality and effectiveness by relating its content and applicability to the concerned interventions. Each individual case study assessed in what ways the framework could be deployed; if all its components are relevant; and whether any components should be added to, and/or removed from the framework, and/or rephrased in order to improve its quality. In all case studies, data collection activities aimed at multiple, complementary sources of evidence in order to find answers to these questions. The most frequently used sources are: documentation, such as country development plans, education strategic plans, grey literature; direct observations and participant-observations during workshops, meetings, etc.; physical artefacts, i.e. the developed curricular products; and interviews. For all case studies, a number of semi-structured interviews, mostly individual, were conducted. All interviews were structured around the same issues: open-ended questions based on the framework and concerned project execution, capacity development, and factors that facilitated and/or hindered the process (see the relevant chapters for annex references). The questions were deliberately formulated in an open-ended way in order to avoid steering interviewees into certain directions. All interviews were recorded with permission and fully transcribed, and all interviewees were

given the opportunity to read and adjust the transcript. Additional case study specific methodology including details related to sources used per case study is presented in the relevant chapters. The case studies were analysed and structured along the pillars of the conceptual framework as presented at the end of stage 1. Below, a brief overview per case study is presented.

Case study 1: Girls' education improvement in Mozambique

In Mozambique, a project dedicated to the improvement of girls' education was carried out. It started in 2013 and was still running at the time of writing in June 2016. The aim of the project was to empower marginalised girls by removing inter-related barriers to education that affect them, and included amongst other things the development of gender responsive curricula. This project was targeted as a case study due to the curriculum component and the project's strong, overall focus on capacity development. Working in this project as a curriculum development adviser and researcher provided an opportunity to deploy the framework during the design and development stages of the curriculum component, and to assess the framework's merit. The researcher's involvement in this project was full-time and covered the period between August and December 2014.

Case study 2: Transition and school-based curriculum development at St. Eustatius

On St. Eustatius, a drastic change in education took place due to the decision to change the language of instruction from Dutch to English. The project took off in January 2015 and its implementation was still running at the time of writing in July 2016. The aim of the project was to develop a number of curricular materials for the subjects English, Dutch and mathematics for all schools on the island. Because local curricular capacity was considered to be limited, a strong focus was placed on the development of quality products through capacity development of teachers. This combination made the project a relevant case study for this research, and provided a second opportunity to adopt the approach, to utilise the framework during the design and development stages and to assess its merit. The researcher's involvement in this project covered the period between January 2015 and April 2016, while situated on the island full-time.

At the same time, a second trajectory took place on the island: the development of a school-based curriculum by secondary school teachers. These developments had started at the beginning of 2014 and were set in motion because of a perceived lack of curricular stability in the school. An international education specialist from SLO supported the teachers during the development trajectory and visited the island on a regular basis. Although living on the island and working with some teachers of the school that were involved in the transition trajectory,

the researcher was not directly involved in this school-based curriculum development intervention as practitioner. This intervention was selected for the research because it provided an opportunity to assess the framework's merit as an analytical and evaluative tool.




Case study 3: Lower secondary education reform in Uganda

The third case study was carried out in Uganda between 2011 and 2014. This CURASSE programme – abbreviation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum, Assessment and Examination Reform – aimed at fundamentally reforming lower secondary education nationwide, involving the development of a balanced, basic education programme for all students, switching from exclusive to inclusive; from teacher-centred to student-centred learning; from 40+ subjects to eight learning areas; and from knowledge-based to competence-based education. The developments were carried out in close cooperation with key stakeholders from the Ministry of Education and its affiliates, supported by an international education consultancy firm. The trajectory started in 2007 and was still being implemented at the time of writing in July 2016. This case study was selected as an opportunity for further testing the practicality and effectiveness of the framework as an analytical and evaluation tool. The enquiry into this project is of different nature compared to the other case studies, since the researcher was not directly involved in this project.

Coding per intervention

In order to visualise how the interventions took shape from the perspective of the framework, each intervention was captured and illustrated by means of coding each of the heuristics. These depictions are included per case study chapter (chapters 6-8), and are brought together in chapter 9 to facilitate a cross-case analysis. Colour coding is used to depict balance, unbalance, possible gaps and disparities per intervention. This colour coding is applied to visualise how the heuristics took shape according to the following threefold distinction, see table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Explanation of colour coding

	Green: heuristic implemented as stated
	Red: heuristic under pressure
	Yellow: heuristic implemented in alternative ways

Heuristics highlighted in green indicate that the heuristic was implemented more or less as stated, and has in general led to an overall satisfactory result or

output. When a heuristic is highlighted in red, it suggests that it has been under severe pressure. This could either be because the heuristic was not, or could not be taken up. Another reason to highlight a heuristic in red is that in some cases the relevant heuristics were observed, but counterbalanced by other factors and circumstances that were ultimately unfavourable towards capacity development. All heuristics in red, however, showed that this pressure negatively contributed to the overall process and appeared to have had an adverse effect on the intended sustainability. Heuristics highlighted in yellow indicate that they have not been implemented as such, but alternative action was taken that also led to an overall satisfactory result or output.

Cross-case analysis

After the individual case study descriptions, the case studies were considered together through a cross-case analysis to make statements and final considerations regarding the framework, and regarding the implications of the proposed approach for international development cooperation. This cross-case analysis examined and evaluated the relevance, consistency, practicality and possible effectiveness of the overall framework as a tool for guidance and evaluation by putting the framework components under final scrutiny, based on the outcomes of the case studies. It explored how the heuristics in general took shape and located common strengths and frequent bottlenecks. It looked into how common pressure on certain components could be mitigated and discussed the implications that this approach has for curriculum development interventions in aforementioned settings.

1.2.5 Quality of the study

Role and cultural bias

In general, being part of the project in multiple roles, and being a foreigner working in different countries with different cultural settings is likely to cause role and cultural biases. In all three case studies the researcher worked as researcher, and in addition also as curriculum development advisor (first case study), and as process facilitator (second case study). Attempts were made to prevent role bias by reflecting on these different roles. The multiple roles were made explicit during interviews for case studies 1 and 2 in order to avoid ambiguities from the part of interviewees. All three interventions took place in different countries. In the instance of case study 2, although the island is part of the kingdom of the Netherlands, the cultural differences between the Caribbean and European part of the kingdom are significant. Therefore, the possibility of cultural bias had to be taken into account for all three case studies. Efforts were made to prevent this by creating an awareness of such possible biases by attempting to

be culturally sensitive; through on-going discussions with colleagues inside and outside the project; and by attempting to be a reflexive practitioner, able to be reflectively responsible and to reflect in, and on action (Ison, 2010). Being reflectively responsible implies awareness and taking responsibility for the practitioners' own role and performance within a given situation.

Selection bias

In addition to cultural and role bias, awareness was also created related to selection bias. Section 1.1.3 already set out how interviewees were selected per case study. In the instance of the second case study, some additional remarks could be made. To a certain extent, the small context of the island has narrowed down the possibility of selection bias. The researcher did not exert any influence on the selection of the working group members. These teachers were selected by their principals, and were in almost all cases also the schools' subject experts. In cases where there was more than one option within a respondents group for conducting the interviews, respondents were selected based on their role(s), their working experience on the island, and the level of involvement in the curriculum developments.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

After the theoretical account related to curriculum and curriculum development in this first chapter, the subsequent chapters of the first stage enquire into theory related to the other key concepts for this study: international development (chapter 2), and capacity development in an international development context (chapter 3). Chapter 4 builds on the outcomes of the previous chapter but shifts the focus from theory to practice, and discusses the outcomes of an expert appraisal and an exploration of recently carried out short- and long term curriculum development interventions in an international setting. The outcomes of this theoretical and practical enquiry yielded a vast number of fundamental insights for an assumingly effective development approach. Chapter 5 synthesises the findings of the previous chapters and translates them into five tentative design principles that form the foundation for the intended approach for sustainable curriculum development within the context of international development. In addition, the developed framework that reflects the approach is presented, intended to be a conceptual tool for change-supporting agents involved in curriculum development interventions in international settings. The second part of chapter 5 discusses the practical implications this approach has for agents who support such curriculum development interventions.

During the second stage, the approach and related framework was implemented in practice. The chapters consecutively describe the validation processes related to the girls' education project in Mozambique (chapter 6), the transition and school-based curriculum development endeavours at St. Eustatius (chapter 7), and the lower secondary education curriculum and assessment reform in Uganda (chapter 8). The case study descriptions are followed by chapter 9, which presents the cross-case analysis of those interventions and discusses the implications of applying the approach to curricular practice in international development cooperation. Finally, chapter 10 recapitulates and discusses the overall study and provides final conclusions and recommendations.

Stage 1

Analysis, design and development

The first stage of this research aimed at the identification of a set of design principles meant to guide the design and development of the proposed approach, including the related conceptual framework, for curriculum development in international development cooperation. It mapped and articulated the existing knowledge base, starting from a broad perspective, gradually working towards curricular capacity development in particular. First, a literature review into trends and paradigms within international development was carried out to get a thorough understanding of developments within this sector, and to make success and challenges insightful. This analysis yielded a number of fundamental insights, including the necessity of capacity development, which formed the second key theme of the literature review. The exploration of this concept yielded additional insights, including a number of critical success factors and recommendations for capacity development. This somewhat general, theoretical address was followed by an expert appraisal and an exploration of a number of contemporary curriculum development interventions in different international contexts, to see if and how the identified insights take shape in practice. The outcomes of the exploration of theory and practice led to the formulation of a set of five tentative design principles that propose a systemic, collaborative development approach based on partnerships, focusing on ownership and harmonisation, and taking into account different capacity levels, which is assumingly conducive to sustainable curriculum development. This approach is operationalized through the framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development, consisting of five fundamental and interrelated pillars that each come with a set of corresponding heuristics. This tentative conceptual framework serves as a practical tool to carry out the proposed approach. It assumingly contains the most relevant characteristics that enable and support the development and implementation of quality curricula through curricular capacity development, and contribute to enhanced sustainable outcomes. The framework is implemented and evaluated during the second stage of this study.

CHAPTER 2 OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – POST WORLD WAR II – 2015

This chapter aims to identify fundamental themes and insights that are of importance for interventions in international development cooperation. Although the research specifically relates to sustainable curriculum development, the literature review deliberately sets out from a wider perspective starting with international development cooperation, followed by capacity development and then narrows it down to curricular capacity development in particular. In order to get a sound understanding of the development sector and a better insight into how and why international development cooperation functions the way it does, this chapter first provides an overview of the recent history of international development aid and cooperation, and shows how and why the discourse and related paradigms in this sector have changed over the years (section 2.1 and 2.2). It also depicts the main international conventions and agreements, their implications and the challenges encountered (section 2.3). The chapter concludes with a short summary of the main fundamental themes and insights related to development cooperation (section 2.4), which form the basis for further investigation.

2.1 THE AMBIGUITY OF DEVELOPMENT

The concept of development is multifaceted, and raises a number of questions: development of what, and into what? Development by whom? And, whose development? This chapter first looks into some of the different meanings of development, and then at the emergence and evolution of development theories and strategies during the second half of the 20th century, starting from World War II. As will become clear, the seemingly simple answers to these questions are not always as straightforward as hoped for, which makes development an ambiguous concept.

The shortest and simplest definition of ‘development’ is probably: ‘good change’ (Chambers, 1997). This may sound like a positive definition, but there are some strings attached. Thomas (2000) argues that ‘good’ and ‘change’ are a combination of different meanings of development that might confuse the question: ‘What is intended by development?’ with the question: ‘What is development?’ (Cowen & Shenton, 1996). ‘Good’ might imply well-being for all people, as a vision of a fair society. It also suggests some sort of measurable development. ‘Change’ on the other hand, is a process, which is not easy to manage and which may entail some form of disruption for people involved. Therefore, it is important to be clear about the sense in which the concept of development is used. Thomas

(2000) further points out that it should be born in mind that, whichever sense of development is used, the concept of development '*embodies competing political aims and social values and contrasting theories of social change*' (p. 23).

The term development can be used in many different ways for many differing contexts. For this research, the main focus will be on development in relation to poverty reduction, and specifically on the development of education as a contribution to the alleviation of poverty. With this focus in mind, Thomas (1996, 2000) distinguishes three interrelated senses in which the concept of development is used, namely as i) vision, description or measure of the state of being of a desirable society; ii) long-term historical process; and iii) consisting of deliberate efforts aimed at improvement by various agencies, including governments, differing organisations and social movements. Over the course of the years, and as will become clear later on in this chapter, the emphasis is increasingly being placed on the third sense: development as deliberate intervention. This research will also be mainly concerned with the third sense. However, the three senses are interrelated. They build on and feed back into each other, and cannot be seen independently of one another. A last important distinction that should be made is the difference between immanent versus intentional development (Cowen & Shenton, 1996), also coined as endogenous versus exogenous development. Obviously, there is a significant difference between an intrinsic desire for development and change, and an externally imposed need to development, and may have a huge impact on the sustainability of a certain intervention.

2.2 REVIEW OF TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A BRIEF HISTORY

2.2.1 Purpose of development

Over time, the meaning or purpose of development has been ambiguous and has sometimes significantly changed, depending on the prevailing socioeconomic context of a particular period of time. Research has shown that there are several ulterior motives for the provision of aid, which are often far from purely altruistic (e.g. Alesina & Dollar, 2000; Hjertholm & White, 1998, Hoebink, 1998). Hoebink (1998) distinguishes five motivations for aid provision. First of all, aid is provided for *political/strategic* reasons, whereby countries try to keep other countries within their sphere of influence or within a particular alliance. For many years development aid was provided to try to stop countries from going communist. In addition, the USA for example has also supported several (dictatorial) regimes for long periods of time in order to try to restrict communism to spread from China and Eastern Europe. Some other examples of

political/strategic motives are to get support from certain countries in elections in international institutions, and to maintain ties with former colonies. The second motive is *economic/commercial*. Bilateral aid has seldom been provided as hard cash, but it almost always contained some form of conditionality. For example, the conditionality of goods or service delivery by the aid providing country, whereby the recipient country is not allowed to purchase this from a third party. This has been highly favourable to the donor country because it promoted export and investments and it provided an opportunity to support distressed companies and businesses. Thirdly, there is the *ethic/humanitarian* motive to provide aid, originating in particular from the Christian and socialist charity and solidarity principles. Hoebink (1998) adds two additional recent motives, which are strongly related to concerns regarding *refugees* and the *environment*. Many countries experience an increase in numbers of refugees, which causes problems. The underlying idea here is that promotion of stability and increased prosperity in developing countries might decrease, or even stop the flow of refugees. Lastly, the environment has become a motive for aid provision. Several environmental problems have become global problems and are caused by both developing and developed countries. In case of the former, environmental problems are often related to high levels of poverty and a lack of means and knowledge to prevent them. In case of the latter, it is the high level of prosperity that dangerously affects the environment. Aid is provided by means of resources to reduce or prevent environmental damage, and through international agreements with mutual benefits.

The next section shows that in particular the economic/commercial and political/strategic motivations prevailed in international development for decades. It also shows a predominantly Western perspective on development aid and effectiveness. For a long time aid flows were instigated by Western, 'developed' countries, and due to the hegemony of the US and strong western influence on international institutions and organisations, donors have long dominated the most influential organisations (Hjertholm & White, 2000). The second half of the 20th century is often conveniently divided in decades. Although to a certain extent arbitrary, it is helpful for a general understanding of developments of the so-called international 'aid industry' over the years. Amongst others, Hewitt (2000) classified the past fifty years of the 20th century into five periods: post-war restructuring, the golden years, debt led growth, the lost decade, and the end of development. Table 2.1 provides a summary of the developments within international development based on Hewitt's classification, and is further elaborated below.

Table 2.1 Overview of developments within international development

Period	Dominant view on development	General approaches and characteristics
1945-1950 <i>Post-war restructuring</i>	Reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bretton Woods, Point Four & Marshall Plan - 1st wave of independence - Promotion of economic growth - Diminishing threat of communism by promoting capitalism - Creating markets for the US by reducing poverty and increasing production
1950s & 1960s <i>The golden years</i>	Modernisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industrialisation as engine for economic growth - Emphasis on large scale investment - Programme support - Technical assistance, capital projects, food aid - Increase of bilateral aid - 2nd wave of independence
1970s <i>Debt led growth</i>	Employment and redistribution with growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing polarisation rich and poor - Basic human needs approach - Emphasis on participation
1980s <i>The lost decade</i>	Structural adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neo liberalism - Structural adjustment policies and loans - Conditionality - Rolling back the state - Rise of NGOs
1990s <i>The end of development?</i>	Globalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growing complexity in global aid & architecture - Promotion of good governance - Sector support - Poverty back on international agenda - Increase in multilateral aid

2.2.2 Post war restructuring

The end of World War II is widely regarded as the starting point of international development aid as it was known for a long time. A significant part of the world was affected by the destructions caused by World War II and the world economy was a tremendous mess. With the United States taking the lead at the end of the war, the agreements made at Bretton Woods in New Hampshire (USA) in 1944 and the Marshall plan, followed by former president Truman's so called *Point Four*, set the context for post-war international development. It should be noted that the concept of development itself was not new, but development defined in terms of escaping from underdevelopment was (Esteva, 1992).

Bretton Woods was a conference of 44 nations, dominated by the USA and Great Britain. The agreements made during this conference were put in place in the subsequent years, and are significant for two reasons: the agreements stayed in tact as an international system until 1973, and because to the present day, the major institutions it created (International Monetary Fund, the World Bank,

the United Nations and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, currently the World Trade Organisation) still have considerable international influence (Hewitt, 2000).

Instigated by the USA, the Marshall plan consisted of an extensive economic reconstruction strategy focusing on the war-torn countries in Europe, and led to the creation of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation in 1948, which in turn evolved into the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1961 (OECD, 2016a) The aid consisted of money, goods, raw materials and food supplies, but Europe was only entitled to that aid under certain conditions. Participating countries should come up with a joint European plan themselves, and their monetary policy should be focused on reconstruction and expansion of international trade and price stability (OECD, 2016a). The first condition is remarkable, in the sense that responsibility to work out a plan is given to the receiving countries. The second condition is interesting, because it indicates self-interest for the USA, which would benefit from global economic stability and increased trade with Europe. After World War II, the tensions between the two super powers, the (by then) Soviet Union and the USA, resulted in the Cold War. Both countries rivalled with each other for influence over newly independent, ex-colonial countries (Thomas, 2000), the USA as protagonist of capitalism, and the Soviet Union as an ardent supporter of communism.

In his inaugural speech in 1949, president Truman promised support to former colonies that increasingly became independent from their colonisers after World War II. From his speech it became clear that there was a major concern about the dire conditions so many people around the world were facing:

‘We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of under-developed areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas’ (inaugural speech Truman (OECD, 2016b)).

Although not specifically mentioned as such, this strategy of providing technical assistance to developing countries raising their living standards through capitalism and democracy was quite consciously used to promote Western values and ideas in order to stop countries from becoming communist, and development aid and military aid were mixed as deemed necessary (Hjertholm & White, 1998).

While the focus of *Point Four* was primarily on technical assistance, the Marshall plan could be seen as the model for setting up an ambitious framework for economic stability. At Bretton Woods a new world system based on large-scale international income transfers was set up, including the aforementioned institutions that are still internationally leading (Hewitt, 2000). He also points out that it were predominantly industrialised countries from the north that arranged this restructuring of the world economy. And because of this northern capitalist hegemony led by the USA, decisions and agreements that were made were mostly favourable to the industrialised countries and lagged the already vulnerable developing countries even further behind within the international economy. The late 40s also marked the beginning of the end of the colonial system. But the end of colonialism did not mean the end of capitalism, which was forced upon those countries by colonial rulers and which had become part of their societies. Over the years, former colonies were increasingly confronted with and hampered by unequal structures of the capitalist world market and of the international division of labour in their attempts to achieve economic development (Bernstein, 2000).

2.2.3 The 1950s and 1960s: The golden years

As a result of the restructuring measures taken after World War II, the 1950s and 1960s were thriving for developed countries like the USA, Western Europe and increasingly for Japan (Hewitt, 2000). As briefly described above, in 1949 the USA formulated an international development assistance programme following from *Point Four*, focussing on two goals: to create markets for the USA by reducing poverty and increasing production in developing countries, and to diminish the threat of communism by helping countries prosper under capitalism. From 1952 to 1961, capital projects and programmes supporting technical assistance continued to be the primary form of American aid, and formed a key component of their foreign policy (USAID, 2016). These two decades were, even more than before, dominated by modernisation theory. Modernisation theories of development imply complete transformations in many aspects of life, brought about by economic development through industry and industrialisation. The general idea was that modernity in the newly independent developing countries could be reached by economic growth, measured in Gross National Product (GNP), and then the rest would follow.

During the post-war period, until the end of the 1960s, international cooperation was marked by transferring knowledge and technology, the supply of capital and building infrastructure, all in order to promote economic growth (van der Velden & Zweers, 1998). Specifically during those decades, industrialisation was seen as the engine of growth that would drag along the rest of the economy in favour

of the agricultural sector, although by the late 1960s agriculture was assigned a more active role in the development process (Thorbecke, 2006). But not all countries were 'taking off'. Even when growth occurred, it did not turn out to be a sufficient condition to establish sustained social and economic development. Hewitt (2000) argues that the disillusionment regarding modernisation theories of development took two forms. First, there was a recognition that developing countries are not, and probably would never be like OECD countries. In that light, Seers (1969; 1979) pointed out that OECD countries should not be seen as the norm, but rather as special cases, and therefore that developing countries might need different strategies for their development. Second, criticism from developing countries emerged. Underdevelopment was no longer only seen as *'a condition of pristine poverty and low productivity, but an historical condition of blocked, distorted and dependent development'* (Toye, 1987, p. 12).

At the end of the 1960s, it was concluded that prevailing unequal economic relationships between developed and developing countries created dependency, and that the gap was widening because of this economic power imbalance. Hewitt (2000) states that this dependency had and still has economic dimensions as described above, but also political dimensions. This concerns the need for more autonomy and a move away from the 'core' countries, which could explain the huge number of countries that gained independence during the 1950s and especially during the 1960s. Towards the end of the 1960s, it became clear that under- and unemployment caused huge problems for the developing world. This led to a consideration of employment as an objective in its own right (Thorbecke, 2006), which, in addition to GNP growth, became the main focus during the 1970s, see below.

2.2.4 The 1970s: Debt-led growth

After the flourishing 1950s and 1960s, the 1970s are characterised by the oil crises of 1973 and 1979, and an increasing polarisation between the rich and the poor. It became clear that GNP-oriented development, with an almost exclusive focus on economic growth was not the right strategy to deal with the increasingly growing development problems in developing countries, which led to re-examination of economic and social development processes (Hewitt, 2000; Thorbecke, 2006). Thorbecke summarizes five acute problems that could no longer be ignored during the 1970s: an increasing awareness and level of under- and unemployment in many developing countries; extensive unequal income distribution; rising levels of poverty; on-going urbanisation and related urban congestion; and worsening external positions of the developing world reflected by pressures of increasing balance-of-payments, rising foreign indebtedness and debt servicing burdens. Mainly as a consequence of these problems, the 1970s

saw a shift from just growth at any cost towards growth with a strong emphasis on income distribution and poverty reduction through increased employment. So the standard of living of the poor had to be increased through employment opportunities. In addition, a stronger focus on basic human needs arose. From the middle of the 1970s onwards, the emphasis was placed on more participatory approaches, whereby participation of the poor and the disadvantaged in their own development became key (van der Velden & Zweers, 1998). However, Schrijvers (1998) argues that this participation policy, propagated by UN-bodies for instance, was too much top-down and meant that the poor were being pursued to participate in developments designed *for* them by others. Expansion of the world market continued to dominate the development agenda, and 'development' still equalled economic growth.

Despite this focus on poverty reduction and human needs, the 1970s with its two severe oil crises posed serious problems upon many countries, and on developing countries in particular. A sharp increase in oil prices, combined with a decrease in production resulted in a worldwide recession. This led, for example, to a decline in international demand for commodity goods and thus commodity prices. So the non-oil producing, primary commodity exporters, which included many developing countries, were particularly hit by the crises (Hewitt, 2000). At the same time, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ended up with huge surpluses, which were made available via Western banks to developing countries through loans, initially at low interest rates. As a result, developing countries started borrowing money on a huge scale, which continued until after the second oil crisis. This indebtedness of developing countries gave the illusion of development for some. However, by the late 1970s, the OECD countries began to adjust to the reality of the recession, and one of the outcomes were increasing interest rates that had serious consequences for borrowers and their debt repayments. Because not only interest rates rose, also the value of the total debt increased due to an increasingly more expensive dollar (Bökkerink & van Hees, 1998). This negative spiral continued during the 1980s.

2.2.5 The 1980s: The lost decade

The 1980s are often described as the decade of neo-liberalism, but also as 'the lost decade' (Hewitt, 2000): lost for those people who needed development the most. The worldwide recession that started in the 1970s continued during the following decade. The extremely heavy debt burden, combined with increasing interest rates and the worldwide recession that also affected creditor countries, significantly changed the development and aid landscape at the start of the 1980s (Thorbecke, 2006). The debt crisis continued, and in attempts to slow down growing inflation, OECD countries slowed down their economies through

depressing prices and demand for commodities, while allowing interest rates to rise, which had detrimental effects on the South. The South Commission report (1990) points out that especially developing countries needed more and more money to pay off their debts, while at the same time receiving increasingly less for their export goods. At some point, banks decided not to provide any more new loans, which resulted in the international debt crisis of the 1980s. Because of all aforementioned developments, it were specifically the developing countries that got paralysed by their debts and interest, which left hardly any financial room for national development.

Development aid and cooperation during this decade was mainly focussed on stabilising currencies and financial systems and promoted market-based principles to restructure developing countries' policies and institutions (USAID, 2016). The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund developed market-led, structural adjustment plans (SAPs) for indebted countries with a strong focus on conditionality, which implies that aid, in whatever form, is provided based on requirements that are drawn up by donors. A typical adjustment plan consisted of measures like devaluation, trade liberalisation, removal of artificial price distortions, necessary institutional changes at sector level, outward orientation, reliance on markets and a minimisation of the role of the state (Thorbecke, 2006). The associated conditionality became a powerful means to control developing countries, to make sure they kept to the programme, and, if considered needed, to discontinue aid and debt relief. International banks and governments also followed and adopted these measures when the restructuring of debts came to the fore (Bökkerink & van Hees, 1998). They describe that, along the way, this conditionality also became an important requirement at project level, where NGOs and other aid agencies were involved. As a result of the structural adjustments the role of the state eroded and led for instance to privatisation of social services. In several countries, this was outsourced to private organisations like for example NGOs and religious organisations (van der Velden & Zweers, 1998).

At the end of the 1980s, NGOs and (northern) governments added another, more political conditionality to the package, expressed in terms of democracy, human rights and good governance. Bökkerink and van Hees (1998) further describe that investments and economic growth lagged behind during this period, with an increase in unemployment and poverty, deteriorated education and health systems, especially at the expense of girls and women as a result. As causes for failure of the SAPs, they do not only point at poor national policies and prevalence of corruption, but also to the quality of the adjustment policies and the associated conditionality. In general, the 1980s also saw a significant

decrease in aid budgets and at the same time a growing incidence of poverty worldwide. All in all, it could indeed be concluded that the 1980s was a lost decade for development for those who needed it the most.

2.2.6 The 1990s: The end of development?

The stabilisation and adjustment programmes that started in the 1980s also remained the prevailing objective during at least the first half of the 1990s. A significant part of bilateral and multilateral aid was used for debt relief, at the expense of its original aim: poverty reduction and sustainable human development (Bökkerink & van Hees, 1998). During this decade of on-going globalisation, a crisis of confidence in development thinking arose, due to a combination of a general failure of the so-called 'big ideas' of the past four decades, and the legacy of the 'lost decade', which put the term development under close scrutiny (Hewitt, 2000). Incidence of poverty worldwide increased, particularly in parts of the world that are outside reach of globalisation. Dietz (1998) stresses that further globalisation seems inevitable. Expansion of goods and service exchange have become increasingly easier due to the revolution in transport and communication. However, it is argued (e.g. Burbach, Núñez & Kagarlitsky, 1997; Dietz, 1998; McGrew, 2000), that globalisation does not take place in a uniform way and there are indications for a divide between countries and areas that are included, and those that are excluded from globalisation, for example countries that are of no value to the world economy, or countries that deliberately exclude themselves, like countries dominated by Muslim fundamentalism.

Hewitt (2000) points out four important events that took place during the 1990s, which influenced and challenged the idea of development. Firstly, the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that aid was no longer determined by Cold War politics. In addition, the disappearance of the communist Soviet Union and Eastern European countries as aid donors and their re-appearance as aid recipients also meant an increase in countries requiring aid (Hjertholm & White, 1998). In spite of initial optimism, the end of the Cold War did not lead to greater security in the world. Allen (1998b) describes an alarming increase in internal wars in the 1990s, with in 1993 over 18 million recognised refugees worldwide and an estimated 24 million people internally displaced as a result of conflict, with increasing numbers in the following years. In short: more conflict and insecurity than ever before. Secondly, the dominance of neo-liberal economic policies decreased to a certain extent, which had been the paradigm for development for years. Markets were still seen as the most efficient engine for economic growth and service provision, but there was growing awareness that free markets alone did not bring universal benefits, which brought poverty

back on the international agenda. In fact, according to Thorbecke (2006), the debate regarding the most appropriate roles of the state and the market might have been the most fundamental issue during the 1990s, including the identification of a set of institutions that are more conducive to growth and development. Thirdly, a series of international UN conferences were held, where governments and NGOs were mobilised to take action on global problems and which set, to a certain extent, the stage for global commitments, standards and guidelines. The last event that influenced and challenged thinking about development was the collapse of East Asian economies. For a long time, the East Asian ‘miracle’ served as an example of extraordinary economic development that could be the model to follow. But during the second half of the 1990s, South East and East Asia were severely hit by the Asian financial crisis, which resulted in a sharp decline of the poverty reduction trend (Thorbecke, 2006). At the end of the somewhat turbulent 1990s, there was a growing consensus on the need for new approaches to tackle the on-going problems in the world.

2.3 THE 21ST CENTURY: 2000 UNTIL 2015

2.3.1 The Millennium Development Goals

The previous sections set out how the international aid system arose and developed during the second half of the 20th century. The beginning of the 21st century is mainly dominated by the Millennium Development Goals. Important and leading international initiatives, like Education for All and several High-Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness are all in line with and geared towards achieving those Millennium Development Goals. This section outlines the latest developments and paradigms related to development aid and aid effectiveness, which is of importance for a general understanding of where we are now, and thus to set the context for this research.

In the year 2000, 189 nations signed the United Nations Millennium Declaration. This declaration was translated into eight goals (see figure 2.1) to be reached by 2015, the so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): 1) eradication of extreme hunger and poverty, 2) achievement of universal primary education, 3) promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, 4) reduction of child mortality, 5) improvement of maternal health, 6) combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases, 7) ensuring environmental sustainability and 8) creation of global partnerships for development. By signing this declaration, nations committed themselves to make joint efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and multiple deprivations worldwide (UNDP, 2000). The Sustainable Development Goals have superseded the MDGs from 2015 onwards.



Figure 2.1 The eight Millennium Development Goals – UNDP (2000)

It could be argued that quality education in itself could have a positive impact on all eight goals, but at this stage, for many children around the world universal primary and secondary education are still not a reality. Since this research primarily focuses on educational development in developing countries, it is specifically concerned with MDG 2: achieving universal primary education for all children, and, directly related to that MDG 3: promoting gender equality in education.

The aim of the MDGs, the eradication of extreme poverty and multiple deprivations within a timeframe of 15 years is quite ambitious. Indeed, this is one of the main criticisms in relation to those goals: they are perceived to be over-ambitious, too broadly formulated and non-committing. Further, critics feel they are focusing on the symptoms of poverty and underdevelopment only and ignore the deeper causes. In the case of education, one of the criticisms for example is the focus on increasing enrolment. Of course enrolment is an important first step, but physically being at school does not necessarily mean that children are offered quality education. In addition, emphasis must also be placed on strengthening the provision of quality education. Some even argue that a radical shift away from the MDGs is needed, because they divert attention from mechanisms that create underdevelopment, like major obstacles created by inequitable international trade as mentioned earlier, which leads to unfair competition and discourages diversification of economies (see e.g. de Schutter, 2010). However, despite criticism, the MDGs, and from 2015 onwards the Sustainable Development Goals are still dominating the contemporary development discourse and play a significant and leading part in the design and implementation of international development policies.

Since the introduction of the MDGs, evaluations have been carried out regularly, usually covered in regional and country progress reports. Since 2005, annual global progress reports showed that over the years progress was made, but that the pace was too slow, the challenges too substantial and with 2015 in sight there was ever growing fear that goals would not be met, which was indeed the case. Over the years, many international meetings and evaluations have been conducted in order to try and find the causes of slow progress, and to possibly narrow down the gap between goals and reality. This led to a shift in international discourse and a change of the general approach. Because of the aforementioned focus of this research, the next section first looks into the developments related to the field of global education, followed by an explanation of the change in international discourse, which are also reflected in global educational programmes.

2.3.2 Education For All

The international initiative Education for All (EFA) was launched in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand. A broad coalition of national governments, civil society groups and development agencies, including influential organisations in the field of international development like the World Bank and UNESCO, committed themselves to the main aim of EFA, which is to ensure access to education for all children by 2000. Not as a vision, but as a fundamental right (see e.g. UNESCO, 2011; UNICEF, 2012; UNESCO/UNICEF, 2012). During the first decade, progress was very slow and global assessment of EFA progress showed that the commitment made in 1990 would not be fulfilled. Therefore, in 2000 the international community reaffirmed their commitment in Dakar and committed themselves to provide education to all children by the year 2015. The EFA agreements were translated into six goals, see table 2.2.

Table 2.2 EFA goals

Six EFA goals	
1.	Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
2.	Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, those in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free, and compulsory primary education of good quality
3.	Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs
4.	Achieve a 50% improvement in adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults
5.	Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality
6.	Improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure the excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills

As described in the previous section, in that same year the MDGs were adopted by 189 nations. Although regarded as two different programmes, there is a strong connection and considerable overlap. MDG 2 and 3 coincide with EFA goals 2 and 5. In addition, there is clear consensus that the achievement of EFA contributes to the achievement of the other MDGs as well (UNICEF, 2012).

As with the MDGs, EFA's progress is regularly assessed within countries and regions and documented in country progress reports, regional progress reports and annual global progress reports. The summary of progress towards EFA report from 2011 (UNESCO) provides an overview of the current state of affairs per region, followed by the main achievements and challenges per goal. Also in the case of EFA, progress is currently too slow to live up to the agreements that were made and to meet the goals by 2015. The report provides some general explanation regarding reasons why progress is slow, for example the stagnation in development agency financing due to the global crisis and changing donor priorities, but also the lack of management and governance capacity of governments.

The EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2012) contains numerous data and is highly detailed, describing problems and challenges encountered related to education. For example, the fact that many children complete primary school, but are not literate. This is directly linked to ineffective learning, which is related to the quality of teachers. Many of the problems seem to be related to ineffective systems and strategies and a lack of skilled staff. The report does hint on the need for whole system reforms. Many of the countries that have committed to EFA have also committed themselves to the Paris Declaration and subsequent declarations that followed from several High Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness. These declarations touch upon key factors and challenges that hinder progress and will be discussed in the next section.

2.3.3 High-Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness

The High-Level Forums on Aid Effectiveness (HLFs) can be seen as a response to general dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of aid worldwide. In 2002, the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey was held. It was the first UN-hosted conference to address key financial and developmental issues and was attended by a multitude of stakeholders, like heads of states, ministers, leaders from the private sector and civil society, and senior officials of all the major intergovernmental financial, trade, economic, and monetary organisations. This conference resulted in 2002 into the Monterrey Consensus (UNDP, 2002), which contains the adopted agreements and commitments. At Monterrey, a new partnership for global development was conceived. It was

agreed that funding needed to be increased, but also that money alone was not the answer to ineffective aid. This first UN-hosted conference addressed key financial and developmental issues, and the UN defined the resulting consensus as a landmark framework for global development partnership, where developing and developed countries have agreed to take joint actions to poverty reduction.

The Monterrey Consensus instigated the need for further action. As already became clear from previous paragraphs, there was a general dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of aid. Recurring issues like a general lack of coordination, budget constraints, unrealistic targets and time frames have hampered effective aid delivery. An apparent need to understand why aid was not as effective as envisaged, combined with an urge to tackle the on-going global poverty problems as formulated in the MDGs resulted in the formulation of a set of guiding principles for more effective aid delivery (OECD, 2003). At Monterrey, it was agreed that a significant shift in approach was needed to tackle the on-going problems in development cooperation, to fight poverty in a joint way, and to instigate further action. Following from the Monterrey Conference in 2002, four subsequent HLFs were held: Rome (2003), Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and, at the time of writing, the most recent one in Busan (2011). In Rome, the principles for aid effectiveness were outlined in The Rome Declaration, a more concrete statement that lists a number of priority actions, including:

- Development assistance should be based on priorities and timing of the recipient country.
- Donors should concentrate on delegating cooperation and should increase their flexibility in country programmes and projects.
- Good practice should be encouraged and monitored to help strengthen the leadership that recipient countries could take in determining their development path (OECD, 2003).

In 2005, another HLF was held in Paris, attended by ministers of developing and developed countries and heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions from all over the world. This HLF in Paris is considered to be remarkable because recipients and donors together agreed to a number of commitments and to joint accountability. The Paris declaration built on the Rome declaration by reaffirming commitments made there, but also went a step further by laying out a practical and action-oriented roadmap to improve aid quality and impact (OECD, 2016c). In order to assess progress and accountability, a set of implementation measures and a monitoring system were introduced. Five fundamental principles to increase aid effectiveness were formulated: 1:

ownership, 2: alignment of country development strategies and development programmes, 3: harmonization of practice to reduce costs and fragmentation, 4: measurement of results and 5: mutual accountability (OECD, 2016c).

Paris was followed by the third HLF in Accra in 2008, aiming to accelerate and deepen the implementation of the Paris Declaration. OECD (2016c) notes that at this forum, the stakeholder group was extended with civil society representatives. The Accra Agenda for Action (2008) stated that since the HLFs in Rome and Paris progress was made, but acknowledged that the pace of progress was too slow, and that without further action and reform the commitments and targets for 2010, the 'expiry date' of the Paris Declaration, would not be met. The Accra Agenda identified three major challenges to accelerate progress on aid effectiveness: increased country ownership, building more and inclusive partnerships and achieving development results. It was stressed that without addressing these obstacles, commitments would fall short and opportunities would be missed. The Accra Agenda therefore reaffirmed the commitments made in the Paris Declaration, and put a strong focus on capacity development, which lied at the heart of this agenda.

Up to this point, the last HLF was held in 2011 in Busan. The conference in Busan was attended by an even wider group of stakeholders, including representatives of the so-called developing and developed countries, heads of state, ministers, heads of multilateral and bilateral institutions, representatives of different types of civil society, private, public, local and regional organisations, and resulted in the formal acceptance of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. The declaration established a framework for development co-operation that embraces traditional donors, South-South co-operators, the BRICS (an association of emerging economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), civil society organisations and private funders (OECD, 2016c). The document builds on the aforementioned HLF-declarations by, again, reaffirming commitments and agreements previously made and - again - acknowledging that progress at the moment was uneven, '*neither fast, nor far reaching enough*' (OECD, 2011, p. 2). The report stressed the importance of increasing development cooperation. Even though development cooperation was considered to be only part of the solution, it was regarded to be of great importance due to its catalytic and indispensable role in poverty eradication, social protection, economic growth and sustainable development.

The HLFs that were held over the past decade show the paradigm shift that has taken place in thinking about development aid or, development cooperation as it is increasingly being addressed. At least in rhetoric, there has been a move away from the aforementioned donor conditionality of the 1980s and 1990s

towards a more supportive donor role, whereby recipient countries should become more and more responsible for their own development agenda. There is a strong emphasis on the need for the development of bilateral and multilateral partnerships, with a focus on capacity development, transparency, mutual accountability, alignment and harmonization of aid and measurable results. Aid should become more and more untied, and efforts must be made to work from effective aid towards effective development cooperation.

Over time, more and more representatives of stakeholder groups from all sectors, public, private and state, have committed themselves to the declarations and the new development paradigm. This could possibly strengthen general ownership of the content of the commitments, and may increase the importance and authority of it. However, even though a multitude of different stakeholders have committed themselves to the declarations, it is also alarming to see that after roughly 12 years since Monterrey the same agreements have been reaffirmed over and over again; the same challenges and difficulties still seem to be in place; and the development pace is much too slow to achieve the stated goals in time. For example, corruption and lack of transparency still cause tremendous constraints on development efforts (OECD, 2016c). Many developing countries' institutional capacities to develop and implement results-driven national development strategies are considered to be (too) weak (OECD, 2016c). This raises a number of questions. For example, to what extent are the agreements and commitments feasible, or are they too ambitious within these timeframes? What exactly does the expressed 'commitment' entail, since there are no obligations or legal sanctions attached, and because pledging commitment does not necessarily equal action. How likely is it for a developing country to take the lead in its own development strategies, when capacities and institutions are weak, or maybe even non-existing? Are donors comfortable with their supportive role, or do they have second agenda's, for example accountability towards their funders for their own existence and survival? To what extent is commitment and adherence to the agreements intrinsically motivated? Is there sufficient capacity, on both sides, to make the development cooperation work? Or in other words: why does there appear to be a significant gap between the intentions stated in the declarations and practice? The answers to these kinds of questions are far from easy. An additional problem is that institutional development processes, and change processes in general, are often slow and hard to measure. It can be concluded that there is still a long way to go before poverty will be eradicated, before quality education will be accessible for all, etc. It officially became clear that the MDGs would not be achieved by the end of 2015. A new agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has now taken over.

2.4 KEY THEMES AND INSIGHTS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

There has been a paradigm shift from development aid to development cooperation, and from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness. Such development cooperation and effectiveness should be based on a number of recurring key principles that came to the fore and are identified as the first, preliminary principles for this study: cooperation, transparency, partnership, mutual accountability, capacity development, alignment, harmonisation, and results-orientation. These important, fundamental principles form the basis for further investigation into possible design principles and will be taken onwards to the next two chapters. The review also pointed out that the overall capacity of many countries is limited, which is regarded to be one of the main obstacles for not reaching globally set education targets as stated in e.g. the MDGs. This study will further investigate the aforementioned capacity development component within the education sector in general, and curricular capacity development in particular, and aims to propose strategies related to how such capacity could be developed in the most sustainable way, within different country contexts and under different circumstances. Based on the aforementioned declarations it can be concluded that there is broad consensus on the importance and the necessity of capacity development. De Grauwe (2009), for example, argues that capacity development is a fundamental action, and that without it countries will not be able to achieve their development goals. The next chapter will enquire into the concept of capacity development, followed by an investigation of recent studies on this topic.

CHAPTER 3 CAPACITY AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

This chapter builds on one of the key themes that were identified in the previous chapter, i.e. capacity development. Capacity is not only considered to be a prerequisite for development, but also forms an important concept for this research considering the research question. In this chapter, the concepts of capacity and capacity development in an international development context are explored. Section 3.1 briefly looks at the concept from an international perspective. After that, the chapter continues with an explanation of the multi-layered nature of capacity and the implications of this perspective (section 3.2), followed by a succinct exploration of some of the definitions (section 3.3). This exploration leads to the question of ‘what capacities’, and how to monitor and evaluate the complex process of capacity development. Section 3.4 enquires into the most dominant and conventional approach that is characterised by a results-based management perspective, including some examples. It highlights the complexity of applying such an approach to interventions with a strong capacity development component, followed by an exploration of possible alternative approaches based on a more comprehensive and systemic perspective (section 3.5). The chapter concludes with a short summary and synthesis of the identified fundamental insights so far, including capacity development, and presents a preliminary version of the foundation for curricular capacity development. All insights and recommendations that derived from the literature review will be taken onwards during further enquiry into practice in chapter 4.

3.1 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AS RECURRING THEME

As discussed in the previous chapter, the focus on development and aid has changed in the 21st century, from development aid and donor conditionality towards development cooperation. There is international consensus on the need for capacity development, alignment, harmonisation, partnerships etc., and acknowledgement that country capacity is one of the main missing critical factors in contemporary efforts to achieve international goals, like the MDGs and EFA, ultimately aiming for eradication of poverty. There has been an expressed necessity to move away from donor domination towards more equally balanced relationships, with preferably a much bigger role for the recipient country. Beneficiary countries should take the lead and donors should play a much more supportive role, focussing on capacity development in order for countries to achieve their development goals. However, it also became clear that progress is slow and, in many cases, there is substantial dissatisfaction regarding achievements and the general impact of development interventions. This became visible, for example, through the subsequent HLFs after the Paris

declaration in 2005. The HLFs held in Accra in 2008, and in Busan in 2011 made it very clear that capacity development is still an enormous challenge.

Through the years, many institutions and organisations, and both beneficiaries and donors, have acknowledged the difficulties associated with capacity development and have expressed the need for improvements. During the last decade, several studies have been conducted related to capacity development, amongst others by OECD, UNESCO-IIEP, UNESCO-CapEFA, the World Bank (WB), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) and the European Commission (EC). In addition, a lot of documentation related to capacity development is found in the form of progress reports, following up on round table meetings and HLFs etc. But first, what exactly is meant by capacity? Which, and whose capacities are to be developed? And why? Capacity and capacity development are multifaceted and complex concepts that are characterised by a multitude of definitions that dominate many contemporary discussions related to developmental issues. For a better understanding of capacity and capacity development, the following sections look at capacity as a recurring theme, the evolution of capacity levels, and into some definitions in order to construct a more defined picture of the concepts. Further, the chapter looks into different tools and ways of monitoring and evaluation of capacity development and makes suggestions for capacity development strategies in the education sector within the international development cooperation sector.

It should be emphasised that capacity development itself is not a new idea. Early attempts at capacity development - by then still mainly referred to as capacity building - in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s consisted of training, skills provision and the provision of tools and equipment, particularly focussing on training of individuals, without paying much attention to the linkage between other system levels (Faccini & Salzano, 2011; Teskey, 2005). The 1980s showed a shift towards increased attention for the role of organisations. Not only capacity building of individuals, but also of the organisations they are part of. Roughly another ten years later it was realised that a sole focus on individuals and organisations was insufficient; an additional focus on institutional reforms was also required, like strengthening national infrastructures and institutions (Faccini & Salzano, 2011). But although capacity building or capacity development has been a recurring theme, there have been recent significant shifts in thinking about it, due to disappointing results of many capacity development programmes in the past. De Grauwe (2009) points out three major changes on which the international

community has reached a consensus. The first one concerns the consensus around the concept *capacity development*. The international community is said to be moving away from the somewhat narrow and negatively regarded concept of capacity *building*, which seems to imply ‘building from scratch’, towards the more positive and constructive capacity *development*, which implies that there is recognition of already existing capacity (see also OECD/DAC, 2006; SIDA, 2005). In that sense, it could be argued that capacity strengthening might be an even more constructive concept compared to capacity development. However, since the term capacity development is widely used internationally and to avoid further expansion of terminology, it will also be used for this study. The second shift is the idea that capacity development efforts should not focus on isolated individuals, but should see individuals as part of a bigger, multi-levelled context. This context consists of the organisation an individual is part of; institutions; and a country with its corresponding traditions, history and power relations. The last shift is the realisation that the state should be regarded again as an indispensable development actor. Especially during the 1980s and 1990s, the role of the state has been significantly reduced (see also chapter 2), which has led to a de-capacitation of the state and an increased role for NGOs. Because existing structures were not always considered to be favourable for development, many NGOs established parallel systems in case changing existing structures proved too difficult (Junne & Verkoren, 2005). This in turn made, and sometimes still makes it almost impossible for public servants to undertake basic tasks needed for development (de Grauwe, 2009).

3.2 CAPACITY AT MULTIPLE AND INTERCONNECTED LEVELS

3.2.1 Levels of capacity development

Indeed, several studies into capacity and capacity development point out the need to make a distinction between the different levels where capacity development could and should take place. Although there are some differences in the exact classification of the levels, there is acknowledgment that capacity development is interpreted as a process including different, intertwined and interconnected levels that should not be dealt with in isolation of each other.

The OECD/DAC report ‘The Challenge of Capacity Development’ (2006) argues that for a long time capacity development was mainly viewed as a technical process, aiming to transfer knowledge from North to South, with insufficient adaptation to the local context and without fostering ownership. This insight is also acknowledged in many other publications and reports. It is stressed that capacity development efforts aiming at individuals only is not enough. Individuals are part of and are influenced by organisations, which in turn are part of and

influenced by the enabling environment. Therefore, capacity development should involve much more than enhancing skills and knowledge of individuals. OECD/DAC (2006) distinguishes three levels of analysis on which capacity development objectives may need to be pursued: the individual level, the organisational level and the enabling environment. Enhancing skills and knowledge of individuals only is not sufficient, because individuals are also depending on the quality of the organisations they work in. In turn, those organisations are influenced by the enabling environment in which they are embedded. So capacity development is not just about procedures and skills but also about incentives and governance. In 'Capacity Development for Education for All', Faccini and Salzano (2011) describe an almost equal view on capacity development, namely that it resides in three different, but interconnected capacity levels: the individual, the organisational and the institutional. They refer to a possible fourth level, the socio-economic, political and cultural context, which embeds the other three levels in a wider perspective. This four level distinction is also described in the 'Rethinking Capacity Development' series by IIEP, commissioned by UNESCO. De Grauwe (2009) distinguishes four capacity levels that capacity development strategies should pay attention to, which are the individual; the effectiveness of the organisation; institutions that rule public management and lastly: the political, social and economic context. The next section describes what these levels could entail.

3.2.2 The individual level

For successful capacity development, it is too limited to focus on the individual level only. However, it is recognised that people will always play an important and central role, since organisations consist of people, and in addition, institutions can only be developed through the action of people (de Grauwe, 2009). At the individual level, the response to a perceived lack of capacity is often the provision of training. Although this might be the appropriate response in certain cases, several reports also point out that it is not always that clear cut, and that there is a danger of simply 'filling the gaps', which are laid out by capacity gap analyses. Such gap analyses tend to identify weaknesses instead of strengths, which is regarded to be demotivating for beneficiaries. Further, they tend to measure the distance to an ideal situation, but do not explain why capacity is what it is and thus often focus on symptoms rather than causes (European Commission, 2010). Other research (de Grauwe, 2009) shows that there are cases where, for example, there is sufficiently skilled staff, but their skills are used ineffectively and incentives to stimulate commitment are missing. In addition, training programmes do not always match well with local needs and contexts, or fit within a capacity development plan. This could result in one-off exercises, which tend to have very little impact in the long run. The above

implies that for capacity development efforts to be successful at the individual level, they should be embedded into wider capacity development strategies. Capacity gap analyses should be avoided, in favour of more systemic capacity assessments.

3.2.3 The organisational level

Individuals are part of organisations, which they influence and are being influenced by. The effectiveness of individuals does not only depend on the presence of the right skills, but also on the functioning and quality of the organisation within which they work. For example high staff turnover and a general lack of normative frameworks are also associated with lack of capacity. Poorly functioning and ineffectively run organisations could seriously demotivate staff, and it seems quite obvious that training individuals who are working in such organisations might be of little use. The focus on educational organisations, for example ministries of education and its staff effectiveness, require work in at least three core areas, namely creating a shared vision about the mission, roles and responsibilities of the organisation; strengthening accountability; and monitoring and evaluation (de Grauwe, 2009; Hite & de Grauwe, 2008).

3.2.4 The institutional level

As pointed out in the previous sections, capacity development transcends the individual level to the organisational level. In turn, the environment, including institutions, influences the operations of organisations. Institutions are the norms, rules, habits, routines and customs that govern society at large. They can be both formal and written, and informal and internalised, and influence the function, structure and behaviour of organisations (Brett, 2000). He describes organisations to be the actors in society who get things done, or not. This performance occurs within a framework provided by institutions, although there is some overlap. Institutions, or the enabling environment influence the behaviour of organisations and individuals to a large extent through the incentives it creates (OECD/DAC, 2006). Incentives stimulate organisations to act in certain ways, which can enhance productivity, or on the other hand, passivity. Therefore, a better understanding of the enabling environment might help to understand why something may or may not work.

3.2.5 The social, political and economic context

Understanding the context of a country is considered to be highly important. Berkvens (2009) for example describes this importance for two related reasons: in order to understand the environment one is working in and thus to be able to design context-specific and relevant strategies, policies, activities, etc. In

many of the reports, some form of assessment before starting up a capacity development trajectory is said to be conditional, like a capacity assessment (de Grauwe, 2009), or an institutional analysis or 'drivers of change' analysis (European Commission, 2010; OECD/DAC, 2006), see also section 3.4.3. These exercises should provide a better understanding of the political and social systems and context, the prevailing incentive structures and sources of leadership in a particular country, and to incorporate these understandings and findings into relevant and contextualised capacity development trajectories. This implies that blueprint designs and one-size-fits-all approaches are not suitable for capacity development efforts. Instead, there is a need for flexible design and approaches, adapted to a specific context.

The elaboration on the different levels shows how interconnected and interdependent they are and because it is such a multi-dimensional process, how complex and, to a certain extent, how unpredictable capacity development processes in fact are. Therefore, several studies recommend a more systemic stance. Comprehensive, strategic approaches are considered to be essential for the possible success of any capacity development effort. The next section looks into what kind of capacities could be strengthened, and ways of how capacity could be assessed, monitored and evaluated.

3.3 DEFINING CAPACITY AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

There are many different capacity and capacity development definitions in use within the international development community, without consensus regarding the exact meaning. Faccini and Salzano (2011) and de Grauwe (2009) summarised and included fairly extensive lists with different definitions of capacity and capacity development that are currently in use by influential international agencies. The aim here is not to provide complete lists of all possible definitions and to discuss them, but to give some examples and to explain the rationale behind the definition used for this study.

In one of its simplest forms, capacity means the ability or power to do or understand something (Oxford dictionary). Although possibly useful, this definition does not specifically point out the multi-layered nature and stratification the concept entails as described in the previous section. According to Faccini and Salzano (2011), capacity means aptitude or ability, or the skill, capability or qualification to perform a task or function, which suggests talent and strength. They argue that *'this implies understanding, will, and motivation, which themselves require resources, conditions and knowledge, as well as management of rules and relations, control and comprehension of procedures'* (p. 15). This points out the wide range that capacity could relate to, from successfully performing a task

or function, to the resources, authority, effectiveness and productivity that go with it. It also implies that capacity invariably integrates both material and psychological factors, which makes it substantive as well as attitudinal.

Several definitions specifically point out that capacity is needed at different levels. OECD/DAC (2006) for example understands capacity to be the *'ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully'* (p. 12). This may sound simple, but it points out the different levels where capacity is needed for successful management of affairs, which also becomes clear in their definition of capacity development. Capacity development is considered to be *'the process, whereby people, organisations and societies as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time'* (p. 12). The complex nature of capacity also comes to the fore in the definition used by the European Commission (2011): *'Capacity is an attribute of people, individual organisations, and groups of organisations. Capacity is shaped by, adapting to and reacting to external factors and actors, but is not something external – it is internal to people, organisations and groups or systems of organisations'* (p. 9). This definition also implies that the desire to develop capacity should be intrinsically driven, and cannot be externally imposed. SIDA (2005) takes a slightly different stance by focussing specifically on the conditions that relate to capacity, by stating that capacity refers to *'conditions that must be in place, for example knowledge, competence and effective development – oriented organisations and institutional frameworks, in order to make development possible'* (p. 13). UNDP (2008) describes capacity development as *'the process through which individuals, organisations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time'* (p. 4).

Despite a lack of consensus regarding the exact meaning of the concept, all of the explored definitions more or less indicate that capacity relates to individuals, organisations, institutions and societies, and that capacity is needed at all those levels for overall development and the achievement of goals, which emphasises the multi-layered nature of the concept and the need for a more systemic approach. Based on the various definitions used by aforementioned development agencies, it can be concluded that capacity and capacity development have to go beyond provision of technical assistance and training to individuals only, and should be regarded in a more systemic way. It includes a wide range of factors that relate to multiple levels, which in turn are inextricably connected to each other. However, although touching upon the different levels, most definitions remain fairly general and do not indicate the kind of capacity that needs to be developed, in some cases to the extent that any activity could be labelled as capacity development. One exception where capacity development is more

specifically framed came to the fore: *‘Capacity development is any activity which aims explicitly at strengthening a country so that it can better achieve its development objectives by having a positive and sustainable impact on any of the following: Individual officers with the necessary capacities and incentives; organisations that have a clear mandate and are run effectively; a supportive public service; a motivating, stable and structured context without having negative effects on any of these levels’* (de Grauwe, 2009, p. 51). This definition clearly defines the scope for and area of capacity development, while at the same time keeping it broad enough to include a wide range of educational interventions. In addition, de Grauwe emphasises the insight that specific skills of individuals or the collective capabilities of planning departments can only be considered capacity when they are part of a collaborative and creative process, which implies involvement and participation.

3.4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

3.4.1 What capacities?

Because capacity development is such a multi-dimensional process, its monitoring and evaluation is regarded to be a complicated exercise. In order to monitor and evaluate capacity development, there has to be some idea about existing capacity levels and agreement on what kind of capacities should be developed. Prevailing views on appropriate approaches and strategies to target and develop such capacities quite significantly vary.

There are many different capacities imaginable that are required to carry out a certain task or performance. Several organisations define a number of ‘capacity sets’, such as key capacities, core capabilities, ministry capacities, and general skills that capacity development trajectories should ideally address, for example technical skills, management skills and relationship building skills (see also the insightful summary in de Grauwe, 2009). The terms capacity, capability, etc. are often used interchangeably, which can be somewhat confusing. Baser and Morgan (2008) make a useful distinction between competencies, capabilities and capacities. They consider competencies to be individual attributes, and capabilities to be collective ones. In turn, capacity is regarded to be the emergent combination of those individual competencies, collective capabilities, assets and relationships that enable human systems to create value. This distinction underlines a systemic focus on capacity - viz. focusing on the different capacity layers and types of capacity - and the possible development of it. It acknowledges that individuals and organisations are intrinsically linked to each other and that they need each other to generate capacity for a purpose: to enable human

systems to create value. In addition, they also distinguish a number of core capabilities: to commit and engage; to carry out technical service delivery and logistical tasks; to relate and attract resources and support; to balance diversity and coherence; and to adapt and self-renew. The question is whether this second distinction, breaking down the broader concept of capacity into certain sets of capacities is useful or not for assessment and evaluation purposes. Based on their research, Baser and Morgan argue that it is, since capacity development efforts have often focused too narrowly at improving project and programme implementation, while organisations need a much wider range of capabilities to perform, as well as to survive. De Grauwe (2009) on the other hand, argues that defining necessary competencies and capabilities beforehand is not useful since expected tasks and profiles are context specific, and identification of the right capabilities should be done in a participatory way based on local needs, preferably led by the partners. This implies that breaking down the broad concept of capacity could be useful for a better and broader conceptualisation of capacity, but that defining what ideal staff or organisations should look like does not seem desirable for reasons just mentioned.

Exactly what capacities need to be developed depends on the specific context and needs of a country. Finding out about possible capacity needs could be done through some form of assessment. Within the international literature, there is consensus on the need for a thorough assessment of the situation before starting any capacity development effort. Several options are possible, although there is considerable overlap between them. For example, OECD/DAC (2006) describes that the starting point of every capacity development intervention should start with the question: 'capacity for what?' Adequate attention should be paid to all levels, in order to determine what is needed and what is appropriate and feasible within a certain context. De Grauwe (2009) also suggests carrying out a capacity assessment with relevant stakeholders and to include all capacity levels in order to come to the formulation of a feasible capacity development plan. Some reports define systematic steps that should be taken to start up a capacity assessment, the development of a subsequent plan and the implementation of it. In the OECD/DAC report (2006), four recurring steps or tasks are suggested that should be taken throughout the process and a similar process is described by UNESCO's CapEFA (Faccini & Salzano, 2011), which contains five steps, see box 3.1.

Four steps of capacity development processes - OECD/DAC

- Understanding the international and country contexts
- Identifying and supporting sources of country-owned change
- Delivering support
- Learning from experience and sharing lessons

Five steps of capacity development processes – UNESCO-CapEFA

- Engage stakeholders on capacity development;
- Access capacity assets and needs;
- Formulate a capacity development response;
- Implement a capacity development response;
- Evaluate capacity development.

Box 3.1 Steps in capacity development processes

Some agencies have taken such general guidelines a step further by developing toolkits that should guide its users through such capacity assessments and beyond, see the next sections.

3.4.2 Conventional capacity development approaches

Many international development organisations recognise the need for a more systemic stance on capacity development, and there is evidence of a general broader, more systemic view on development issues. However, at the same time there is still a huge reliance on the logical framework or other results based management approaches that are based on the logical thinking of the results chain, viz. input-activity-output-outcome-impact, and rely on cause and effect, focusing on the delivery of predefined outputs (see e.g. UNDG, 2011; IEG/WB, 2012). Such reductionist and technocratic approaches are oriented towards planning and control and tend to treat organisations as if they were machines, reducing complex problems and systems to their constituent components (Watson, 2006). To a large extent, the on-going focus on results-based management can probably be explained through the internationally established agreements as set in the Paris Declaration (OECD, 2005) and the Accra Agenda (OECD, 2008) (see also chapter 2), where one of the main areas of focus is measurable results and where the targets and indicators have a results-based management character. For example, indicator 11 in the Paris Declaration focuses on results-oriented frameworks: *'The number of countries with transparent and monitorable performance assessment frameworks to assess progress against national development strategies and sector programmes'*, (p. 10), and is linked to the target: *'reduce the gap by one-third - reduce the proportion of countries without transparent and monitorable performance assessment frameworks by*

one-third' (OECD, 2008). Also, there is evidence that donors are under pressure to deliver evidence of effectiveness of their development programmes to their own constituencies, which is largely done through project frameworks. In addition, the majority of international NGOs, who, in return, are in many cases depending on donors for their funding, also use such results-oriented frameworks (Watson, 2006). This emerging call for effectiveness seems to at least partially stem from public discussions that are going on in many countries regarding 'value for money', and the increasingly felt demand to justify every dollar spent within the international development sector.

There is obviously a strong desire to closely monitor, measure, compare and contrast results. For example, the Global Partnership for Education report (GPE, 2012), reporting on monitoring exercises on aid effectiveness in the education sector, mentioned that the use of mutually agreed frameworks would be increasingly important in the future. Not only for the rigorous monitoring of progress, but also to accompany donor funding. In relation to capacity development, several toolkits (see section 3.4.3 for some examples) but also many capacity assessment frameworks (e.g. UNDP, 2007 & 2010) focus strongly on the measurability of learning and capacity development, resulting in extensive lists of standard indicators per capacity factor, indicators and measures for learning objectives and learning outcomes related to those capacity factors, including several stages and steps to be taken during the process. The next paragraph looks at some examples.

3.4.3 Toolkits

Several toolkits have been developed, intending to be practical guides to capacity development, for example the Toolkit for Capacity Development (European Commission, 2010), The Capacity Development Results Framework (Otoo, Agapitova & Behrens, 2009) and AusAID's Staged Capacity Building Model (2006).

Toolkit for Development

The Toolkit for Capacity Development (European Commission, 2010) is intended to be a practical document, 'primarily helpful for partner-led diagnosis and planning' (p. 8). The starting point is an explanation of three essential elements that must be present for capacity development to happen. First, the presence of 'drivers of change'. Drivers of change are actors that may feel the present capacity and performance level is not good enough and who have at least some power to make change happen. Second, there must be a credible change process possible to transform the current situation into a future state, and third, there should be a shared vision about the future. These elements are interdependent,

not static and the sum of those three elements together makes up the pressure to change. The elaborated tools provided in the document are structured around these three elements, and relate to eight sections, including carrying out a quick scan, assessment of organisation capacity, stakeholder analysis and sequencing and scoping of the capacity development. This structure seems fairly linear, although it is stressed that the tools should not be applied in a linear manner, and that their relevance depends on a specific context. Each section is linked to an extensive and systematically described tool, including the description of the purpose and use of each tool, and some background information and details.

Capacity Development Results Framework

The second example is the Capacity Development Results Framework, a strategic and results-oriented approach to learning for capacity development (Otoo, Agapitova & Behrens, 2009). This framework is described to be a powerful approach to design, implementation, monitoring, management and evaluation of development programmes, and can also be used as a stage by stage guide to plan, implement and evaluate capacity development programmes and projects at national or subnational level. As the name of the framework already implies there is a very strong focus on measurability of learning and capacity development, which results in extensive lists of standard indicators per capacity factor, indicators and measures for learning objectives and learning outcomes related to those capacity factors, including several stages and steps to be taken during the process.

AusAID's capacity development toolkit

The last example is the capacity development toolkit by AusAID (2006) that guides users to design and plan capacity development interventions step by step, including timeframes to measure the level of capacity after 6 months, 12 months, etc. The model describes four capacity stages (i.e. dependent-guided-assisted-independent) ranging from beneficiaries being highly independent to advisors to full capability, and includes three tools: a capacity development plan, which is a plan that documents the functions of a work group, current and targeted levels of capacity and capacity development strategies; a progress report, a table that shows progress in capacity development over a period of time; and capacity development strategies in the form of a checklist of capacity development strategies, tools, methodologies that can help advisors and counterparts to identify options. The model aims to be a systematic means of analysing and quantifying capacity changes. Compared to the other two toolkits, this document is quite compact, clear and straightforward and seems to be more practical and easier applicable during interventions in challenging contexts.

Although stressing flexibility and contextualisation, in particular the Toolkit for Development and the Capacity Development Results Framework seem to be designed from a western perspective, based on logical thinking, cause-effect and input-output relations, focussing on outcomes at the macro level and at whole system reform, assuming that capacity development interventions and processes can be pinned down in models and frameworks with predictable outcomes. This raises some questions. To what extent are such toolkits applicable to other contexts, specifically in non-western societies with other traditions and worldviews? To what extent are beneficiaries able to (independently) apply such fairly complicated frameworks in practice? Or will they, due to the complexity of the materials be depending on support from external advisers? If so, what does that mean for the role of donor-beneficiary? In addition, the question remains to what extent certain complex processes like capacity development lend themselves to such approaches, nailed down by systematic, semi fixed lists of indicators, targets, objectives and outcomes? There appears to be a growing number of critics that argue for more informal approaches to monitoring and evaluation of capacity development, since there is growing evidence that such processes cannot be predicted and drawn-up in advance, and possible results and impact cannot linearly be attributed to certain interventions.

3.5 TOWARDS MORE SUPPORTIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION APPROACHES

3.5.1 Different perspectives

As already described at the beginning of chapter 2, change is a process that is not easy to measure (Thomas, 2000). And despite the dominance of results-based thinking, when it comes to the measuring of capacity and capacity development in particular, there is growing criticism on the use of results-based approaches with its strong focus on results chains (see e.g. Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; Ortiz & Taylor, 2009; Watson, 2006). Baser and Morgan (2008) carried out a study intended to provide some new perspectives on capacity and capacity development with a specific focus on an endogenous perspective on capacity development, i.e. internally instead of externally motivated; looking beyond capacity literature that is produced by the international development community; and to provide evidence of good practice.

The study assumes capacity development to be a process of change and looks at it from a systems perspective, as opposed to results-based management. Multi-perspective thinking is regarded to be crucial for understanding capacity issues, which is at the heart of systems approaches. It focuses on processes more than structures, on interrelationships between people, movement,

patterns, recurring behaviours and patterns of a system as it evolves, structures and ideas, and leaves rooms for unforeseen, not predetermined but emergent properties to develop. The authors argue that many conventional capacity tools and assessment frameworks are based on the assumption that capacity issues can be explained by close examinations of the parts or elements of the system. A systems perspective implies the belief that no single factor or constituent element, for example leadership, trained staff, communication, structure, can be an explanation for the development of capacity by itself. So isolated interventions, like for example training, are not likely to make a significant difference to system behaviour unless it is embedded within a wider systems context, because working with individual people does not necessarily have an immediate linear, causal relationship with overall capacity, as is assumed in some interventions. This resonates strongly with earlier findings in this chapter, but also extends the systems perspective specifically to monitoring and evaluation. Systems thinking does not place much faith in the effectiveness of planned, controlled and engineered efforts at capacity development. Controlled and directed change, especially when imposed by an external source, is seen as having little chance of being successful. There is evidence that capacity development with a focus on exogenous accountability, i.e. accounting to donors for the use of funds, is significantly less supportive of capacity development than endogenous accountability, where organisations are accountable to their own constituencies (Watson, 2006). He states that innovative, often more informal monitoring mechanisms based on systems thinking tend to be more supportive of this endogenous accountability, and that such mechanisms seem to be more effective in promoting better performance and increased ownership compared to results-based management monitoring mechanisms applied by many donors.

3.5.2 Systems approaches versus results-based management approaches

A problem related to results-based approaches is the assumed correlation between an intervention and attribution of results. Critics of results-based approaches point at the difficulty of demonstrating a causal link between specific interventions and the wider process of change, because there are too many variables influencing the behaviour of individuals in society (like Baser & Morgan, 2008; Collins, 2005; Hailey, James & Wrigley, 2005; Ortiz & Taylor, 2009). Then the question arises to what extent it is useful to set pre-determined, fixed indicators if it is virtually impossible to attribute certain impacts to particular capacity development interventions? Ortiz and Taylor (2009) actually turn it around, and argue that the attribution dilemma may not really be a dilemma, but an indicator that we are part of non-linear systems that demand open learning approaches. They claim that instead of allocation of credit for different levels of impact, it might be more important to assemble evidence to show that

stakeholders are learning, adapting and are taking well-informed paths. Collins (2005) states that it is not about quantifying results, but about assembling quantitative and/or qualitative evidence to track progress. Measurement should seek to apprehend meaning, which calls for different forms of evaluation.

Several critics of the results-based management approach (Baser & Morgan, 2008; Watson, 2006) stress that they are not necessarily against it. They argue that under certain circumstances, e.g. in stable environments with absence of political conflicts over means and ends and where objectives can be relatively easily specified, results-based management could even be very effective. However, they suggest that results-based management need to be modified to deal with increasing uncertainty and complexity that are often inherent to capacity development trajectories. Baser and Morgan included a list of conclusions, recommendations and features of more systemic monitoring and evaluation approaches, e.g. making use of participatory methods with a strong emphasise on learning and adaptation. They point out the need to give more attention to learning and reflective practice objectives; to come to some sort of enforceable agreement on the nature of capacities that are to be monitored; to establish clear rules for making judgements on capacity development; and to monitor the role and contribution of the external intervener.

Although many organisations agree on the need for a more comprehensive perspective on capacity development, the way in which these programmes are carried out is often still rather conventional and based on results-based thinking. It may have become clear that systems thinking comes with a different perspective on cause and effect. It does not support the idea of linear, predictable chains of results, but sees outcomes in terms of possibilities and probabilities and places much emphasis on learning. If a change-supporting agent genuinely wants to support a development trajectory and to encourage ownership and decision-making by the partner, then the outcomes of the trajectory depend on choices made by partners. It thus has to be accepted that there cannot be a clearly defined path from the beginning. This path should be iterative, has to be elaborated and should crystallise, form and mature along the way. However, this does not imply a complete abandonment of results-based approaches. In fact, Watson (2006) points out that the most successful organisations in the analysed case studies tend to combine elements of both systems approaches and results-based approaches. It is stressed that there is a need for more ideas, experiments, lessons and research on monitoring and evaluation of capacity development in order to learn how it can be done in a different, more effective way (Baser & Morgan, 2008; Ortiz & Taylor, 2009; Watson, 2006).

Overall it is acknowledged that capacity development processes are highly complex that could easily be disrupted due to a multitude of factors, and that there are no formulas for guaranteed success. In addition, several authors (Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; Watson, 2006) also stress that the ideal capacity development programme consists of a package of different activities, which effect is possibly worth more than the outcomes of single, stand-alone interventions. All repeatedly emphasise the need for flexibility and adaptability in design and implementation of capacity development programmes, and stress that the possible relevance and success of a strategy depends on the specific country context. Blueprints and straitjackets are therefore inappropriate. Instead, an answer to the question 'what might work' (OECD/DAC, 2006) should be sought, together with the partners. However, reality still shows many examples where country contexts are not, or not sufficiently taken into account at all (see e.g. Berkvens, 2009). A joint thorough assessment of the country or organisation might be the way forward. As mentioned above, most investigated reports describe forms of such assessments at all levels. Although there are some differences in wording, there is overlap in steps to be taken and activities to be carried out. Again, all studied reports stress that these structures should not be used rigidly, but serve as a somewhat systematic guidance and should be adapted to the local context. Other features of assessments that are repeatedly mentioned are the need for inclusion of stakeholders during the whole process to promote ownership; building on existing capacities and processes; building on possible existing plans; identification of and discussions with stakeholders; and study local capacity and identification of capacity needs in order to come to some sort of baseline. Some reports, like European Commission (2010) and OECD/DAC (2006) also specifically state that a thorough assessment is needed to identify relevant stakeholders, to identify intended and unintended winners and losers and how they could possibly support or obstruct the change process. However, when it comes to the perspective on capacity development processes, assessment, monitoring and evaluation there are significant differences. Roughly two perspectives exist: a reductionist and a systems perspective on capacity development. It may have become clear that the chosen perspective has implications for capacity assessment, and for monitoring and evaluation approaches and strategies.

3.6 SYNTHESIS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

3.6.1 First outline for the intended approach

The literature review pointed out that the international development community has moved away from development aid towards development cooperation, and that interventions should be underpinned by a number of recurring, fundamental insights: capacity development, transparency,

partnerships, ownership, mutual accountability, alignment and harmonization of aid, and measurable results. Especially capacity development is considered to be vital of any kind of development, and lack of capacity is seen as one of the main obstacles for development. However, as chapter 3 pointed out, there is wide acknowledgement that capacity development in general, including in education, is highly complex and complicated to establish. There is evidence of a strong focus on capacity development within the international development community, but perspectives on definitions, the kind of capacities that should be developed and approaches to capacity development vary. There is consensus regarding the fact that capacity development has to go beyond the provision of technical assistance and training to individuals only; and accordance regarding the complexity of capacity development, including an increasingly acknowledged need for a more systemic development perspective. But to a large extent, assumingly due to the strong focus on measurable results, the dominant approaches to capacity development still remain largely based on a reductionist perspective, with capacity development often being compromised by results-based approaches. Therefore, alternative or blended approaches that allow more room for learning are suggested. As an alternative for results-based approaches, a systemic and interconnected outline for the intended approach under construction is proposed. This first prototype is based on the identified main insights derived from the literature review, but with a specific, integrated focus on capacity development (see figure 3.1).



Figure 3.1 First outline for the intended approach

The outline serves as the point of departure for the analysis into educational and curriculum development in practice in the next chapter. In addition, these last sections also summarise additional subjects that were identified through the literature analysis, which are mapped out in two categories: critical success factors, and recommendations for capacity development in international development corporation.

3.6.2 Critical success factors for capacity development in international development

The scope for capacity development depends on a number of critical success factors. The starting point of the aforementioned Toolkit for Capacity development (European Commission, 2010) is an explanation of three essential

ingredients that must be present for capacity development to happen: the presence of drivers of change; the likelihood of a credible change process to transform the current situation into a future state; and a shared vision about the future. A slightly different starting point comes from UNESCO-IIEP. In the synthesis of the series 'Rethinking Capacity Development', de Grauwe (2009) clearly set out three main notions for capacity development, which, to a large extent, determine the degree of success of a capacity development effort. First, capacity development can only work in a sustainable way when there is national leadership and ownership, and alignment between national priorities and strategies and international efforts. Second, capacity development strategies need to pay attention to several capacity levels, namely the individual level, the organisational level, institutions which rule public management as a whole, and the social, political and economic contexts. Third, all interventions must recognise intrinsic values of participation and ownership. When it only aims at the identification of the weakness of the partner, or to strengthen the position of already powerful people, capacity development is lost. In addition, there has been much debate about 'doing' capacity development. It is generally acknowledged that external agents cannot impose development upon others. Development trajectories should start from an intrinsic, or endogenous motivation; a certain 'readiness' for change has to be present. Although not always specifically listed as such, the aforementioned principles are also underlined by other research (like ADB, 2008; Baser & Morgan, 2008; European Commission, 2010; Faccini & Salzano, 2011; OECD/DAC, 2006; SIDA, 2005; Watson, 2006). The fact that many reports share the same kind of principles is not that remarkable, since many of them build on and feed into each other and are, not surprisingly, all in line with the declarations and agreements mentioned in chapter 2.

3.6.3 Recommendations for capacity development in international development

In addition to the aforementioned main insights and critical success factors, the literature review also identified a number of additional, recurring recommendations that are listed in box 3.2 below. Most of the studied documents focus on capacity development in international development at macro level, aiming for whole system reforms. To what extent they may apply to curriculum development interventions at macro, but also at meso level will be further explored in the next chapter, where the focus is shifted to practice of educational and curriculum development in an international context.

- See capacity development as on-going learning experiences and use the whole process as a capacity development activity in itself (Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; Faccini & Salzano, 2011; SIDA, 2005)
- Commit to long-term investment in capacity development, while working towards short-term achievements (ADB, 2008; Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009)
- Work from a joint vision (Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; EC, 2010; OECD-DAC, 2006)
- Promote and support participatory and learning-oriented approaches, encouraging leadership, commitment and ownership (ADB, 2008; Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; European Commission, 2010; Faccini & Salzano, 2011; OECD-DAC, 006; Ortiz and Taylor, 2009; SIDA, 2005; Watson, 2006)
- Make use of existing national capacities; focus on guiding and coaching of national experts (ABD, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; Faccini & Salzano, 2011; SIDA, 2005)
- Acknowledge that no single agency or organisation can accomplish all encompassing capacity development by itself, which calls for promotion of collaboration, cooperation, communication and alignment between ministries, agencies and organisations to jointly work towards achievement of objectives (ADB, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; SIDA, 2005), and following from that: foster multi-stakeholder partnerships for improved (education) delivery (de Grauwe, 2009; SIDA, 2005)
- Carry out some form of capacity analysis and impact assessment at the various levels before starting any intervention, preferably executed by national actors, supported by the external agency (ADB, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; European Commission, 2010; Faccini & Salzano, 2011; OECD-DAC, 2006; SIDA, 2005)
- Support the translation of the assessment into a capacity development plan, which serves as a starting point for further activities, and which should contain an appropriate package of different interventions (de Grauwe, 2009; European Commission, 2010; Faccini & Salzano, 2011)
- Jointly develop context specific and context relevant strategies, where flexibility and adaptability to national and local circumstances, and general feasibility are key (ADB, 2008; Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; Faccini & Salzano, 2011; SIDA, 2005)
- Jointly agree on what kinds of capacities need to be developed; on criteria and indicators for capacity development success and goals, and review them on a regular basis (ADB, 2008; Baser & Morgan, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009; Faccini & Salzano, 2011; OECD-DAC, 2006; SIDA, 2005)
- Offer diversified training programmes and models, preferably through national, regional or international training institutes, which are embedded in larger capacity development strategies (ADB, 2008; de Grauwe, 2009)
- Support national/regional training centres through offering training and knowledge resources and by promoting networking between such centres (de Grauwe, 2009).

Box 3.2 Recommendations for capacity development

CHAPTER 4 EXPLORATION OF CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL AND CURRICULAR PRACTICE

This chapter presents the outcomes of an enquiry into contemporary education development and curricular capacity development in the international development sector. With the previously identified fundamental insights and recommendations in mind, focus is shifted towards the operational level by putting capacity development approaches and experiences of a number of non-profit, internationally operating organisations under scrutiny. This is done in order to get an understanding of how, and to what extent the international paradigms as described in chapter 2 and 3 take shape, and to get more insight into explicit and implicit approaches and guidelines that organisations apply that may positively contribute to educational and curriculum development and capacity strengthening. An expert appraisal with representatives of agencies that support educational capacity development in low and middle-income countries is conducted, and in addition, three recent relevant international curricular capacity development interventions are explored. Section 4.1 provides some background information regarding the consulted sources of information. Subsequently, section 4.2 presents the second prototype of the approach under construction, consisting of the four building blocks as already identified in the previous chapter, and is confirmed and further extended through this enquiry. The results (section 4.3) are structured along these tentative pillars. The chapter concludes with some final considerations (section 4.4) that will be taken on to the final chapter of this first stage.

4.1 EXPERT APPRAISAL AND EXPLORATION OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

4.1.1 Expert appraisal with international development agencies

The expert appraisal was carried out with five international agencies that support educational and curricular capacity development in low and middle-income countries through semi-structured interviews (see annexes 1 & 2). Chapter 1 presented the overall methodology for this part of the research. A brief background of the five change-supporting agencies is provided below.

International Institute for Educational Planning - IIEP

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) was founded about 50 years ago, as a response to the demand of newly independent nations to help them to plan and manage their education systems. Although an integral part of UNESCO, it enjoys a large amount of autonomy. IIEP initially focused

on competency building: what was needed to strengthen the competencies of individual staff, while combining research and training. The research supported the training and vice versa. During the 1990s, this scenario changed somewhat, due to shifts in budgets, and due to requests from member states to provide long term, direct support (up to three years) in country, focussing on educational planning and management. The focus gradually broadened, concentrating not only on training and research, but also technical assistance came to the fore. Over time, experience learnt that simply training may develop the capacity of individuals, but does not necessarily add to capacity development of organisations and institutes. In 2006, the Norwegian ministries of education and foreign affairs commissioned a systematic reflection on capacity development, because it was felt that returns on investments in capacity development trajectories were unsatisfactory. The research, undertaken between 2007 and 2009, concentrated on two main issues: why are the results not as good as envisaged, and what can be strategies for potentially successful capacity development programmes? The interview concentrated on this extensive research and lessons learnt from a wide range of experiences related to capacity development, and lay an important foundation for this chapter.

The Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development - SLO

The Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) is an independent, non-profit organisation focussing on policy, practice and research in relation to curriculum development. Much of the work is related to primary, secondary and tertiary education in the Netherlands, but SLO also provides support on request in international contexts. Within such international projects, SLO aims to support the development of contemporary and contextualised curriculum products, while simultaneously strengthen the capacity of their counterparts through collaborative and inclusive approaches. The organisation has worked with several countries all over the world, for instance China, Uganda, Suriname, Curacao and Luxembourg.

Non-profit organisation A

This non-profit organisation was founded about 30 years ago and has been focusing on sustainable improvement of quality, efficiency and effectiveness of education as a means to reduce poverty in developing countries. The current partner countries can be found in South-East Asia, South America and Africa. In addition, the organisation tries to enhance public support for a more inclusive global society in their home country. In partnership with the selected developing countries the organisation works on sustainable solutions for encountered problems in education, by supporting educational programmes that aim at local capacity development. The organisation operates at the micro, meso

and macro levels and works for instance with ministries of education, teacher trainer colleges, the inspectorate and NGOs, with the school as a broad learning environment as the central theme. Partnerships are usually long-term, where the organisation strives to take on a coaching, mentoring and supporting role. The interview related to a partnership with a South-American country where the organisation was involved in a long-term education programme. This respondent requested to remain anonymous. Therefore, the organisation is further referred to as non-profit organisation A (NPO-A).

Non-profit organisation B

This non-profit, child-focused development agency organisation was founded about 75 years ago. It started off small but is now part of an alliance that operates worldwide, assisting children in need regardless their background. The organisation is committed to a poverty free global society where children all around the world can reach their full potential. Therefore it supports long-term and sustainable community development and promotes children's rights, in partnership with children and their communities in the areas of education, food security, health, water and HIV/AIDS. At the moment, the organisation supports development programmes in 26 countries worldwide, with a priority focus on 12 countries. Programmes are long-term and usually comprise a three-year cycle. The interview with this organisation was done through email, as the respondent preferred, and related as much as possible to the educational capacity development activities the organisation carries out. This respondent requested to remain anonymous. Therefore, the organisation is further referred to as non-profit organisation B (NPO-B).

Non-profit organisation C

This non-profit, child's rights based organisation primarily focuses on children in war-torn countries worldwide. It was founded in 1993 as a small foundation run by volunteers but rapidly expanded and developed into a professional organisation that now works in 11 countries worldwide, including countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. The programmes are based on three focal areas: psychosocial support, education and the creation of a safe environment for children. The organisation works directly with children and their parents, teachers and local governments and administrators to protect children's rights in the long run, focusing on enhancement of local capacity and influencing policy level. It also works with local NGOs or local aid organisations that work directly with the community and the government. Projects are both short-term and long-term, varying from six months up to about three years. This respondent requested to remain anonymous. Therefore, the organisation is further referred to as non-profit organisation C (NPO-C).

4.1.2 Curricular capacity development interventions

In addition to the interviews, three recent curriculum development interventions were analysed for this research: the Basic Education Improvement Project in Suriname, a curriculum development course in Uganda, and the NUFFIC Curriculum and Assessment course 2012. All interventions are explained in more detail below in order to provide a context.

Basic Education Improvement Project in Suriname (long-term project)

In Suriname, a wide range of stakeholders was involved in developing a new basic education curriculum, supported by SLO. The curriculum has, apart from an effort around 1980, hardly been changed since the seventies and was perceived to be out-dated. This current curriculum reform started in 2010 under the name Basic Education Improvement Project (BEIP) and was designed as a participatory process, focusing on capacity development, professionalization and sustainability. In all activities carried out under the curriculum component that SLO was involved in, the development of high quality contextualised curricular products, while simultaneously strengthening the capacity of stakeholders has been central. In order to establish that, different stakeholders from all layers of the education sector were invited to participate in the reform. Several heterogeneous development teams were composed to develop a range of curricular products, starting with a curriculum framework and learning strands for grades 1-11. Further, teaching and learning materials for grades 1, 2 and 3 have been developed, which were implemented in October 2011 (grade 1 and 2) and January 2013 (grade 3). The research that was done into this particular case study (Vis, 2012) aimed to (a) investigate the management of this participatory curriculum development intervention in order to identify factors that may have facilitated and/or hindered the process, and thus capacity development and sustainability, and (b) to come to recommendations regarding the extent to which a participatory approach with heterogeneous development teams could be organized and managed in a more efficient and effective way. The research consisted of conducting semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, a quantitative data analysis (Tjon-A-Loi, 2012), a grey material analysis and a literature study. The interviews with stakeholders who participated in the curriculum development effort were carried out at two different points in time: at the end of the project (February-March 2012, 19 interviewees, six focus group and four individual interviews) and eight months later (November 2012, seven interviewees, all individual interviews).

It was concluded that a participatory approach with heterogeneous development teams is favourable to capacity development and to the development of high quality, contextualised curricular products. However, several factors have been

identified that have hindered the intervention and have challenged the quality of both process and product. It was found that the main problem was a (partially) perceived lack of partnership. The study indicates that more coordination and collaboration between partners, including stronger leadership by the ministry of education may have positively contributed to the overall success of the intervention. Below, several examples will be provided to illustrate both successes and challenges encountered during this intervention.

Uganda (short-term course)

In 2012, an international consultancy firm requested SLO to develop and carry out a curriculum development course because of a perceived lack of contemporary curricular capacity within the Ugandan National Curriculum Development Centre, an affiliate of the Ugandan ministry of education that is engaged in curriculum development. This course was conducted as part of the Lower Secondary Curriculum, Assessment and Examination (CURASSE) reform programme. (The CURASSE programme evolved over time and is also included as case study in the second stage of this research, see chapter 8). The two-week course was intended for locally selected curriculum and assessment specialists and different subject experts. 22 participants attended the course, which was held in August 2012 at the National Curriculum Development Centre in Kampala, Uganda. Every course day finished with a short evaluation, followed by a more comprehensive summative evaluation consisting of six open-ended questions regarding the organisation and content of the course, professional development and possible further learning needs. All participants filled out this questionnaire at the end of the course. In addition, five interviews were conducted with six participants. The daily evaluations were carried out in order to make adjustments in the programme if circumstances so dictated, based on needs and wishes of participants. The course aimed for active participation, using different methods in order to expand the curricular toolbox and to deliberately incorporate space for processing curricular theory and applying it to the Ugandan situation.

NUFFIC Curriculum and Assessment Course 2012 (short-term course)

14 participants from nine countries participated in a three-week 'Curriculum and Assessment' course in The Netherlands, from 10 till 28 of September 2012. This course was carried out by the Institute for Assessment Development (CITO) and SLO, commissioned by The Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in higher education (NUFFIC). Participants came from different countries with different backgrounds, e.g. teacher education, policymaking and curriculum development, focusing on primary, secondary or tertiary education. The curriculum part of the course was organised by SLO (1.5 week), the assessment part by CITO (1.5 week). The collected data relate specifically to the

curriculum part. Two evaluations took place by means of questionnaires. The first one was carried out at the end of the course (10 elaborate statements and six open-ended questions filled out by all respondents). The second evaluation took place six months after the course (10 elaborate statements and six open-ended questions, filled out by nine respondents). The aim of the second evaluation was to get a better insight into the actual use of the newly acquired knowledge in the work place and the level of support participants get from their superiors.

4.2 BRINGING THEORY AND PRACTICE TOGETHER: PILLARS FOR THE INTENDED APPROACH

The outcomes of the expert appraisal and exploration of the curriculum development interventions have confirmed, strengthened, extended and further specified the findings of the literature study (see chapter 1 for the methodology used). The outcomes showed strong correspondence with the first prototype as presented in the previous chapter (see figure 3.1), and are therefore structured along these components, the so-called 'pillars'. However, due to deepened insights that resulted from this enquiry into educational and curricular practice, a fifth pillar was added to the initial four, as displayed on the right-hand side of the dotted line in figure 4.1. Several important recommendations, e.g. related to communication, time and resource provision, could not be logically placed under the four previously identified components, but are nevertheless regarded to be of great importance for the course of a process. These findings are grouped under this fifth pillar: strategic thinking and action.



Figure 4.1 Pillars for the intended approach

The findings of this exploration of practice exposed several critical success factors or preconditions that are considered to be indispensable for capacity development, as also identified in the previous chapter. Very often such preconditions cannot be enforced or influenced. However, it is assumed that certain actions or attitudes of change-supporting agents may positively contribute to an overall conducive environment. The findings have led to the translation of a wide number of guidelines and recommendations and are structured under the respective pillars of the foundation, which are assumed

to contribute towards enhanced sustainable outcomes of curricular capacity development interventions.

4.3 FINDINGS EXPERT APPRAISAL AND EXPLORATION OF CURRICULAR PRACTICE

4.3.1 Pillar 1: Capacity levels

Capacity development at multiple levels

The literature review clearly showed a shift in thinking about capacity development: from a narrow to a more stratified perspective on capacity levels (e.g. de Grauwe, 2009; OECD/DAC, 2006). All respondents pointed at the need to acknowledge that curricular capacity development encompasses much more than just the provision of training. IIEP considered capacity development to take place at four interrelated levels: the individual, the organisational, the institutional level and the social, economic and political environment or context. Capacity development goes way beyond training at the individual level and should be an exercise that aims to have an influence on, and/or take into account those four levels. All other organisations acknowledged the principle that capacity development encompasses much more than just the provision of training. One of the NPOs explained how they try to touch upon the different levels in practice as follows:

‘We also often argue that capacity development of our partners is a way in which we contribute to the building of civil society and better governance in the countries in which we work. We also often talk about it in relation to working for the advancement of human rights – capacity building for community members as rights holders and with local government partners as duty bearers’ (NPO-B).

However, IIEP also argued that change-supporting agencies’ sphere of influence is typically restricted to the first two levels: the individual and the organisational. This is also pointed out by one of the other organisations:

‘When we talk of capacity development, we might be working to the capacity of an organisation’ (NPO-C).

Attempts to influence the institutional level typically require broad partnerships/ coalitions for change and strong political leadership. Based on IIEP’s broad experience in the field of capacity development, external action in this field tends to have very little influence. As for the context level, IIEP stated that it is

often more a question of adapting to the context than trying to actually change it, since that is outside the remit of the external agent supporting the educational change. However, it could be argued that at the technical level of curriculum development, a certain level of friction is needed to set the change in motion. The subsequent recommendations that derived from the expert appraisal and exploration of interventions may help to map and take into account the different capacity levels.

Assess the context

All respondents stated that if a change-supporting agency aims to have a positive impact on capacity development, it has to understand the local context of the country and counterparts they work with, to get a better understanding about what can, and cannot be influenced and changed. IIEP pointed out that it is important to develop intimate knowledge about the context to get rid of preconceptions and biases, for instance by often visiting that particular country/region to build close relationships that are in turn necessary for genuine partnerships (see also the next pillar). Understanding a context is also important to be able to make a sound assessment regarding possibilities or impossibilities for change and what kind of strategy or approach does, or does not suit a certain context. One of the respondents presented a striking example by stating that for successful development, partners should pay close attention to a country's zone of proximal development for feasible project or programme design:

'A principle for successful education reform is: from a vision, develop a good curriculum [...] where the innovation lies in the zone of proximal development. So, let's not suddenly go from entirely whole-class teaching to totally individual teaching' (NPO-A).

This is only possible if there is a thorough understanding of the context one is working in. The room provided to learn to understand a context is sometimes hindered, e.g. by the duration of an intervention or a contract, as will be explained shortly.

Getting to know the context could be done through a context analysis. However, the way such analyses are carried out varies per organisation and per context. IIEP is used to carry out a capacity analysis and works from the principle of assessing capacity constraints instead of capacity gaps. According to IIEP, a gap implies a void that needs to be filled, while a constraint could be compared to a knot that needs to be untied, which is much more complex than local training needs only. Therefore, they suggested an approach in which a team consisting of relevant (national) stakeholders collaboratively perform a capacity analysis to

try to understand capacity constraints. The individual level, the organisational level and the context are put under scrutiny in order to see how individuals function within their organisation, and how components of the organisation are organised. Through this approach it is quite likely that the need for more comprehensive capacity development comes to the fore:

'In many cases you can see that the problem is not uniquely related to training needs, but capacity constraints like coordination, communication, leadership, structures, and so on, the way people are recruited' (IIEP staff).

Such a team ideally consists of relevant stakeholders, depending on the type of assessment. The aim of such an exercise is threefold: to get better insight into the context, to map the capacity constraints of an organisation, and to use the process as a capacity development activity and learning exercise for all stakeholders involved, which is a recurring recommendation throughout the narrative. Other respondents mentioned similar analyses, although these do not always specifically focus on capacity development. Due to the often long-term and on-going programmes and projects, the other NPOs seemed to have established a fairly good overview of the contexts they are working in and are familiar with local policy, politics and culture. One respondent felt that the organisation usually did not come up with their own ideas, but focused specifically on what a country was doing and how they could best support what is (to be) set in motion. In the Suriname project, a similar analysis was carried out at the beginning of the project together with relevant stakeholders, which was perceived to be meaningful.

IIEP stated that the national team functions best if led by a capable, national individual in the role of coordinator. There is a need to find such a senior level supporter of the intervention, who is willing and able to push through; who has the appropriate status and respect; who is able to solve critical situations and who is close to the decision-making level. Other respondents did not make reference to such a specific coordinator, although they mentioned working with counterparts who take on a leading role. In Suriname, such a leading coordinator, or counterpart was absent during part of the project, where it would have been beneficial for the process:

A: 'I think you should have worked with a counterpart, which was the case at the beginning. You start doing things side by side. Where one maybe has more expertise internationally speaking and the other has more knowledge of the local setting, so an ideal team if you ask me. Shoulder to shoulder, you should see how far that will take you. And you could both

learn so much from that.' B: 'That was the case during the development of the pre-primary curriculum, but at some point it was decided that the counterpart had to assess the work of SLO, and that's where things went wrong' (double interview SLO staff).

Translate the outcomes of the assessment into a development plan

After the context assessment is performed, the outcomes should be translated into a development plan. IIEP recommended doing this together with a national team, and to discuss results and draft plans with a wider group of stakeholders for feedback purposes. They pointed out that designing and carrying out a capacity development plan may be a challenging exercise due to political and cultural characteristics, like power differentials, corruption and nepotism. Designing and developing a capacity development plan seemed to be a fairly progressive and advanced approach. Other respondents explained that they have not come across any national or regional capacity development strategies in practice. The impression is that they work within or align with existing education structures, plans and policies as much as possible, see also pillar 3.

Collaboratively formulate a vision as foundation for further development

Several respondents pointed at the importance and necessity of a joint vision as starting point:

'It should be about the vision on educational reform, what do we think successful reform contains? Maybe that's what capacity development should initially lead to: an agreement of joint starting points and a subsequent integral approach. Together. Operating from one vision' (NPO-A).

IIEP stated that a good capacity development programme should be integrated in a national capacity vision. This is not necessarily a plan, but at least an overall understanding of how different activities integrate to overhaul ministry capacity. Such a vision is of importance, and capacity development programmes or projects should become integrated into that vision. In that sense, a distinction could be made between a) a vision, or rationale for the country and how education could contribute to the fulfilment of those dreams, and b) a vision about the role and responsibilities of the ministry of education and other stakeholders, whereby the latter should be in line with and contribute to realise the former. Both are considered to be important and necessary.

After a thorough context assessment was carried out, the creation of a joint vision was one of the first activities of the curriculum reform in Suriname. However, having a joint vision did not guarantee a successful project process. Due to the

fact that several important stakeholders disengaged from the reform process or refused to engage at all, coupled with an unfavourable leadership style, and including relatively autonomously operating departments, there was no unity within the ministry (see also pillar 2). In addition, several respondents believed a strong island mentality still prevailed within the ministry of education, even though a wide range of stakeholders - including the ministry - collaboratively formulated the vision, which was communicated in several ways. Seven months after BEIP-I was finished, one of the interviewees described it as follows, which well illustrates the complexity of the context:

'Look, there's a lot of confusion in the field because the inspectors all have their own vision, and people of the support department too. This department is responsible, by law, for supporting teachers but they expect BEIP to do it. Since BEIP implemented the reform and took care of everything, they feel now BEIP should do the rest, that BEIP should solve the problems. [...] So if you want successful implementation, that's never going to happen if people don't move towards each other. If you don't really involve these departments regularly and inform them about the latest developments then this happens, things are slated in the end. Look, the sound gestures, they are beautiful but it's being turned down. By inspection, by people of... it's because of the confusion, curriculum development department too, there are people who disagree with the sound gestures. And teachers have already started with it, but it's now being forbidden at certain schools [...] and who's going to do something about that?' (Ministry staff Suriname).

This example underlines the importance of inclusion of relevant stakeholders and the need for leadership, but at the same time how the principles are interrelated and can reinforce each other.

Align future programmes and projects to existing national policy and plans

The interviews showed that there was broad agreement on the necessity to work in line with national policy and existing programmes as consistently as possible when aiming for successful and sustainable capacity development interventions. For example, one of the NPOs described that:

'In many cases we work with ministry of education district level officials to do so, and the programmes conducted are 'official' in the sense that they are formal courses designed by the ministry and delivered by ministry trainers under national programs' (NPO-B).

Other mentioned examples are encouraging colleagues to work within those policy and strategy plans and to use the same mutual language:

'If we're talking about sustainability, then I think these are important elements because you actually make yourself a structural component of certain approaches' (NPO-A).

In Suriname, policy was used as a starting point to make sure the intended reform was as much as possible aligned to country plans and the countries' wishes and desires regarding education.

Integrate training into the overall change strategy

Through research, IIEP concluded that one-off training courses that are not embedded in an overall capacity development strategy and without proper follow up might be effective for personal gain, but tend to be less effective for organisational capacity gains:

'Individual training has seldom translated automatically in organisation improvement' (IIEP staff).

Therefore, they suggested integrating any form of training into the organisation's overall change strategy. A combination of training, working on the job with a counterpart and distance follow up may be the way to go. In general, blended learning and the provision of a mixture of methods during a course or training seem to be the most effective strategy. Training courses should also as much as possible collaboratively be designed and developed, in order to use the process as a capacity development exercise itself (see also pillar 4).

This has implications for existing activities carried out by e.g. SLO, such as the way particular trainings like the NUFFIC and Uganda courses are conducted. Although the approach of both courses was highly valued by participants and promoted learning opportunities for all stakeholders involved (see also pillar 4), the sustainability of this type of courses could be questioned since it is not always clear to what extent such a training fits into larger educational plans of participants' countries. There is concern that provision of training in a one-off way does not optimally contribute to sustainable capacity development. The Uganda course was embedded into a larger curriculum reform plan, but the outcomes of the Ugandan questionnaires suggested that there was a need for further curriculum development support, since participants' responses suggested that Uganda currently does not have sufficient capacity to implement the envisaged curricular reforms. The design of the NUFFIC course was even more complicated than the Ugandan case. In Uganda, the course was tailored as much as possible to the Ugandan context and requirements. On the other hand, participants of the NUFFIC course came from countries from all over the world, with wide ranging levels of experience and with very different backgrounds. Although

all participants stated that this course highly contributed to their professional learning needs, it remained quite challenging to design a balanced programme that caters for the professional learning needs of such a heterogeneous group coming from very different contexts. In this case, it was unclear for the supporting organisations to what extent the course was embedded in national (capacity) development strategies. In addition, there was no follow up, which could jeopardise sustainability.

In order to get more insight into the extent to which participants of the NUFFIC course felt they could use, and in the end actually implemented the newly acquired knowledge, two subsequent evaluations were carried out. The first evaluation showed that most participants had some ideas about how to implement the newly acquired knowledge in their daily practice, e.g. using the knowledge to improve training modules and courses, and sharing it with colleagues and supervisors. The majority of participants indicated to have additional learning needs based on their specific professional interest, e.g. ICT in education and the design of curriculum materials. It remained unclear to what extent such learning needs would be addressed in the future. The outcomes of the second evaluation, six months after the course took place, provided some understanding of possible implementation of the newly acquired knowledge, and of the level of support participants received from superiors. All respondents (except for one) stated that they have incorporated the acquired knowledge in their daily work and were able to give examples of specific course content they have implemented, although the way this is done varied. Several respondents gave very detailed examples, while some others seemed to have copied the table of contents of the course. Almost all participants attended the course individually. The vast majority stated that it might have been useful to participate together with one or more colleagues:

‘The idea of having colleague will make easier to implement the knowledge as two or more heads are better than just one. The similarity on knowledge, visions and ideas will make the discussions and ideas easier to apply’ (participant NUFFIC course).

The data implied a link between the level of support that participants received from their superiors, and the extent to which they were able to implement or share the newly acquired knowledge. Participants with higher positions and participants with encouraging superiors had more, or were given more room to share knowledge compared to others in lower positions and/or without support from superiors. In one case, the participant was not allowed to use any of the new knowledge and skills in their daily work. Further email correspondence with this participant indicated that this may be related to existing hierarchical

structures and cultural constraints: those lower in rank should not have and display more knowledge than their superiors. A tentative conclusion could be that certain courses can have individual benefits, but it remained fairly unclear to what extent it actually contributes to organisational capacity development or institutional reforms. Additional research into alternative design and implementation of such courses is recommended.

4.3.2 Pillar 2: Partnerships through dialogue

Shared responsibility

The importance of partnerships has been a recurring theme at the international development stage for years (OECD, 2008, 2011). The need for partnerships also strongly came to the fore in this enquiry into practice. A genuine partnership between a ministry of education and/or its affiliates - which is the most likely partner in case of curriculum reform - and an external change-supporting agency is regarded to be essential for the success of any development intervention. IIEP specifically stated that a partnership based on trust, dialogue and mutual accountability between parties involved is of great importance to increase the chances of a capacity development programme to be successful. This implies an open attitude and thus calls for open minds, dialogue between partners and the development of a 'mutual language', which is especially of importance in curriculum reform projects where curriculum is usually defined in many different ways.

That a partnership is not necessarily obvious during the complete run of a curriculum development project, and how that may have negative effects can be illustrated through the intervention in Suriname. At a certain moment during the process, the relationship between some of the key partners changed. Instead of a partnership between the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and SLO, at some point it was decided that the counterpart of the PCU became the person that had to evaluate the work of SLO, which changed dynamics. Another lack of partnership was perceived between the ministry of education (MOE) and the PCU. The vast majority of interviewees mentioned an apparent difficult relationship between those two parties. Although the MOE set up the PCU as the body in charge of project coordination, the vast majority of respondents perceived them to be two different entities, operating rather independently from each other and sometimes pursuing different goals. Two related factors could be identified that have strengthened this idea. First of all, some respondents felt the physical distance between the MOE and the PCU increased alienation. Secondly, and maybe even more importantly was the fact that curriculum development was transferred from the curriculum development department, a department

within the MOE, to the PCU. Analysis of different reports, studies and project documentation indicated that this department lacked the necessary capacity to lead and manage such an extensive project, and therefore the development of the curriculum was outsourced. During several stages of the project, attempts were made to get this department on board, but this was not entirely successful. Possibly as a result of this, cooperation and communication with this department always remained fairly complex:

'It would have been more stable if you'd had an organisation, like the ministry or the curriculum development department who were already developing curriculum, and if the work would have stayed here and X [PCU, red.] would have come to support it all. Then maybe you wouldn't have that war situation, or that tensed situation so to speak, you possibly wouldn't have had that. And maybe you could have had professionals from BEIP who could monitor, support. That could have been a different perspective. Instead of taking away the work, no, I'm not going to say taking away work, but... Well, that is what it actually comes down to' (ministry staff, Suriname).

An additional complicating factor was that there was neither any obligation from the MOE, nor from the PCU for curriculum development staff and other staff to participate in the development teams. Interviewees frequently mentioned this issue of ministry staff that stopped participating, which was perceived to be a complicating factor in the development process:

'I also think that this ambiguity regarding the role of the ministry caused things to become very cloudy [...] anyway, along the way there was a lot of resistance from people working at the ministry, which led to stagnation of many things. And to come to certain results, you are depending on each other when you work in a team' (local NGO, Suriname).

The perceived lack of partnership also resulted in (partially) working at cross-purposes and confusion about responsibilities and involvement. The vast majority of the respondents felt that the ministry and/or PCU should have steered, coordinated and cooperated in this project, which was not sufficiently done, resulting in confusion, disappointment and demotivation:

'Actually, the ministry commissioned SLO to carry out the curriculum developments but it felt like only SLO was part of it. The ministry was.... invisible, which made us wonder: what was in fact their involvement?' (Ministry staff, Suriname).

This seemed related to the division that arose during the project between three main stakeholders: the ministry, the PCU and SLO. The recommendations described here may contribute to the establishment of genuine partnerships, and could help to prevent such situations in the future.

Commit to long-term partnerships and invest in relationships

Long term partnerships and good relationships have proven to be highly favourable factors for more sustainable capacity development. The majority of respondents pointed out that a long-term commitment between parties increases the establishment of good working relationships. This is why the NPOs committed themselves as much as possible to long-term programmes, which they felt are necessary to gain trust, build relationships and to contribute to sustainability.

'There's a certain idea behind that, in the sense that, if you want a project to be sustainable, then you really should take your time. You should take your time for people to get to know you, to gain trust. To go somewhere and do a project of a year, that's almost impossible' (NPO-A).

It could be argued that this could also help to maintain the status quo and securing one's position as NPO, but that is not the focus of this study. All sources agreed that especially when the process is used as a capacity development exercise, time is an indispensable factor (see also pillar 5). A complicating factor in the Suriname project was the series of short-term contracts that were often signed last-minute, which made capacity development more complex. In the case of such short-term consultancies, long-term commitment is not always easy to deal with, which came to the fore during the interview with SLO staff on a number of occasions:

'It is an almost impossible thing to work with, that kind of short-term contracts. We often do projects that run for four years, and we feel that's actually already too short. So six months hardly makes sense' (SLO staff).

The will to commit to long-term commitments may be there, but is sometimes limited or made impossible due to short-term contracts issued by other agencies. One of the NPOs added that the duration of a project or programme might also depend on practical factors, e.g. funding, which may limit room for investment in partnerships. The research into the Suriname project underlined that solid relationships based on mutual trust are indispensable for engaging in such long-term curriculum reform efforts. In addition, negotiation and brokering, cultural awareness, sensitivity and diplomacy are essential personal skills that positively contribute to relationship-building and project management.

Adopt a coaching and mentoring role while respecting national leadership and autonomy

All interviewees pointed out that the establishment of genuine partnerships, good relationships and the promotion of ownership require a specific approach, depending on the context, the existing capacity levels and local needs. The general approach of all consulted organisations could be summarised as ‘doing it together’ whereby specific roles were mentioned, e.g. acting as a sounding board; starting off doing pioneering work, working together and then slowly fading out; encouraging people; acting as an example; mentoring, modelling; and guiding people.

‘If you’re working with colleagues, you work with them, you hold their hand through things, you model it, you let them do some of it, then they eventually do more of it, and you give them feed-back and work with the people, and over the course of would it be an hour or many weeks and months, then you got capacity built. Or developed. Or strengthened’ (NPO-C).

In all three case studies, SLO adopted such an approach for all their activities, which was regarded to be beneficial for the professional learning of stakeholders involved:

‘It is indeed some kind of a subtle ‘play’, to come to some sort of combination of what they find important and what we can contribute in relation to contemporary insights and expertise [...]. That should be a two-way process, instead of: we’re here and we’re coming to do our thing and then we fly back’ (SLO staff).

The Suriname research indicated that the vast majority appreciated the overall support provided by SLO, which was also the case for participants of the courses in Uganda and NUFFIC:

‘The course was involving, many activities prompting the participants to think of what they desire for their country, not imposing their ideas on the participants’ (participant Uganda).

‘They came as coaches, they supported us and adjusted themselves to our culture’ (Surinamese teacher).

In practice, finding the right balance between coaching and mentoring and at the same time respecting national leadership and autonomy can lead to certain tensions. Several different examples were given about different viewpoints of

partners regarding the feasibility of a development pace, which also showed the differences in decisiveness that may exist between various countries:

'Here, I felt I had to slow them down, while in other countries it was more like: 'Hello, shall we finally start doing something?' (NPO-A).

This created situations where the change-supporting agency had to comply with the partner, even though it may not be the most suitable strategy according to their professional experience:

'We were running after them, they were going faster than us. And I recognise it with all the humility in the world. They went faster than us on developing and they were bolder than us, more ambitious than us, in designing their own national programme' (IIEP staff).

This last example is an illustration of when things turned out in favour of the desired developments. Nevertheless there might be cases where the partner insists on a certain approach or course that might not be favourable to the envisaged outcomes, as was the case in Suriname. Striving for partnerships based on trust, on-going dialogue and communication may reduce such risks.

4.3.3 Pillar 3: Ownership & harmonisation

Readiness and local leadership

The literature review exposed a number of critical success factors related to ownership and harmonisation (e.g. Faccini & Salzano, 2011; SIDA, 2005; Watson, 2006) that also came to the fore during this practice enquiry, and are regarded to be success factors for any kind of development intervention. Almost all respondents acknowledged the need for internal and political readiness for change, and pointed out that capacity development cannot be imposed. There has to be an internal readiness or a desire for change present for capacity development efforts to be potentially successful:

'What you saw was some kind of self-conscious, perky attitude. This may not necessarily lead to the best change, but at least the will to change, a will that is not externally imposed but an internal motivation, I think that's a precondition for development and achievement' (NPO-A).

'If there's no will to change then you're going to fail probably, unless you can change someone's will, or an organisation's will' (NPO-C).

In addition, there is an expressed need for local leadership and involvement, which was acknowledged by almost all respondents. Research into the project in Suriname pointed out that strong leadership and committed managers are essential for the success of such an intervention. Due to a lack of leadership and involvement (and vision, see below), some departments and individuals operated rather autonomously and were able to carry out personal policies and strategies, which were not always in line with the initiated developments. This caused confusion, especially at grassroots level, and did not contribute to the sustainability of the reform:

'The role that the ministry should play is now missing: policy should be better formulated, long-term plans should be made so there are no gaps and to prevent demotivation. Offer guarantees, coordinate the whole thing so everybody knows what they and others are doing' (ministry staff Suriname).

'I know the ministry spread responsibility, but I don't know who held the baton in the end. Within the ministry, not all signs point in the same direction' (local NGO Suriname).

The difficulty is that leadership cannot be enforced:

'I think what we'd really like to see is something that is difficult to achieve: genuine commitment, or real interest of ministries or higher officials for projects that they've signed for, to really support it. I find that hard. It's often ok that we are there, they will never say: 'It's not ok that you're here', but without any problem they take people out of a workshop or a consultation meeting because they feel the need for that at a certain moment. Even though those are exactly the people you need for the process. That would be a good design principle, such commitment and devotion, but very often we can't exert any influence on that' (SLO staff).

Promote cooperation, coordination and alignment

The need for leadership was emphasised with different examples. One of the consulted NPOs explained how things came to a standstill without leadership in a country that saw eight different presidents pass by within a decade. This had consequences for the procedures that organisations working in that country followed. Most plans were approved but there was a lack of coordination and overview, with all kinds of harmful consequences as a result. IIEP shared the arguments stated above, but also pointed at a strong need for a leading and cooperative ministry for additional reasons. There must be recognition that no

single agent can cover all capacity needs by themselves. Therefore, the ministry also plays an important role in coordinating the various activities carried out by possible different agencies, and to make sure they align with the vision and the overall capacity development understanding (see also pillar 1). Finally, a leading and cooperative ministry may also enhance ownership. Although preconditions like leadership and intrinsic motivation cannot be enforced, the recommendations stated below could contribute to a favourable environment and strongly relate to harmonisation and ownership.

Encourage ownership and commitment

All respondents shared the opinion that promotion of ownership is vital for the sustainability of an intervention and indicated that this could be strengthened and consolidated through active involvement of stakeholders in the process, and by making them co-responsible. In the case of Suriname, the vast majority of participants that took part in the development teams expressed that ownership and responsibility were enhanced through their participation. Becoming part of the process and working together did create, to a greater or lesser extent, responsibility for and ownership of the curricular products, which is regarded to be a critical success factor for increased sustainability:

'I really started to think about developing curriculum. I also started to read much more, I totally immersed myself into the curriculum development process' (local NGO, Suriname).

'I feel responsible, because I contributed [...] yes, I am co-responsible for subject X, absolutely!' (Local NGO, Suriname).

On the other hand, the research also pointed out that a lack of ownership at macro level hampered development. Several respondents mentioned a perceived resistance from some ministry staff from the beginning of the project, which resulted in a lack of ownership of some ministerial bodies that should have been part of the process. In addition, this also caused stagnation of the development process and harmed relationships. In the case of Suriname, this lack of ownership was also closely related to poor communication; a (partial) lack of partnership; and a specific leadership practice, e.g. by not holding ministry staff accountable or responsible for their (in)actions (see also hereafter).

Consult relevant stakeholders and include the most suitable people possible

In order to engage in the whole process as a curricular capacity development activity, and to design the right interventions for the right purposes, all

respondents stressed that inclusion and consultation of relevant stakeholders throughout the process is a necessity.

'You got to get the opinion of children, and get the opinion of teachers, design together' (NPO-C).

The majority stated that, where possible, they always design and develop with people. The Suriname research indicated that inclusion of stakeholders from the beginning of the process does not only enhance the likelihood of increased ownership and broad support, but also serves as a means to curricular professionalization of those stakeholders involved, which are all important for sustainable curriculum change. Working together should take local expertise regarding the context as starting point, combined with (external) curricular expertise. This combination increases the possibility of the development of contextualized, high quality curriculum products.

Several respondents stated the need to have the right people on board to get the job done, but immediately added that this is not always the case due to several factors. One of the NPOs pointed at the sometimes more complex reality regarding consultation and inclusion of stakeholders.

'Consultation, quite rightly, is part of the development mantra for all governments, donors and NGOs. Generally speaking it is easier for (international) NGOs to talk about consultation than to do it and often, when it does happen, it is seen by agency staff and partners as something that has to be done in order to get things going, rather than as a process which brings any benefit. There's still an underlying assumption behind much community development work, held by the agency staff, community members or government partners that the donor/implementing agency will do what it wants to do and that consultation is a requirement. Deadlines, [...] work routines and running costs are all facts of life and all inhibit consultation' (NPO-B).

It is therefore important for change-supporting agencies to think through why they want to include and consult stakeholders and to do it for the right reasons, in order to avoid it becoming a mere formality. Other recurring factors were the complexity of dealing with people who were selected for political reasons and not necessarily because of their skills, and the reality of having to cope with high staff turnover. This is considered to be a complex challenge that is not easy to address:

‘When you look at sustainable educational reforms, a number of lessons could be learned. You need to set clear and feasible long term objectives and then you should make sure the right people are involved. But that team should be a stable team. So the instability they [min. of education, red.] had in their workforce, yes, that was highly counterproductive’ (NPO-A).

Staff turnover was also perceived to be a hindering factor for capacity development in the Surinamese case study, as several respondents pointed out:

‘All of a sudden, people disappeared and had to be replaced, which weakens the team because they’ve missed the previous discussions’ (local NGO Suriname).

SLO also referred to the problems this created. The agency and the PCU had different ideas about team composition. They both disagreed with each other’s suggestions and in the end a compromise was made. The perceived hierarchy complicated matters. For example, the PCU was hesitant to include teachers for hierarchy reasons. Moreover, neither the ministry nor the PCU expressed obligation for ministry staff to join the teams. This example shows again how closely factors cohere and relate to each other. It also points at the necessity of critical success factors for capacity development and their impact when they are not sufficiently present.

4.3.4 Pillar 4: Collaborative learning

On-going learning

The literature review drew attention to an increased need for systems approaches for capacity development in addition to the mainstream results-based management perspective, with a strong focus on learning (including Baser & Morgan, 2008; Ortiz & Taylor, 2009; Watson, 2006). This also strongly came to the fore during the practice enquiry. All respondents regarded learning as a fundamental part of development trajectories.

‘Everything starts with capacity development’ (NPO-A).

Some respondents have elaborated this into a key principle: use the whole process as a capacity development activity and learning exercise for all stakeholders involved. IIEP and SLO stated to strive for systematic incorporation of this principle into their programmes. Although other respondents acknowledged the importance of doing so, the extent to which it is actually done varied and depended on the nature of the job to be performed. Who designs, develops and carries out capacity development activities differed per organisation and context:

'It depends on exactly the complexity of it. And whether the capacity is there in country or not. Where possible if the capacity is in country then we want national people, speaking national, suitable language' (NPO-C).

The general impression is that using the whole process as a capacity development activity is not always sufficiently done and seems to be complicated by varying factors, like not having the most suitable people on board, high staff turnover, competition, a lack of capacity, and time spans that are too short. When a change-supporting agency is only involved in an intervention during a short period of time, on-going capacity development is sometimes limited:

'The preparation of activities, that is one of the things I'd like to change. It's possible when you arrive earlier. It's not possible when you have to start the next day. If you have a week in advance to prepare, if you can divide and talk things through with people, then it is possible. That's how it should be because, to do that through email is not going to work' (SLO staff).

Some respondents specifically pointed out that learning does not only apply to the recipient country, but to all stakeholders involved, including agencies that support change. For this reason, SLO added a research component to most of its international activities in order to learn more about the process and the effectiveness of adopted approaches, and about its own role (see also below). Collaborative and mutual learning is also closely related to learning to understand a context and to being flexible as discussed under pillars 1 and 2. The following recommendations are geared towards the enhancement of collaborative learning.

Adopt participatory and contextualised approaches including (inter)-active and comprehensive learning

As already mentioned under pillar 1, all respondents specifically indicated to consider capacity development to be more than just training. One of the NPOs explained that within their organisation capacity development is carried out both through formal training, e.g. workshops, training courses, planning and review events, and through informal means like accompanying staff on monitoring missions, joint preparation and acquittal of budgets, and 'on-the-job' learning. Although some theoretical training is done, most capacity development is carried out in a practical way, usually in the context of the partners' work practice or in relation to specific activities. Similar kinds of activities were also mentioned by the two other NPOs. All respondents more or less indicated that capacity development is as participatory as possible, building on existing knowledge and

skills, is on-going and always a part of any working relationship between agency staff and partners.

Based on the outcomes of the research into the Surinamese project, a participatory approach for future curriculum development efforts is strongly recommended, in order to enhance sustainability of outcomes. The majority of the respondents felt highly involved in the process and experienced a personal or joint responsibility for the product. Such an iterative, systemic approach should include relevant stakeholders from all levels of the education sector to enhance ownership and broad support. At the same time, it opens up opportunities for capacity development and professionalization of all stakeholders involved in the entire process, provided a number of principles are taken into account (see the recommendations in this chapter). An iterative design approach, which includes different stakeholders, is preferable when the objective of a curriculum reform is to design and develop broad-based, contextualised, quality curriculum products. However, in many countries such an approach is not conventional and, also in Suriname, for several stakeholders even regarded to be uncomfortable due to existing traditional, often hierarchical structures.

'And you see, a certain direction is chosen but later on, I remember on the 2nd or 3rd day then you go back to something else, or you chose something else, or you modify, then you think: what are we doing? What are they [SLO, red.] doing? They don't know where they're going. Which raises all sorts of questions' (ministry staff Suriname).

'It sometimes seems as if people are used to be given directions. I often got the feedback: 'why don't you tell us what to do?' while I wanted to think and act with the group instead' (SLO staff).

'Every time things were added, sometimes I wondered: have they even thought things through before we started?' (Local NGO Suriname).

Therefore, the need for an iterative design approach should be emphasised repeatedly and regular attention should be paid to the consequences of such an approach, namely: a recursive way of developing.

Some respondents pointed out that capacity development and learning does not only apply to the recipient country but should apply to all stakeholders involved, including development agencies as learning organisations, being willing to learn during and from the process. This is also closely related to flexibility and its implications as described previously.

Although capacity development should go beyond training, training is often part of such trajectories. Exploration of the Uganda and NUFFIC interventions led to some statements regarding the specific execution of training. Participants seemed to benefit from an interactive approach, with plenty of room for active participation, interaction and discussion. The course content should as much as possible be linked and geared towards the local context, with a balanced equilibrium between theory and practice. In the case of Uganda, almost all participants indicated that they highly appreciated the approach of the course, which was considered to be interactive and to include much room for participants' involvement, especially because of the strong focus on and activities related to the Ugandan context. They indicated that this made the course practical, relevant and functional:

'My expectations are more than met. The course was very successful. There is so much theory, we expected to be given problems, including solutions. That's it. But it was about our opinion, solutions coming from us' (participant Uganda).

The evaluation of the NUFFIC course showed similar outcomes. Almost all participants stated that the way in which the course was executed was highly beneficial and positively contributed to their professional learning.

'To a great extent this course met my professional learning needs. Practically all the topics covered were very relevant, including the school visits. The mini-workshops, assignments and exercises made it all the more interesting and relevant' (participant NUFFIC course).

Develop proper monitoring and evaluation systems

All respondents specified the need for evaluation of programmes and projects, both formative and summative, but almost all indicated a perceived lack of proper indicators, specifically to measure the quality of an intervention and the level of capacity development.

'In general I would say that capacity building activities are not being satisfactorily evaluated, by us nor any other agencies that I know' (NPO-B).

Most respondents indicated a need for both formative and summative evaluations, but appeared to struggle with it, especially with formative evaluation. One respondent explained that:

'What I'd rather like to see myself [...] and I've advocated but it didn't work out very well, I'd like to make evaluation more part of the design, more formative but it seems that people still find that difficult, which may have to do with the capacity and the professionalization of the organisation itself. And also with the fact that there are relatively few people with an educational background. [...] Although a lot of good work is being done, it all happens rather intuitively' (NPO-A).

In addition, it was stated that change processes are slow, unpredictable to a certain extent and prone to external influences outside the sphere of influence. This makes it fairly complicated to evaluate them according to predefined indicators, and to define and relate possible success to a specific approach or pedagogy:

'It is also difficult to evaluate such programs because evidence of genuine capacity building will only emerge over time, generally a much longer period of time than that covered by a development project and able to be picked up by end of project evaluations. Projects end, donors and agencies move on, fads and fashions rise and fall, there may be little continuity. Few agencies are able to carry out the kind of longitudinal studies required to come to any conclusions about what makes an effective capacity development program, despite the obvious importance of doing so' (NPO-B).

Almost all respondents indicated that evaluation is often not done frequently and properly enough, and that evaluation of capacity development efforts in particular is a complicated exercise. The actual output is usually recorded by most, which is fairly straightforward: number of people trained; type of workshops carried out, etc. Specific events like trainings or workshops are commonly evaluated through simple questionnaires such as feedback sheets, but almost all respondents indicated that not much is done with these kinds of exercises.

'And yes, every workshop hands out an evaluation form at the end that says: 'Teachers did you enjoy this?' or: 'Participants did you enjoy this?' And yes, they happen. I think cynical about what data you actually get from those which is valuable, I think it says whether people valued or enjoyed the last two days, one hour, whatever' (NPO-C).

Most respondents specified that long-term capacity development efforts are usually evaluated through project evaluations, but by far not always in a systematic way. IIEP stated that both formative and summative evaluation is considered to be highly valuable for the process and the eventual results, and

should therefore be built-in during the project design stage. SLO indicated that it tries to incorporate both formative and summative evaluation within project design, but also pointed out that they sometimes struggle to convince partners of the importance of evaluation. Concluding, in general it is felt that more attention should be paid to the development of proper indicators to measure success, see below.

Most respondents indicated that if capacity development is measured, it is done rather intuitively considering much of the input is informal: through working on a day-to-day basis on capacity development and learning by doing things together. According to one respondent, most experienced development workers:

'Rely on anecdotal evidence or their own experiences over time to make judgements about what is most and least effective in capacity building programs' (NPO-B).

Sometimes evidence is used to show something was successful, e.g. looking at behavioural change, or 'seeing people grow' while working with them over long periods of time. But most of these evaluations are neither done in a systematic way nor through qualitative indicators. One respondent suggested that:

'Probably the best measure of effectiveness is in the quality of the working relationships with partners during projects and the general levels of satisfaction with progress' (NPO-B).

Although this is certainly a valid point, the question remains whether these kinds of evaluations should be done through more formal indicators. Curricular capacity interventions carried out by SLO thus far were evaluated on an on-going basis by adding research strands to most of the international activities, which is considered to be fairly satisfactory. Capacity development is mostly measured through surveys, questionnaires and interviews. However, it is felt that expansion of quality data collection is desirable and a need for more in-depth data was expressed, e.g. by conducting more interviews. IIEP felt there is a need for more proper monitoring and evaluation systems with appropriate indicators. IIEP's programmes focus on long-term changes, which are not always clearly visible, including attitudes, culture, self-confidence, resistance and autonomy. Many evaluation systems and indicator systems tend to be short-term and focusing on quantifiable items only. There is a stated need for the development of indicators or any other form of measurement to capture organisational change, and to see what beneficiaries are capable of as a collective unit that led to change. As an option, they suggested to diversify the sources of information in order to capture both quantitative and qualitative change. This is

increasingly done so by IIEP, e.g. by making explicit the choice of strategies: why were they chosen, for what particular purpose and objectives, and, at regular intervals during the implementation, monitor if the strategy still applies. This is done through discussion with beneficiaries and colleagues. Further, attempts are made to list the qualitative results through surveys and through reflection sessions and open discussions with participants and partners. This strategy was also mentioned by another respondent, who stated to have good experiences with such reflection sessions. The output of these sessions was subsequently used for a) the evaluation of capacity development of stakeholders, and b) as input for upcoming annual planning.

IIEP made some additional suggestions for qualitative evaluation. An idea for future activities is for participants to keep a logbook or portfolio with personal reflections on what is learned during a trajectory; if, and how the organisation has changed or is changing; what has been valuable; what has been challenging, etc. In this way, the kind of capacity that is developed could be formalised and it is also a professional way to reflect on what is, or is not acquired and what investments should, or should not be made anymore in the future. Such an approach delivers input for reflection and stimulates the development of reflective practitioners who feel responsible, both beneficiaries and change-supporting agents.

There seemed general consensus on the need for monitoring and evaluation, and on the need for summative evaluation to be carried out by an independent third party who is sufficiently knowledgeable and critical, but not involved in the intervention. IIEP's programmes are regularly evaluated by independent evaluators, but they expressed the wish to also be critically evaluated by their donors in the future.

Strengthening supply and demand for capacities

All consulted agencies were convinced of the necessity to provide support that is demanded by the recipient country. It is believed that such support increases space for ownership and responsibility, and might imply that the desire for change is intrinsic, as opposed to being imposed.

'Capacity building is an organizational expectation in nearly all of our projects so in that respect, there is a strong element of it being supply driven' [supply based on a certain demand] (NPO-B).

One of the respondents explained that the organisation specifically looks at the demands a country makes, and that the recipient country makes the final decision regarding the work to be done. But although demand-driven support might imply an intrinsic motivation for change, which in turn increases the chance for capacity development to be successful, IIEP and one NPO argued that in addition, efforts should be made to also create demand:

'We also have to generate a demand. If we don't generate a demand, people are passive participants rather than engaged' (NPO-C).

IIEP stated that a good capacity development programme or plan (see also pillar 1) should contain a package of interventions that tries to have an impact on the different levels, while also strengthening supply and demand for capacities and social accountability. For curriculum development activities, this could mean e.g. to make teachers co-evaluators of the curriculum development department, in order to create a demand for better capacity and curricular products, and exercising pressure for social accountability.

An example of how a reform may increase social accountability came from Suriname. Eight months after the project was finished, an additional number of interviews were carried out, in order to get more insight into the current situation and how the education reform had further developed. The director of one of the school boards made mention of bottom up pressure, from schools and school boards to the ministry, for continuation of the initiated educational developments:

'The pressure from schools, from school boards to continue with this is so strong that the ministry is also more or less forced not to let it come to a standstill. Look, what I hear is: 'It's so good for the children', which makes that people, let's say force the ministry: you have to continue. There must be a continuation of the reform into the next grade' (director school board Suriname).

This perceived need from change-supporting agencies for generating demand seems to imply that they feel their partners may not always be aware or able to estimate what it is they need. Of course, this does not necessarily have to lead to an imposed, exogenous supply, although agencies should be aware of this possible paradox, which may be coined as the ownership paradox in international cooperation.

All respondents indicated to focus on the development of skills that are needed for specific jobs, but except for IIEP, did not specify what kind of capacity development they were after.

'The whole nature, a lot of NGO work is trying to change cultural behaviour'
(NPO-C).

IIEP took it a step further by making an articulated distinction between professional content capacity and transversal skills. IIEP's focus has long been on strengthening professional content capacity, but increasingly also on transversal, or 'soft skills' that are needed for an organisation to function properly, such as enhancing creative and critical thinking; professional autonomy; the capacity to resist; relationship building; professional maturity; self-confidence; negotiation; communication; and leadership skills. Other respondents indirectly pointed out that they touch upon such skills by working together on a day-to-day basis, but did not specifically describe them.

4.3.5 Pillar 5: Strategic thinking & action

Additional pillar

As already explained in section 4.2, the exploration of practice identified an additional fifth pillar. While analysing the data, a set of additional insights and recommendations emerged that could not logically be linked to one of the other pillars, but are nevertheless considered to be important for capacity development processes. These principles are captured under this additional fifth pillar: strategic thinking and action, and include the following recommendations.

Acknowledge that change takes time

All respondents stressed the need for acknowledgement by all partners that change, including capacity development takes time. There was unanimous agreement that enough time must be available in order to guarantee the process to be used as a capacity development activity itself, and to get the job done. At the same time, all respondents stated that there is much tension between this acknowledgement, and the often present strong desire for quick results. In Suriname, lack of time seriously hindered the space for curricular capacity development:

'It's important for me that curriculum development is a profession, an art in itself. And you need to be able to think about it, you need to be able to discuss, then a draft appears which you have to re-read and over again, but we didn't have that time' (local NGO Suriname).

'You have to put the process of change in motion and support it, while at the same time bring in specific subject content that people are unfamiliar with. That is complicated and becomes an obstacle if you have to work under such an enormous time pressure' (SLO staff).

Particularly in circumstances where curriculum expertise is limited, enough time should be allowed for the different core activities of curriculum development (see figure 1.2) in order to guarantee quality curricular products, and also to allow for the most optimal process conditions that should be used as a means to strengthen capacity of stakeholders. One of the participants in Uganda suggested having several shorter courses instead of one extensive course:

'If we could structure it in five days, then time for implementation, then another 5 days, implementation and so on, would give more result. But then you should stay longer and that would cost money and your time' (participant Uganda course).

Ensure context-relevant, long-term strategic plans including short-term achievements

There was broad consensus that change takes time, and that acknowledgement of this fact by all partners is of great importance. At the same time, all respondents pointed at tension between this acknowledgement, and an already mentioned strong desire for quick results. Therefore, IIEP advocated the need for long term planning, while at the same time aiming for short-term achievements. But reality showed that this is not always easy. One of the main factors that cause this tension seems to be of political nature. Priorities of ministries sometimes change (too) rapidly. Several respondents pointed out the difficulty of setting goals, which is usually related to long-term planning, and the usually often short-term time span of politics.

'They [ministry] ignored a certain kind of educational basic principle: that change is always slow. And that many reforms fail. They wanted too much, too fast, with too few resources' (NPO-A).

As often is the case, there were strong indications that when political interests are at stake, the pressure for quick delivery increases. One of the respondents explained that educational reforms, including their characteristics, are not always consistent with prevailing political ambitions. Huge pressure and responsibility to perform was put on ministry staff, demanding unrealistic outcomes in way too short timespans, which affected both process and quality of what was being developed in a negative way.

'There was, let's say, technical vocational education and there was a sort of general education stream [...]. At the beginning of the school year it was decided that it should be turned into one educational stream, and, can you imagine, the year after it was implemented: from now on you're going to do it like this. And those people had absolutely no idea what happened to them, what they should do, what should be changed. The teaching and learning resources weren't there, communication was lacking, it was chaos. Just a terrible, big chaos' (NPO-A).

In this country, heavy pressures also led to frequent changes in the workforce, a complexity as discussed previously, which turned out to impede capacity development.

In Suriname, similar difficulties were encountered. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that organisational institutions and culture within the ministry constrained curriculum development, including capacity development of staff. The problems in education were repeatedly mapped out in reports, analyses etc., but policy seemed to break down the moment when taking action was required. This could be due to a lack of capacity but also to political inability and/or lack of political will. The way the ministry operated did not always favour strategic thinking and action. The research showed that there was much talk about the need for quality education for over 25 years. But considering the frequent changes in short-term policy decisions, the ministry seemed unable to take purposeful action based on long-term policy plans. Ministry policies sometimes even contradicted themselves, which caused confusion, especially at grassroots level. This problem was also addressed by several interviewees.

'An integral approach is totally lacking, with all kinds of harmful consequences as a result' (Surinamese teacher).

There were indications that because of the aforementioned lack of coordination and cooperation, and leadership practice, departments and affiliates were in a position to make their own policy. This might explain why ministry staff and its affiliates were able to operate rather independently, which did not contribute to the envisioned broad-based sustainable reforms.

'I was actually shocked when I was called by the interim director of education. I had to attend a meeting because there was a team developing the curriculum of the pedagogical institutes, maths. Someone else was working at the teacher training college for secondary education and nobody knew anything about each other's work. I say, the ministry should have taken care of, I mean, if they are now working on a new curriculum for

the pedagogical institutes, then they must know what is happening at the level of primary education, because those students have to be prepared for teaching at primary level' (local NGO Suriname).

'It is too soon to tell whether it has worked. There's too much politics involved. We only need one person to say: 'away with it!' And it will be off the table' (Surinamese teacher).

Change is thus a long-term process and it takes time before possible impacts of a curricular reform become visible and measurable. It is therefore recommended to design and adhere to long-term strategic plans, instead of constant deviations and the adoption of un-systemic, short term plans primarily focusing on quick results. Such decisions usually seem to be taken at an ad hoc basis, guided by hurdles that are encountered during the process. This does not mean that a plan should be followed rigidly, regardless changing circumstances, but implies that a balance should be struck between holding your course (Fullan, 2007) and being flexible, as earlier propagated and as further elaborated on below. Curriculum development based on the proposed cycle of analysis, design, development, implementation and on-going evaluation ensures the development process to be constantly monitored and evaluated and allows for well-informed adjustments if necessary.

Adopt a flexible attitude

'I think that that is extremely important, that organisations take on a very flexible attitude. And sometimes, it works against you but you must be really flexible' (NPO-A).

All respondents stressed the necessity for being flexible in general. IIEP highlighted that being flexible is important to be able to adapt approaches to each and every context, which has some implications. i) Agencies should be ready to rethink an approach for every context; ii) Agencies should explain in advance and in an explicit manner how and why this specific choice of activities and strategies is made. A design rarely fully fits the context; there will always be a risk of mismatch in approach and needs. iii) Agencies should be ready to renegotiate and adapt the theory of change behind the intervention; which implies that building in room to change the plan is necessary. They advocated that donors should provide this room by allowing enough time within the contract, and by allowing adjustments and extensions if this will lead to more sustainable results. Sometimes this room is provided, but there are also cases where room for flexibility was very limited, which may have detrimental effects on the envisaged quality and results. The Suriname research showed that

the somewhat rigid attitude of the donor and the PCU put an enormous time pressure on the development teams, which hindered the quality of both the capacity development process and the curricular products, see also below. A flexible approach is also essential in the case of short-term interventions, like a two-week course:

'We sign a deal to go and do it, like in Uganda, but what is really going on, what the real questions are, that is actually being [answered] on the spot. Yes, when we're there. But that means you got to be prepared to improvise. Take on last minute changes in your programme because that better suits the needs that only then become clear. Flexibility right?' (SLO staff).

SLO stated that because of the short time span and the often very limited opportunities to get to know the context before the activities start, agencies should be prepared to improvise and to make last-minute changes in their programme if that better suits the needs that may come to the fore once actually in country.

Provide clear and frequent communication regarding and throughout the whole intervention

All sources stated the need for clear and frequent communication within, and about a specific intervention. Communication is regarded to be necessary between a) stakeholders who are directly involved in the intervention; b) between ministries/affiliates and c) to society as a whole. In Suriname, all respondents felt that general communication within and about the project could have been more supportive. The vast majority felt that the perceived lack of communication and coordination contributed to feelings of demotivation, confusion and frustration.

'Everything hinges on communication. If you don't communicate, and also when communication to society is bad, you will get a lot of different perspectives' (Surinamese teacher).

In order to diminish such feelings and waste of resources, and to enhance ownership and broad-based support, frequent communication between involved stakeholders is strongly recommended. This could be done directly, e.g. through frequent, systematic face-to-face consultations, meetings and workshops, or indirectly, e.g. by sending out circulars, newsletters, minutes, etc. This has been done to a certain extent, although apparently several stakeholders did not perceive this as such.

Alignment with and communication between ministry departments is perceived to be indispensable for an intervention to be successful. This is closely related to

the need for a leading and cooperative ministry; cooperation and coordination between departments; and the need to operate from a joint vision (see also previous pillars). If this is absent, there is a danger that departments and/or affiliates start to work towards different goals, and might change course. There appears to be a relation between the level of communication and politics. NPO-A described that staff was being judged on results, which could have far stretching consequences, such as losing their job. As a result, while trying to achieve those goals, people tended to isolate themselves, unable or unwilling to see what others were doing and sometimes pursuing different goals. This NPO provided an example where new books were just purchased and education standards were revised, when other ministry staff decided to start changing the curriculum based on very different insights, and not in line with the new teaching and learning resources. Lack of communication and not having a clear overview played an important part here. The case of Suriname showed similar examples. Several respondents raised for example the case of curriculum development efforts at the pedagogical institutes that nobody knew about, due to a general lack of communication and coordination.

‘What I’m trying to say is, that actions being undertaken in the field, no matter how well intended, should have a joint starting point and a joint final destination. And the ministry, this is not only about the project, is in charge of policy and has political responsibility, so the ministry should make sure that organisations that are working in education communicate with each other’ (Suriname teacher).

The majority mentioned the existence of a strong island-mentality within the ministry and affiliates and stated their worries and dissatisfaction regarding the lack of communication by the ministry. The Suriname research also showed that the perceived lack of information provided to the public caused problems. The vast majority stated that society hardly knew about the project and about what was happening.

‘There hasn’t been any communication. Absolutely, people didn’t know. Also the part of the pre-primary has not been communicated well. Some people didn’t even know that it is implemented’ (local NGO Suriname).

Although data showed that the vast majority of the respondents were very dissatisfied with the level of communication within the project and about the project to society, observations learned that society was informed through articles in newspapers, items on TV, etc. However, Surinamese media do not have a strong tradition of fact tracking, and in addition, anyone is more or less free to publish whatever they want. Verification of content often does not, or not

sufficiently takes place, resulting in incorrect and sometimes even contradictory messages with all kinds of confusing consequences.

In order to keep stakeholders and wider society informed about a project and its developments, a communication plan should be carefully designed and carried out systematically. Communicating a coherent story and keeping stakeholders and the public informed about steps being taken and decisions being made can positively contribute to a sense of involvement and ownership. It also may diminish or prevent the spread of incorrect information. This could be realised through national and/or local media (like newspapers, TV, radio, internet), the organisation of stakeholder conferences and consultations, meetings, etc.

Ensure sufficient resources and make an informed decision regarding incentives

All respondents felt that sufficient resources should be made available to partners in order to carry out the work properly. The provision of incentives on the other hand is generally a frequently debated subject, but was only briefly touched upon in the interviews. There seemed to be a tendency to be careful with provision of financial incentives, because of the widespread conception it may hinder sustainability. Nevertheless, there were exceptions, depending on the mandate of an agency. For example, NPO-B co-executed projects and programmes, but also provided financial support to local governments. This enabled them to take official capacity development programmes into areas where they would normally not be able to go because of inadequate training budgets. Although the use of incentives was not extensively discussed during the interviews, experiences in Suriname showed how disagreement over incentives could have a negative impact on the process and can be an impeding factor for capacity development if not properly arranged for. Ministry staff indicated that financial issues caused problems to them and stated that financial incentives were unclear from the outset.

'If you promise people money, you have to pay them' (ministry staff Suriname).

Several respondents stated that financial issues caused problems in the development teams and hindered the work and process. Due to those financial disagreements, the work of one team even came to a complete standstill. It is recommended that the discussion regarding whether or not to provide incentives is conducted at the design stage of an intervention. If incentives are provided, all parties involved should have clear contracts, preferably signed at the beginning of the intervention. Within these contracts, remunerations should be clearly stated and be brought under the attention of participants.

Provide clear statements of responsibilities of key partners

This recommendation specifically came from the Suriname research, and was not raised as such by other respondents. However, the absence of clear statements related to responsibilities of partners had severe impact on the curriculum development process and the eventual outcomes. Therefore it was decided to take on this recommendation, since it may be of importance for possible future curricular capacity development interventions.

The Suriname case learned that due to lack of a genuine partnership; coupled with an unfavourable leadership style; insufficient communication and coordination; and not having clearly defined roles and responsibilities of partners involved, led to complicated project implementation. The change-supporting agency ended up carrying out work that should have been done by the partners, or at least together with the partners, which put the organisation into an awkward position. The agency got more or less forced into a position where it had to lead the process, while it was felt it should have supported the trajectory instead. Therefore it is recommended that the roles of key partners that participate in the reform are well described and that responsibilities are clearly marked out from the outset.

Permanent residence in, or frequently visiting the supported country

The Suriname research pointed out that, in order to build and foster good relationships, long-term staff based in country is highly recommended. Working together with local colleagues on a daily basis enhances knowledge regarding cultures and local contexts, which is likely to increase mutual understanding, trust and good relationships. If permanent residence is not possible, which was the case for several experts involved in supporting the development teams, options for frequent visits in combination with distance support could be the next best alternative. However, over 50% of the respondents expressed the desire for on-going external curriculum expertise input and stated that they would have preferred the expert to be permanently based in Suriname instead of frequent visits.

‘What we needed was a full-time coordinator, here in Suriname. Because, [...] you have teachers and there’s us from curriculum development, but you don’t have a maths expert’ (ministry staff Suriname).

One of the NPOs also underlined the necessity of having (international) staff permanently residing in country for reasons including relationship building, getting to know the local context, gaining trust and creating a mutual understanding. Their offices comprised both local and international staff. The

other two NPOs also made mention of mixed staff in local offices, with regular visits from (international) experts.

IIEP was more cautious when it comes to permanent residency in a particular country. They emphasised that frequent visits provide the opportunity to get a better understanding of the context, to build good relationships and also to revise and adjust strategies along the way. But on the other hand, they warned that due to being physically present in a country, involved stakeholders might start to rely on the external agency to do the work for them. It is argued that the choice for permanent residence or frequent visits depends on the kind of work that has to be performed and the specific context where the work takes place, including the level of existing capacity. Based on the experiences in Suriname, it would have been virtually impossible to support such an extensive curricular capacity development trajectory at distance, without having at least one expert permanently in country. The choice for frequent visits versus being permanently based in a country also depend on available resources, such as money, time and available staff.

4.4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The rich data that derived from all previous chapters led to subsequent prototypes for the intended approach and related conceptual framework under construction, now consisting of five pillars and a number of corresponding guidelines and recommendations, listed as subheadings under each pillar in this chapter. Although most guidelines and recommendations could be logically placed under a specific pillar, it could be argued that some of them may also be positioned under different pillars than where they are grouped now. This illustrates the strong interconnection and interdependence of the pillars and recommendations and strengthens the idea that they should not be dealt with in isolation of each other. Metaphorically speaking, the foundation should be regarded as much as possible as a meal, not a menu (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). During the interviews this became clear on a number of occasions. One of the NPOs summarised it as follows:

'One of the challenges I think we face is applying them all in conjunction with each other' (NPO C).

But also:

'Sometimes one should be careful not to, also overestimate the impact that capacity development is supposed to have. I think. There has to be a degree of realism' (IIEP staff).

During the interviews, the need for more coherent and comprehensive approaches was frequently expressed. However, there was also wide recognition that, no matter how comprehensive an approach, change processes can never be fully controlled:

‘Design principles might work towards successful capacity development, but due to complexity there will always be uncertainties, dependency on others, which makes the exercise erratic to a certain extent’ (IIEP staff).

The previous chapters listed and illustrated a wide number of fundamental insights, critical success factors and various guidelines and recommendations for curricular capacity development within an international development context, resulting in a vast and extensive list that could be perceived as quite daunting, and may promote or encourage selectivity. In order to make things more concise, user-friendly and manageable, and with the purpose of increasing a conjunctive application, all findings are synthesised, summarized and translated into a set of tentative design principles for the intended approach, which is operationalized through a conceptual framework that reflects the approach. The next chapter will present the design principles for the approach, the corresponding conceptual framework, and elaborates on some practical implications for external agents supporting curriculum development interventions.

CHAPTER 5 THE PROPOSED APPROACH AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The last chapter of this research stage presents the tentative set of design principles and the intended sustainable curriculum development approach, including the corresponding conceptual framework. The chapter starts with a synthesis of yielded data from the previous chapters (section 5.1), which are translated to curriculum development within the international development context. A concise description of the assumed purpose of sustainable curriculum development interventions in general is presented, followed by the definition of curricular capacity development used for this research. The synthesised findings have led to the formulation of a set of tentative design principles that underpin the proposed systemic collaborative design approach. This approach is operationalized through the associated framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development, which consists of the earlier presented pillars and related heuristics. The chapter continues with a discussion regarding practical implications for application of the approach and the framework related to change-supporting agents' roles, and capacities to be developed, and provides an overview of what matching curricular capacity development activities could look like. Section 5.2 introduces the curricular capacity development disk in which roles, capacities and activities are brought together. Section 5.3 concludes with some last remarks related to the proposed approach.

5.1 SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW AND EXPLORATION OF PRACTICE

5.1.1 Purpose and definition of curricular capacity development




As introduced in the first chapter, this study takes a comprehensive and systemic perspective on curriculum as starting point. It assumes that the underlying purpose of any curriculum development intervention should be to provide partners with the appropriate curriculum theory, tools and support to enable them to make well-informed decisions related to their curricular issues, in order to come to more relevant, consistent, practical, efficient, effective and eventually sustainable curriculum reforms. This implies capacity development to be both means and end; the eventual curriculum outcome is formed by and takes shape through the curriculum development process. Curriculum development interventions may comprise a broad range of activities, varying from short course provision, to the support of a full curriculum reform (see also section 5.2).

This study assumes capacity to be the emergent combination of individual competencies, collective capabilities, assets and relationships that enables a human system to create value (based on Baser & Morgan, 2008). Curricular capacity development in turn is considered to be any activity that specifically aims at enabling partners to make informed curricular choices, and to develop broad-based quality curricula, or curricular products that suit partners' needs, wishes and context.

5.1.2 Tentative design principles for the intended approach and conceptual framework

The findings of the literature review and exploration of practice resulted in the formulation of a set of tentative design principles for a sustainable curriculum development approach that aims to enable and support the development and implementation of quality curricula through capacity development. These design principles are formulated by analogy with the formula of van den Akker (2013):

If a change-supporting agent is involved in a curriculum development intervention that aims to enhance the sustainability of its outcomes, then it is best advised to adopt a systemic, collaborative design approach that strongly interconnects curricular capacity development of stakeholders and the development of improved curricula, in order to i) optimise the curriculum development process; ii) enhance the quality of the curriculum; and iii) strengthen its implementation, because:

-  **Capacity levels**
Curriculum strategies benefit from a thorough curriculum assessment (including a problem, context and needs analysis and analysis of the knowledge base), taking into account multiple and interconnected capacity levels: the individual, organisational and institutional levels, and the social, political and economic context
-  **Partnerships through dialogue**
Curriculum interventions benefit from genuine partnerships based on trust, open-mindedness, collegial dialogue and mutual accountability
-  **Ownership & harmonisation**
Curriculum interventions benefit from the presence of a certain readiness for change, coupled with local leadership and ownership; alignment; coordination and cooperation; departing from a shared vision

- *Collaborative learning*
Curricular capacity benefits from collaborative, participatory, learning-oriented and context-relevant approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability
- *Strategic thinking and action*
Curricular capacity development interventions benefit from a systemic perspective, including strategic choices that strengthen ownership and harmonisation, partnerships, collaborative learning and the quality of process and products

The design principles underpin the systemic collaborative design approach, which is operationalized through the framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development (SCCD). The SCCD framework consists of five interrelated pillars that reflect the design principles underlying the approach. In addition, the synthesis of exploration of theory and practice also led to the identification of a number of guidelines and recommendations, the so-called heuristics (see also below), which are structured along the corresponding framework pillars. The framework is designed as conceptual tool that aims to guide change-supporting agents through the design and implementation of systemic collaborative curriculum development interventions, but also as an evaluative tool to analyse such interventions. Through the described iterative development process, the design principles, the proposed approach and the related framework were gradually built up. The final prototype of the framework was presented and discussed during a research workshop with experts and practitioners at the ECER conference of 2014. Based on the provided input the framework was further refined and finalised into the version as presented below (see fig. 5.1).

The framework roughly consists of four interrelated parts: the five pillars; pillar statements that contain acknowledgement of critical success factors; and a number of heuristics per pillar. These heuristics should be understood as guiding principles, favourable advice and actions that may positively contribute to the strengthening, fulfilment, implementation and/or realisation of the respective pillars, and are classified under the most relevant and obvious pillar. Due to the limitations of written accounts, the pillars and heuristics are listed in a somewhat linear way. However, it is stressed that they should not be regarded as such. They are intertwined, interrelated and exactly when they should be acted upon during an intervention depends on the specific context. Although most heuristics could be logically placed under a specific pillar, it could be argued that some of them could also be categorised under different pillars than where they are grouped now. This illustrates the strong interconnection and interdependence of the pillars and strengthens the aforementioned idea that the framework



 Capacity levels	 Partnerships through dialogue	 Ownership & harmonisation
<p>Curriculum strategies benefit from a thorough curriculum assessment (including a problem, context and needs analysis and analysis of the knowledge base), taking into account multiple and interconnected capacity levels: the individual, organisational and institutional levels, and the social, political and economic context</p>	<p>Curriculum interventions benefit from genuine partnerships based on trust, open mindedness, collegial dialogue and mutual accountability</p>	<p>Curriculum interventions benefit from the presence of a certain readiness for change, coupled with local leadership and ownership; alignment; coordination and cooperation; departing from a shared vision</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn to understand the context to decide what could be influenced and changed 2. Carry out a curriculum assessment with a team consisting of national* and international experts, preferably led by a national coordinator 3. Collaboratively formulate a vision as starting point for further curriculum development 4. Translate the outcomes of the assessment into a curriculum development plan, aligned with national education policy and plans 5. Integrate learning into the overall development plan, offering diversified training programmes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commit to long-term partnerships 2. Invest in relationships 3. Adopt a flexible attitude 4. Adopt a coaching and mentoring role while respecting national leadership and autonomy 5. Seek alignment with actors working in the same field, encouraging multi stakeholder partnerships for improved education delivery 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt and promote participatory approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability through encouragement of leadership, involvement, commitment and ownership 2. Consult relevant stakeholders and include suitable professionals to carry out the intervention 3. Make as much as possible use of existing capacity, guiding and coaching national* experts 4. Promote cooperation, coordination and alignment between ministries, and between ministries, NGOs and other change supporting agents to collaboratively work towards fulfilling the curricular and educational development plans

Figure 5.1 The framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development

*In this framework, 'national' refers to staff from the partner country, and may relate to nationals at macro, meso and micro level

THE PROPOSED APPROACH AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

 Collaborative learning	 Strategic thinking & action
<p>Curricular capacity benefits from collaborative, participatory, learning-oriented and context relevant approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability</p>	<p>Curricular capacity development interventions benefit from a systemic perspective, including strategic choices that strengthen ownership and harmonisation, partnerships, collaborative learning and the quality of process and products</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in capacity development as a continuous learning experience: use the entire intervention as a capacity development learning process for all involved stakeholders 2. Adopt and promote collaborative, learning oriented approaches, including (inter)active and comprehensive learning, appropriate to local context and circumstances 3. Collaboratively agree on capacities that are to be developed, on indicators for capacity development goals and successes, and review them on a regular basis 4. Strengthen supply and demand for capacity, both professional content capacity and transversal skills 5. Build in formative and summative evaluations of both products and capacity development process 6. Monitor the role and contribution of practitioners 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge that change takes time, build in and allow sufficient time to carry out the intervention 2. Provide clear and frequent communication regarding, and throughout the intervention 3. Collaborative develop curriculum development strategies, where general feasibility, flexibility and adaptability to local circumstances are key 4. Make curriculum strategies and choices clear and fit for purpose, and adapt if circumstances so dictate 5. Ensure sufficient resources and make an informed decision regarding provision of incentives 6. Provide clear statements of responsibilities of all involved key partners 7. Consider permanent residence in, or frequently visiting the country

parts should not be dealt with in isolation of each other. The fourth part of the framework, which is not visualised in figure 5.1 but nevertheless takes up an important share, is the systemic curriculum development theory as introduced in chapter 1, and which is further elaborated on in section 5.2. It is recognised that change-supporting agents involved in curriculum interventions may only have limited influence on the development process. Leeway may be facilitated or hindered by various factors that are not always within direct sphere of influence. However, it is expected that interventions designed and executed as much as possible based on the framework may generate increased sustainable outcomes.

5.2 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR CHANGE-SUPPORTING AGENTS

5.2.1 Implications of the intended approach

Adoption of the proposed systemic collaborative design approach for sustainable curriculum development as operationalized through the corresponding framework has implications for the change-supporting agent, i.e. the external curriculum expert. The approach requires a certain perspective and knowledge related to suitable roles that change-supporting agents could take up. In addition, having a general overview of possible curricular capacity categories and appropriate curricular activities is recommended when supporting a curriculum development intervention. The following sections reflect on such capacities, roles and activities.

5.2.2 Curricular Capacities

During future interventions, the assumed focus should be on strengthening capacities that are needed related to the components of the curricular spider's web (see figure 1.1) and related to the core activities of curriculum development: analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation (see figure 1.2). However, as discussed in chapter 3, development of specific capacities should not be prescribed because this depends on the aim of an intervention, and should ideally be determined in dialogue with partners. Nevertheless, the curriculum literature offers some overviews of possible curriculum competences that provide useful directions. Such a conceptual outline can provide a sense of direction, without being prescriptive. Based on several overviews, Nieveen and van der Hoeven (2011) distinguish six curricular capacity categories: subject matter expertise; pedagogical expertise; curricular consistency capacity; curricular problem-solving capacity; intra-personal and inter-personal capacities. The first four categories directly apply to the substantive core of curriculum

development, the last two categories could be seen as overarching, transversal skills that are conducive to the process. These capacity categories are integrated in the curricular capacity development disc as presented in section 5.2.5.

5.2.3 Change-supporting agents' roles

Several framework heuristics make reference to or imply a preferred attitude of external agents that are involved in supporting curriculum development interventions. Champion, Kiel and McLendon (2010) identified nine specific roles that a consultant could choose in capacity development processes, which could also be useful for conceptualisation purposes for change-supporting agents. This may help to make a well-informed choice for roles that best match a specific activity in a specific context, in order to strengthen the capacity of partners as optimally as possible. The consulting role grid (see table 5.1) provides nine options for a consultant - in this case the supporting agent - in a given situation, with varying responsibilities for growth and results for both client and agent.

Table 5.1 The consulting role grid (Champion et al., 2010)

↑ Responsibility for client growth	Counsellor	Coach	Partner
	Facilitator	Teacher	Modeller
	Reflective observer	Technical advisor	Hands-on expert

→ Consultant responsibility for project results

The grid is developed to better match appropriate levels of involvement of change-supporting agents with intended outcomes, and enables dialogue in this regard between agents and clients, in this case: the partners. The grid makes a distinction in levels of intervention for each role: low, moderate and high. A concise description of each role is provided in table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2 Description of roles (Champion et al., 2010)

Low intervention roles	<i>Reflective observer</i>	Client is primarily responsible for intended results and capacity development, consultant providing feedback based on observations and impressions
	<i>Facilitator</i>	Consultant facilitates process-oriented activities (e.g. convening, collating and displaying data and providing techniques like problem analysis, brainstorming, planning), client may absorb processes and techniques as employed by the facilitator
	<i>Technical advisor</i>	Client uses advisor's expertise for a specific purpose; consultant has moderate responsibility for results and low focus on capacity development of client
	<i>Counsellor</i>	Strong focus on capacity development to enable client to perform the task, supporting client in clarifying and setting of goals, maintaining positive motivation and development and implementation of effective plans
Moderate intervention roles	<i>Coach</i>	Client is mainly responsible for the task to be performed, consultant uses highly directed instructional techniques for performance improvement: prescribing and observing practice sequences and providing feedback, advice and support during the job performance, e.g. observation of client leading a meeting and discussion of results afterwards
	<i>Teacher/trainer</i>	Consultant is mainly concerned with general performance rather than performance in specific situation, focusing on general knowledge building and mastering skills
High intervention roles	<i>Partner</i>	Implies high and shared responsibility for growth and results and assumes both client and consultant to have the capacity for successful performance. It assumes that the consultant is able to teach, and the client is willing to learn in a hands-on way
	Modeller	Consultant highly responsible for results and carries out the task for the client, with some room for capacity development of client through the display of certain approaches and techniques and by being available for answering questions about what is being done and why. It implies that in the future the client may carry out tasks themselves
	Hands-on expert	Consultant undertakes the task on behalf of the client and carries most/all responsibility for achieving results. Very limited focus on capacity development of client and implies the consultant is needed again for future performance

A few comments on the roles should be made. The partner role could be seen as overarching and, in line with the framework, should be the point of departure: partners with different expertise working together and being mutually accountable for the outcomes, but comes with a critical footnote: partners should be willing to learn from *each other* instead of assuming the learning only to come from the client as Champion et al. (2000) suggest. Since the purpose of interventions described in this study is strengthening curricular capacity, it will be quite obvious that roles like hands-on expert and technical advisor, where

(almost) all responsibility lies with the change-supporting agent and with low, to no focus on capacity development are not desirable, since that would in principle be at odds with the framework. Although the provision of technical advice may be desired, it seems more beneficial to do so in another capacity, for example in the role of counsellor or trainer. Highly beneficial to capacity development and therefore particularly suitable for systemic curriculum interventions are the roles of counsellor, partner, coach and facilitator. The trainer/teacher role may be favourable in certain circumstances for certain activities, e.g. in case training or workshops are needed and when there is insufficient capacity on the client's side to carry out the activity. This also applies to the role of modeller. In case of (very) low capacity, the modeller role might be appropriate during certain activities, but then it should be combined with the role of coach in order to increase the scope for capacity development, since this role allows more room for (mutual) learning.

5.2.4 Illustrative examples of appropriate curricular capacity development activities

In line with and in addition to appropriate roles for change-supporting agents involved in systemic curriculum development, the proposed approach also has implications for the way corresponding activities should be performed. This section exemplifies in more detail what activities could look like, suiting the proposed approach.

Based on experiences with previously carried out curriculum development interventions, five types of related activities are targeted that may be designed and implemented, and/or carried out during an intervention: as one-off, but well embedded activities in a larger development plan, or as on-going or recurring activities throughout the process. The activities are summarised as follows: formal training; workshops; job embedded coaching and mentoring; on the job learning; and knowledge brokering. Although listed as separate activities with differing aims, there might be overlap in their coverage. Each activity is briefly outlined below, including the main purpose and preconditions.

Formal training

Formal training could be provided in case of a perceived need for more in-depth theoretical curriculum knowledge and theories. A formal curriculum course emphasises the transfer of knowledge and provides participants the opportunity to further specialise themselves in curriculum development and obtaining an official certification. Formal training requires participants to be able to disengage themselves from daily work for a certain period of time. In addition, the preparation and provision of a high quality and contextualised

curriculum course requires the availability of specific expertise and sufficient financial resources.

Workshops

Workshops are a more informal means to transferring of knowledge and skills, where the emphasis primarily lies on practical application thereof in daily work. A wide range of topics may be covered, resulting for example from formal training, bottlenecks that are encountered in day to day work, specific needs from partners, etc. Workshops provide an opportunity to actively work together on a specific topic through participatory and interactive sessions. Workshops can vary in length, depending on the complexity of the topic. As with formal trainings, it requires participants to be able to disengage from their daily work for the duration of the workshop(s). Workshops may require financial resources.

Job embedded coaching and mentoring

Research into professional development and the effect of training (Joyce & Showers, 2002) has shown the eminent importance of coaching after training. Joyce and Showers have identified four components that make up an ideal training: the study of theory; demonstration or modelling; practice; and peer coaching. Figure 5.2 shows the increase in effectiveness when these components are piled as it were, and thus complement each other. It also shows that there is a remarkable difference between personal mastering and applying skills into classrooms without the coaching and monitoring component.

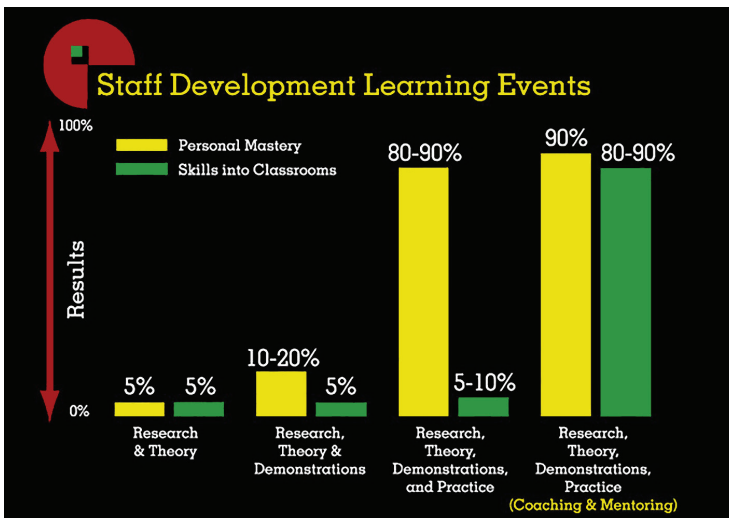


Figure 5.2 Effectiveness of coaching and mentoring (Showers & Joyce, 1996)

Apparently, without the coaching and monitoring component learners learn a lot (90%), but only a very small number of learners (5-10%) actually apply the new skills in practice. This number dramatically increases to 80-90% when the coaching and monitoring component is added. So, training will only be effective when followed up by job-embedded coaching. Although the research is conducted based on classroom practice, the theory has also proven to be effective in professional development efforts outside the classroom.

Job embedded coaching and mentoring is highly relevant after both formal training and workshops. It provides learners room to apply and practice with the newly acquired knowledge in their daily work, in a safe environment. In time, a shift from job embedded coaching and mentoring to peer coaching should be pursued. Through the introduction of peer coaching, a learning community could be created where members learn with, and from each other. The members themselves will decide exactly what is being learned. In such a context Kessels (1999) speaks of a corporate curriculum (see also chapter 1). A corporate curriculum is not a pre-established, formal plan for learning, but a curriculum that is being created by the members during their learning trajectory and work. They decide what knowledge and skills need to be learned and in which way this should be done. Based on the formulated design principles, the learners in this case may primarily be the team and the coordinator who, ideally, in turn will become responsible for the learning of others like e.g. ministry staff, school directors, teachers and possible other supporting staff. Job embedded coaching and mentoring requires partners to be available, present on the work floor and willing to learn with and from each other, and that the change-supporting agent is able to provide that kind of support.

On the job learning

On the job learning shows similarities and could possibly overlap with job embedded coaching and mentoring, but is different in intent. Job embedded coaching and mentoring directly derives from a specific training or workshops, whereas on the job learning results from working together in a day-to-day work setting. On the job learning requires partners to be available, present on the work floor and willing to learn in such a hands-on way, and that the change-supporting agent is able to provide that kind of support.

Knowledge brokering

Knowledge brokering aims to strengthen existing knowledge connections and/or to establish new ones. It facilitates learning and capacity development, aims to establish access to knowledge and to remove possible barriers, bringing people together with the purpose of working towards the same goals. It promotes

networking between different sources of knowledge, e.g. to further strengthen knowledge-linking programmes to help overcome the knowledge divide, including more effectual systems for knowledge management. The external change-supporting agent may at first have to do pioneering work in relation to knowledge brokering, but all activities should be carried out as much as possible with partners to make knowledge brokering a capacity development activity.

Table 5.3 contains an overview of possible curricular capacity development activities. The components of the curricular spider’s web (van den Akker, 2003, see also figure 1.1) are used for the elaboration of the activities. All activities should ideally be designed, prepared, implemented and/or carried out as much as possible together with, or possibly by partners. Possible roles taken up by the change-supporting agent depend on existing levels of capacity.

5.2.5 The curricular capacity development disc

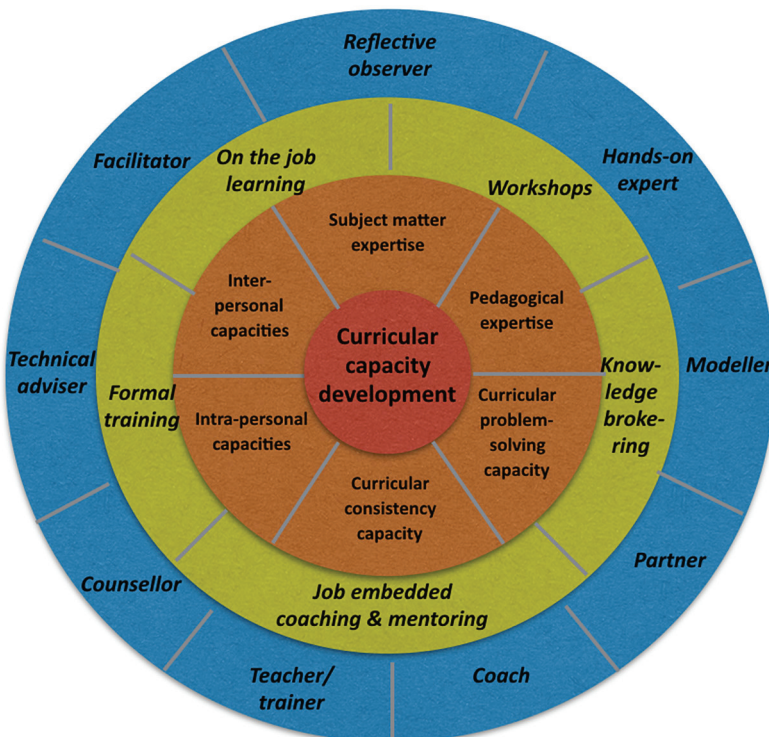


Figure 5.3 The curricular capacity development disc

The curricular capacity categories, the illustrative activities and change-supporting agents' roles as discussed in the previous sections are integrated into one model as displayed in figure 5.3. The model consists of five circles, starting with curricular capacity development as key component of future interventions in the middle. The next circle displays the different curriculum capacity categories a curriculum intervention may touch upon. Around the capacity circle, the five types of activities are depicted, which in turn are surrounded by the last circle containing possible roles of change-supporting agents. The circles are considered to be flexible, which means different roles could be linked to different activities and capacity categories. Which capacities, activities and matching role(s) are most suitable depends on the intervention and the context with its specific needs.

Table 5.3 Overview of curricular capacity development activities

	Rationale	Aims & objectives	Content	Learning activities	Role change agent
Formal training	To strengthen curricular capacity that is needed to positively contribute to the achievement of quality education for all children	To enable partners to make informed curriculum decisions that fit their context, based on state of the art curriculum theories and knowledge	Contemporary curriculum theories, educational change theories; systemic curriculum approaches; quality criteria for curriculum development	Theory should be embedded into activating, participatory and interactive activities, tailor-made for local contexts to make it relevant, practical and functional	Teacher/trainer
Workshop	To strengthen curricular capacity that is needed to positively contribute to the achievement of quality education for all children	To provide partners with practical knowledge and skills related to curriculum development that enables them to perform a particular aspect of the intervention	Emphasis on future practical application of newly acquired skills and knowledge in daily work. The exact content depends on the topic of workshop	Activities should contain participatory, activating assignments to provide ideas and tools that enable partners to do, carry out, find out, implement, etc.	Facilitator
Job embedded coaching and mentoring	To strengthen curricular capacity that is needed to positively contribute to the achievement of quality education for all children	To transfer, embed and ground training and workshop content into day to day work	Content is related to topics that were addressed during trainings and/or workshops	Activities related to daily work and practice that cohere with the training/ workshop content. Focus on application in the workplace	Coach/ counsellor
On the job learning	To strengthen curricular capacity that is needed to positively contribute to the achievement of quality education for all children	To enable partners to gain practical skills and knowledge related to curriculum development and managing educational/curriculum interventions through day to day work	To organise, carry out, analyse, collate, build and maintain relationships, manage, etc.	E.g. preparing and carrying out effective meetings, co-designing and preparing workshops, communicating effectively, managing (part of an) intervention	Counsellor, coach reflective observer
Knowledge brokering	To strengthen curricular capacity that is needed to positively contribute to the achievement of quality education for all children	To open up space for learning and knowledge sharing; and strengthen the overall educational and curricular knowledge base	Bringing sources of knowledge together; strengthen existing and/ or establish new networks and connections; facilitating learning and capacity development	Networking, coordinating, cooperating, workshops, training, collaboration, participation, establishing connections	Modeller/ counsellor

THE PROPOSED APPROACH AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

	Materials & resources	Grouping	Location	Time	Assessment
Formal training	Relevant course materials, e.g. curriculum literature	The local team including coordinator, possibly others like curriculum developers, teachers, relevant ministry staff	A suitable venue for the number of participants	1 to 2 weeks	Formal assessment leading to certification, interviews, written evaluation
Workshop	Relevant workshop materials, e.g.	The local team incl. coordinator, other participants involved in the workshop, e.g. curriculum developers, relevant ministry staff, teachers, teacher-trainers	A suitable venue for the number of participants	Variable (from half a day to a sequence of days)	Written evaluation, interviews, logbook keeping, reflections, observations
Job embedded coaching and mentoring	To be defined	The local team incl. coordinator, participants that participated in the respective training/ workshop	The daily work environment	Specifically after training/ workshops	Group discussion, reflection, logbook keeping, interviews, observations
On the job learning	To be defined	The local team incl. coordinator, possibly others like curriculum developers, teachers, teacher-trainers, relevant ministry staff	The daily work environment	On-going	Group discussion, reflection, logbook keeping, interviews, observations
Knowledge brokering	To be defined	The local team incl. coordinator, possibly others like curriculum developers, teachers, teacher-trainers, relevant ministry staff	The daily work environment	On-going	Group discussion, reflection, logbook keeping, interviews, observations

5.3 FINAL REMARKS STAGE 1

This chapter attempted to bring the rich data together and to direct it to systemic curriculum development. This resulted in the proposed approach as outlined above, operationalized through the SCCD framework. It is assumed that interventions based on this framework could enhance the sustainability of intervention outcomes. The framework is assumed to be usable as a conceptual tool from the very start of an intervention throughout the design, development and implementation stages, but also as an analytical tool for evaluation and optimisation purposes. Framework adoption may differ according to the different forms a curriculum intervention may take. It is likely that some heuristics are more obvious to take up than others during a certain intervention. For example, although a two-week course may require a different evaluation approach compared to a two-year project, such heuristics remain of importance to both types of interventions and should be taken into consideration. Exactly when, and how they should be acted upon depends on the aim, duration, complexity and specific context of an intervention. At the same time however, this may raise questions about the relative weight of the pillars and their heuristics. To what extent is comprehensive application realistic and/or necessary? Are some pillars and heuristics considered to be more important than others? These questions will be taken on board during the next stage of the study: validation of the approach and the SCCD framework in practice. In order to make statements related to the approach and framework more robust, the theory will be applied and validated during a number of curriculum development interventions in two African countries and the Caribbean. In these countries, different interventions were carried out varying in size, aim and purpose, but all including a curriculum development component, focussing on capacity strengthening. These interventions will be explicated in more detail in stage 2.

Stage 2

Implementation and evaluation

The second stage of this study further explored the practical relevance, coherence, and practicality and effectiveness of the approach and related framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development, and identified the implications this approach has for curriculum development interventions in international development settings. The developed approach and framework as presented at the end of stage 1 were utilised and validated in different curriculum development interventions worldwide, to explore its actual overall applicability. The exploration took place to investigate how the framework functions in practice based on three case studies (four interventions) in two African countries and a Caribbean island. The chapters 6, 7 and 8 narrate in more detail about how the case studies progressed, how the framework was deployed per case study, for what purpose, and whether all components played an equally important role. The subsequent cross-case analysis as described in chapter 9 showed that the more components of the framework were included and observed, the more promising the outcomes of an intervention were, both related to the capacity development process as well as to the curriculum products. Based on the case studies it could be concluded that the framework as reflection of the approach is a relevant and coherent tool to design and develop, but also to analyse and evaluate interventions for optimisation purposes. In addition, there are indications for the approach' and framework's actual practicality and effectiveness in relation to enhancing sustainability of curriculum development interventions in international development cooperation. These, and other conclusions, including overall considerations related to the approach and the presented validated SCCD framework are discussed in the last chapter (chapter 10) of this study.

CHAPTER 6 CASE STUDY 1: GIRLS' EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT, MOZAMBIQUE

This chapter presents the outcomes of the first case study where the approach and SCCD framework were put to practice for validation purposes. The case revolves around a project that focused on the improvement of girls' education in Mozambique at provincial (meso) level, funded through a relatively new and increasingly more frequently used construction: payment by results. The framework, which was supposed to be applied as a design and development tool, was eventually used to analyse this case study and exposed a number of problem areas that seemed directly related to the implementation of payment by results. Therefore this chapter starts with a short investigation into this new funding scheme, followed by an explanation of the project under scrutiny to provide a context (section 6.1). The chapter continues with section 6.2, where additional, case study specific methodology is presented. Although payment by results may sound plausible at first and seems compatible with the proposed approach, this case study shows that in this particular intervention it is at odds with almost the entire framework. In this intervention, payment by results has had a negative effect on wider project execution and overall sustainability of both curriculum development process and curricular products, which is presented in section 6.3. The chapter closes with discussion and conclusions (section 6.4).

6.1 INTRODUCTION OF THE MOZAMBIQUE CASE STUDY

6.1.1 Changing funding approaches

'Girls' education', the project under scrutiny in this case study, was carried out by a number of local non-governmental (NGO) and community-based organisations, and led by an international non-governmental organisation (INGO). This organisation has vast experience worldwide and has worked with different donors for years. However, within the international development sector a shift is taking place in the way programmes and projects are funded, which has serious implications for several actors within the sector. For a long time, funding was made available at the start of an approved programme or project, but there is evidence that this is changing into structures where money is disbursed in arrears based on certain results instead: payment by results. Donors are increasingly embracing and adopting this approach on a bigger scale worldwide, lauding its presumed innovation, flexibility, room for learning and ownership, which assumingly leads to better results. These include the same donors that also endorsed the main principles for development as identified

in the literature review, and that are to a large extent captured in the SCCD framework.

6.1.2 Payment by results

Payment by results (PBR) is a relatively new approach within the international development sector, and is expected to become increasingly more dominant in all sectors, including education. Major and influential donors such as the World Bank, USAID and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) regard this approach to be the promising way forward related to programme and project funding. Although there is no overarching international definition of PBR in place yet, there are a number of similarities and recurring characteristics that cover the concept. First of all, PBR stems from a perceived need to justify every spent dollar. USAID (2016b) for example states to pursue more strategic, focussed and results-oriented approaches in order to maximise impact of every development dollar they spend, and consider performance based incentives to be a promising means to achieve this. The World Bank uses similar wording, arguing that development nowadays is about results and institutional strengthening and that everyone, including civil society, government officials, parliamentarians and the private sector, is demanding programmes that enforce the delivery of sustainable results and build institutions. One of the answers is considered to be the so-called Program-for-Results financing instrument (World Bank, 2015). Also DFID sees PBR as the approach to guarantee the biggest impact on the ground. It is regarded to be a suitable financial control that gives a better oversight of spending decisions, and supposedly offers a degree of transparency that allows taxpayers to see where and how the money is spent (DFID, 2014). Secondly, as the name suggests, funds are disbursed in arrears, based on verification of measurable, pre-agreed results. A further exploration of the concept immediately leads to the identification of a wide variety of constructions, such as Results-Based Finance, Cash on delivery, Results-Based Aid, Development Impact Bonds, Programme for Results, which all fall under the wider umbrella of PBR (Perakis & Savedoff, 2014). The distinction lies roughly in the different types of organisations the payments are made to, for example from funder to partner government, or from funder to service provider, which is the case for this study. Thirdly, PBR is said to provide increased room for innovation, since recipients are granted more space to decide how results are to be achieved (Perrin, 2013; BOND, 2014; DFID, 2014). Flexibility, learning, increased ownership and adaptation are recurring key concepts. Because the project in this case study is funded by DFID through a PBR construction, the following section places DFID's rationale behind PBR and its PBR praxis under some further scrutiny.

DFID considers itself to be one of the leaders in the field of PBR and intends to expand PBR use. It aims for widespread implementation in all sectors, and claims that the underlying principle of PBR is to ensure best value for money of development interventions for recipients in developing countries, as well as for taxpayers in the UK, by paying on delivery of outcomes instead of inputs. According to DFID, PBR can be designed in different ways, depending on a number of choices: the level of payments (ranging from 100% on delivery to only a small amount); the type of organisation the money is paid to; and the type of result the payment is linked to, which can vary from payment based on outputs, to the more innovative level of outcomes that they strive for. DFID points at a number of strengths of the use of PBR. It can be used for the re-balancing of accountability; to increase innovation and flexibility in delivery by not specifying how results should be achieved; to create a strong focus on performance by service providers because PBR encourages them to examine what works and what does not, which supposedly drives up performance, management and measurement; and to increase transparency and accountability for results (DFID, 2014). PBR is used to support programmes in DFID's priority areas, including the empowerment of women and girls, such as the Girls Education Challenge Fund that supports girls worldwide to improve their lives through education. Suppliers do not receive funds directly from the donor. DFID has outsourced these activities to a fund manager. In the case of the Girls Education Challenge Fund - which includes the business of girls' education project - this is an accountancy firm with its headquarters in Northern Europe, with a strong track record related to auditing and consultancy in the corporate world.

6.1.3 Evidence of effectiveness of PBR

Due to the fact that PBR is a fairly new approach, evidence about its effectiveness is still at an early stage. Especially when it comes to PBR-contracts that involve suppliers like INGOs, there is relatively little literature available (BOND, 2014). DFID (2014) claims there are early indications that PBR may lead to better service delivery, but also expresses the need for on-going learning and evidence building to strengthen the evidence base. Others state that evidence is still weak (e.g. BOND, 2014; Perrin, 2013). Experiences with PBR in international development are still limited, and claims in favour of PBR are often based on untested hypotheses rather than on evidence (BOND, 2014). Savedoff (2013) acknowledges that organisations have put a lot of effort to the linking of disbursements to performance, but argue that these operations tend to pay for activities and outputs instead of outcomes, which is exactly what donors like DFID state to aim for. It is argued that there are hardly any programmes that really test the theory that PBR improves results by creating increased scope for innovation, because their design actually constrains recipient discretion.

'If flexibility, innovation, local ownership and reduced administrative burdens are essential to the argument for PBR, then you can't design PBR-programmes that simply add results payments on top of the requirements and restrictions of an input-funded programme' (Perakis & Savedoff, 2014). In terms of evidence building they state the need to see PBR programmes that actually do build in space for innovation before assessing these experiences and learn from them. The experiences from the project in this case study may feed this discussion and could contribute to the evidence base of PBR.

6.1.4 A girls' education project

This chapter presents the outcomes of the first validation study into relevance, usability and effectiveness of the approach and framework related to a girls' education project in a rural province in Mozambique. As mentioned earlier, the project was funded by DFID, led by an INGO, and carried out together with a number of implementing partners consisting of five local NGOs and community-based organisations. The leading INGO has adopted capacity strengthening of local partners by working together as a fundamental principle and core strategy. In order to establish capacity strengthening, they match local partners with international advisers who live and work within a certain country, usually for longer periods of time. This girls' education project provided an insightful case study of the impact of PBR on curricular capacity development at grassroots level. The country where the project takes place is characterised by a turbulent history. After 500 years of colonial rule the country became independent in 1975, immediately followed by a civil war that would last until 1992, the year that the peace treaty was signed. From that deplorable position, the country has come a long way and is currently one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa, yet is also still one of the poorest countries in the world (UNDP, 2012). The population is relatively young, 43% are under the age of 15, with approximately 70% of the population living in rural areas (UNDP, 2012). Much progress has been made, but the country still faces a number of complex challenges, including in the education sector. The Education Strategic Plan describes that a considerable number of students are still not enrolled; do not finish primary school; and leave school without having developed sufficient reading and writing skills, which raises concerns about the quality of education. In addition, teacher-student ratio is high, and pass rates in grade 10 & 12 of secondary education are a source of concern (PEEC, 2012). The document targeted three main challenges: provision of inclusive education; ensuring retention in school; and the progression from one level to the next. An additional problem in education that is directly linked to the provision of inclusive education is a significant gender disparity (see e.g. PEEC, 2012; UNICEF, 2011). The country is characterised by a predominantly patriarchal society, ranking 178 out of 187 in the gender inequality index (UNDP,

2014). Education, if already obvious, is even less obvious for girls than for boys due to poverty, coupled with deep-rooted sociocultural factors (see e.g. Save the Children, 2007; UNICEF, 2011). In education, such entrenched gender roles are often translated into stereotypical school curricula and the pre-dominance of male teachers (Nkhoma, 2007), which is still the case in this casus. This is linked to the fact that the role of women and girls within household and marriage is given much greater priority than education and learning. In addition, due to the subordinate role of women and girls in society in general, there is an on-going high incidence of sexual abuse and early marriage, which severely decreases girls' overall opportunities (Save the Children, 2007; UNICEF, 2011; 2015). Within this context, several projects were run, and are still being implemented aiming at increasing opportunities for marginalised girls. This also applies to the girls' project under scrutiny for this case.

The project was carried out in a rural province and aimed to contribute to the empowerment of marginalised girls by removing inter-related barriers to education that affect them. The project proposal stated that this includes the creation of gender responsive classrooms and schools; gender responsive communities and home environments; and should ultimately result in the improvement of learning and livelihood outcomes for a targeted number of marginalised girls. The innovation of this specific project involved placing girls as key actors in the centre of all areas of project implementation, and by utilizing and amending existing curriculums into gender responsive curriculums. The project asserted that girls would be able to go and stay in school, and would increase their learning when they would be encouraged to become their own protagonists of change. In order for this to happen, capacity of teachers in gender responsive teaching should be strengthening; literacy levels of parents should be increased; and awareness of school councils and communities should be raised to enable them to address socio-cultural practices that perpetuate the disadvantaged position of girls. The needs of girls in the targeted communities were mapped through focus group interviews conducted with girls, boys, parents, teachers, school councils and community development committees. In addition, desktop research was carried out; fieldwork implemented by key stakeholders, donors and other NGOs was reviewed; and extensive consultations with various community-based organisations were held.

To provide some context on how the project aimed to achieve its objectives, and on the different actors involved, a brief overview is given below. The project intended to focus on girls, teachers, schools, school councils, parents, and communities and was divided into five outputs (see table 6.1). Each output came with milestones, and a set of agreed key activities for each output per quarter.

Table 6.1 Project milestones girls' education Mozambique

Output 1	Output 2	Output 3	Output 4	Output 5
2100+ marginalized girls have the capacity to engage in and influence their own learning outcomes	234 teachers are able to deliver gender responsive teaching to improve learning outcomes of girls and boys in 39 schools	819 school council members have the capacity to lead and manage schools	An estimated 975 parents and out of school girls have increased levels of literacy which translates into supporting girls and boys to access, stay in school and learn	Effective management of stakeholders and sharing of project learning to achieve long-term learning outcomes for marginalized girls

The outcomes were to be achieved by a number of cooperating actors, which can be roughly divided into four groups: the leading INGO; local organisations; international advisers; and lead girls. The management of the leading INGO was based in the capital of the country, and led the project in cooperation with a number of local organisations, the so-called implementing partners. Each of these partners was chosen based on a particular specialism, such as community development, adult literacy and community radio. All implementing partners were based in the province where the project was run, over 1000 kilometres away from the capital.

The specific focus of this case study is on the curriculum component of the project. One of the aims was the amendment of existing curricula in a gender responsive way, including the national curriculum and the adult literacy curriculum developed by one of the implementing partners. As briefly mentioned before, the leading INGO has put capacity development at the core of its work, and recruits advisers from all over the world to work together with local counter parts in order to strengthen capacity on the ground. For this project, six international advisers with different professional expertise and cultural backgrounds were recruited. They were to support the various implementing partners in the province and to contribute to the different project components, and included the following positions: a gender adviser, a teacher trainer adviser, a school management adviser, a monitoring and evaluation adviser, a communication adviser and a curriculum development adviser. The researcher took up the latter position and carried out the research from that position.

The researcher arrived in country at the end of July 2014, at a time where a lot of time and effort was put into revisions of the previously approved project proposal, and into the proposal for an extension year, which was suggested by the fund manager. The project had faced several delays since its launch, and at the time of arrival it was unclear whether the implementation phase had officially started or not. Some said it had, others said the project was put on hold. During that time,

the proposal for the extension year got rejected by the fund manager, but was eventually approved after meeting a number of special conditions. At that time, it was fairly hard to sit down with the management team of the INGO at the head office to learn more about the project, because of the significant workload they faced and pressure they were under due to the required revisions and proposal writing. This team that mainly consisted of national staff was relatively new due to frequent staff turnover. Observations during meetings; email correspondence between the fund manager, head office and the field; project meetings; and several informal conversations painted a picture of a general feeling of confusion and frustration regarding the project, because of on-going changing terms and conditions, and requirements constantly being added by the fund manager. In turn, this resulted in further project delays, augmented pressure and an increased discrepancy between the centre where decisions were taken and the realities on the ground. It also seriously hampered the aforementioned stated benefits of PBR, such as room for innovation, flexibility, learning and increased ownership. At the beginning of October 2014, the researcher arrived in the provincial capital and was immediately requested to attend an urgent meeting with the implementing partners regarding necessary changes that had to be made to the project implementation plan, requested by the fund manager. Against this backdrop, the research at grassroots level took off.

6.2 CASE STUDY SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY

As already introduced in chapter 1, data for this case study were collected from multiple and complementary sources of evidence, see table 6.2. The interviews were carried out in November 2015 with staff and international advisers who were recruited to strengthen capacity on the ground and who were directly involved in the implementation process at grassroots level. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interviewees were given the opportunity to read and adjust the transcription, but none of them indicated a need for this.

A number of additional interviews with some staff from the local NGO's were envisaged, but were not carried out. Although several attempts were made to schedule these interviews, targeted respondents were either hardly present, and/or expressed anxiety related to such consultations due to the experienced language barrier and lack of translators, but also due a lack of time. The pressure to carry out the delayed project weighted heavily on the partners involved. However, numerous formal conversations, informal dialogues and meetings took place during this period that provided valuable information related to opinions and perspectives from a wider range of actors, including (non-English speaking) key staff from the different organisations.

Table 6.2 Overview of consulted sources case study Mozambique

Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project documentation</i>: project proposal, log frames, extension proposal, mile stones, base line report, base line evaluation, placement descriptions, theory of change document, quarterly reports, and weekly updates (internal documents) • <i>Relevant policy documents</i>: (Education Strategic Plan ((PEEC, 2012), the national curriculum for basic education (Plano curricular do ensino básico) • <i>Literature review into Mozambique’s context and gender issues</i>: Girls’ Education: Key to development (Nkhoma, 2007); Protecting Children. Community attitudes to child sexual abuse in rural Mozambique (Save the Children UK, 2007); About Mozambique (UNDP, 2012); Human Development Data 1980-2015 (UNDP, 2014); Child Poverty and Disparities in Mozambique 2010 (UNICEF, 2011); Child Marriage and Adolescent Pregnancy in Mozambique: Policy Brief (UNICEF, 2015) • <i>Literature review into payment by results</i>: Payment by results: What it means for UK NGOS (BOND, 2014); Sharpening incentives to perform: DFID’s Strategy for Payment by Results (DFID, 2014); Payment by results: One size doesn’t fit all (Perakis & Savedoff, 2014, November 20); Evaluation of payment by results: current approaches, future needs (Perrin, 2013); Close but no cigar: Paying for performance is not necessarily COD aid (Savedoff, 2013, November 9); Results-based management handbook, harmonising RBM concepts and approaches for improved development result at country level (UNDG, 2011); USAID Forward (USAID, 2010); Program-for-Results Financing (World Bank, 2015)
Interviews	Five individual semi-structured interviews with advisers (see annex 3) and implementing partners (see annex 4)
Direct observations and participant observations	Observations (during meetings (30+), workshops (3); trainings (3), and the national education conference (1)

6.3 OUTCOMES OF THE MOZAMBIQUE CASE STUDY

6.3.1 Outline

This section describes the outcomes of the research into the girls’ education project that took place during three months (from September–December 2014) at field level. The research specifically focused on the curriculum development component, and looked at how the components of the framework were taken into account to strengthen curricular capacity and develop quality curriculum materials. Figure 6.1 illustrates how the intervention evolved related to the framework.

The narrative below is based on the framework heuristics, but does not state them all separately since this would interrupt the flow. Instead they are interwoven in the description of each pillar. For a complete overview of all heuristics see figure 5.1. Although the focus of this research was on the curriculum component of the project, much of the outcomes also relate to procedural aspects of project implementation in general. This was considered essential to describe because it

illustrates how the process and implementation of the project have negatively influenced and affected room for curricular capacity development, by making it virtually impossible.






 Capacity levels <i>Curriculum strategies should be based on a thorough curriculum assessment (including a problem, context and needs analysis and an analysis of the knowledge base), taking into account multiple and interconnected capacity levels: the individual, organisational and institutional levels, and the social, political and economic context.</i>	 Partnerships through dialogue <i>Curriculum interventions benefit strongly from genuine partnerships based on trust, open-mindedness, collegial dialogue and mutual accountability</i>	 Ownership & harmonisation <i>Curriculum interventions benefit significantly from the presence of a certain readiness for change, coupled with local leadership and ownership; alignment; coordination and cooperation; departing from a shared vision</i>	 Collaborative learning <i>Curricular capacity could be best developed through collaborative, learning-oriented, content-relevant and participatory approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability</i>	 Strategic thinking & action <i>Curricular capacity development interventions benefit strongly from a systemic perspective, including strategic choices that strengthen ownership and harmonisation, partnerships, collaborative learning and the quality of process and products</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn to understand the context to decide what could be influenced and changed 2. Carry out a curriculum assessment with a team consisting of national¹ and international experts, preferably led by a national coordinator 3. Collaboratively formulate a vision as starting point for further curriculum development 4. Translate the outcomes of the assessment into a curriculum development plan, aligned with national education policy and plans 5. Integrate learning into the overall development plan, offering diversified training programmes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commit to long-term partnerships 2. Invest in relationships 3. Adopt a flexible attitude 4. Adopt a coaching and mentoring role while respecting national leadership and autonomy 5. Seek alignment with actors working in the same field to encourage multi-stakeholder partnerships for improved delivery 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt and promote participatory approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability through encouragement of leadership involvement, commitment and ownership 2. Consult relevant stakeholders and include suitable professionals to carry out the intervention 3. Make use of existing capacity guiding and coaching national¹ experts 4. Promote cooperation, coordination and alignment between ministries and between the ministry of education, NGOs and other change supporting agents to collaboratively work towards fulfilling the curricula and educational development plans 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in capacity development as a continuous learning experience: use the entire intervention as a capacity development learning process for all involved stakeholders 2. Adopt and promote collaborative, learning-oriented approaches including (inter) active and comprehensive learning, appropriate to local context and circumstances 3. Collaboratively agree on capacities that are to be developed, on indicators for capacity development goals and successes, and review them on a regular basis 4. Strengthen supply and demand for capacity, both professional content capacity and transversal skill capacity 5. Build in formative and summative evaluations of both products and capacity development process 6. Monitor the role and contribution of practitioners 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge that change takes time, build in and allow sufficient time to carry out the intervention 2. Provide clear and frequent communication regarding, and throughout the intervention 3. Collaboratively develop context-relevant and context-specific curriculum development strategies where general feasibility, flexibility and adaptability to local circumstances are key 4. Make curriculum strategies and choices clear and fit for purpose and adapt if circumstances so dictate 5. Ensure sufficient resources and make an informed decision regarding provision of incentives 6. Provide clear statements of responsibilities of all involved key partners 7. Consider permanent residence in, or frequently visiting the country

Figure 6.1 The SCCD framework – case study Mozambique

The included quotations are derived from a variety of actors. They are exemplary for this project and present wider shared viewpoints rather than that of a single individual, unless specifically stated otherwise. To guarantee the requested anonymity, the quotations have not been further specified except for a distinction between implementing partners (including staff from the leading INGO) and international advisers.

6.3.2 Pillar 1: Capacity levels

The project started with an analysis of the context, which acknowledged and took into account several capacity levels. It aimed at tackling interrelated barriers that affect girls from different angles and at multiple levels, including different groups of individuals (e.g. girls, teachers, parents), the environment of those groups (schools, communities), the intended institutional changes within the social context as described in the introduction, all embedded within the wider project design.

The project plan was designed based on an analysis and assessment of the context, carried out by the leading INGO. The project is aligned with and supports national policy in the sense that it aimed to tackle gender disparities, as for example described in the Education Strategic Plan (2012) (see also the fourth pillar). It intended to empower girls and to contribute to the improvement

of teaching and learning. By profiling the project as a learning project, it also aimed to contribute to delivery of input at provincial and national level for possible future projects targeting this area. However, the project elapsed in a different way than envisioned right from the start, which has affected all levels. During the first year of the project, problems arose that had a destabilising effect, resulting in serious project delays. After the initial project approval of the fund manager, the project proposal and plans were altered on a number of occasions, instructed by the fund manager. This likely explains the many visible alterations that were made to existing project documents. Various sources indicated that the project was put on hold a few times due to required changes in design and project objectives, although the fund manager denied this on at least one occasion, stating that the leading INGO was responsible for the delays. In addition to involvement of the fund manager, several external consultants got involved during this phase, including in the baseline study and the design of the monitoring and evaluation framework. There are indications that different aims were pursued, for example retention versus learning, which caused confusion. Moreover, the first baseline study got rejected by the fund manager due to a lack of quality, and had to be carried out again as a result. One of the respondents pointed out that this complicated matters because the outcomes of the first baseline study were different from the second one, and required adjustments in project design. It also caused certain processes to be carried out in a rush because they had to be included in the baseline, such as the selection of the lead girls, who were supposed to be at the very centre of all phases of the project.

“So the selection of the lead girls was not done properly. I was to tell X, the partner, listen, as part of the baseline study the lead girls have to be selected. You’ve got two weeks to do that. And actually it was almost the last week before the school break. And then X had just to rush to the schools and said ok fine, teacher tell me who is the best girl here. And then they just had to give us a list of this is the best girl in the school, but it didn’t follow the whole participatory process where you had the community involved, you had the parents involved, you had the girls or the gender focal point involved so for me, basically it was done ad hoc. Because it was a process to fit in into the baseline study because if that component does not come into the baseline study, the report would not be approved’ (implementing partner).

All these events caused significant delays. The inception phase had to be approved first before the actual implementation could start. Due to the delays, the implementation time frame had become significantly shorter. It was at this time that the fund manager requested the lead INGO to apply for an extension

year. There are strong indications that this course of events caused uncertainty, confusion and an increase in workload for all actors involved, while at field level many activities came to a standstill. It is quite likely that the accumulated problems that arose during the first stage of the project contributed to an equally complicated implementation start. By the time the implementation phase officially took off, much effort was made to make up for lost time by trying to carry out as many activities as possible in a limited time frame, not necessarily in accordance with a feasible development plan.

‘We are bogged down by this project’ (implementing partner).

‘PBR is forcing to deliver. Maybe it is time to say no’ (international adviser).

Capacity strengthening is at the core of the leading INGO’s strategy worldwide, including in this project. However, it is questionable whether the capacity levels were sufficiently taken into account in the adjusted project design and further implementation, including the possibilities and impossibilities related to the context. The demands of the fund manager were unconstructive. Severe delays arose due to changing requirements, followed by a request for the application of an extension year at a time when project implementation had not even started yet. This put the executive work in the field under pressure, inhibited room for capacity development and resulted in a huge discrepancy between the intended project design and the eventual enacted implementation. This is a recurring theme and will be discussed further below. Instead of empowering people and strengthening institutions, the vast majority of time was spent on paperwork.

‘All they do [fund manager, red.] is ask questions and make demands, they don’t give no guidelines how things are supposed to be done’ (international adviser).

6.3.3 Pillar 2: Partnerships through dialogue

In this project, a multitude of partners were involved who were supposed to work together on the same project goals. However, these partnerships seemed far from being based on mutual accountability and trust. Project documents make mention of an innovative project design with room for flexibility and put an emphasis on learning, but numerous informal conversations, observations, email correspondence and responses from interviewees indicated that this was not experienced as such in practice. There was a strongly felt upward accountability toward the funder, partly fuelled by the often expressed desire of ‘getting this project right’, which contributed to imbalanced relationships and insufficient accountability towards the girls that the project claimed to put at the centre.

'To be honest with you, we are justifying ourselves to the donor, to Z [fund manager, red.] So far, we are doing more reporting, more checking on project improvement, which is important, but we are more meeting for the sake of checking on whether we are meeting the demands of Z than being there and making sure that the marginalised girls are already identified, but say for example we should have gone ahead already with engaging the girls, at least by now, but it hasn't happened' (international adviser).

Observations, meetings and interviews learned that there was general doubt whether the fund manager was aware of the type of context in which the project was carried out, and whether it had the right experience and background to run a developmental project such as this one. Various actors openly expressed their concern regarding the perceived co-called 'business-models' being applied to such a challenging context dealing with delicate, cultural issues like girls' empowerment.

'The organisation [the fund manager, red.] is inexperienced. They don't know about these kinds of contexts. Social change versus milestones? No. There is too much unfamiliarity with the situation here' (implementing partner).

During the time the research took place, tight deadlines were adopted, leaving hardly any leeway. This followed directly from aforementioned delays, and the intention of the fund manager to accelerate the process, to get things going and make up for lost time. The difference of opinion regarding project goals and a perceived extra workload due to the experienced multiple changes in project design, in combination with high time pressure and high staff turn over put the development of genuine partnerships under pressure. Various email correspondence and observations during meetings, gatherings and informal conversations showed that the complex course of events that surrounded the project (at least until December 2014) caused ambiguity and confusion at all layers. This was reflected in mutual frustration, finger-pointing and irritation between all partners, including fund manager versus the leading INGO; implementing partners and advisers versus the fund manager and leading INGO; and implementing partners versus advisers, all vice versa.

'The whole process, it took about one year to start putting things a bit clear. And actually I'm not 100% sure what's happening but the starting of the project was bad for me in the whole process. It seems to me in my understanding everybody was in a process of learning. And it reached a point where in this learning process everybody was accusing each other: 'you are doing wrong, we are doing right', etc. and this confused

everybody [...] And we couldn't pass them [implementing partners, red.] a clear message of what they should do because also we didn't get clear messages from Z' [fund manager, red.] (Implementing partner).

'The whole thing seems to have turned into some sort of power play' (implementing partner).

According to the interviewees, a lack of partnership was also perceived between the project and stakeholders that were considered to be very relevant and crucial for this project. These stakeholders, in particular the provincial education department and the teacher training college, were mentioned in several project documents, especially in the implementation plan, but were absent in practice, simply because the necessary links with these institutions were never properly established. The effects of this will be further elaborated under pillars 3, 4 and 5.

6.3.4 Pillar 3: Ownership & harmonisation

The project was designed in alignment with national policies and strategies and coincides with the international development agenda that Mozambique has committed itself to (see also the first pillar). The education strategic plan (PEEC, 2012) acknowledges existing gender disparities and states a need to tackle them. The girls' education project called for a comprehensive, systemic approach, acknowledging that aiming for improvements in single, isolated areas is quite likely not sufficient to tackle such complex problems. Cooperation and alignment was sought with other development partners in order to launch this project and make it happen. The project targeted over 2000 marginalised girls and placed them – at least on paper - at the centre as key actors of their own development. Review of project documentation, observations and interviews learned that this is indeed widely adopted as the joint vision, and could be summarised as 'supporting and capacitating marginalised girls'. Project documents stated that the innovation of this project lies in the inclusion of girls at all project stages, but that had not yet materialised at the time of this research. The girls were eventually targeted, but not through the envisaged participatory process (see also pillar 1), and after the identification, there are indications that they had not been in the picture ever since. This makes it impossible to make any statements related to their position and ownership as yet. Although the marginalised girls were widely regarded to be the main stakeholders and actors, many of the partners and advisers experienced a strong pressure from above, resulting in a strong, upward accountability instead of at least an equally strong focus on the beneficiaries, including the girls. All interviewees felt this was directly linked to the PBR-construction: the necessity to meet requirements in order to receive

money, as was also a recurring theme in several informal conversations and in observations.

'The whole process was highly bureaucratic. And I think in this project, I don't know how it is now, we spent more time on papers and emails rather than doing things. So it's really, for me, I was really scared about it how much time we spent on it. On revising budget, on revising objectives, on communication with these people from Z [fund manager, red.] (Implementing partner).

To a large extent, the desire to meet the requirements to satisfy the fund manager, coupled with the increasing time pressure explains this upward accountability, with very little attention paid to strengthening ownership. During the period from September until December 2014, efforts were made to make up for lost time due to aforementioned delays, trying to meet the pressing requirements, which resulted in a wide range of activities being squeezed into a too short time frame. This has hindered the process severely, to the extent where it resulted in an impossible working situation, and further deteriorated relationships between partners involved.

'We should say no [to the fund manager, red.] Sorry, we can't deliver what you are asking. Ask someone else to do it. But assumingly there's too much at stake' (international adviser).

Zooming in on the curriculum development component of this project, several difficulties arose which have virtually eliminated opportunities for strengthening local leadership and ownership at the design and development stages. Different views regarding the concept of curriculum and regarding what needed to be adjusted (see also the next pillar), resulted in confusion related to project activities and different actors not working in the same direction. Ownership was hard to strengthen due to the absence of relevant stakeholders and no counterpart to work with. The time pressure, including deadlines prevented opportunities for learning to understand the context first and building relationships.

6.3.5 Pillar 4: Collaborative learning

As already indicated, the intended design appreciated a learning-oriented approach, but did not materialise in practice. In order to engage in curricular capacity development as a continuous learning experience for all stakeholders involved, it is first of all necessary to become included and engaged in the process. Secondly, in order to collaboratively learn a way through in an effective way, decent working relationships between actors that are supposed to work

together are indispensable. However, it may have become clear already that a number of factors have complicated and hindered optimal learning, including a lack of partnerships based on trust and collegial dialogue, and a strongly felt upward accountability (see previous pillar).

Especially at grassroots level there was a strong feeling that important educational partners were missing and that opportunities for learning together and curricular capacity development were lost. One adviser working with implementing partners on procedural and technical aspects of the project described this project to be a *'super capacity building exercise'*, and stated that partners were learning a lot related to project development, to PBR, and on how to meet the expectations of funders. According to this adviser, this was reflected in better organisation of administration, development of log frames, documenting and report writing. Although it could be argued that this type of capacity development is important for running and managing complex projects like these, capacity strengthening in order to meet the projects' aims should at least be equally important. However, the PBR strategy applied to this project seems to have contributed to a distorted focus. The paperwork got most of the attention, while the development of structures that are needed to enable the project to be carried out with the right stakeholders was pushed to the back. All advisers stated that important stakeholders, whose input and involvement were considered to be of great importance were missing, in particular the provincial department of education and the teacher training college. Although project documents, in particular the project implementation plan, repeatedly mentioned such stakeholders as partners in this project, it remained unclear why they were not involved. Due to the absence of certain stakeholders, advisers felt they could not perform their work properly, which inhibited room for capacity development, buy-in and strengthening ownership.

'I was quite surprised when I asked Mr Q how we will work with them [teacher training college, red.] and then he said 'no because they're not in the project' but I think, to me this is missing partner we should work with because it relates to the teacher training. I think is really good to involve them more because they have experience in educating student teachers, or like pre-service or whatever in this context, so I think we will get more feedback from them, for example what kinds of methodology which is actually best for the local context' (international adviser).

The project proposal and job descriptions stated that several curricula, including primary school and adult literacy curricula should be amended in a gender responsive way, and underlined the need for involvement of important education stakeholders. And also here, despite claims regarding existing links with such

stakeholders, observations learned that these relationships were not yet established. At the time of research, at some point an introductory meeting was held at the provincial department of education to formally present the project and the implementing partners involved. It became clear that the staff present at this meeting was unfamiliar with this project, but expressed a desire for fruitful cooperation in the nearby future anyway. That did not materialise, at least not during the time when the curricula had to be developed within a timespan of less than six weeks. One of the targeted activities was the amendment of the primary school curriculum. This national curriculum has a mandatory status, and can therefore not be altered just like that without ministry involvement. Discussions with relevant stakeholders related to possibilities and options to make any amendments did not take place. The deadlines were pressing, relationships were not established and, due to time pressure and a language barrier, there was no possibility to do so. A subsequent enquiry into the national curriculum and discussions with partners and advisers with experience related to realities on the ground learned that the gap between the envisaged and enacted curriculum was substantial. Time to investigate this further by visiting schools and talking to teachers was not possible, due to the same hindering factors as just described.

Project documents and observations during meetings made clear that very different ideas regarding curriculum and curriculum development existed between partners, revealing a lack of curriculum knowledge and experience. Some partners considered textbooks to be the curriculum, others made mention of some type of document 'on the side' that can be altered if needed. It also became obvious that there was neither a clear idea of what exactly needed to be amended or adjusted, nor an awareness of the relation between curriculum and teaching. This could be illustrated by the following example. Just a few days after the researchers' arrival in the province, the local project team (consisting of implementing partners and advisers) received the latest version of the project implementation plan from the INGO's head quarters, approved by the fund manager. This plan contained a striking sequence of activities and indicated that gender responsive curricula and teacher training into gender responsive teaching were seen as two separate and unrelated issues. According to this plan, in October teachers were supposed to be trained in the new methodology, while in November the actual training materials were to be developed. The curriculum itself could follow later, because it was felt by former management staff that the curriculum had no relation with such trainings. Attempts were made to conceptualise curriculum, and to establish a link between a curriculum and the role of teachers, which ultimately resulted in some changes in the plan. However, the revised plan that eventually came back to the field included some of the

proposed changes, but again contained an illogical sequence of activities that were impossible and too numerous to carry out within the given time frame and with staff available. There were indications that these changes and additions were made by a part of the INGO's management team. Many respondents ascribed this to the pressure that was felt, and the desire to speed things up and deliver so that funds could be released.

'In case you fail you're on the wall and you don't want to look bad, then you'll be an impressionist, you just want to impress. So, it's easy to try to impress [...] the project implementation plan is a very good example of trying to look good. We write stuff in the province, yeah we know the reality and then we send it to Y [INGO head office, red.], and because Y is under fire, they change stuff' (international adviser).

'There's too much pressure. We can take two steps at a time, not 20' (implementing partner).

Another encountered challenge related to the adult literacy curriculum, which also had to be amended in a gender responsive way. But there turned out to be a discrepancy between the aims and objectives of the implementing partner responsible for the adult literacy programme on the one hand, and project demands on the other. During an internal training of the facilitators of this implementing partner, the national management of this same partner made specifically clear that no alterations or additions could be made to this internationally implemented curriculum, except for some gender friendly suggestions. It was pointed out that the allocated time must be fully used for literacy teaching, no extra time was available within this curriculum to add any content. The teaching and learning resources were about to be printed and had to remain unchanged. However, the project demanded adjustments to the existing curriculum and proposed a lesson cycle on gender issues for adults that should be taught in addition to the literacy programme. This included e.g. gender responsiveness, issues related to violence and domestic chores, and vocational courses. The response from the project management in the province in this case was significant: *'If we don't deliver, we're in big trouble'*. It remained unclear what exactly was agreed between all organisations and how it was possible that such different ideas coexisted in the implementation phase.

Due to high time pressure; an experienced language barrier; a lack of a counterpart; and strict deadlines, a situation occurred where there was no time to include important stakeholders after all, and most international advisers felt forced to carry out the work by themselves. This was also the case for most

of the curriculum development activities that were carried out with barely any input from local stakeholders.

'There's too much ambition, be realistic. Only if we really take this as a learning project and actually learn from it, then it would make sense: learning how not to run a project' (implementing partner).

6.3.6 Pillar 5: Strategic thinking & action

The research indicated that long-term strategic plans were developed in theory, but in practice, plans kept on being altered, due to changing requirements of the fund manager. This also affected short-term achievements.

'There is no clarity, no overview and no clear memory of understanding' (implementing partner).

Along with the aforementioned challenges, several additional complicating factors came to the fore, which are directly related to this last pillar: strategic thinking and action. A first recurring challenge was the experienced lack of communication, in the broadest sense of the word. First of all, the experienced language barrier caused a major communication problem. None of the advisers who were recruited to support the partners mastered the local language sufficiently. This also applied to the partners related to the English language, many of them did not, or did not sufficiently speak English. This resulted in having frequent meetings with only a very limited number of English speaking partners, who also spent much time acting as translators for their colleagues in case they were present. Although communication between people who are supposed to closely work together is considered to be indispensable, mastering the local language was not a requirement for the job. Most job descriptions only stated that fluency in the local language, or a willingness to learn was 'desirable'. All advisers were supposed to do 100 hours of language training before starting the job, but in most cases this was not provided. In addition, observations learned that not all advisers were equally disciplined and/or able to learn the language. This resulted in overall arduous and inefficient communication. On numerous occasions information got lost in translation, for example during workshops on important topics, provided in English for partners with (very) limited English skills.

'We should not have them [international advisers, red.] without language skills, or at least some' (implementing partner).

Communication was further complicated by different use of telephone and email. Observations and experience learned that some partners naturally communicated through such means, where others did not, or not frequently. Lastly, communication within and about the project was far from efficient. A frequently mentioned illustration was the resignation of head office staff members at crucial positions, which was not communicated to the field, leaving emails unanswered for quite some time. Almost all interviewees mentioned ad hoc communication when problems had to be solved straight away. In many cases, this was attributed to (adjusted) requirements from the fund manager.

'Usually communications come rapidly out of crisis management. So I feel like there should be communication beside crisis: 'Oh now Z [fund manager, red.] needs us to respond and, now let's meet!' So, there should be communication that doesn't break' (international adviser).

At field level, a lack of resources led to stagnation of several project activities. This was generally felt to be of negative influence to the overall process, and at the expense of inclusion of relevant stakeholders; promotion of ownership and leadership; and learning. Not being able to carry out activities becomes extra problematic when payment is done in arrears. At some point during the implementation phase, the project got stuck in a vicious circle: because certain activities could not be carried out, budgets could not be released since payments were allegedly done based on a certain number of carried out activities. One example was the lack of vehicles. Many activities were to be carried out in remote areas. Dozens of schools were targeted, including almost 2000 marginalised girls; more than 200 teachers and over 800 school council members were to be trained and capacitated, spread out over sometimes very remote districts. A relatively small group of around eight facilitators was available to carry out the fieldwork, to provide trainings and workshops, etc. Two cars were available for the whole project, including for fieldwork, but one of them was out of order. No additional funds were available for maintenance, since a significant amount of money was already spent on the purchase of those vehicles. So many of the activities could not be carried out within the set timeframe due to lack of transport, leading to further delays and targets not being met, so the next batch of money could not be released, etc. An additional problem was the huge staff turn-over leading to extra delays, and a generally felt problem related to not having the right people at the right positions, not having sufficient time to work together and to promote ownership and strengthen capacity, and not having enough people available to carry out the work.

In some cases, the human resource is limited, say you want facilitators [...] you know you don't have many so, a few of them have to repeat, like for the training you are organising. They have to repeat and there's the fatigue. [...] For example the person who is doing the coordination role in this project is overwhelmed! She trains, she collects data, she now coordinates the whole project! That is too much on one head [...] how will you build her capacity, she doesn't even have time to sit down (international adviser).

In addition, a lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities was experienced at several levels: at central level from the fund manager and the INGO's headquarters, but also at provincial level of local implementing partners, and to a certain extent also of the international advisers. At some time in November, the project reached a very critical stage, and utmost efforts were made at the highest level to turn matters around. It was felt that too much was at stake, and that too much money, time and efforts were already put into the project to let it come to an end at that specific point in time. Due to the ever-increasing complexities and the related problems, it was generally felt to be impossible to continue the project under the back then prevailing conditions and circumstances. The fund manager and partners agreed on the necessity of a revised project proposal. This process started in January, a few weeks after the involvement of the researcher came to an end.

6.4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that basically the entire SCCD framework was at odds with the way the PBR strategy was carried out for this specific project. The way this project was executed up until December 2014 was neither conducive to capacity development and sustainability in general, nor to curricular capacity development in particular. The process was fraught with difficulties, which inhibited proper participatory execution of several project components, including the curriculum development part. It was generally felt that to a large extent, many of the encountered difficulties were directly related to the PBR construction, and, whether entirely justified or not, has given PBR a negative connotation. Drawing on the stated strengths of PBR as set out in the introduction raises a number of questions. PBR is claimed to re-balance accountability; to increase room for innovation and flexibility in delivery, and transparency and accountability for results; and to create a strong focus on performance. However, except for the latter, all other benefits did not materialise during the execution of this project up to December 2014. The project showed much resemblance with conventional development approaches as discussed in chapter 3. Each step was carefully controlled and monitored by the fund manager, characterised by a strong focus

at input and output level, including very detailed descriptions of activities to be carried out, and accompanied by monthly updates and submissions of quarterly reports. In that sense, the project showed remarkable resemblance with regular programmes that are funded based on input but with additional PBR requirements on top of it, as quoted by Savedoff (2013) in the introduction. This can make programmes even more rigid.

Inconsistency that arose from demands for work plan alterations, changing project aims and objectives, and the request for a project extension even before implementation had started, seem to have drained the necessary energy and capacity, and prevented the project from being carried out as envisaged: with participation of relevant stakeholders and with a focus on learning. Judging by the many alterations in project documents, there are clear indications that previously agreed reports and studies were reversed during later stages of the process. The ambiguities regarding the aims of the project may have blurred agreement on results, resulting in confusion and inconsistent strategies. The experienced time pressure that characterised the implementation phase forced actors to carry out activities in a too limited timeframe, as a consequence of pressing project requirements imposed by the fund manager and at the expense of proper inclusion of crucial stakeholders, not least the girls. In addition, much time was spent on meeting the fund manager's requirements, including lengthy and cumbersome paperwork at the expense of the stated project focus: improving life conditions of marginalised girls. In that sense it could be argued that this project did not feed the theory that PBR improves results by increased scope for innovation and flexibility for suppliers, etc., at least not up to the point of the research. Actors were constrained to work according requirements that were mainly set by the fund manager, and were not supposed to make any decisions without fund manager's consent. This did not so much rebalance, but rather imbalance accountability by putting an enormous pressure on the leading INGO and partners, who tried to 'get this project right' in order to secure their own future. It also raised the question what the added value is of outsourcing fund management to consultancy firms, especially in times characterised by heated discussions about the delivery of value for money. It remained unclear how much of the budget is actually spent on fund management, but it is assumed that it absorbs a significant part, which is thus not spent at grassroots level.

To a significant extent, many of the encountered problems are a direct effect of negligence of almost all components of the framework. Room for participation and (curricular) capacity development was inhibited by several factors, including a lack of relevant stakeholders and counterparts, in combination with a lack of time to build relationships and to get to learn the context; a language barrier;

and severe pressure to deliver in a too tight timeframe. Due to not observing heuristics such as involvement of relevant stakeholders, allowing sufficient time and developing relevant strategies, other heuristics could also not be adopted. This may imply a certain level of pre-conditionality within the framework. For these same reasons, most of the advisers felt forced to carry out activities by themselves. This resulted in curricular products and teacher-training materials designed and developed by two advisers with barely any local input and participation, even though this was initially envisaged considering proposals and implementation plans. This is also contrary to the main principles of the leading INGO: capacity development through working together. It could be argued that this course of events does not necessarily mean that such materials will per definition not be used in practice, but nevertheless is a prototypical example of a missed opportunity for buy-in, strengthening ownership and capacity development. In addition, it increases the risk that these products are less context-relevant and context-specific and therefore less, or not suitable and applicable.

The framework rationale matches to a large extent with the ideology of the INGO, and could – at least in theory – also be applicable to the PBR paradigm. However, the problems encountered seemed to strongly resonate with discussions related to reductionist approaches versus more comprehensive approaches to capacity development, as also discussed in chapter 3. A results-based focus often inhibits room for more participatory approaches with a strong emphasis on collaborative learning and capacity strengthening. PBR in this project seemed an example of such reductionist, results-based approaches that - in this specific case - did not contribute to learning and capacity development, and did by far not live up to the stated PBR expectations and benefits. However, a focus on results and at the same time on capacity development does not have to be mutually exclusive, although it may require some preconditions: genuine partnerships between fund manager and supplying agencies based on dialogue, clear aims and objectives and including a good understanding of the (im-) possibilities of a context is indispensable. It may be beneficial if a fund manager has experience in the developmental sector to be able to provide proper guidance and sound advice. Further research into this project should tell whether the proposed project modifications did allow more room for participation, capacity development and learning, themes that were virtually missing during the previous stages from July up until December 2014.

It could be concluded that many of the encountered difficulties directly follow from not having incorporated the framework's heuristics. Because the entire framework was under such pressure, it was rather difficult to make statements

regarding the weight of individual heuristics. However, the fact that several heuristics could not be taken up because others were not yet observed assumes at least a certain order of importance, or level of pre-conditionality. As became clear for example, the lack of inclusion of relevant stakeholders has had severe implications for other parts of the framework, in particular on the third and fourth pillars: ownership and harmonisation; and collaborative learning. For this case study, the framework was supposed to be applied as a guiding tool for design and development but due to the circumstances, this was not possible. Instead, the framework was used as a tool for analysis and evaluation. In this case study, the framework seemed to be a relevant, consistent and practical instrument for this aim, and there are indications that using the framework as a foundation could have been beneficial to this project. As PBR is currently being introduced at a large scale, more research into PBR as the steering method for international cooperation is recommended in order to allow PBR to live up to its stated benefits.

CHAPTER 7 CASE STUDY 2: THE TRANSITION AND SCHOOL-BASED CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, ST. EUSTATIUS

This chapter presents the outcomes of the case study on St. Eustatius, a small island in the Caribbean where the SCCD framework was validated during two interventions. On this island a new curriculum had to be developed after the decision to change the language of instruction in education, an intervention referred to as the island-wide ‘transition’. The design of the curriculum component of this intervention was based on the framework. The second intervention involves the development of a school-based curriculum at the secondary school, where the framework was deployed as an evaluative tool to analyse the intervention. To set the scene, the first section (section 7.1) provides a brief history and an outline of more recent events and circumstances on the island, which eventually led to this transition and the development of a school-based curriculum at secondary level. After that, the transition, and in particular the curriculum development component, are further described in more detail, followed by an overview of the specific methodology used for this case study (section 7.2). Throughout the narrative, a distinction is made between the curriculum work that was carried out island-wide, which included representatives of pre-primary, primary and secondary schools; and the development of the school-based curriculum with secondary school teachers. The remainder of the chapter describes the outcomes of these trajectories (section 7.3), which are drawn up along the five pillars of the framework, and finishes with a discussion and conclusion (section 7.4).

7.1 INTRODUCTION OF THE ST. EUSTATIUS CASE STUDY

7.1.1 A brief history

St. Eustatius is located on the Northern American continent, surrounded by the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Together with neighbouring islands such as Saba, St. Kitts and St. Martin it forms part of the Northern Leeward islands of the Caribbean. The island has a surface of about 21 square kilometres, with a population of approximately 3193 people (CBS, 2016). St. Eustatius, or ‘Statia’ as referred to by its people, is characterised by a rich and turbulent history. The island was put on the map for the first time by Columbus in 1493 while on his way to the Americas. Over the subsequent centuries the island was occupied by various European powers, including the British, French and Dutch during the colonial era. St. Eustatius experienced its heydays in the 18th century, playing a starring role as a prosperous trade centre for decades, but those thriving times never returned (St. Eustatius Historical Foundation, 2010). After having

changed hands over 20 times, the British returned the island eventually to the Dutch in 1816, but the English language remained. Over time, ties with the Dutch remained, despite a physical distance of roughly 7000 km. During the 19th and 20th century the island formed part of the Dutch colonies until 1954, when St. Eustatius became part of the Dutch Antilles, also known as the Dutch West Indies. The island remained in this position until 2010.

The Dutch Antilles ceased to exist as a country on 10 October 2010. This had wide implications for the islands involved, including St. Eustatius, which was incorporated in the Netherlands. The website from the Dutch government (Rijksoverheid, 2016) states that since '10-10-10', the kingdom of the Netherlands consists of four countries that are located in different territories: the Netherlands in Europe, and the three islands Aruba, Curacao and St. Martin in the Caribbean. Together with Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, which are incorporated as extraordinary municipalities within the kingdom of the Netherlands, these three countries form the Caribbean part of the Netherlands. The three municipalities Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba - the so-called BES-islands - are called the Caribbean Netherlands. For the ease of reading, this study uses the official names of the areas of discussion as they are commonly known by, e.g. St. Eustatius and the Netherlands, instead of the Caribbean Netherlands or European Netherlands.

The constitutional reform implied greater involvement of the Netherlands on the BES-islands, including on St. Eustatius. Since 10-10-10 many changes and reforms have taken place, including the enforcement of Dutch laws and regulations. But because of the status of extraordinary municipality and due to the different context, there are a number of exceptions and differences within the legal framework. Agreements were made regarding the implications of the constitutional reforms on several areas, including for education. Standards have been established for an acceptable level of service provision, taking into account the specific context of the islands and on the principle of ensuring shared responsibility (see e.g. Stuivering & van Schoten, 2012). Since 2010, the Ministry of Education (OC&W) is responsible for education on the island, and the Dutch education system is leading. However, the quality of education between the European and Caribbean parts of the country differs significantly. In 2008, the inspectorate concluded that the quality of education on St. Eustatius was very weak (Inspectie van het onderwijs, 2008). The vast majority of students faced huge backlogs in their educational developments, which will be discussed in further detail below. Agreements on strengthening the quality of education on the BES-islands were set out in early 2011 in the *Education Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands* (OC&W, 2011), which contains objectives for the BES-

islands that should be reached by 2016. The agenda is divided into 5 priority areas: increasing the overall quality of education; capacity strengthening of teachers, principals and school boards; tailor-made care; attractive vocational education; and having prerequisites in place. For each priority it is stated which actors are involved, the support that can be expected, a timeframe, and what results are to be expected (OC&W, 2011). From 2010-2015 the agenda has been leading in education and serves as guiding principle for the inspectorate. At the beginning of 2016 the document was evaluated, and the process of designing the new Education Agenda 2017-2022 was well on its way.

Education on St. Eustatius is compulsory for children aged 4-18. There are five schools on the island that fall directly under the responsibility of OC&W: four primary schools and one school for secondary education. Three out of the four primary schools are of different religious denominations; the fourth is a public school, as is the school for secondary education. In 2015, the primary schools together accommodated about 350 students (information provided by schools), the secondary school stated to have approximately 230 students. All schools are presided by individual school boards. While the ministry is responsible for education provision, the boards are primarily responsible for overseeing management of the schools, recruitment of staff, etc. A fifth, private primary school is run by the American oil terminal on the island. This is the only school that is outside the jurisdiction of the Dutch ministry and is therefore not included in this research.

Although part of the Netherlands, the BES-islands are characterised by a different context compared to the European part. This manifests itself not only in obvious geographical differences, but also in differences in culture, habits and customs. In addition, the islands are characterised by different socioeconomic issues. As indicated in several reports (Drenthe et al., 2014; Drewes, 2012; Kloosterboer, 2013), Statia faces several complex, interrelated challenges that affect a significant part of the population, which also have a negative influence and impact on education and learning achievements of many students. The island has a relatively high incidence of poverty, domestic and sexual violence of children, teen pregnancies, and one-parent families (Kloosterboer, 2013), leading to a multitude of severe problems that directly affect children. Another major difficulty for many students is language related. The Dutch language played an important part in education. In general, primary schools started teaching in English in the first cycle and include increasingly more Dutch into the programme, which eventually should result in Dutch as the language of instruction in the upper cycle of primary school. In secondary school, students were fully taught in Dutch. However, Stian English is the main language on the

island and for the vast majority of students Dutch is not even a second, but a foreign language. Alarming low passing rates in consecutive years eventually led to an examination of this issue (Faraclas, Kester, & Mijts, 2013).

In 2012, extensive research into the language issue was carried out, initiated by the former Commissioner of the island and commissioned by the then minister of education of the Netherlands. The aim of the research was to investigate benefits of and attitudes towards Dutch and English as languages of instruction in primary, secondary and vocational education on St. Eustatius (Faraclas et al., 2013). The outcomes of this research showed that the vast majority of students indeed faced severe difficulties with Dutch as the language of instruction. It also concluded that the majority of the island preferred English as the language of instruction, while maintaining Dutch as a subject to allow students the opportunity to continue their studies in the Netherlands. The report suggests that changing the language of instruction is not going to solve all the aforementioned problems that the community faces, but can at least contribute to improvements in education. The team came with a number of scenarios for possible language(s) of instruction, including a wide range of recommendations. Based on this first study, a feasibility study (Drenthe et al., 2014) was carried out, including additional research and also comprising the implications per suggested scenario. Shortly after publication of the feasibility study in June 2014, the ministry made the decision to change the language of instruction from Dutch to English. From school year 2015/2016 onwards, all students in primary schools should be taught in English. Due to existing exam programmes and structures, English as the language of instruction at secondary level will be implemented in phases, starting with the first-year students. This decision had far-reaching implications for the education system on the island, and is captured in a programme called '*the transition*'. The next sections contain a more detailed overview of the components of the transition, and in particular the curriculum development component.

7.1.2 The transition

The overall aim of the transition was to improve the quality of education and strengthen the learning outcomes and achievements of all students. The feasibility study (Drenthe et al., 2014) mentioned above recommended that before the transition to English as the language of instruction could be made, the following actions should be taken: i) prepare a detailed action plan and appoint a coordinator; ii) develop teaching and learning resources for Dutch as a foreign language; iii) provide teachers with additional training in English; iv) develop curricula for primary education and secondary education; and v) develop a programme for graduates leaving the island. This suggested action

plan was indeed established, with the aforementioned action points taken up as the transition components.

Rationale for the curriculum development intervention

As previously noted, extremely low subsequent passing rates caused ground for concern and led to action. Both the language of instruction report (Faraclas et al., 2013) and the feasibility study (Drenthe et al., 2014) described a need for curriculum development in case of a transition from one language of instruction to another. Both mentioned the necessity to develop continuous learning strands, at least for the languages and call for making use of existing capacity on the island, including the input of teachers. Appropriate resources should be made available and stronger links between the different school types - pre-school, primary and secondary education - should be established. In the absence of a curriculum, textbooks were the main guiding instruments at all schools, more comprehensive curriculum documents or descriptions were lacking. In practice this meant a lack of overview of what students were supposed to learn during their school career, and when. A coherent structuring of content within and between schools was lacking. There was hardly any curricular stability, which was further aggravated by high staff turnover, especially at secondary level. This situation also complicated the transfer for students from one school level to the next. The recommendation to develop continuous learning strands in order to create more curricular stability was taken up by the ministry of education, and made up the first part of the curricular products that were to be developed under the umbrella of the transition.

The feasibility study (Drenthe et al., 2014) further recommended to seek external support for the curriculum developments needed, but also to make use of existing expertise. Such capacity should be further expanded and strengthened. SLO, system partner of the ministry of education with regard to the curriculum, was requested to support this specific intervention and took up this role. A decision was made for the development of continuous learning strands for English, Dutch as a strong foreign language and mathematics. A learning strand could be defined as *'an argued construction of intermediate goals and content, leading to a final goal'* (Strijker, 2010). Learning strands spread content over the years, making insightful what students should be able to do, know and master from one year to the next. Continuous learning strands imply that such strands should continue vertically, from one school level to the next, allowing for smoother transitions, in this case from pre-primary to primary and from primary to secondary level. Based on SLO's experience, it was assumed that teachers and teaching would likely not benefit from learning strands only, because such strands are considered to remain too general and abstract for use in daily

practice. A translation from the learning strands to a more practical level was considered necessary to make the work for teachers more insightful, meaningful and practical. This resulted in the development of so-called term planners for the three subjects English, Maths and Dutch as a strong foreign language (from now on referred to as 'Dutch'). These term planners provide an overview per term, consisting of a more detailed translation of the general content, aims and objectives as stated in the learning strands. Each planner contains and links the domains to content, learning activities, objectives and assessment, displayed per week or two weeks. The planners should provide guidance to cover the content that needs to be addressed during the year in a feasible pace, and should make it easier for teachers to draft their daily and weekly work plans.

Curriculum development at secondary education level

The curriculum developments at the secondary school had already started at the beginning of 2014, way before the transition was initiated. The school has been under surveillance by the inspectorate for a long time due to a number of complex problems, including alarmingly low passing rates over subsequent years, on-going language issues, social-emotional problems, and high staff turnover of teachers and principals. This has led to an unstable environment and discontinuity at all layers for years. The need for curriculum development was included in the Education Agenda 2011-2016 (OC&W, 2011), but subsequent reports from the inspectorate (Inspectie van het onderwijs, 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014) continue to make mention of a lack of a curriculum and emphasize the need for proper development thereof. The need for curricular stability in the school was also re-stressed in a number of interviews that were carried out for this study. Following from the Education Agenda, one of the former principals requested SLO at the end of 2013 to support the development of a school-based curriculum. This principal was inspired by a curriculum intervention that was already set in motion on one of the neighbouring islands. The curriculum trajectory designed for the secondary school on Statia was based on the same type of approach (school-based, participatory and hands-on) used on the other island, consisting of similar activities. In order to make insightful what teachers should teach and what students should learn during their time in secondary school and to increase curricular stability in an environment with high staff turn over, learning strands for all subjects were developed, followed by the development of term planners. However, the developments at Statia took a slightly different turn compared to Saba and never fully got off the ground as envisaged, which is described in this narrative later on.

Approach to curriculum development

To carry out the work, a number of working groups were composed. For clarity reasons, a distinction is made between i) the work of the 'island-wide' curriculum development working groups, consisting of teachers from pre-school, primary and secondary education; and ii) the curriculum developments at secondary level within the school. This division is necessary in order to distinguish between the two trajectories that ran parallel at some point, and will be described in further detail below.

The approach for the island-wide curriculum development intervention was based on the SCCD framework. The curriculum development work on the island was characterised by a participatory learning-oriented approach, including the active involvement and direct input of teachers. The choice to develop with teachers was deliberately made and is twofold. Local expertise is deemed necessary to develop contextualised and practical curricular products. At the same time, involvement of teachers opens up opportunities for curricular capacity development, which was considered to be limited. Strengthening curricular expertise may help to retain knowledge on the island and could be beneficial for future developments. The developments at the secondary school had already started before the transition and the involvement of the researcher. The adopted approach for this trajectory could be characterised as participatory, hands-on, also envisioned with full teacher involvement.

For the work related to the curriculum component of the island-wide transition, three working groups were formed, one for each subject. These groups consisted of teachers from all schools, one from each school type: a pre-school teacher, four primary school teachers representing each school, and one secondary school teacher. Each group developed continuous learning strands and term planners for the subjects English, Maths and Dutch. The formation of heterogeneous working groups followed from the framework. The members were selected by the respective principals, based on their expertise and, where possible, taking into account equal representation from lower and upper cycle of primary school. For each group, one of the group members was appointed as chairperson. All groups initially started off with six members, but this composition was not solid and changed over time, affecting the size of the groups. A number of reasons explain the fluctuating numbers of participants. First of all, not all participants attended all meetings and workshops, sometimes with, sometimes without notice. Second, around March 2015, one of the primary school boards decided to withdraw its teachers from the working groups out of precaution for a possible work overload. This had implications for the rest of the members, who saw their workload increase. In addition, two secondary school teachers

left the groups early. One teacher decided to withdraw at an early stage because taking part in the working group was considered to be no longer relevant to them. The other teacher left because of a career change. Attempts were made to find replacements but remained unsuccessful.

At secondary level, the curriculum developments also took place in working groups. These groups were small, because for several subjects there is only one teacher. As a result, many of the term planners were developed at an individual level. Because the curriculum development activities implied an additional workload, all working group members and the teachers at secondary level received a financial compensation for their work, paid for by the ministry.

7.2 CASE STUDY SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY

Table 7.1 Overview of consulted sources case study St. Eustatius

Documentation	A variety of sources, including official reports and research related to St. Eustatius before and after 10-10-10: Feasibility Study (Drenthe et al., 2014); Poverty in the Caribbean report (Drewes, 2012); Language of Instruction research (Faraclas et al., 2013); Inspectorate Reports (Inspectie van het onderwijs, 2008; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014); UNICEF report (Kloosterboer, 2013); Education Agenda (OC&W, 2011). Additional documentation: Periodical magazines issued by the ministry related to education on the BES-islands ('What's New (OC&W/RCN) 5 volumes per year) and website Dutch government (Rijksoverheid, 2016)
Interviews	17 individual semi-structured interviews with project coordination staff of OC&W/RCN (3) (see annex 12), management of primary education (2) (see annex 13), school board members (2) (see annex 14), management (see annex 15) and teachers (see annex 16) of secondary education (5), support staff from other organisations involved in the transition (2) (see annex 17) SLO-experts (3) (see annex 7 & 12); 3 focus group discussions with the 3 working groups (n=5/n=3/n=3) (see annex 18)
Surveys & questionnaires	Conducted with working group members (3 surveys, n=8/n=15/n=11) (see annexes 5, 6 & 8); teachers primary education (2 surveys, n=23/n=16) (see annexes 9 & 10); teachers secondary education (1 survey, n=17) (see annex 11); SLO expert (1) (see annex 7)
Direct observations and participant observations	Observations (80+) by the researcher throughout the duration of the project during workshops, meetings, daily work, informal conversations, and through email correspondence
Physical artefacts	The developed curricular products: continuous learning strands and term planners

Sources of information

In addition to the overall research design as described in the first chapter of this thesis, a detailed methodology for this specific case study is provided below. In order to enable data triangulation within this case study approach (Yin, 2003), a variety of complementary sources of evidence were consulted, including documentation, interviews, surveys and questionnaires, direct observations and participant observations, and physical artefacts (Yin, 2003), see table 7.1, and are further explained in more detail in this section. At the request of

interviewees, data have been anonymized. This allowed them to speak more openly about their experiences and perspectives.

Data collection island-wide working groups

The island-wide curriculum development process ran from January 2015 until May 2016. Throughout this process, strengthening curricular capacity of teachers and development of quality curriculum products were key. Together with teachers, continuous learning strands and term planners for the subjects English, Dutch and Maths were developed. Process, products and professional development of working group members were monitored and evaluated on a continuing basis. Such on-going monitoring and evaluation allowed for adjustments of developed products if needed to guarantee relevant, consistent and practical curriculum products. In addition, for this case study Guskey's (2000) levels of professional development were used to monitor and evaluate capacity strengthening of the working group members.

The results are roughly structured around the first four levels: participants' reactions; participants' learning; organisation support and change; and participants' use of new knowledge and skills. The fifth level, student learning outcomes, is not included since it is too early to measure any possible improvements in that area. The progress of the island-wide working groups, and the quality of the products under construction were monitored and evaluated at several points in time throughout the process, making use of a set of methods, including surveys, interviews and focus group meetings. Table 7.2 provides an overview of the main curriculum development activities that took place throughout the intervention, including their monitoring and evaluation.

The curriculum development activities took off in January 2015 and eventually concluded with a curriculum conference in April 2016. Each of the island-wide working groups was facilitated by a subject expert from SLO, who supervised the work and provided professional input and content knowledge: one expert for the language groups English and Dutch, and one for the Maths group. These experts visited the island about five times throughout the trajectory. During these visits, workshops per working group were organised that were fully dedicated to the development of the learning strands and the subsequent term planners. In addition, a full-time curriculum development process facilitator supported the three working groups with their daily work when the experts were off-island and managed the overall process. Upon request, the process facilitator was available for support for the curriculum development groups at secondary level as well, but except for one request, the school did not make further use of this possibility. The process facilitator also carried out the research for this study.

Table 7.2 Overview curriculum development activities including monitoring and evaluation

Activity & date	Organised for	Facilitated by	Evaluation
Introduction curriculum trajectory – Jan. 2015	Working groups English, Dutch, Maths (a 2-hour session per working group)	Curriculum project manager and process facilitator	Two open-ended questions regarding general curriculum development
Mission 1: Feb. 2015	Working groups English, Dutch, Maths (2 workshops per working group)	SLO subject experts language and Maths	Oral evaluation after workshops and survey including statements and open-ended questions
Mission 2: April 2015	Working groups English, Dutch, Maths (2 workshops per working group)	SLO subject experts language and Maths	Oral evaluation after workshops and survey including statements and open-ended questions
Mission 3: May 2015	Working groups English, Dutch, Maths (2 workshops per working group)	SLO subject experts Maths Language teacher Saba*	Oral evaluation at end of workshops
Start-up conferences Aug. 2015	All pre-primary school teachers and principal (½ day)	Working group members, process facilitator and teacher coach	Evaluation activity
	All primary school teachers, teacher assistants and principals (2 days)	Working group members, process facilitator and teacher coach	Survey
	All secondary school teachers and principal (1.5 hour session)	SLO international educationalist and teacher coach secondary education	
1st evaluation learning strands & term planners Oct. 2015	All teachers and teacher assistants primary schools	Process facilitator in cooperation with working groups	Survey including statements and open-ended questions
Focus group meeting Dec. 2015	Working group members Dutch	Process facilitator	Evaluation activity followed by group discussion
Focus group meetings Jan. 2016	Working group members English & Maths	Process facilitator	Place mat activity followed by group discussion
Mission 4: Feb. 2016	Working groups English & Dutch (1 workshop per working group)	SLO subject expert language	Oral evaluation
Mission 4: March 2016	Working group Maths (2 workshops)	SLO subject expert Maths	Oral evaluation
Curriculum conference April 2016	Primary school teachers, teacher assistants and principals	SLO subject experts language and Maths, process facilitator	Survey including statements

** Due to medical reasons, one of the experts was temporarily replaced. This expert resumed the work from December. 2015 onwards*

During the first two visits of the experts, a series of workshops was carried out comprising underlying theory of learning strands, term planners and occasionally extended with subject related content in case relevant. This theory was subsequently translated to practice within the Statian context. Through a cyclical approach, prototypes of learning strands were designed and further developed. The learning strands for English and Dutch, and the first term planners for English, Dutch and Maths were completed in July 2015, ready for use in the new school year.

At the beginning of the new school year a series of start-up conferences per school level was held, aiming to inform all teachers about the learning strands, term planners and their use. This was done through a number of workshop sessions, facilitated by working group members, staff from the Education Expertise Centre on Statia, the teacher coach of the secondary school and SLO. From October to November 2015 (the initial end of the project) the planners for the 2nd term for all three subjects were developed.

As table 7.2 depicts, the process and products were monitored and evaluated in different ways. Working group members and teachers were asked about perspective and experiences through a number of surveys and questionnaires. The work of the SLO experts was also monitored and evaluated throughout the process. At the end of the first visit of the experts, a survey with five open-ended questions related to approach and expectations was conducted. During interviews later on in the trajectory these questions were evaluated. Due to medical reasons, one of the experts was temporarily not able to carry out the work and was replaced by an expert teacher from a neighbouring island. Due to circumstances not further discussed here, another SLO expert was replaced in November 2015. A complete overview of all surveys that were conducted during the period between January 2015 and April 2016 is depicted in table 7.3, including their annex-reference. The annexes contain the conducted questionnaires, surveys, et cetera.

The numbers of participants in the working groups fluctuated over time. This also had its immediate effect on the number of respondents. Main reasons for this include the varying presence of participants during working groups during meetings and workshops, and the withdrawal of several teachers from the groups. For unknown reasons, the teachers of one of the schools were unable to fill out the seventh survey, which explains the difference in respondent numbers between surveys six and seven.

Table 7.3 Number of respondents of surveys conducted between January 2015 and April 2016

	Survey 1 Jan '15 (Annex 5)	Survey 2 Feb '15 (Annex 6)	Survey 3 Feb. '15 (Annex 7)	Survey 4 April '15 (Annex 8)	Survey 6 Oct. '15 (Annex 9)	Survey 7 April '16 (Annex 10)	Survey 8 April '16 (Annex 11)
Working group members island-wide transition	N = 8	N = 15		N = 11			
SLO experts			N = 1				
All teachers primary school					N = 23	N = 16	
All teachers second. school							N = 17

In addition to the surveys and questionnaires, interviews were conducted with stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in the curriculum developments and the transition (see also table 7.1). Three focus group interviews with the three working groups ($n=5/n=3/n=3$) were carried out, and a number of individual interviews were conducted, including principals (2); project management (3); subject experts (2); school board members (2) and support staff (1). All individual interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interviewees were given the opportunity to read and adjust the transcription, but none of them indicated a need for this. Almost all interviewees requested to remain anonymous, which allowed them to speak more freely about their work, the process and related complexities. All interviews were conducted individually, and all were structured around the same line of inquiry: open ended questions about what facilitated and what hindered curriculum development, in order to avoid steering interviewees into certain directions. One of the interviews contained such divergent and conflicting information compared to all other data sets that it was considered to be an outlier, and is therefore not included in the analysis.

Curriculum development at the secondary school

The curriculum developments at secondary school level took off way before the island-wide transition trajectory started, due to a need for a school-based curriculum. From 2015 onwards, the school-based curriculum process incorporated the transition from Dutch to English as the language of instruction (see above for more detail). The school-based curriculum development started in early 2014 with a (re)statement of the vision and mission for the school. Following from that, a series of activities was undertaken to first develop learning strands for lower and upper secondary, followed by development of term planners. This trajectory was facilitated by an international educationalist of SLO. Because the curriculum work started long before the researcher's arrival on the island, this process was evaluated in a different way: seven individual interviews regarding the curriculum development process were held with stakeholders that were directly involved in these developments, including teachers and management

(5), support staff (1) and the SLO facilitator (1). These respondents were selected based on their roles (management roles and executive roles); their working experience in the school and their involvement in the curriculum development process. In addition, a survey (n=17, see also table 7.3) was conducted with all teachers from the secondary school, containing a number of statements and one open-ended question. Additional data derived from direct observations during meetings, school visits and informal conversations.

7.3 OUTCOMES OF THE ST. EUSTATIUS CASE STUDY

7.3.1 Outline

This section describes the outcomes of the research into the island-wide transition, and into the curriculum development at the secondary school. In the case of the former, the SCCD framework was used to design the intervention. In the case of the latter, the framework was used to analyse the intervention. Figure 7.1 illustrates how both interventions took shape related to the framework.

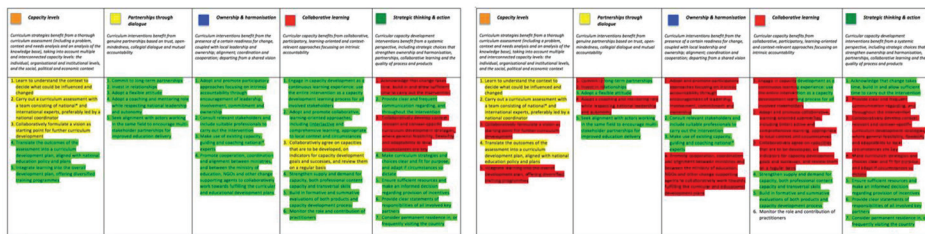


Figure 7.1 Transition (SCCD framework 1) and school based curriculum development (SCCD-framework 2)

The outcomes of the case study are arranged along the pillars of this framework as presented in the narrative below. The narrative is based on the different heuristics from the framework, but does not state them all separately since this would interrupt the flow. For a complete overview of the set of heuristics see figure 5.1. Each section starts with the overall description of the pillar, followed by an account of activities and processes that took place under this heading during the intervention. For clarity reasons, the distinction between the island-wide transition and the curriculum development at the secondary school is continued.

The request of interviewees to process data anonymously put restrictions on source indication. Due to the very small context and thus the relative ease with which sources could be traced, only very general subdivisions were made related to references and quotations used, in particular when related to the

secondary education intervention. The quotes used for this study come from across the different respondents and represent the perspective of more than one interviewee, unless stated otherwise.

7.3.2 Pillar 1: Capacity levels

As described in the introduction, the transition trajectory was preceded by extensive research into the prevailing situation in education at that time, including some acknowledgement of the wider social, political and economic context. However, this research did not include a specific context and/or problem or needs analysis at the individual and organisational levels related to education or curriculum capacity on the island, nor an assessment of existing capacity. There are no indications that schools were involved in the final decision to change the language of instruction, nor that this exercise was used as a capacity development activity that included local staff. After a further examination of the two documents that led to the intervention, it could be argued that the organisational level is implicitly taken into account through references to the inspectorate reports, but it remained rather unclear to what extent curricular capacity was present at individual and organisational level.

The two studies both extensively mapped the context, and included the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders. As indicated earlier, the first conducted study (Faraclas et al., 2013) was commissioned by the former island commissioner and the former minister of OC&W to perform research into the language of instruction on the island. There appeared to be an island wide desire for maximum proficiency in both English and Dutch, but the outcomes of the study also showed that the use of Dutch as language of instruction had a negative impact on student performance, both in English and in Dutch. The team observed that students' command of both Dutch and English stayed far behind the level of their counterparts in the Netherlands and other English-speaking communities respectively. They point out that it is crucial that students master at least one language, and concluded that the best solution for most of Statia's students would be the provision of a solid foundation to master the language that is closest to their native language: Standard English, and to offer Dutch as a strong foreign language as a subject.

Subsequent to this first study, the ministry commissioned a second study into the language issue. This study aimed to answer the question which language of instruction and which exam structure would be most feasible on Statia. An independent research team consisting of members with expertise in education, but also experience with and knowledge of the social and cultural context of Statia and the wider Caribbean region, carried out this feasibility study. The

study built on the previous research and expanded it by investigating the implications of a number of scenarios for changing the language of instruction. This team interviewed a wide number of stakeholders on Statia and beyond, and eventually recommended a change to English as the language of instruction while remaining Dutch as a strong foreign language, and adopting the regionally established exam programme of the Caribbean Examination's Council (CXC). The report also included recommendations related to how the project could take shape and how the work could be carried out.

The design of both studies and the comprehensive way in which they were carried out appear to justify the decision to change the language of instruction, and seems to be widely supported by the community. The interviews conducted for this case study confirmed this, several respondents made mention of the studies and acknowledged the necessity of the transition. However, some interviewees also mentioned a small group of people that strongly disapproved of the transition. This also came through the fore through some observations. There are indications that a majority of this group are older community members who were brought up in the Dutch system themselves, and feel that the current generation may be denied the opportunities they once had, because students might not receive an equally strong foundation in Dutch due to the transition. In addition, some people expressed a fear that the transition may lead to a separation with the Netherlands.

Despite the substantiated rationale and the broad based support for the transition, both reports pointed out that a change of language of instruction is not the answer to all problems and obstacles. They also underlined the complex and interrelated problems that the community faced related to education and the wider socioeconomic environment. The domestic situation of many children is said to contribute to significant behavioural problems and cognitive deficits (see also Kloosterboer, 2013) that seriously hinder them in their development. The feasibility study (Drenthe et al., 2014) concluded that the transition by itself would not be sufficiently effective. Additional comprehensive approaches to tackle these broader challenges are indispensable. The aforementioned research eventually led to the transition and the proposed curriculum developments, initiated by the ministry.

7.3.3 Pillar 2: Partnerships through dialogue

Despite the small scale of the island, the transition involved a multitude of stakeholders, on the island and beyond. In addition to the transition, general educational developments were already taking place. To a large extent, these developments can be traced back to the Education Agenda (OC&W, 2011),

including many of the same key stakeholders, i.e. the schools. The curriculum development activities took place during a turbulent year where many changes were taking place at the same time. For both trajectories – the work of the island-wide working groups and the curriculum development activities at the secondary school - partnerships were sought, but they worked out in different ways. The majority of the island-wide working groups described that overall cooperation with SLO proceeded in a constructive way, and positively contributed to the whole process.

‘They were involved from the beginning. You had someone who was overseeing it, not only teachers are doing it, they are involved but it’s not that they’re doing it all by themselves, they have a professional always guiding them in the right way, so you get what is needed’ (principal).

Several interviews and observations confirmed that good working relationships, on-going dialogue, and working flexibly alongside stakeholders contributed to a favourable climate to get the work done.

‘The support was fine. Both X and Y [SLO staff, red.] could be contacted rapidly, they thought along with you and were well informed’ (working group A, member).

However, this was not the case in all working groups. In one of the groups the relationship with the expert was somewhat complicated due to a self-adopted role and approach. Several members described the approach as inconsistent and too cautious, with too little expertise being brought in. This resulted in friction and a certain level of confusion, and did not contribute to a positive working climate (see also pillar 4). It also implies that managing and supervising these kinds of processes require specific competencies and skills from a change-supporting agent, see also the next pillar.

Partnerships were also sought with actors working with the schools, but who were not directly linked to the transition. This was done in order to align the work as much as possible and working towards the same goals, but also to avoid duplication and overstressing stakeholders. This required clear lines of communication, which was not always easy considering the numbers of stakeholders involved in education in one way or the other, see also pillar 5.

Curriculum development at secondary school level

Developing a partnership with the secondary school turned out to be complicated as indicated by both teachers and management of the school and SLO staff. All interviewees in this respondent group indicated that the school curriculum,

including its development, was not yet broadly supported. Several complex factors led to an overall understanding that the curriculum was developed for SLO, not for the school. Survey data backed up this claim: almost two-thirds of teachers agreed, or partially agreed with the statement that the learning strands and term planners were solely developed for an external party.

‘The first word that actually comes to mind is ‘annoying’. Because the curriculum developments started without any clarity’ (respondent secondary education).

Although the request for curriculum development support came from the school itself in 2013, respondents indicated that a combination of high staff turnover of both teachers and principals, a lack of communication, and a lack of steering and supervision from management contributed to a negative attitude and resistance towards everything that had to do with curriculum development, including the external supporting expert. Several respondents stated that it would be virtually impossible for any external party to build up good relationships due to the operation of the school in general.

‘SLO was asked to organise a training related to vision and mission and nobody from the team, there was huge resistance at the time SLO did the introduction, ignited a fire and emotions running high: what vision and mission? Why? We got to start with preconditions first! Another group said: but we already have a vision and a mission! People thought it was a day for SLO. [...] So it is really difficult for an outsider in this situation despite good intentions, under these complex circumstances, to accomplish something that could qualitatively strengthen you big time’ (respondent secondary school).

‘I remember one time when X [expert, red.] was slightly devastated, all these people, so aggressive, and that there is no management that responds to the situation, because that’s not X’s job. He comes as the external expert and you as management should make sure such a process runs well, but that didn’t happen’ (project management).

The interviews and several observations learned that the described complexity of the school hindered the entire curriculum development trajectory, including the transition process in general, see also the next sections.

7.3.4 Pillar 3: Ownership & harmonisation

The level of ownership seemed to have increased over time, but was fairly low at the beginning. The feasibility study (Drenthe et al., 2014) started in January 2014, and the report itself dates from June that same year. Six months later, in January 2015, the implementation of the transition took off. Several interviewees made mention of the fact that they were not against the transition, but that they were against the way and pace in which it was executed. They stated that the schools were neither taken into consideration when the final decision was made, nor involved in setting up an implementation plan. It was felt that a huge transition was imposed onto them within a too short timeframe.

'So I objected heavily against it because it was a little too fast. We were hoping that we would get the year 2015/2016 to make, to work more on the transition, that we can actually try to smooth it out and you spread it out so that others will come on board, because we had to convince our staff, what it is for [...]. Because we had our own programme set up, our school plans that we were working with and then all of a sudden you got this bááám, yes the bullet hit you and, it's like hey, from one day to the next you have to change and it was too rapid for us to really actually digest' (principal).

What needed to be done was more or less clear, but according to several respondents, how it should be done and within what time frame felt imposed, which hindered ownership. Observations learned that especially during the first months it took much effort to get the schools on board. There was a noticeable, often expressed feeling that the transition was something additional to the already experienced heavy workload, which was also indicated by almost all interviewees. As explained in the introduction, the Education Agenda is guiding the schools in their educational improvements, but all of a sudden the transition came in between, a process repeatedly described as being obstructive and having negative effects. Several respondents felt that for a long time a number of stakeholders were not sufficiently engaged, including the inspectorate, which is supported by observations. This sometimes caused confusion, since the inspectorate is a department within the same ministry that initiated this transition.

'The fact that it was seen as something new what schools had to do, on top of what they already had to do. And you actually noticed that throughout the field. Not just the schools but also people around the schools. Boards, but also Y was very sceptical at the beginning. For example, it turned out

not possible to carry out the original plan, to set up a transition working group consisting of principals' (project management).

Several interviewees in different capacities mentioned that alignment between the Education Agenda and the transition and aligning the multitude of education stakeholders involved on the island to be a challenging exercise that took a lot of effort. In line with this, also unclear roles and responsibilities, and inefficient communication were referred to as complicating factors, see also pillar 5.

'There has been confusion obviously. And again, that also had to do with different roles people have. And well, different stakes too, eventually we all work towards the same thing but everybody has a slightly different agenda. But I think it also has to do with not enough communication between a number of key stakeholders' (respondent secondary education).

As directed by the framework for SCCD participatory approaches were adopted for the execution of all curriculum development activities. This was not only done for capacity development purposes, but also to encourage leadership, commitment and ownership, by making use of existing capacity and by including relevant stakeholders. The majority of interviewees underlined the importance of such an approach, but some also described difficulties that can come with it. For example, including stakeholders also implies dealing with available stakeholders and their capacity. This sometimes required flexibility and adaptability when overall capacity turned out lower than expected, while still ensuring that the work got done and was up to a certain standard. Dealing with a lack of a certain basic professional skills level, such as preparing for meetings or workshops, preparing agreed assignments, etc. took up more time than envisaged, at the expense of the actual development work.

'Hindering factors are also willingness, commitment, and compliance with agreements that were made. Yes, sometimes we had made agreements about when to do this; when to bring that, and then there was a difference in who had prepared and who hadn't. That sometimes becomes an obstacle in the sense that you want to move on, but you can't take the next steps because the rest is not there yet' (working group member).

Curriculum development at secondary school level

The general climate at the secondary school hindered commitment and ownership. All interviewees and the vast majority of the survey respondents put to the fore that curriculum development at the school was a necessity. Almost 95% of the respondents agreed or partially agreed with the statement that it was necessary to think about education and curriculum at school level

because there was hardly anything written down. Almost all interviewees stated that development of the school curriculum should be done with teachers for ownership purposes, but at the same time they also indicated that many teachers do not appear to see the value and necessity of it. Interestingly, the survey indicated that the vast majority of teachers feel it to be (very) important that teachers are directly involved in the development of the curriculum since they are the experts, but at the same time, 24% stated that curriculum development is not considered to be their duty. Observations and interviews learned that the development process itself was fraught with difficulty. According to all interviewees, general low ownership is directly associated with the overall complexity the school was dealing with, including a lack of shared vision, communication, structure, strategic planning and leadership.

'Imagine, we're told Mr X will be here tomorrow to do something with curriculum. A lack of clarity, exactly, then let's say you've been teaching for a whole day, and after that apparently something is going to take place. You know, due to communication and things that are planned at short notice, or not being planned at all, that calls for a lot of frustration and resistance. And with resistance you won't get any decent products' (respondent secondary education).

'There are many disciplinary problems with students in the classrooms, let's say the pre-conditions for teaching are not always there [...] If you face those problems, and on top of that you are supposed to think conceptually about the arrangement of your education, for some that is simply too much. And when you're not managed from the top; when the value and necessity are not clear to you, but you can't find it out from others either, then you may be inclined to take the work not that seriously' (respondent secondary education).

Several interviewees indicated that the willingness to change is considered to be low, which they felt is also related to the level and experience of teachers, and the fact that several teachers feel curriculum development is not their task.

'I do think that people at some point have an attitude, like everything has to be at the ready. Sometimes you see people who say that students don't want to work hard anymore, or that they aren't motivated to work, but I also think it's not just the students, I think that we also reflect through our own attitude that we want to get everything at the ready. [...] Actually we protest, we say: well it is imposed on us, but when people give us the mandate [...] then we don't want to do that either. So we don't want to

have the feeling that things are imposed on us, but when people say okay, you do it, what do you think of it? Yeah well that's not my job! (Respondent secondary education).

In addition, some interviewees also stated that limited ownership is related to school plans that are not well thought out; important policy choices that are not being made resulting in confusion and a messy implementation.

'We really missed expertise too. We missed having a sense of direction, we didn't know very well where we were heading. Still not actually, we still need to decide which organisational structure the school gets. That still needs to be decided upon' (respondent secondary education).

In the survey, teachers responded somewhat divided related to the sense of direction related to the curriculum work: almost half of them felt it was more or less clear what they were working towards, while the other half disagreed with that. Related to the discussed issues, the survey showed some other interesting outcomes. The vast majority of teachers felt that the developed curriculum is (well) aligned to the vision and mission of the school. However, a number of interviewees, observations and school documents indicated that the vision exists, but only on paper. There is very little evidence that the three school-based pillars coming forth from the vision that should serve as a foundation for education at the school - a challenging teaching programme, an inspiring learning environment and tailor-made support – are firmly integrated, neither in the intended, nor in the enacted curriculum.

7.3.5 Pillar 4: Collaborative learning

Capacity strengthening was given a prominent position throughout the curriculum development trajectory, as much as possible guided by the framework heuristics, all geared towards collaboratively achieving the intended curriculum objectives. Although the framework recommends to collaboratively develop curricular strategies, this was not done so in this case. Strategies and aims were targeted without inclusion of local partners. In addition, mainly due to time constraints and practical considerations, capacities were not collaboratively targeted and specified upfront. Instead, a question related to expectations and professional development was added to the second questionnaire. The responses provided input for the design of the upcoming workshops. The process was used as much as possible as a capacity development experience, including partners where feasible under the existing time constraints.

The overall aim of the curriculum intervention was to develop continuous learning strands and term planners with a group of teachers, in order to create curricular stability in schools by structuring learning content and by making the curriculum more insightful. From the spider's web perspective (see figure 1.1), this implies a main focus on the components aims and objectives, and content. To establish this, teachers should be provided with knowledge of learning strands and the necessary skills to build up the different domains, and in addition, they should be provided with knowledge related to the interrelationship between the curriculum components aims and objectives, content, learning activities and assessment, and to gain the necessary skills to translate this into a practical term planner. A summary of how this process took place is provided below, structured along four levels of professional development according to Guskey (2000) (see section 7.3.2).

Participants' reactions

As mentioned in the introduction, the three working groups (A, B and C) came together for the first time in January during kick-off meetings in three separate sessions per subject. Through the first survey conducted in February 2015 (n=15, see annex 4), the vast majority indicated that the change of language of instruction will assumingly contribute to improved education, and stated that it is clear what was expected of them in the coming months. The vast majority also agreed that the inclusion of teachers in this curriculum development process is important, and that it provides an opportunity to strengthen professional development. Most of the members believed that the learning strands and term planners would help to better structure and arrange their work. However, although all members indicated during the kick-off meeting that curriculum is very important to their work, different ideas regarding the concept of curriculum seemed to exist, including some controversy related to curriculum development being a responsibility of teachers or not: 40% agreed, 33% partially agreed, 26% disagreed. The majority agreed or partially agreed that good textbooks are sufficient for a teacher to teach, but all teachers also stated that they feel being member of the working group allows them to directly contribute to the improvement of education on the island. Also, opinions differed on whether there was enough time to carry out this transition: 66% (partially) agreed, 33% disagreed.

The second survey conducted in April 2015 (n=11, see annex 6) provided particular insight into participant's reactions to the workshops, both content and execution. Outcomes showed that the vast majority had a positive attitude towards the workshops in general; the composition of the groups; room provided for individual contribution; room provided for exchange within the

group; and the attention paid to the Statian context. This also showed from the observations made during the workshops. In general, most working group members acted interested, motivated and willing, although they also expressed feelings of uncertainty and not overseeing the overall picture as yet.

Z requests a short one-to-one meeting in the hallway. She expresses her concerns related to the bigger picture, and how they fit in ('I'm lost'). She does seem lost and struggling to find that connection. Need to take action on this (observatory notes mission 2, April '15).

At the end of the second cycle of workshops, most members of two out of three working groups described an increased clarity and overview, a stronger sense of direction, and some expressed that the different parts were slowly coming together compared to the kick-off meeting.

'In the background it's still slightly messy but we're heading towards the right direction' (evaluation after 2nd workshop cycle - working group member).

The initial plan - the development of the learning strands by the working group members with support from SLO - turned out to be unfeasible due to a lack of capacity and time to carry that out. Instead, a validation approach was taken for groups A and B. Based on examples from other countries, such as New Zealand and Curacao, the working group decided on what the learning strands for Statia could look like. Through group discussions and guided exercises, several options, features and possibilities from the examples were examined and taken on board, which gradually built up the learning strands. The decision regarding the format for the term planners was taken in a similar, collaborative way. Group C took up a slightly different approach, which will be discussed below.

Overall, the support to the island-wide working groups and management of those corresponding workshops by SLO was positively assessed. All respondents felt that SLO had a clear vision related to the development process, and all stated they consider the SLO experts to be knowledgeable and sufficiently skilled in supervising and assisting the working groups. However, this is not entirely in line with the observations during workshops and meetings, email correspondence and individual conversations that took place throughout the process. For all working groups, the same learning-oriented, participatory approach was envisaged, but matters turned out differently for one of the groups due to a number of reasons. For this subject, textbooks in Dutch were used in all schools. However, as a consequence of the transition, new textbooks in English had to be ordered. This necessity was already mentioned in the feasibility study (Drenthe

et al., 2014) but the schools responded rather late to this issue, which is likely related to the lack of felt ownership at that time (see also previous pillar). Only after on-going reminders, action was taken and new textbooks eventually got selected in June, just in time for the start of the new school year. This course of events severely delayed the development of the learning strands and term planners for this group, since the textbooks had to be selected first before the development work could take off. In addition, the supervision of this working group by the expert proceeded in a rather difficult way, apparently due to different expectations between the working group members and this first expert. This resulted in a somewhat rough start and ditto continuation of the process for this group, and also had implications for learning, which did not progressed as it did for the other two groups. During the first workshop the difference in expectation became clear and caused resistance, which proved difficult to tackle. Although selection of textbooks was primarily a responsibility of the schools and not part of SLO's contract, within the group other perspectives existed. One member was under the impression that the new textbooks were already selected; others seemed to have an expectation that SLO should select the teaching and learning materials.

'SLO should have come with clear examples, should have made a pre-selection [...] this is not structured. We expected a number of methods, that's what we chose from. There is too much hassle and switching going on. We expected much more guidance, [...] you are the experts. This rush is bad, SLO comes here with an enormous pressure' (working group member).

The reason why it was obviously felt that SLO put the schools under pressure seemed to be related to the way the transition took off, by many regarded to be rushed and fairly out of the blue, see also pillar 3. During the first round of workshops, a lot of time was spent on selection of textbooks, which delayed the development of the learning strands and term planners. By the time this group started the actual development of the curriculum products, the process was further complicated by an experienced and observed inconsistent approach, and a certain level of indecisiveness from the side of the expert, resulting in further confusion.

'There's a lot of discussion but few decisions are being made' (working group member).

All this limited room for learning and capacity strengthening of the group, see also below.

The outcomes of the surveys and evaluations with the working groups that were held after the workshops were used to guide improvements and adjustments in the design of the course and to steer the process, and to make the content of the workshops as relevant and contextualised for participants as possible. The curriculum products were developed through a cyclical process characterised by on-going formative evaluations in order to guarantee relevance, consistency and practicality (i.e. the quality criteria (Nieveen, 1999; 2009), see chapter 1 and the methodology section for this case study). Due to time constraints caused by the very tight timeframe in which products had to be delivered, there were no possibilities to share the draft products with a wider group of stakeholders before disseminating them throughout the schools. With the aim of gaining insight in the usability of the planners, a survey was conducted a few weeks after the beginning of the school year. Although teachers had only been working with the planners for a relatively short time, this initial information was deemed useful in order to get a first impression of the actual practicality. The provided input led to the revision of some planners, and allowed the working group members to continue with the development of the next set of planners.

Participants' learning

The first few months of the intervention were mainly devoted to the set up of the learning strands. This was a fairly new area for most working group members. Although the outcomes of the second survey indicated that the vast majority felt they had a good overview of the development process and a clear idea of what was expected of them, a certain level of confusion, puzzlement and obscurity was observed in all groups, particularly during the first workshops. In two of the groups, that feeling apparently started to fade around May. As one of the members expressed it:

'It's becoming easier, the skills are already in your head. It's falling into place, the core objectives and goals. As you go more into it, you're getting a clearer picture' (working group member).

Observations and interviews indicated that learning took place during the process, at least in two of the working groups. Below, a brief overview is provided of participants' learning per working group. This is done in order to be able to compare and contrast between the groups later on.

Working group A (n=6)

This group remained quite consistent in number and commitment of its members: all but one took part from January until the very end. Almost all members indicated that this trajectory has provided them with deepened knowledge and

insight regarding educational content and their educational practice. Stronger links were established between subject content, objectives and intermediate objectives and how that can be translated into teaching and learning activities. Having a better insight into the objectives made it easier to oversee what they were working towards.

'What I liked were these core objectives and intermediate objectives. To me, what makes my work easier now is that I can take it with me in my lessons. What are my main objectives, what are my intermediate objectives, what do the children need to know. Because sometimes you are standing there in front of that classroom, you prepare but you don't know what's really important for those children' (working group member).

Members described deepened insight into the different levels, between school types, and for primary education also between the subsequent years. Knowing what happens in other years and knowing what to expect from students when they enter – the following year and the next school type - is considered to be an important asset. In that sense, the composition of the working groups proved to be valuable, since it allowed for discussion and collaboration between teachers with different backgrounds.

'You hear about what teachers in primary education encounter, which gives you an opportunity to better align' (working group member).

'The structure of the learning strands, seeing and experiencing the bigger picture, what can you do to reach that goal and brainstorm about that. Collaborate with different schools, critically assess teaching and learning resources [...] And I really liked developing the term planners. This allowed me to come up with my own themes and carry them out in practice' (working group member).

Almost all members stated that they valued the adopted approach and management, which they felt contributed to their learning.

Working group B (n=4)

All members of this working group stated that this trajectory has provided them with a deeper understanding related to educational content for this specific subject, and how that content is structured over time in the respective years. They stated that digging deeper into their teaching and learning resources has been beneficial for an overall understanding of the curriculum. Together with examples from other curricula, this has helped them to build up the learning strands.

'Being exposed to other curriculum was also a good thing, we got an idea of what's being done, globally. [...] Sharing ideas within the team, it was a very strong team we had and I felt real confident, and comfortable with the team, working with SLO' (working group member).

All members indicated that the learning strands and term planners have provided them with more structure; insight; a focus on the skills that should be taught; and also what should be taught throughout the different years.

'What we did basically before is we were using the same method but generally everybody was doing what they wanted to, not in a unified way, and sometimes the children would come to me, they haven't quite dealt with the important concepts of group X, but they're coming to me in group Y, I'm expected to take the work of group X and group Y, but now that the teachers, each of them have a better understanding of what their role is, what they have to do, then the children are coming to me now, and it's not so long, but the teachers know: we have to do this and this and this, and then they are ready for group Y. I know where I start and where I finish, also generally the vision is clearer for dealing with the method' (working group member).

They also indicated that cooperation and collaboration between teachers of the different schools and school types positively contributed to the overall process, and strengthened links between the schools.

'I'm now able to discuss with other teachers of the other schools matters related to this subject's curriculum. We are able to share our experiences of teaching using the various areas of the curriculum' (working group member).

One member emphasised the fact that the island now has a unified curriculum, which in addition to sharing experiences with other schools, makes it also easier for children to switch between schools. The members were unanimously positive in their perspective on the participatory approach taken.

'It's good that we as teachers within the classroom, within the environment of St. Eustatius had the opportunity to do it [curriculum development, red.], because we're working, we know our children, so it really helped' (working group member).

Several interviewees also emphasised the need to do this type of development with teachers, instead of doing it for them, and felt this has also strengthened overall ownership.

Working group C (n=4)

The reflections on learning of this third working group were fairly limited compared to the other two groups. This is directly linked to the aforementioned encountered challenges that have delayed and complicated the work during the first year. All members cited their experiences with the rough start this group faced. Related to this process, all members stated that they gained a better insight into selection of textbooks, and how assessment tools can help during the procedure. However, where curriculum development and learning was concerned, this group lagged behind the other two. The aims of the workshops that were held from March until June 2015 were not always clear for the participants.

'I was not sure about the facilitator's intent' (working group member).

Observations during subsequent workshops confirmed this image.

Repetitively there's this question: 'what do you think?' directed at the members. This results in a strange sort of tension. 'I can't decide for you'. Discussions keep on falling silent and questions remain unanswered. Eventually the group almost stopped responding (observatory note during workshop June 2015).

The experience made clear that the role of an expert can play an important part and requires certain characteristics. Having thorough knowledge regarding a subject only is not sufficient. Facilitation of such trajectories also requires certain skills and competencies of experts. Directing and steering a group without being prescriptive, leaving sufficient room for autonomous choices seems a balanced act that requires the right mix of expertise, flexibility and adopted roles as discussed in chapter 5. The learning was restricted because of the first expert's choice to develop the products mainly individually instead of with teachers. This also applies to the learning strands, which were developed by the first expert and eventually finalised by the second expert, without involvement of the working group.

'I have a feeling that the only thing I did, I typed in what was in the book and the rest was done by the person who corrected it' (working group member).

A change in approach came in January 2016, when a second expert was recruited to support the group to finalize the curriculum products, in particular the term planners. In addition, based on experiences working with the new textbooks and the programme, adjustments had to be made to the math programme for

the next school year. This was done as much as possible by actively including the working group members and to collaboratively decide on the revisions. This second expert visited the island twice, once for the development of the final term planners and the necessary adjustments. The second visit was marked by implementation of the new textbooks, and took place after the researcher left the island. The time span of one mission was too short to measure possible learning, but observations and conversations with working group members indicate some increase in commitment, in understanding how the planners were designed and how to adjust them. Despite the limited room for capacity strengthening, the planners for this subject were being used and valued by the vast majority of teachers, see also below.

Organisational support and change

At the start of the school year 2015/2016, evaluations learned that the planners were not being used in all schools yet, for roughly two reasons. One of the schools had not yet internally distributed the planners to all teachers. In some other cases, teachers did not make use of the planners because they did not know how to, despite the start-up conference. It occurred that the school that withdrew their teachers seemed to struggle the most, or at least openly indicated they did. For both scenarios action was taken. Based on several interviews; the outcomes of surveys; observations during school visits; and discussions during workshops, meetings and the conference, at some point there were indications that most of the planners were eventually being widely used in the schools. At least two principals actively encourage teachers to make use of the planners. In one school, both teachers and principals indicated that the planners help the team to stay on track, and to take informed action when a class is getting behind.

'It makes all of us accountable, it makes all of us stay focused, that they are completing monthly what they're supposed to. But at least we are aware also. Before when we were doing the year plan I didn't really know, it was difficult to check where they actually... now I know. It just helps keep us all on the right track, and we're finishing when we're supposed to be finishing. I like it. I like the term planners, I like how it's set up, I like easy way to follow. It met the objectives very much so' (principal).

The school that withdrew their teachers from the process sought support from SLO on a number of occasions, mainly in case of confusion or queries related to the planners. There are strong indications that they now actively use the planners. Other schools faced internal issues related to staff turnover in their management team and absence. Information from working group members; conversations with teachers from these schools and the outcomes of the second

evaluation of the planners indicated that the planners were being used by some teachers, although it remained unclear to what degree, and to what extent it was encouraged by the principals.

Use of new knowledge and skills

The previous sections provided an impression related to the members' learning throughout the trajectory. The actual use of new knowledge and skills has become visible through (increased) quality of the developed planners over time, and in some occasions also through stated team interaction and observed interaction between teachers. During the start-up conference in August 2015 at the start of the school year, almost all members from all working groups facilitated parts of the workshops, where they explained the function and use of the learning strands and term planners to their colleagues. Observations learned that the majority of the members were well capable of transferring and sharing their knowledge with their peers.

Strong participation, lot of discussion and interaction. Subject sessions with the working group members seem pretty successful. Working group members well in their role, lots of explanations. Exemplary for ownership? (Observatory notes start-up conference, Aug. 2015).

Also during the curriculum conference at the end of the intervention in April 2016, several members naturally took up that supporting role again by providing information, explanation and ideas to their peers. In at least one case, a discrepancy between rhetoric and practice was publicly observed. During one of the theoretical sessions of the start up conference facilitated by a group member, it became clear that the new knowledge was not always well embedded yet, although rhetoric in the course of time sounded promising.

Conceptual framework apparently not clear in all cases, for example providing totally wrong examples and information, even after we've discussed and went through the whole session in length. Kept on talking about learning strands while explaining term planners. Can't be just the nerves, can it? (Observatory notes start up conference, Aug. 2015).

This resulted in the dissemination of incorrect information to the wider group. Encouraging participation during the start-up conference may have been too ambitious.

The quality of the planners was approved by the experts, which indicated that the majority of members are well capable of developing qualitative, balanced and practical planners for their own subject, but in some cases, also beyond.

For example, a member of one of the working groups clearly demonstrated use of new knowledge and skills by successfully taking up revision of planners from another subject, that makes use of unfamiliar teaching and learning resources. This teacher proved capable of translating the new knowledge to a different context. However, it must be noted that in some cases the quality in planners differed significantly. Although attempts were made to increase the quality of such planners, this did not in all cases led to the envisaged results due to time and capacity constraints.

The application of newly gained knowledge also came to the fore during interviews with the experts. They indicated that, to a greater or lesser extent, this trajectory did contribute to the strengthening of professional development of at least some of the working group members.

'And now that I noticed in a planner: skip when mastered', well you can't make me any happier as a curriculum developer. That is fantastic! Because that means that teachers are stepping away from the idea that they have to follow every single thing from the textbook. This is what we always want, the teacher as a designer. And here they do it, they put this in themselves!' (Staff SLO).

Discussions during the last workshops and meetings in some cases demonstrated the actual use of new knowledge. One of the members indicated that they completely revised previously developed curricular products on their own initiative, based on new insights gained along the way.

'I'm new this year in the lower cycle, and it looked like things here at school were going pretty well, good work plan, all looked good [...] but to my horror, from the first lesson onwards: these textbooks are so Dutch! This is no good to work with. What I did is, I worked my way through the textbook, looking for the most useful or adjustable materials, linking that to the reference framework, the learning strands, but not what was there in the term planner' (working group member).

The experts' feedback confirmed that these revisions indeed increased the overall quality of the products. The interviewed principals indicated that working group members more and more act as the key person within the team related to the specific subjects.

'I think the members of this team have gained a wealth of experience in preparation of the curriculum and so they are also able to, if you call in for a meeting let's say Maths or English or for Dutch, they can give feedback

to their colleagues on why this was decided, how are you go about that, so it also gives them the sort of professional level, that they are able to share and pass on with their colleagues' (principal).

Time should tell whether this professional involvement will further grow and help to improve the work of colleagues.

Overall, the general understanding and use of the learning strands and term planners in the schools has increased over time. After the first survey in October 2015, the planners and learning strands were evaluated a second time in April 2016. Caution should be exercised in comparing the two surveys because of the difference in number of respondents, 23 in October versus 16 in April. Also, not all boxes of the questionnaires were ticked consistently. However, the response per statement in the surveys was in some cases almost similar, so some careful assertions could be made. Comparing the outcomes of the two surveys showed a modest increase of understanding of the learning strands: there was a slight increase in the number of teachers indicating that learning strands contribute to a better structuring of content, and that learning strands provide a clear overview of the objectives. The outcomes did not show much fluctuation related to the term planners. In both surveys, the majority indicated that they use the planners as designed, but a slightly bigger majority also stated that they use the planners as guideline. There were some teachers who indicated not to use the term planners at all; one in the case of Maths (October) and one in the case of Dutch (April). In both surveys, a small number of teachers indicated to partially agree with this statement, but except for one, they did not state reasons why. There were a few inconsistencies and seeming contradictories in the answers provided. Several teachers stated that they use the planners exactly as they were designed. However, at the same time they also indicated that they use the planners as guidance, but come up with their own teaching and learning recourses, themes, activities, etc. In most cases this seemed not logical, because the planners are mostly based on textbooks that are used throughout all schools. Some teachers indicated that they use the planners exactly as developed, that they use the planners as guidance only, and that they do not use the planners at all. It is difficult to make any appropriate statements related to these apparent inconsistencies, because open-ended questions that could provide more information are hardly filled out. Based on conversations with teachers, one clue could be that teachers sometimes deviate from the timeframe of the planners. By doing so, they feel they do not use the planner exactly as designed, although to a large extent they actually do.

In the first survey (October 2015), when the implementation was underway for about two months, the vast majority stated that the term planners make the

work easier for teachers, that they are well designed, and that it is clear to them how they can use the planners. There is a visible shift in answers provided: the boxes 'completely agree' and 'agree' got increasingly more ticks than 'partially agree' and 'disagree' in April compared to October. This confirms the overall positive impression related to the effective practicality of the curricular products. But, although several data sources indicated and confirmed an overall use and appreciation of the products, there are indications that some teachers may have provided socially desirable responses. For example, one of the teachers positively assessed the overall usability and practicality of the planners for subject X through the survey. However, during the conference in April, this same teacher explained that the manuals for this subject got lost and that she did not use the textbooks on which the planners are based. Because of the direct link between planners and textbooks for this subject, the planners are basically useless without books. This raises some questions related to the reliability of answers provided by this particular participant. But despite such possible inconsistencies, there are sufficient grounded indications that the majority of teachers used the planners, and that they were overall considered to be useful. The actual effective use of the planners and learning strands should be further assessed in the future.

Curriculum development at secondary school level

At secondary level, the learning process did not proceed as envisaged due to an interrelated complex set of factors explained in previous sections. Two interviewees stated that attempts have been made to turn the trajectory into a learning process and an opportunity to strengthen curricular capacity of teachers, but also described the overall resistance, low ownership, and lack of management within the school, which was also brought to the fore by all other interviewees from that respondent group. In addition, absence of an overall vision and direction, and not seeing the added value or need for the development of a school curriculum were frequently mentioned factors that hindered the process, and resulted in only modest outcomes. One interviewee indicated that resistance may also be related to a rudimentary writing culture on the island, and suggested that some teachers may find it difficult to put things in writing. This respondent indicated that in line with this, the use and reading of emails by people is limited. This was also widely observed during the entire trajectory, which hindered communication. The supposed number of emails that never reached the island seemed remarkably high.

The general reaction was: 'We've not been informed'. P and I pointed at the number of emails sent about this but the unsurprising response was: 'no, we've never seen these emails' (observatory note 13 April 2015).

Almost all respondents felt it was necessary to define and document the curriculum in some way, which is substantiated by the survey outcomes: many respondents described former education practices consisting of piecemeal developments, a lack of curricular coherence, leading to individually operating teachers.

'So the lessons, the subjects that were taught were based on the whims of teachers and not on a learning strand within the school, a school curriculum. That's what happened. What happened was we've thrown away loads full of textbooks that were never even taken out of their boxes' (respondent secondary education).

There are indications that this still happened, at least until the school year 2015/2016.

'We had developed a whole programme based on textbooks we had. All of a sudden, we faced a situation where we had different sets of books for the entire first year. And then the school is just so chaotic that it turned out impossible to figure out who ordered them [...] But they are there now and we're supposed to use them' (respondent secondary education).

Apparently textbooks do remain fairly important to teachers, over 40% felt that having textbooks is sufficient for teaching. The survey indicated that the majority of the teachers used the planners that they have developed for their subject. However, it is not entirely clear which planners respondents are referring to at this stage.

'And in the meantime the management team has come up with something different, [...] a collective planner per class, fill in per subject per week what should happen in that week and when there's a tests. We all had to fill that in online and that generated some sort of planner. Per class. And then all of a sudden we had to add what we've developed for SLO, and what we've developed for the class [...] It all took up a great deal of time' (respondent secondary education).

According to three interviewees, recently someone from the management team decided to change the set up of the planners and turned them into a different type of document with a different aim compared to the initial set up of the planners. It remained unclear to what extent the initial term planners were finalised.

'The learning strands are developed for all subjects. Planners are made for term 1, and partially for term 2, but not term 3, at least not according to the initial design. Several people are leaving, so much of that expertise will disappear again while the trajectory hasn't been finished yet, and that concerns me. But at the same time, I also think it's the responsibility of the school. To ensure good use of all the support that you have at your disposal and align it with your vision, the direction you're heading towards. I feel that has seriously been underused' (staff SLO).

Outcomes of the survey suggested that despite the resistance and difficulties, a majority of teachers felt that participation in this trajectory has strengthened their professional skills and knowledge at least in some way, see also table 7.4 below. According to the survey outcomes, almost a quarter of respondents felt that the learning strands did not make the work more insightful. This coincided with the question related to the textbooks: almost a quarter felt that a school curriculum is unnecessary if there are textbooks, and another 18% partially agreed with this statement. This implied that about a fourth of the teachers depends on textbooks for their teaching. At the same time, almost half of the respondents indicated that taking part in the trajectory has positively contributed to their professional development, and another 24% partially agreed with this statement, which implies that learning did take place. One of the characteristics of the adopted approach was participation of teachers with room for their own input. The vast majority agreed or partially agreed that this room was available. Different perspectives existed regarding the curriculum being finished or not.

Table 7.4 Part of survey curriculum development at secondary level (n=17)

Statements	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
I use the term planners that are developed for my subject	18%	35%	29%	18%
A school curriculum as developed now is unnecessary. Textbooks only are sufficient to be able to teach.	-	24%	18%	59%
The learning strands have made my work more structured and insightful	18%	29%	29%	24%
Participation in this trajectory has strengthened my professional skills and capacity	12%	35%	24%	29%
There was sufficient room for my individual contribution	24%	29%	29%	12%
I feel the curriculum is now finished	12%	18%	29%	35%

About one third of the respondents felt it is finished; roughly one third partially agreed with that statement and just over one third disagreed. Interestingly, there is hardly any difference in response between the two different streams (academic and vocational) within the school, although one of the streams in

particular still faced an amount of curriculum development work coming up following from the implementation of the new exam structure.

7.3.6 Pillar 5: Strategic thinking & action

One of the most recurring themes related to the transition is time, or actually a lack thereof. The vast majority of interviewees mentioned the many changes taking place at the same time within an extremely limited timeframe, which caused a lot of pressure and stress. The surveys and observations showed a similar outcome. The different components of the transition, the curriculum developments and the language training in particular demanded a lot from teachers, especially from teachers who also took part in the working groups.

'I feel I don't have time to take a breath. All these workshops, English lessons, it's taking its toll (working group member).

So much was going on, that project components sometimes got in each other's way. For example, at some point in time it turned out to be nearly impossible to organise the curriculum development workshops because they coincided with the language training that all teachers were supposed to attend twice a week, scheduled from Monday to Thursday each week. In addition, the transition itself was of such magnitude that it raised questions whether it was possible to carry it out under such circumstances, in the end leaving some respondents marvelling at the fact that somehow the island did it.

'I just felt everything was too much too quick, but... here we are. A year later, it's done! And we're still alive, so maybe it was the best thing to do, I don't know...' (principal).

'Actually it's an innovation that is too big in complexity. It's about everything. Different structure of the learning content, different language of instruction, different subject matters [...] it's simply enormously ambitious [...] Actually, I truly find it a miracle that the products are ready within a year, despite this constricting situation' (SLO staff).

Another frequently mentioned theme was communication, from different perspectives. Some interviewees indicated that frequent communication was deemed necessary to keep the wider community informed through the media, with an emphasis on radio. The island is said not to have a strong reading culture, therefore informative radio programmes related to the transition were regularly broadcasted. Stakeholders indirectly involved in the transition, for example the school boards, were regularly informed about the process during periodic

informative consultations, which was acknowledged by two interviewed board members. One of them stated that there was actually too much information:

'The problem is, it's so much information, so many things are happening. And many things are detailed that you don't always understand everything. There's a lot board members are not... they don't have that educational background. And certain things you really have to question, and you as a board member has to really get in-depth involved to really understand what is taking place' (board member).

Usually, only a few board members attended such these meetings, who in turn were supposed to inform the rest of their boards. However, this transfer of information was sometimes considered to be challenging. Several other interviewees pointed out this difficulty, and this issue also came to the fore during such meetings. Decision making power rests on the shoulders of people who have good intentions, but do not always necessarily have the right background to make informed decisions related to education innovations.

Curriculum development at secondary school level

Based on the interviews, observations and informal conversations, communication at the secondary school was considered to be problematic at all levels, with negative consequences as a result.

'What I notice is that communication within the school isn't good. For example often you don't get any information related to what a seminar is about, or what a meeting is about, you just hear that at the moment you're there. And that also limits commitment' (respondent secondary education).

Related to this is a perceived lack of long-term strategies and plans by interviewees, which was frequently described as hampering, resulting in patchwork, and processes that were characterised by piecemeal developments.

'So many classes are being cancelled, there is an awful lot of turmoil on the schoolyard, it seems as if we're constantly being overwhelmed by all sorts of things. I think that as long as you don't have some form of basic stability and some level of continuity, you can't work on improvement of the education process. The school constantly makes the decision to put policy on hold and instead focuses on solving the most pressing problems. I notice that when there's an incident related to security, then that demands all attention. And this way we hop from one incident to the next. There is no coherence, I also feel as if management is hopping from one incident

to the next, and that a long-term strategy is lacking. Yes, I believe that as long as those preconditions are not in place it's going to be very difficult to improve' (respondent secondary education).

The interviews pointed out that for many stakeholders, including teachers, management and some board members it remained somewhat unclear where the school was heading in general, and related to the set-up associated with the new exam structure. The general impression of several respondents is that there is no (written) plan. Related to that, there seemed to be some ambiguity regarding where such plans should come from. Some feel management should draw up such plans, but management in turn sometimes appeared to wait for action from the ministry.

'That's quite funny, I hear a table tennis match going on there, so the ministry moves to the school, the school indicates that they have to leave it to the ministry, and the ministry says schools can do it themselves. According to me there's a fair amount of obscurity there' (respondent secondary education).

Formally, decision power lies with the school boards, but observations and interviews implied that informally, the school was in some instances strongly steered into certain directions by ministry representation, which blurred roles and responsibilities and caused confusion related to decision making on several occasions.

The island-wide transition

Also within the island-wide education developments obscurity related to roles and responsibilities came to the fore. Observations made throughout the intervention learned that due to the small context and the relatively numerous stakeholders associated to the transition in some way or another, roles and responsibilities easily blurred and sometimes led to ineffective lines of communication. This was also pointed out by some interviewees, which was considered to be very time consuming. In addition, some respondents felt that the overall transition plan or strategy was not well designed. Some interviewees made mention of an implementation plan, but further inquiry learned that the actual implementation plan was not widely shared with stakeholders, nor publicly available for further examination. The ministry did confirm that the components described in the feasibility study (and as introduced at the beginning of this case study) could be seen as the implementation plan. However, it can be concluded that these components were not always well aligned. For example, the development of teaching and learning resources for Dutch got seriously

delayed but were needed to develop the term planners, and at the same time were also supposed to be implemented in the schools.

'It is obviously detrimental for such an innovation when you have to develop teaching and learning resources in utter rush and haste at the very moment when it is supposed to be implemented. That's ridiculous' (SLO staff).

To a certain extent, this also applied to the development of the learning strands and term planners. There was hardly any time to properly review the learning strands once developed, since they were needed for the development of the term planners. In turn, the planners needed to be finished well in time before the start of every new term. This affected overall quality of the products in a negative way. In December 2015, the ministry granted a requested extension, which resulted in an additional 3.5 months to work with the groups and to properly finalise and revise the products.

Several interviewees made mention of the financial compensation that was provided for the curriculum work carried out by the teachers. One respondent believed that the working groups functioned rather well due to this incentive. Others stated that such incentives in itself may be good, but that more clarity related to financial incentives from the beginning could possibly have contributed to a smoother process at the secondary school.

'You don't want people to do it only because they receive money for it, but these are means that help to get people in motion. Then we could have said in January already: 'Guys, you receive this much money at the time when this, and this, and this is finished. Then X, or me, or whoever, shouldn't have had to push so hard, because that would have been an extra motivation to do it' (respondent secondary education).

The work following from the curriculum component is delivered, SLO's involvement came to an end and the implementation was well on its way. However, whether the developed curricular products continue to be used and to what extent they will eventually contribute to improved learning outcomes for students should be studied at a later stage.

7.4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

As indicated at the introduction section of this case study, the SCCD framework was used as a foundation for the design of the island-wide transition intervention. Although the framework was not yet developed at the start of the secondary

school trajectory, its underlying paradigm of capacity development and learning also formed the basis for that intervention. In this case, the framework was used to analyse the trajectory. The start of the actual implementation of the transition also marked the point of entry for the change-supporting agent/researcher. This was after the context analysis was conducted and after the transition plan was drafted, but before the curriculum component was rolled out. All semi-structured individual interviews that were conducted for this study were arranged along the same general structure: a line of enquiry into factors that have facilitated and/or hindered the process, encouraging respondents to explicate experiences related to the process. In many cases, data were directly and sometimes indirectly traceable to the framework components. The different data sets taken together showed that most of the described heuristics have come to the fore to a greater or lesser extent. They emerged either in an affirmative way when present, or with negative outcomes as a result when not, or not sufficiently taken into account. To a large extent, their assumed importance was confirmed, but in some cases it also raised a number of questions related to general feasibility and necessity of their application. Through the analysis of the collected data, a number of matters and queries have come to the fore that will be discussed below.

The narrative described two processes that ran more or less parallel to each other during this research: the island-wide curriculum developments, and the development of a school-based curriculum at secondary level. Both were aiming for the development of qualitative curricular products and strengthening capacity of teachers, and both were to a large extent based on the approach as illustrated through the SCCD framework. However, the outcomes of the study implied that the island-wide trajectory was more promising than the trajectory at secondary level. Data demonstrated that at secondary level many factors that directly refer to the pillars have hampered the process. Even though many framework heuristics were observed, it did not fully lead to the desired yields due to a number of impeding factors. Data implied that several of the critical success factors as identified earlier in this study and articulated under the respective pillars, were not, or not sufficiently in place. As a result, several pillars were put under pressure. For this intervention, no specific curriculum assessment was carried out as suggested under pillar 1. However, the context of the school and the challenges it faced were well mapped out and appeared not to have changed much over the years, so it could be argued that an additional curriculum assessment may not have added any deeper insights than already brought to the fore. Several stakeholders - including the inspectorate - acknowledged the need for curricular action on many occasions. Eventually the school itself requested the intervention, due to this observed and experienced lack of curricular stability.

According to several different stakeholders, the development of a school curriculum was much needed, but at the same time, concerns were repeatedly expressed related to the organisational capacity of the school. Data implied that at the institutional level, the school as a whole struggled. Especially unfavourable leadership, a lack of communication and coordination (pillar 4), in combination with, or maybe due to on-going discontinuity at all levels, has led to an unstable school environment in which willingness and readiness for change appeared to be fairly low. Although investments were made, strong partnerships (pillar 2) never seemed to have come off the ground well, and overall ownership at all levels remained weak. Weak ownership also seemed to be aggravated by a lack of purpose that was experienced by several teachers. Apparently the aim of the intervention was not always clear and there are indications that teachers may not have experienced the benefits of the intervention for their daily work (pillar 5). This all resulted in an insufficiently managed, difficult and rather complex intervention including questionable outcomes.

The conditions related to the island-wide trajectory were favourable enough to allow the adoption or implementation of a greater number of heuristics, and to generate overall positive outcomes despite encountered challenges that followed from not, or not sufficiently observing certain other heuristics. For example, due to time pressure it was not feasible to collaboratively agree on capacities that needed to be developed, including indicators for success (see pillar 4). At the beginning of the project, the limited available time was fully devoted to starting up and getting things in motion, at the expense of such activities. At the same time, questions could be raised related to the need and overall feasibility of this activity in general. Overall, the development of the curriculum products took place under significant time pressure, which to a certain extent negatively influenced overall quality. In addition, the time squeeze limited room for formative and summative evaluation. Although formative evaluations were carried out, it was done rather hastily and due to the same time constraints, there was no room to do this together with the working group members as part of the capacity development trajectory. The lack of local leadership at the start of the intervention - which did improve over time - seemed not to have hindered the curriculum progress. In the case of the island-wide curriculum work there was project management present on the island that steered and managed all related components. Even though there are strong indications that this has been favourable to project execution in the sense of progress and overall continuation, continuous efforts were made to also promote that local leadership and ownership.

The sustainability of the curriculum development endeavours remains to be seen. The outcomes suggested that the work carried out by the island-wide working groups has a greater likelihood of continuation compared to the work at secondary level. However, the current principal has expressed the wish to positively transform the school and make education challenging, inspiring and tailor-made, together with the team, which could be a promising starting point.

Observations during the final meeting with principals and school board members related to the island-wide curriculum work learned that the majority of the principals at primary level stated to continue working with the planners. There was wide recognition of increased capacity of the working groups and a general feeling that the groups included the right teachers to continue the curriculum work. Three out of four principals and two out of three of the present board members expressed that the schools should definitely continue to make use of this capacity in the future for further development and evaluation purposes. However, the principals also indicated that they were not sure how such evaluations should be carried out. There are no indications that there will be any further support to the schools related to the curriculum work. Several SLO experts expressed concerns related to such somewhat abrupt endings.

'I feel the work is not finished until these products are in full use. Not at the end of a project, but actually in a year from now. That we really have another opportunity to properly evaluate. [...] But the project ends in June. And it doesn't look like there's any financial means left to do so. There is a tendency to think that because the planners are ready and the learning strands are done, that all the work is finished. And of course we know that implementation is much more complicated than that. That support in that area is actually necessary too' (SLO staff).

Such statements related to consolidation of curricular innovations are backed up by numerous studies, including Joyce and Showers (2002) (see e.g. section 5.2.3 for a described need for follow up). Although the entire cycle of implementation is considered to be part of the core activities of curriculum development (see figure 1.2), and the full cycle should ideally be completed with statements not only related to the expected, but also the actual effectiveness (see the quality criteria, table 1.2), projects often end before that phase. Interventions are usually considered to be finished once deliverables are completed and/or objectives are met. This leaves hardly any room for further follow up after the closing date, despite the importance of doing so in the light of sustainability. Even though the underlying framework theory includes the full cycle of core activities of curriculum development, this need is not made explicit in the framework itself. Although possibly not easy to realise, it should be included as a heuristic under

pillar 5: allow sufficient room for all curriculum development activities, including follow up and evaluation, also after a project is finished.

Looking at these two interventions and the Mozambique case study, there emerges to be a relation between the number of observed heuristics and the level of success of an intervention. In the case of the girls' education project, almost the entire framework was under severe pressure and outcomes thus far caused ground for concern. The evaluation of the intervention at the secondary school showed that some heuristics were observed, but significant parts of the framework were under pressure, eventually leading to only modest outcomes. The island-wide curriculum intervention, where the framework was used as a design and development tool from the start of the trajectory, saw most of the framework materialise and yielded the most positive results. In addition, a pattern seems to occur related to pre-conditionality of certain heuristics, as was already pointed out in the Mozambique case, which caused a certain domino effect in an adverse way. To a less grave extent, this also became visible in the case of the secondary school. In general, most of the heuristics of the framework seem relevant, although it appears to be possible to generate results even though they are not all, or not all fully taken on board. This was e.g. the case related to agreement on capacities to be developed including indicators during the transition trajectory. The enquiry related to relevance, consistency, practicality and effectiveness of the framework continues in the next chapter, and will be discussed in further detail in chapter 9 where all case studies are subjected to a cross-case analysis.

CHAPTER 8 CASE STUDY 3: THE LOWER SECONDARY CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT REFORM PROGRAMME, UGANDA

This chapter presents the outcomes of the last case study in which the SCCD framework is validated, in this case to analyse a curriculum development intervention with a strong focus on capacity development at the end of its development phase: the lower secondary curriculum and assessment programme of Uganda. This programme involved a major reform at macro level with far stretching consequences for the entire lower secondary system: the development of a balanced, basic education programme for all students, switching from exclusive to inclusive education; from teacher-centred to student-centred learning; from 40+ subjects to eight learning areas; and from knowledge-based to competence-based education. With the roadmap for reform written in 2007 as a rough starting point, mid-2016 the project was at a stage where the curriculum could be rolled out, but was put on hold for various reasons that are immediately connected to the framework. This case study further explored the practical relevance, consistency, practicality and effectiveness of the approach and framework as an analysis tool. Section 8.1 places the case study in context by providing a brief history and relevant background information related to the intervention. Section 8.2 provides some additional, case study specific methodology, and section 8.3 presents the outcomes of this case study, analysed along the components of the framework. The chapter finishes with some final discussions and conclusions (section 8.4).

8.1 INTRODUCTION OF THE UGANDA CASE STUDY

8.1.1 The need for a new curriculum

Uganda's lower secondary education system was considered to be in urgent need of reform for quite some time. The curriculum dated from the 1970s and remained virtually unchanged ever since. The need for a new curriculum is well articulated in several documents, and also frequently emerged in the conducted interviews for this case study. The extensive report 'Roadmap for Reform' (Clegg, Bregman, & Ottevanger, 2007), written in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Sports and the World Bank, could be regarded as a prelude to the major, national curriculum reform at secondary level. It explicates identified bottlenecks, challenges and issues encountered related to curriculum and assessment in lower secondary education, and sets out how the challenges could be addressed. The report starts with an overview of reasons for the necessity of a new curriculum, which can be summarised in a number of problem areas related

to overload, content, methodology and costs. The old curriculum was perceived to be too elitist, designed and catering for an elite minority only, characterised by both high entry qualifications as well as unacceptably high failure rates. The curriculum is characterised by a strong focus on subject content at the expense of competencies and skills. Over 40 years, the curriculum remained unchanged except for continuous addition of content, while leaving out important other areas such as health education and earth science. This resulted in a significantly overloaded curriculum to the extent where it could not simply be corrected by removing, or merging content. Previous attempts to do so remained rather unsatisfactorily. This overload also made the curriculum insufficiently flexible in addressing emerging fields of knowledge. Key characteristics considered to be required for the 21st century, including metacognitive skills and abilities, were missing (Clegg et al., 2007). Other important stated reasons for the intended curriculum reform were that the existing curriculum did not adequately address Uganda's social and economic needs. In addition, teaching methodologies propagated through the syllabi did not promote effective learning and focussed insufficiently on skills acquisition. Lastly, the report indicated that the costs of the existing system were unsustainably high. This was mainly caused by the multitude of subjects taught (40+), and the small numbers of learners in many of the optional subject classes. Resource constraints did not allow further expansion of this system.

The Roadmap for Reform exposes a comprehensive view on curriculum development and includes the different components that are linked to, or affected by such a dramatic, system wide reform. It also describes the implications of roadmap execution, which are significant considering the magnitude of the proposed reform. Therefore, it calls for a strong team to develop, implement and monitor the new curriculum, which requires coordinated action by many involved institutions. Three important prerequisites are considered to be key. The reform would require: i) agreement between major stakeholders; ii) involvement of teachers and head teachers including their intensive support; and iii) long term commitment by decision makers. The roadmap also outlines a number of challenges posed by the current curriculum that the reform should address. These challenges include the need to address all abilities; the need to ensure ownership of the reform from key stakeholders; strengthening capacity of those stakeholders; reduce subject overload; strengthen effective pedagogy and teaching styles; alignment with needs for further education, workplace and society; alignment with reforms in primary education and with international benchmarks; quality assurance; and reducing costs.

In order to achieve this envisaged reform, the report recommends a broad number of actions and activities. These actions and activities should take place at three interconnected levels: the political, the technical, and the curriculum level. At the political level, the setting up of a steering committee to make crucial and strategic decisions regarding secondary education and the reform, and to oversee the entire reform process is recommended. Priorities at this level include political leadership decisions; the development of a management structure and assessment of capacities; drafting a strategy paper; and decisions on resource allocation. At the technical level, the establishment of working groups is recommended to supervise and coordinate the process. These groups - the so-called learning area working groups - should comprise staff from the curriculum department, the examinations board, the directorate for industrial training, the department of education standards, teacher colleges, universities and schools. These groups are supposed to provide leadership and guidance to the curriculum development process. In addition, they should appoint, coordinate, and take part in working groups subcommittees to develop the curriculum framework and the learning areas. For the third level, curriculum reform, focus should be on the development of an overarching curriculum framework; addressing overload; development of curriculum statements, programmes of study, examination summary, and scope and sequence tables; decision making on compulsory and optional subjects in the secondary education curriculum; building cost efficiency into curriculum subjects; and assessing a broad ability range. The roadmap finally proposes a timeline for all these recommended successive activities and actions at all three levels, distinguishing between immediate (1-12 months), short (year 1-2) and medium to long term (year 3 and beyond).

8.1.2 The lower secondary curriculum and assessment reform programme

The described need and desire for a major curriculum overhaul at lower secondary level eventually led the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) in 2008 to decide on this thorough reform, captured in the lower secondary curriculum and assessment reform programme (CURASSE). To a certain extent, the roadmap and its recommendations were adopted, although a level of selectivity and a number of adaptations caused by delays have somewhat changed the course of events. In summary, the reformed curriculum seeks to:

- Develop learners' understanding, skills and competences instead of only knowledge acquisition.
- Establish a shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred methodologies.

- Replace content laden textbooks with interactive learner friendly textbooks.
- Reduce long hours of instructional time that do not allow learners to explore what they have learned.
- Change the excess mass of subject content that does not deliver required skills for the labour market.

Due to the magnitude of the proposed reform in combination with limited curricular capacity in country, intensive technical assistance was considered indispensable. For this reason, the project deliberately contained a significant, built-in capacity development component. Over a period of less than three years, several curricular products were developed by staff from a number of key institutions and affiliates of MOES, in particular from the curriculum and assessment departments. The developments took place following a participatory approach, with technical assistance from a number of external consultants specialised in several subjects and disciplines. The curricular products included an overarching curriculum framework that draws together curricular key elements - such as vision, values, approach, key outcomes and skills (NCDC, 2013) - followed by syllabuses for eight learning areas, a teacher support plan and materials, textbook specifications and sample examination papers (NCDC/ Cambridge Education, 2014b).

Mid 2016, the curriculum was technically ready to be implemented. However, a number of recommended crucial and conditional actions were not yet taken. Two of the most pressing issues at the time of writing included teachers that were not yet trained in the new methodology and the procurement procedure for the development of the textbooks had not started, even though the first implementation of the reformed curriculum was scheduled for January 2017 in 20 frontrunner schools. Curriculum implementation in the rest of the country was supposed to follow at the beginning of 2018. Against this backdrop, an attempt to provide a modest reconstruction of the general process is given below, using the SCCD framework as analytical tool.

8.2 CASE STUDY SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY

Data for this case study derived from complementary sources of evidence, including: project documentation, relevant policy documents, and 12 semi-structured interviews (see table 8.1). The interviewees were selected in cooperation with CURASSE staff in Uganda. Efforts were made to include staff from the various learning areas, to get a broad overview. This included pragmatic

selection in some cases, based on availability of staff during the period of the researchers' visit. Staff from other departments was selected based on their involvement and role in the project. Efforts were made to also include other stakeholders, such as staff from the teacher training department and staff at key positions, but due to hierarchical issues and in a number of cases due to a lack of response, this turned out not possible.

Table 8.1 Overview of consulted sources case study Uganda

Documentation	<p>A variety of relevant sources, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project related reports (11): Roadmap for Reform (Clegg, et al., 2007); NCDC Secondary Specialist Capacity Building Plan (NCDC/Cambridge Education, 2012); Lower Secondary Curriculum Situational Analysis Report (NCDC, 2012); Draft Lower Secondary Curriculum Framework Document (NCDC, 2013); Competence self-assessment results (Cambridge Education, 2014); CURASSE Phase 2 Inception Report (NCDC/Cambridge Education, 2014a); CURASSE Phase 2 Completion Report (NCDC/Cambridge Education, 2014b); Implementation report (Ottevanger & Berkvens, 2015) • Policy documents (3): Government Whitepaper on Education (1992), National Development Plan 2010-2015; Education Sector Strategic Plans 2004-2018 • Newspaper articles (2): Olupot (2016, March 30); Ahimbisibwe (2016, April 20)
Interviews	<p>12 (10 individual and 2 double) semi-structured interviews with curriculum developers from the curriculum and assessment departments (10) (see annex 19), ministry staff (1), funder (1), and consultants (2) (see annex 20)</p>

Most interviews were conducted individually, except for two interviews that were carried out with two respondents each. The initial set up was to let interviewees respond to the SCCD framework in relation to CURASSE, to see to what extent they feel the framework is relevant for such an intervention. However, the first interview learned that explanation of the framework took up too much valuable interview time. Therefore, all other interviews were structured around the same line of inquiry as also used during the previously described interventions: open-ended questions related to capacity development and facilitating and/or hindering factors encountered during the process. All interviews were recorded and transcribed, and interviewees were given the opportunity to read and adjust the transcript if preferred. Seven respondents made use of this opportunity and sent back the transcript. Four of them confirmed the transcript with (minor) adjustments; three respondents confirmed the transcript without further alterations.

8.3 OUTCOMES OF THE UGANDA CASE STUDY

8.3.1 Outline

This case study differs from the others in its different level of involvement. SLO and the researcher were involved on a small scale during an earlier project phase,

but not in the actual curriculum design and development stages as was the case with the other case studies. This implies that as a result, the SCCD framework was not used during the design and execution of this project. Therefore, this case study provided a good opportunity to further explore the framework’s merit as analytical tool. In order to obtain an understanding of project and process, the researcher visited Uganda in June 2016. The outcomes of this case study are arranged in the same manner as the previous studies, viz. along the framework pillars. Fig. 8.1 visualises how the intervention took shape related to the framework. The narrative is based on the set of framework heuristics, but does not state them all separately to avoid interruption of the flow. For a complete overview of all heuristics see fig. 5.1. Each section of the narrative provides an account of the process and activities that did, or did not take place under this heading during the intervention.






 Capacity levels <i>Curriculum strategies benefit from a thorough curriculum assessment (including a problem, context and needs analysis and an analysis of the knowledge base), taking into account multiple and interconnected capacity levels: the individual, organisational and institutional levels, and the social, political and economic context</i>	 Partnerships through dialogue <i>Curriculum interventions benefit from genuine partnerships based on trust, openness, mindedness, collegial dialogue and mutual accountability</i>	 Ownership & harmonisation <i>Curriculum interventions benefit from the presence of a certain readiness for change, coupled with local leadership and ownership; alignment, coordination and cooperation; departing from a shared vision</i>	 Collaborative learning <i>Curricular capacity benefits from collaborative, participatory, learning-oriented and context-relevant approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability</i>	 Strategic thinking & action <i>Curricular capacity development interventions benefit from a systemic perspective, including strategic choices that strengthen ownership and harmonisation, partnerships, collaborative learning and the quality of process and products</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn to understand the context to decide what could be influenced and changed 2. Carry out a curriculum assessment with a team consisting of national* and international experts, preferably led by a national coordinator 3. Collaboratively formulate a vision as starting point for further curriculum development 4. Translate the outcomes of the assessment into a curriculum development plan, aligned with national education policy and plans 5. Integrate learning into the overall development plan, offering diversified training programmes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commit to long-term partnerships 2. Invest in relationships 3. Adopt a flexible attitude 4. Adopt a coaching and mentoring role while respecting national leadership and autonomy 5. Seek alignment with actors working in the same field to encourage multi-stakeholder partnerships for improved education delivery 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt and promote participatory approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability through encouragement of leadership, involvement, commitment and ownership 2. Consult relevant stakeholders and include suitable professionals to carry out the intervention 3. Make use of existing capacity, guiding and coaching national* experts 4. Promote cooperation, coordination and alignment between ministries and between the ministry of education, NGOs and other change supporting agents to collaboratively work towards fulfilling the curricular and educational development plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in capacity development as a continuous learning experience: use the entire intervention as a capacity development learning process for all involved stakeholders 2. Adopt and promote collaborative, learning-oriented approaches, including (inter)active and comprehensive learning, appropriate to local context and circumstances 3. Collaboratively agree on capacities that are to be developed, on indicators for capacity development goals and successes, and review them on a regular basis 4. Strengthen supply and demand for capacity, both professional content capacity and transversal skills 5. Build in formative and summative evaluations of both products and capacity development process 6. Monitor the role and contribution of practitioners 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge that change takes time, build in and allow sufficient time to carry out the intervention 2. Provide clear and frequent communication regarding, and throughout the intervention 3. Collaboratively develop context-relevant and context-specific curriculum development strategies, where general feasibility, flexibility and adaptability to local circumstances are key 4. Make curriculum strategies and choices clear and fit for purpose, and adapt if circumstances so dictate 5. Ensure sufficient resources and make an informed decision regarding provision of incentives 6. Provide clear statements of responsibilities of all involved key partners 7. Consider permanent residence in, or frequently visiting the country

Figure 8.1 The SCCD framework – case study Uganda

Almost all interviewees preferred their contributions to be processed anonymously. Therefore, it was decided to specify the origin of the quotes in a general way only, without stating departments or ranking. The included quotes come from across the different respondent groups and represent the perspective of more than one interviewee, unless specifically stated otherwise.

8.3.2 Pillar 1: Capacity levels

Before the actual development of the lower secondary curriculum started, the wider (educational) context, including capacity levels, was mapped extensively and articulated in a wide range of studies. After some delay, the outcomes of the first steps towards this massive curriculum and assessment overhaul became

visible around 2011 through a number of analyses and reports. Considering the magnitude of this proposed reform, the already mentioned CURASSE Roadmap for Reform report (Clegg et al., 2007) looked into detail why the reform was required, and could be considered as the prelude to the final reform decision by MOES in 2008. The roadmap was written by consultants in close cooperation with MOES and with input from a wide range of relevant stakeholders, displaying a comprehensive perspective on curriculum development. As its name suggests, the document was considered as roadmap for the reform, including short, medium and long-term recommendations for systemic project execution and for overcoming possible challenges as described in the introduction. The roadmap recommendations demonstrated much common ground with the framework paradigm. For example, it included recommendations related to involvement and inclusion of relevant stakeholders for consultation and development purposes; determination of and addressing capacity needs; development of feasible strategies and definition of roles of institutions involved; and decisions on resource allocation. The emphasis on capacity strengthening was of great importance throughout the entire reform. Several of the roadmap recommendations were eventually taken up by the project, however, not all. Data suggested that this selective adoption was assumingly related to budget constraints. This by itself is a legitimate reason, but at the same time contributed to a less systemic project, see also further on.

Two additional documents are of specific relevance here: the Lower Secondary Curriculum Situational Analysis (NCDC, 2012), and the NCDC Secondary Specialist Capacity Building Plan (NCDC/Cambridge Education, 2012), because they touch upon several heuristics under this first pillar, capacity levels. A curriculum assessment in the form of the Curriculum Situational Analysis (CSA) (NCDC, 2012) was conducted by staff from the curriculum department and served as a baseline statement of the reform. This analysis drew on documents that were generated during the run-up to programme implementation, but also on policy documents and strategies that provided insight in the thinking that underpins the reform decision, such as the Government Whitepaper on Education from 1992, the National Development Plan 2010-2015 and the Education Sector Strategic Plans 2004-2018. The purpose of this analysis was threefold. First of all, it was supposed to serve as a document that captures the context of the reform rationale and as a contextual resource for sensitisation purposes, which made it an essential document for national and international stakeholders. Secondly, the report consolidates the findings from different consultancy reports, appraisals and proposals that were generated in the years of planning and appraisal, including the roadmap, and offers perspectives that were gained from several start-up activities during the projects' inception period. Finally, the process of

developing the CSA that took place during the inception phase formed part of the overall capacity development plan for staff from the curriculum development centre. Carrying out a curriculum assessment provided these specialists an opportunity to analyse and assess the system in which they operate, including curriculum resources such as syllabi and other teaching and learning resources. In addition to this curriculum assessment, a number of other studies, such as a labour market and livelihood survey, were carried out that mapped the broader context and which outcomes further fed into the reform design.

The various reports and previously mentioned studies that were conducted in the light of the reform repeatedly emphasised the need for extensive curricular capacity development. Due to the magnitude of the reform, huge demands were placed on key institutions considering the pivotal role they play, in particular the curriculum and assessment departments. Therefore, the roadmap also recommended assessment of capacity needs, which was taken up and resulted in the Secondary Specialist Capacity Building Plan (NCDC/Cambridge Education, 2012) as part of the capacity development component of the technical assistance contract to the project. The plan provided the rationale for the anticipated training programme, and included the actual capacity development plan. The training needs were located in the mismatch between the stated functions of the curriculum development centre and job specifications of the specialists on one hand, and the current profile of the specialists on the other. This competency profile was constructed from outcomes of a background analysis that included an experience questionnaire and a self-rated curriculum competency profile. This resulted into a comprehensive training programme consisting of 15 strands of professional expertise, such as curriculum process; learning/teaching styles; developing of learning materials; and assessment of learning. The programme comprised a strategy that integrated learning and capacity strengthening into the overall capacity development trajectory, offering hands-on, job-embedded and diversified training programmes on specific curriculum, assessment and learning aspects. All activities took place in collaboration with and facilitated by a number of consultants, working directly with the various learning area working groups over a period from 2011-2014. This approach was frequently referred to in the interviews. Several interviewees stated that they valued this collaborative way of working, and considered it to be beneficial for the overall strengthening of professional expertise and learning, see also pillar 4.

'It's like on-job training. You are actually developing a certain document but under instruction. So at the end of it you have both information, knowledge and skills, but also a related output to the training [...] So that is we learned as we worked' (Ugandan specialist).

Through the interviews it became apparent that all respondents felt that this curriculum reform was urgently needed, often referring to the overall vision for lower secondary education as also captured in the Curriculum Framework (NCDC, 2013): a holistic education for personal and national development.

‘Yes, the reform was necessary because Uganda inherited an education system from the colonial government, which was Britain. Right from independence in 1962 the curriculum that was inherited from the British has never been reformed in any way. So it was riddled with a lot of content overlap and quite a number of subjects that really learners were doubling weight, over 40 subjects’ (Ugandan specialist).

However, there are indications that this vision was not as widely shared with and embraced by the envisioned wider group of stakeholders. Or, alternatively, the vision may be shared but the way to get there still seemed to be under debate, even though the curriculum had actually been developed (see also pillar 5). All in all, the different capacity levels were well mapped through a rather thorough curriculum assessment that included analyses of problems, context, needs and the knowledge base. Additionally, the levels were taken into account in further planning and design as reflected in different project documents. However, not all theory could be translated into practice, see further below.

8.3.3 Pillar 2: Partnerships through dialogue

The initial involvement of the consultancy agency was supposed to be mid to long-term. During that time, consultants worked closely with staff from different relevant institutions, in particular with the specialists from the curriculum and assessment departments. Interview data implied that overall the relationships between the local specialists and the consultants were good. Several interviewees made mention of a collaborative working environment that included respect for opinion and respectful interaction, with much room for discussion and input. In most cases, consultants seemed to have taken on an effective supervisory role.

‘We consulted with them, they consulted us’ (Ugandan specialist).

‘I valued, we valued it. It was very collaborative. It was two-way. Because whatever we reached at, it was democratic’ (Ugandan specialist).

The establishment and fostering of partnerships in the wider reform context were assumingly more challenging. Because of the magnitude of the reform and its impact on several interconnected aspects of education, such as examination, inspection and teacher training, intense involvement from a broad range of

institutions affiliated with MOES, including the assessment department, teacher training institutes, universities and the inspectorate was required. In addition, the MOES itself as the official instigator and lead body of the reform should ideally be the leading body to promote, foster and maintain such partnerships. However, data implied that partnerships at this level were challenging, and described to be not as strong as desired. The vast majority of interviewees described the absence of important ministerial stakeholders and an overall lack of partnership where that would have been beneficial for the process.

‘The problem again was that they [MOES, red.] had so many things on their hands that really, when we were there they were able to leave the whole project to us, we hardly ever saw the top management’ (consultant).

The lack of such partnerships due to insufficient involvement and engagement from important actors led to a number of challenges that put the process and eventual outcomes under severe pressure, which will be further explicated under the remaining pillars.

8.3.4 Pillar 3: Ownership & harmonisation

The adopted collaborative and learning-oriented approach seemed to have generated a strong sense of ownership of the new curriculum of stakeholders directly engaged in the design and development stages. All-but-one-interviewees who went through this process described a strong sense of ownership, but also indicated that this took time considering the massive changes the reform entailed, and compared to the current situation the education system is in.

‘It has taken us time to get that ownership’ (Ugandan specialist).

The degree of ownership beyond the core group of developers seemed less clear-cut. This appeared to be directly linked to the challenge of inclusion and engagement of the right stakeholders, as already hinted at under the second pillar. The learning area working groups were supposed to consist of representatives from different relevant stakeholder groups such as teachers, teacher training institutes, curriculum and assessment departments, and universities. These representatives were supposed to inform their respective constituencies throughout the process, in order to keep them informed about the developments. However, in practice that apparently worked out differently than intended for different reasons. Several interviewees pointed out that the panels, or working groups, were too big to effectively develop the curriculum, and that the actual writing eventually was done by smaller groups consisting of approximately six writers per learning area. The extent to which the wider group

of panel members were actually involved and represented seemed to vary. In a number of learning areas several stakeholder groups were not properly involved at all; stakeholders sometimes stopped participating at some point in time; or did participate but on an irregular basis. In all cases, this seemed to have reduced the level of ownership because they did not (fully) take part in the learning process. All interviewees brought up the experienced challenges with dissemination of information in general, also in cases where working group members fully participated in the development work. The assumption that representatives would keep their constituencies informed did not materialise. Combined with insufficient communication and sensitisation of the wider public (see also pillar 5), this has resulted in unfamiliarity with the reform at best, but in the worst case led to severe resistance to the reform.

‘At one time, the university, the department of geography they were very bitter that we are destroying their geography, so all these are part of the challenge [...] They’ve been involved in the development, yeah we’ve had the teacher trainers. But when they, you know the funny thing is after a year, when they go back they don’t disseminate the information’ (Ugandan specialist).

Two interviewees brought to the fore that the lack of dissemination at a wider scale may also have a cultural component:

‘Some of them [working group members, red.] have found challenges when they tried to get an opportunity to inform others and they’ve got negative responses, like: ‘How were you identified, are you the best among us to qualify to be part of the development process? So there’s been mixed feelings like: ‘I haven’t been identified so I shouldn’t be listening, if they want me to know what’s happening they should also identify me and I should get an allowance as well’ (Ugandan specialist).

Several others also pointed at the strong hierarchical structures that characterise society as a hindering factor to dissemination of information.

‘There are people who simply just don’t want to accept because I’m not a professor. It’s the hierarchy’ (Ugandan specialist).

An additional, frequently expressed challenge that negatively contributed to this situation was the experienced lack of coordination, cooperation and alignment between MOES and its departments and affiliates.

'One challenge we have here in the education system: it's compartmentalised' (Ugandan specialist).

'Another challenge is we are lacking coordination between different stakeholders, for instance we are curriculum developers, these universities, some of the universities are teacher trainers and we have the teacher colleges, but none of those institutions may be knowing what is happening in other institutions. I developed the curriculum, I don't know what or how the universities are training teachers, how are they going to implement the curriculum developed here. So, there is no coordination, harmonisation' (Ugandan specialist).

It remained unclear to what extent the universities and teacher colleges already aligned and adapted their curriculum to the reformed lower secondary curriculum, as strongly suggested in the Roadmap for Reform (Clegg et al., 2007) and the proposal for implementation of the reformed curriculum (Ottevanger & Berkvens, 2015). Some interviewees indicated that these institutions have everything ready and are only waiting for the official go ahead to roll it out. Others suggested that no efforts to alignment have yet taken place, while still others thought that some institutions have started with some preparations to reform. Considering the displayed resistance from universities; their relatively low levels of involvement during the development process and the – at least partial – unfamiliarity with the content of the reform, the question was raised to what extent the supposed alignments are in line with the reformed curriculum. Several newspaper articles written by opponents of the reform, including university lecturers, more or less rejected the new curriculum.

'The new secondary school curriculum will make students academic dwarfs of science since it aims at merging of all science subjects' (article in New Vision: Olupot, 2016).

All interviewees indicated that they experienced a lack of leadership, commitment and engagement from MOES, and felt this severely challenged the reform. The majority stated that on-going efforts were made to inform and involve them throughout the process, but also indicated that this was not satisfactory.

'The money is from the government, but it comes through the ministry of education. And they are aware that we're doing the work. But some of them still say they don't understand what we are doing. They have been informed. But some of them, even when they have been invited to come here several times for meetings so that they are sensitised, they just don't come' (Ugandan specialist).

A recurring theme throughout the interviews was that unfamiliarity with the reform, irrespective of the reason, led to severe resistance. Both this resistance and the (at least temporary) suspension of the project in April 2016 were discussed in a number of newspaper articles, and were also brought to the fore by several interviewees. There are several indications that unfamiliarity with the reform and its underlying theories has led to unfounded judgements, which could also be a result of not taking part in the process, and not being properly sensitised (see also pillar 5).

‘They were saying: the curriculum was so shallow, that’s what they were saying, that it is shallow. Simply because we have reduced the learning, from 42 subjects to 8 learning areas, and to them they think we have made it so shallow. It’s not good for the children. But they have not read through the documents to see what exactly we have, what happened’ (Ugandan specialist).

At the time of writing, there was still a lot of insecurity regarding further implementation, and how things should, or were going to progress (see also below).

8.3.5 Pillar 4: Collaborative learning

Project plans, strategy documents and interviews implied that the entire development process was as much as possible used as a continuous learning experience, through participatory, comprehensive learning oriented approaches. All interviewed specialists indicated that the approach and the process were very beneficial to the strengthening of their professional capacity. The ongoing activities that took place, including on-the-job learning, but also the more formal training were described as intense and tough at times, but overall very constructive.

‘There is change because this course helped and the experience I got, because I know what was happening before this reform. I was involved in reforming the primary curriculum. We were doing things but not understanding what we were doing. And then when I worked with X [consultant, red.] and after the training then you see that curriculum development specialisation is needed, as a person working in curriculum development’ (Ugandan specialist).

One interviewee underlined that curricular capacity strengthening was good, but added that the same intense professional development should have taken place at other departments too, even though several consultants were placed

in other relevant departments as well. According to this respondent, this could explain why not all departments were fully involved, which also directly links to the previous pillar, ownership and harmonisation.

'So if you reform only the curriculum and leave other areas untouched, and yet they are very important cogs in the wheel of this reform, then it becomes a problem' (Ugandan specialist).

As described under pillar 1, the specific capacities that were to be developed were determined upfront, and defined in the Secondary Specialist Capacity Building Plan (NCDC/Cambridge Education, 2012). According to one of the interviewees, due to time constraints (see also pillar 5) monitoring and evaluation of the capacity development process did not take place at regular intervals, as was recommended in this capacity building plan. However, at the end of the programme a final evaluation did take place to get some insight into the learning progress of the specialists. The self-assessment that was used at the start of the trajectory was now used to re-rate themselves against the same curriculum competencies at the end of the project. This was done so to get a sense of what specialists thought about their own capacity development as a result of the process. The results of this exercise are described in the 2014 Competence self-assessment results report (Cambridge Education, 2014), and imply that according to specialists' own perception there was a significant improvement in competencies as a consequence of the project over the period October 2011 - July 2014. The report stated that in 2011 specialists mostly gave themselves a rating of two or three on a scale of five for each competence. However, in 2014 they were more likely to rate themselves as four or five. Competencies that were most improved include writing learning outcomes which specify learner behaviour, conditions, and criteria for performance; sequencing of learning experiences so that understandings, concepts and skills are logically coherent; and structuring of topics and skills of a syllabus as a work and time planning scheme for teachers.

In addition to process evaluation, monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum products also took place, but due to time constraints not as extensively as envisaged. Testing of products mainly took place through trialling sessions with link schools, described by several interviewees as a highly useful activity, which also increased ownership of those teachers involved.

'And what I liked about Cambridge education, we identified the link schools. So we were supposed to develop something here and take it to

school, train the teacher, the teacher implements in your presence and you see what is working and what is not working’ (Ugandan specialist).

The majority of interviewees felt that the developed curriculum is now much more contextualised than before, and much better aligned with the country’s overall setting. An exploration of the new syllabi seemed to underline such statements, which are for example well reflected in learning areas such as Science and Technology & Enterprise.

So far it could be concluded that one of the main aims of this project – curricular capacity development - has been relatively successful. However, the project dealt, and at the time of writing was still dealing with a number of issues that are seriously challenging further implementation. These challenges are mainly related to the next and last framework pillar: strategic thinking and action.

8.3.6 Pillar 5: Strategic thinking & action

The majority of interviewees indicated that significant delays have affected the entire project and overall planning, which led to a number of project postponements over time. Especially the second project phase suffered from huge time constraints, when the duration of the second contract was reduced from the initial 18 to approximately three months. According to the Phase 2 Inception report (NCDC/Cambridge Education, 2014a), the delays that occurred around the start-up of the first phase left less time for the second phase. That time was even further reduced due to additional delays. Delays occurred because of an apparently unexpected perceived need from MOES to put together a curriculum task force that should review and endorse the new curriculum. By the time the curriculum was approved, there were only three months left before the deadline of the funding programme. All activities had to be completed and all deliverables had to be approved before this specific date. This had serious implications for project plans, strategies and the approach taken.

‘The way that we’ve been working throughout the first phase of the project you know it’s very collaborative, pushing things along slowly, lots of revisions and so on, basically there isn’t going to be time to do that in 15 weeks, and we will not going to be able in any case to do all of the deliverables’ (consultant).

The delays resulted in a severely truncated contract. Due to this situation the work mainly became consultant-led, leading to a consultative approach instead of the previously adopted participative approach, and leaving very little room for capacity development of Uganda’s specialists. The majority of the interviewees

brought to the fore that overall, ample time was needed to allow change to set in, to be able to understand the changes - in particular the shifts from teacher-centred to student-centred methodologies, and from subjects to learning areas - and to come up with aligned products and ideas, especially where learning areas comprised two or more subjects. Several respondents also pointed out that ample time is now also needed for teachers and other stakeholders to learn to understand the change and to implement it. However, at the time of interviewing there seemed to be a widely shared concern regarding further project implementation and the challenges ahead, which appeared to be strongly related to a number of heuristics under this pillar, see further below.

'We pray that the implementation level is really handled properly. Because that's where we find, that's where I'm a bit sceptical, the implementation. The document is good, the information is good, but then... taking it to the next level...' (Ugandan specialist).

All interviewees mentioned that levels of communication, sensitisation and advocacy related to the reform were too low and were insufficiently taken into account. According to the respondents, this led to unfamiliarity with the project and with the proposed changes in general; to misinformation; resistance; and fear of job loss from teachers who worry their subjects become redundant due to the implementation of the learning areas. This resistance also became visible through a number of newspaper articles where the reform was slashed by opponents. Curricular strategies and choices were not made sufficiently clear, ultimately resulting in the project being put on hold by MOES in April as announced in a national newspaper (Ahimbisibwe, 2016).

Another recurring theme was the limited available resources. There are several indications that this has hindered the process at times. The vast majority of interviewees specified that due to budget limitations insufficient advocacy took place, and also prevented the inclusion of more stakeholders during the development process, e.g. related to the working groups. For the next stages, additional funds are urgently needed to sensitise teachers, parents and the wider community; to train teachers and publishers in the new methodology; and to develop the appropriate textbooks that carry the reform. There are concerns that even if funds are made available, possible budget limitations may lead to alternative implementation strategies, which could jeopardise the entire reform. At the time of writing it remained unclear whether funds will be available or not. Some interviewees pointed out that new funds are supposedly accessible, but they come with conditions attached by the funder, including increased political leadership, commitment and ownership from MOES. In addition to the need for funds, the necessity of sensitising stakeholders, especially those key

stakeholders who are in a position to discontinue the entire reform appeared to be urgent at this stage.

‘But we will really feel sad if at some point some people come up to fail the programme. Because we think we have given it our all, and we think that’s what the country wants, that’s what the country can afford to, that’s what we think our children will benefit from. Because a major challenge is today, you just give children information. Graduates cannot work because they’ve not been trained to work. The system they go through is simply knowing to talk about things. And that one has really killed the country, that’s why we have rampant unemployment’ (Ugandan specialist).

8.4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This case was added to further explore the extent to which the SCCD framework is usable for analysis of curriculum development interventions, without further involvement as curriculum practitioner from the researcher. Because of this different level of involvement, the case study could not be carried out with the same intensity as aforementioned interventions. This entails a more limited data collection, leaving less room for triangulation. However, the data that derived from interviews; from exploration of project and policy documents; and from informal conversations paint a clear enough and overall picture of the process to allow for some founded discussion, statements and conclusions regarding the usability of the framework as an analytical tool in relation to this specific intervention.

The framework turned out to be a useful tool to analyse such a project from an outsider’s perspective, and clearly indicated in what areas the encountered bottlenecks were located. The analysis showed that in theory, the project included many of the framework heuristics. In practice however, there seemed an obvious gap between project proposals and reports on one hand, and the reality on the ground on the other. The project’s strengths are mostly positioned in pillars 1, 2 and 4. The biggest gaps, or unbalances within the project seemed mainly located in pillars 3 and 5.

As described under the first pillar, the project contained a strong curricular capacity development component aiming for capacity strengthening of the curriculum developers from the curriculum and examination departments, teachers, and staff from teacher training institutes and universities. The adopted participatory approach (see pillar 4) turned out to be beneficial for learning and for capacity development, and learning outcomes seemed fairly successful so far. All but one of the interviewees who were directly involved in the developments

displayed strong ownership and sound understanding of the reform, and appeared eager to start the implementation of the new curriculum. However, going beyond that relatively small circle of developers, there appeared to be a high level of unfamiliarity with the reform due to various reasons, including insufficient involvement, sensitisation and communication (see pillars 3 and 5). In addition, insufficient coordination and steering of, and involvement and engagement in the reform from the higher ministry levels (see pillar 3) severely compromised the trajectory. This could at least partially explain why other departments and institutions were not involved as strongly as was preferred.

The challenges and issues that the project was facing at the time of writing were not new. Several subsequent project documents set out clear listings of possible challenges and issues ahead; of the consequences of inactions; and regarding prerequisites that should be in place before starting the implementation, which mainly came to the fore under the first and fifth pillar. Also, these documents provided direction on how to possibly proceed and on how to avoid or mitigate such challenges, but it appeared as if appropriate response has been insufficient up until now. For example, the latest implementation plan (Ottevanger & Berkvens, 2015) again underlined the urgent necessity of certain activities such as teacher preparation and the development of proper textbooks, since teachers are one of the main carriers of the reform. Due to the delays, the project seriously lagged behind schedule but several important prerequisites were still not in place around July 2016, and specific actions had not been taken. All this jeopardised implementation at the frontrunner schools, which was already rescheduled to January 2017. The implementation plan - written around November 2015 - involved recommendations for a sequence of actions, including a timeframe. It advocated e.g. the immediate start-up of the bidding process for the development of textbooks, but at the time of writing - July 2016 - hardly any of the suggested actions were taken. This could be related to political and/or cultural factors, and/or an indication of insufficient presence of capacity related to such comprehensive curriculum development processes.

The relative weakness detected in pillars 3 and 5 resulted in a critical situation. At the time of interviewing, the project was more or less put on hold. On a number of occasions, several interviewees described feelings of being stuck, and displayed a sense of concern related to the upcoming implementation phase. A change of government made things come to a further standstill, and at that time it was unknown how the newly appointed minister of education would proceed. Up to this point, millions of dollars are invested in the reform, but so far it remains uncertain whether there would be any funds available to support further implementation in schools nationwide. The previous funding consisted

of a loan, requested for and initiated by the national government. There are strong indications that the lack of overall political involvement and lack of dedication to the project negatively influenced the process. However, based on the current data it is not possible to make any founded statements regarding any possible underlying reasons for this, such as a lack of capacity to carry out such a reform; or whether the lack of involvement may be more culturally or politically oriented. More research would be needed. Nevertheless, irrespective of motivating reasons, the fact that national leadership and coordination was considered insufficient remained. This has severely pressured pillar 3, and pillar 5 as a direct result thereof.

It can be concluded that the framework allowed for thorough examination of this project's development process, and clearly brought to the fore its strengths and weaknesses, all within a relatively limited timeframe. This suggests that the framework is relevant, consistent and practical as an un-going, more formative evaluation tool during different stages of a process, to illuminate possible underexposed areas and to anticipate if needed. The analysis also re-emphasised the necessity of using the full framework as comprehensive foundation for such projects. The pillars are strongly interrelated; missing or unobserved components within one or two pillars appear to have an immediate, mostly adverse effect on other areas as well, often eventually compromising sustainability. This appears in line with the findings from the previous case studies, and also underlines the issue that has arisen related to a possible pre-conditionality within the framework. This detected hierarchy between the pillars, how heuristics relate to each other, and possible addition or removal of parts of the framework will be discussed in the next chapter. This final chapter of the second stage explores these issues by bringing the case studies together for further analysis and evaluation of the framework, and tries to find some answers to these questions.

CHAPTER 9 CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the overall applicability of the proposed approach and related SCCD framework as a tool for designing, developing and analysing systemic collaborative curriculum development interventions in international settings is evaluated. It considers questions and draws conclusions related to the relevance, consistency, practicality and effectiveness, i.e. the overall applicability of the approach and framework, and looks at what the implications of adoption of the approach and framework are for change-supporting agents and other actors. Section 9.1 analyses and evaluates the quality and applicability of the overall framework as a tool for guidance and analysis by putting the framework components under final scrutiny, based on the outcomes of the three case studies. Through a cross-case analysis, this section further explores if, and how the heuristics took shape and locates common strengths and frequent bottlenecks. It discusses hierarchy within the framework, provides recommendations on how to mitigate components under pressure and illustrates the implications of approach and framework application for change-supporting agents and partners in international development cooperation. The outcomes of the cross-case analysis led to a small number of alterations to the framework. The validated approach and updated version of the SCCD framework are presented in the last chapter (chapter 10) of this study.

9.1 VISUALISATION OF THE FRAMEWORK IN PRACTICE

The SCCD framework is evaluated and discussed in more detail by means of a cross-case analysis of the case studies as specified in the four explored interventions: a girls' education project (1), the island-wide transition (2a), school-based curriculum development (2b), and the lower secondary curriculum and assessment reform CURASSE (3). The outcomes of the case studies as described in the previous three chapters are brought together and illustrated in fig. 9.1. This was done in order to carry out such analysis that allows for in-depth discussion, statements and conclusions related to the overall relevance, usability and applicability of the approach and the corresponding SCCD framework.

Framework classification and colour coding required a certain level of understanding of the particular intervention. Interventions with a high level of external practitioner involvement, as was the case in the girls' education project (1) and the transition (2a), appeared somewhat easier to classify compared to interventions that were evaluated without further involvement. Involvement in intervention 1 and 2a was relatively high due to long-term commitment and the additional role as practitioner. This allowed the researcher to accumulate larger and richer datasets over time, and thus differed from interventions where

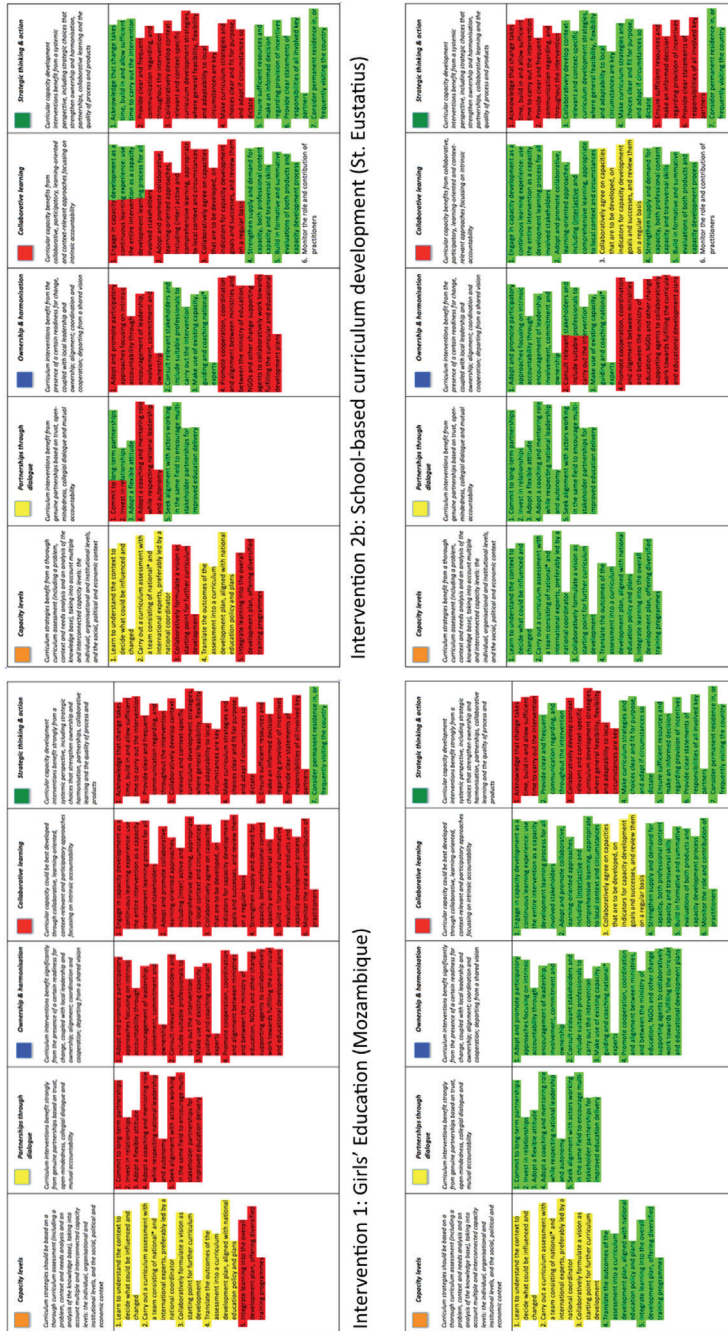


Figure 9.1 The four colour-coded interventions

the framework was applied as an analysis tool, and where the researcher's role was limited by short-term research interference, as was the case with CURASSE (3). Gaining a clear overview of an intervention in case of limited involvement required some changes to the interview schedules. Semi-structured interviews were carried out, supplemented with more specific questions for different stakeholders, focussing on particular areas of the framework in case the picture was not yet sufficiently clear.

It is acknowledged that classification is prone to discussion and bias, especially in those cases in which the researcher also played a practitioner's role, and was able to shape the process of curricular capacity development as much as possible according to the approach as propagated through the framework. As stated in chapter 1, efforts were made to prevent role bias by on-going reflection on the different roles, and by making them explicit during interviews (interventions 1, 2a & 2b) to avoid possible ambiguities. Related to the classification, attempts were made to minimize such bias by adhering closely to the gathered data, without further interpretation.

9.2 THE SCCD FRAMEWORK IN PRACTICE: EVALUATION AND IMPLICATIONS

9.2.1 Main strengths and bottlenecks

The case studies demonstrated that the SCCD framework proved to be a useful instrument for two stated purposes: to design and develop curriculum interventions that aim at development of quality products through strengthening curricular capacity; and as evaluative tool to map and analyse such interventions for optimisation purposes. Overall, the case studies confirmed that the framework includes relevant and important, but also regularly lacking aspects to carry out systemic curriculum development intervention as optimally as possible. Such lacks became particularly visible in the cases where the pillars were less balanced (Uganda, intervention 3, and the school-based curriculum trajectory on St. Eustatius, intervention 2b), or not balanced at all (Mozambique, intervention 1) and where heuristics were insufficiently observed. Such imbalance resulted in challenges and obstruction of the process that negatively influenced room for sustainable curriculum development and the quality of curriculum products.

Looking at the four frameworks as depicted in figure 9.1, several points of issue and patterns catch the eye. Starting from top left going in clockwise direction, the amount of red gradually decreases while the amount of green visibly increases. There appears to be a relation between the intensity of the pillars and number of observed heuristics, and the potential success of an intervention. For example,

the framework of the girl's education intervention (1) is almost entirely red and caused severe ground for concern. No curricular capacity was strengthened because relevant partners were not involved, and due to time pressure there was no space to do so after all at a later stage. As a result, curriculum materials were developed with barely any local input.

On the other hand, the framework on the bottom left - the transition (2a) - is predominantly green and showed more positive output. Data indicated that capacity strengthening took place, while at the same time relevant, consistent and practical products were developed. Also the third intervention – CURASSE – indicated that capacity was strengthened, which seemed to run parallel with the development of a quality curriculum (although its implementation was hampered at the time of writing because of insufficient observation of some of the other very important heuristics, see further below). Simply put: there are indications that the more comprehensive the framework is applied, the more promising the outputs. In all case studies, heuristics in green have had a positive effect on other parts of the framework, and/or the entire intervention, while heuristics coded in red means they were under (severe) pressure. However, it does not automatically mean that heuristics under pressure were not taken into account. It could mean that attempts to adopt certain heuristics were made, but were counter-balanced by other factors and circumstances that put them under severe pressure. This was strongly the case in the first intervention, where many heuristics could not be taken up because others were not yet adopted. For example, partnership building (pillar 2) and collaborative learning (pillar 4) become difficult when relevant stakeholders are not involved in any way (pillar 3). In a few occasions (interventions 2b & 3) heuristics are highlighted in both green and red, meaning that they were observed and partially worked out well, but at the same time were under pressure. For example, in Uganda (3), several relevant stakeholders were highly involved and active, but other stakeholders were not, which led to aforementioned described tension.

This raises a number of questions. For example, how could it be explained that some heuristics seem easier, or more difficult to adopt than others? Is there a hierarchy between the different components of the framework, i.e. are some more important than, or conditional for others? If so, which ones? Which heuristics are seemingly always adopted, but in a different way than described in the framework, and why would that be the case? The discussion below elaborates further on these questions and issues and indicates what implications framework adoption has for the different actors involved in such interventions.

9.2.2 Hierarchy and interconnection of framework components

In several cases, the ease, or difficulty with which heuristics could be taken up appeared to be directly dependent on other aspects of the framework. If certain conditions are not, or not sufficiently present it can have immediate negative effects on other components. All cases confirmed the strong interconnection and interplay between the pillars and their heuristics, which was observable both in the promising interventions, as well as in the interventions where there was ground for concern. Especially in the girls' education project the domino effect mentioned in chapter 7 became well visible in almost all areas. Although less strong, other interventions demonstrated this framework interconnection too. Intervention 2b – school-based curriculum development - indicated that high staff turnover; insufficient or unfavourable leadership during the duration of the entire intervention; and insufficient engagement and involvement of management and part of the team had a negative impact on other aspects of the framework. For example, to a certain extent it pressured relationships (pillar 2), it complicated the promotion of coordination and cooperation within the school (pillar 3), and it had far-reaching consequences for the space for collaborative learning (pillar 4). Possibly due to different priorities, part of the team showed resistance and preferred an individual development approach over a collaborative, learning-oriented approach. This in turn complicated the heuristic to engage in the entire process as a continuous learning experience. Further exploration of such patterns revealed that there appeared to be a hierarchy between some of the pillars and heuristics.

The pillars all start with statements, which include pre-requisites for development and change as formulated under each of the five headings. The third pillar - harmonisation & ownership – could be regarded as pre-conditional for all other pillars. If the right stakeholders are not involved; if there is insufficient local leadership; and/or if there is no readiness for change, it will become very challenging to focus on the other areas, because eventually for a collaborative approach to materialise, relevant stakeholders are needed. But in addition, heuristics such as allowing sufficient time to carry out an intervention; the provision of sufficient resources; and (although to a somewhat lesser extent) communication (all under pillar 5) turned out to be rather crucial too as was demonstrated through the cases studies. This raised the question whether heuristics should be placed under the respective pillar in hierarchical, or pre-conditional order, starting with the most crucial ones, which was granted. This same question also applies to the pillars. The short answer to this question is no, and will be further discussed below.

The order of the pillars in the two-dimensional, somewhat linear depiction of the framework (see fig. 5.1) was determined based on a logical order. The capacity levels pillar comes first, since its related activities and heuristics are usually most applicable at the start of an intervention. It also turned out to be the most logical pillar to start with for purposes of analysis and narration of an intervention. The strategic thinking & action pillar was placed at the other end considering its links to all other pillars. The remaining three pillars were placed in between, in a somewhat conditional order. The issue whether or not to prioritise the pillars becomes redundant when the framework is visualised in a way that better reflects its intend, i.e. strengthening coherence and interconnection. The strong interconnection between the different parts of the framework points at the necessity to use the framework as comprehensively as possible. A sole focus on just one, two or three pillars is not sufficient, since it is all about the systemic interplay between the different parts that creates additional value. Figure 9.2 brings this to fore by depicting the interconnection. For the heuristics on the other hand, it is considered to be sensible to list the most important and most conditional ones first, such as inclusion of stakeholders, communication, proper resource provision, and time. Therefore, a second, validated framework version including the discussed modifications and interconnections is presented in the final chapter.

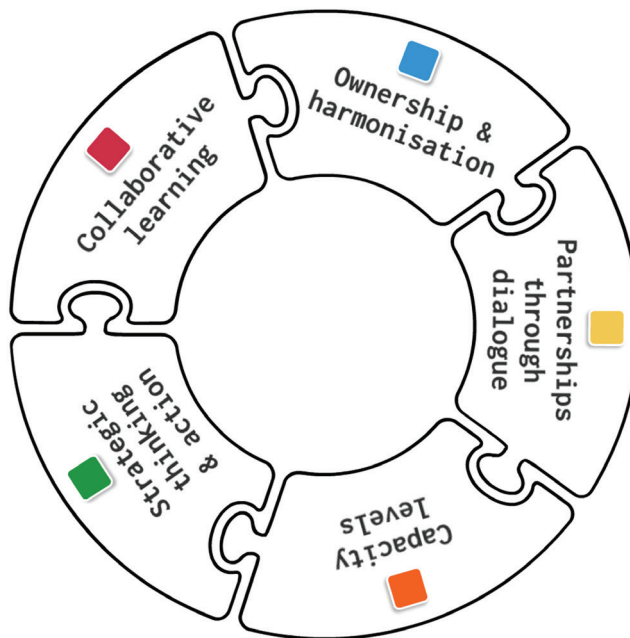


Figure 9.2 Interconnected pillars

Directly following from this, one last remark related to prioritisation could be made. Application of a specific order may encourage selectivity, where some parts are taken up and other parts are left behind. This could jeopardize overall consistency, coherence and interrelation, and as this study has demonstrated through the case studies, this will quite likely negatively influence the process, its output, and eventual outcomes. Although it is possible that not all heuristics are equally applicable to every individual intervention (see also below), it is stressed again to metaphorically adopt this framework as much as possible as a meal instead of a menu (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

9.2.3 Theory versus practice

In the interventions of Mozambique and St. Eustatius (1, 2a & 2b), a remarkable concentration of yellow is visible, in particular under pillar 1. This could be explained by the fact that no intervention ever starts from scratch: it will rarely happen that the framework could be implemented from the very beginning. Except for the intervention in Uganda (3), in none of the other cases a specific curriculum assessment as recommended under pillar 1 was carried out. Also, in these three interventions there was limited room for the practitioner to learn to understand the context first, because the work immediately started upon arrival. In these cases, practitioners were recruited to carry out a specific task that was already identified by others at an earlier stage, when practitioners were not yet involved. In all three cases, the curriculum development plans were drawn up based on previous studies and assessments that functioned as foundation to build from. Existence of such studies and assessments indicates that certain steps were taken without observing the framework and in addition, that curricular expertise is often not sought until the start of the development phase of an intervention. Unless action is taken to change this, in many cases the framework will quite likely not be used exactly as described. Its full application, including during analysis and project design phases may therefore more often be exception rather than rule. Not being able to fully apply the framework does not make the framework irrelevant, but implies awareness of the practitioner's specific point of entry, and of restrictions this may entail that practitioners have to deal with. Not being able to fully apply the framework also requires certain flexibility and creativity of practitioners to observe the framework as much as possible under the prevailing circumstances.

The reality between the described framework in theory and the actual situation in practice also applies to other framework components. Another part of the framework that was either under pressure, or carried out in an alternative way related to the heuristic to collaboratively agree on capacities to be developed; on indicators for capacity development goals and successes, and to review them

on a regular basis. This was either not done at all, as was the case in Mozambique and at the secondary school, or, in the cases of Uganda and the transition, it was done but due to time pressure they were applied in a less extensive and more basic manner. This does not mean that such heuristics should necessarily be adjusted, but underlines that the framework should be used as a guiding tool. Overall, it is designed to be a practical instrument for different types of interventions. The set of heuristics could be considered as guidelines when the framework is utilised to design and develop an intervention. When utilised as an analysis or evaluation tool, heuristics could be considered as criteria. But in both cases, it should be acknowledged that interventions take place in existing and differing contexts that each come with possibilities and restrictions, and should therefore be adapted accordingly.

9.2.4 Overarching factors influencing the developed approach

Although the explored case studies were diverse and the framework was used to assess its applicability related to different functions, the cases shared a number of characteristics or parameters that are recurring in almost any intervention, such as duration, funding arrangements, accountability and conditionality. These factors determine to a significant extent the amount of space available to carry out an intervention, and thus how the pillars and heuristics take shape. In the girls' education project (intervention 1), the delays, the changing requirements, and a strongly felt upward accountability towards the funder caused by the PBR-scheme resulted in an extremely limited timeframe to carry out the actual project activities, and made it virtually impossible to implement the framework and to carry out the work in the intended participatory way. This case study also pointed out that the underlying paradigms of both intervention and framework should match, because otherwise the framework becomes unusable. In the case of the transition (intervention 2a), the space provided by the funder, i.e. the ministry, to carry out the intervention in a way that allowed capacity strengthening was relatively large. The ministry's interference in project execution was minimal, and responsibility was mainly left to actors on the island. However, related to duration, it should be acknowledged that the time available to carry out the curriculum activities was limited, and exerted significant pressure on all actors involved.

To a certain extent, the lower secondary reform (intervention 3) also suffered from limited provision of space and time, especially during the second phase of the project. Due to inflexible deadlines this phase was eventually truncated from one and a half years to three months, which obviously negatively influenced room for further capacity strengthening. Due to severe time pressure following from this, it also affected the developed curriculum documents and overall project

coherence, because the intervention could not be carried out as planned and as propagated through the framework. A better understanding of the influence that such project characteristics may exert on project execution requires increased awareness from funders, outsourcers and contractors, but also from local authorities, to allow for greater leeway and sufficient time to carry out an intervention, see also the next section. Observing the SCCD framework could ensure that funding requirements do not get in the way of project execution, or oppress capacity development and the achievement of educational goals.

9.2.5 Shared responsibility for framework application

Although the framework was initially designed from the point of view of external change-supporting agents, i.e. practitioners, they obviously should not work in an isolated way, since this would go against the framework's fundamental principle of collaboration, mutual learning and capacity development. As previously described, the pillars and their corresponding heuristics also include preconditions that are difficult to enforce in general, such as willingness to change and local leadership. The first intervention demonstrated what could happen when preconditions are not in place, and when the largest part of the framework is not taken into account. Such negligence raises the question to what extent further execution of a project under such circumstances would be sensible and meaningful. Considering the fact that every context is different, it is difficult to determine an exact tipping point that indicates if continuation of a project still makes sense or not. But in this particular case, project revision was inevitable. In other interventions, e.g. 2b, some results were achieved but outcomes may likely have benefited from stronger partnerships, and increased ownership and harmonisation.

Strengthening partnerships, ownerships, etc. cannot only come from the side of a practitioner, since involvement and engagement of all actors is needed as suggested by the framework. Therefore, the framework should not be used by practitioners only when e.g. planning an intervention, but ought to be deployed as a collaborative instrument to create increased awareness of the important design principles for more successful interventions. Using the framework in such a way may also be the key to mitigate frequently pressured, rather crucial framework areas. The analysis indicated that primary pressure is most recurrently located in the third and fifth pillar, and from there often extended to other framework areas. This implies that especially local involvement, in the broadest sense of the word, is crucial. Involvement not only includes consultation, inclusion and participation of relevant stakeholders for actual curriculum development, but also strong involvement in an intervention from the higher levels, such as the ministry or school management. Joint efforts, cooperation, coordination and

collaboration are indispensable, and require strong partnerships. Stronger involvement and commitment of all necessary partners helps to strengthen these often-pressured pillars. At the same time it is acknowledged that such reflections may sound simple and clear-cut, but that reality often turns out less manageable.

9.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The findings of the case studies and the subsequent cross-case analysis demonstrated that the SCCD framework - that reflects the proposed approach - turned out to be a relevant, consistent and practical instrument for different types of curriculum development interventions, and for different purposes, at least in the hands of the practitioner/researcher. Moreover, there are some indications that the approach and framework may be effective for the development of quality curricula through capacity development. However, some additional reflections and considerations related to the approach and overall applicability of the framework could be made, which will be discussed in the next and final chapter of this study. In addition, as discussed above, the deepened insights require some minor framework adjustments related to the sequence of some of the heuristics under pillars 3 and 5, and the supplementary heuristic that derived from chapter 7 should be added. The validated and modified version of the framework will also be presented in this last chapter.

CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This final chapter provides a recapitulation of the entire study on a sustainable curriculum development approach. Section 10.1 starts with a brief summary of the research context, research question and research methodology. Section 10.2 continues with an explication of the main findings and conclusions of the study related to the research questions, and presents the validated approach including the validated version of the framework for systemic collaborative capacity development. In this section, conclusions are drawn related to the quality and overall applicability of the approach and the framework. Section 10.3 continues with reflections on the educational design research approach applied to this study, and discusses the main encountered issues and measures taken to avoid bias. Section 10.4 reflects on the developed approach and its related framework. The chapter concludes with final considerations, including limitations of the study and pointers for future reference, and provides recommendations for actors involved in future curriculum development interventions (section 10.5).

10.1 RECAPITULATION OF THE STUDY

10.1.1 Research context and research questions

This research was carried out between January 2013 and December 2016, initiated by SLO and the Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO, because of experienced sustainability challenges with internationally carried out curriculum and educational reforms. SLO's experience with several curriculum reform interventions worldwide is that outcomes, in the light of both capacity development and quality of curricular products, in many cases were less successful than envisioned. This often seemed to be caused by projects having too narrow perspectives on curriculum and curriculum development, including a desire for quick fixes and results, and by not involving the right stakeholders. Trajectories aiming for curriculum reforms often seemed to provide insufficient room for curricular capacity development. Therefore, this study was set up to develop a curriculum development approach for change-supporting agents to adopt that enhances the sustainability of curriculum development interventions through capacity development, and investigated on which design principles such trajectories should be based. Following from this, the main research question was captured:

What are the characteristics of a sustainable curriculum development approach that places local curricular capacity at the centre and is suitable within the context of international development cooperation?

In order to answer this research question an educational design research approach was applied. Following this approach the study was divided into two subsequent stages, each guided by the following more operational sub-questions:

Stage 1: Analysis, design and development

What design principles for the intended approach can be derived from theory and practice, and how could the approach be operationalized into a conceptual framework meant to serve as a guiding tool for change-supporting agents?

Stage 2: Implementation and evaluation

What is the quality of the approach and the corresponding conceptual framework, and what are the implications for their application in international development contexts?

10.1.2 Research methodology

To develop an appropriate response to the research questions and to validate the developed theory in practice, an educational design research approach - with an inbuilt case study approach - was adopted. The combination of educational design research with a case study approach proved to be relevant and valuable for this study, because the case studies provided a good opportunity to validate the developed theory in practice. The study identified a set of five design principles for a systemic collaborative design approach for sustainable curriculum development. These design principles guided the design and development of the conceptual framework for systemic collaborative capacity development (SCCD) that operationalizes the approach. The quality of the approach and framework were evaluated in practice during three case studies. As described in the first chapter, the quality was assessed using the four successive quality criteria for curriculum development (Nieveen, 1999; 2009) as presented in table 10.1 below.

Table 10.1 Quality criteria targeting the developed approach and framework

Quality criterion	
Relevance	The approach and related framework address a need for a sustainable curriculum development approach; their design is based on state-of-the-art (scientific) knowledge
Consistency	The structure of the approach and framework are logical and cohesive, and contain the most relevant components conducive to curricular capacity development
Practicality	The approach is applicable to, and the framework is a usable instrument for different type of curriculum interventions at different levels (macro, meso, micro) for two purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To design and develop curriculum development interventions that focus on capacity strengthening and aim for implementation of improved curricula ● To analyse and evaluate such interventions for process optimisation
Effectiveness	Application of the approach and framework lead to the development and implementation of improved curricula through capacity strengthening of involved partners, and thereby contributes to overall sustainability

10.2 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

10.2.1 Findings of the first stage of the study

Following an iterative process, the first stage commenced mapping and articulating the existing knowledge base through a literature review as described in chapters 2 and 3, investigating paradigms and trends within the international development sector, and capacity development in this field. The exploration deliberately started broad and was carried out in order to get a thorough understanding of developments within the international development sector. The review made successes and challenges insightful, and generated a number of key themes, fundamental insights and recommendations that were considered to be of importance for capacity development in international development cooperation. This theoretical address was followed by an expert appraisal and an exploration of contemporary curriculum development interventions in different international settings as described in chapter 4, to capture to what extent theory is enacted, and to identify what kind of approaches are adopted. The outcomes confirmed and further extended the findings of the literature analysis, and added a number of recommendations aiming to contribute to the improvement of curriculum development interventions that focus on capacity strengthening. The cumulative character of the exploration of theory and practice eventually led to the identification of a set of design principles that underpin the proposed systemic collaborative design approach as narrated in chapter 5. This approach is operationalized through the SCCD framework, which is designed as a conceptual tool for change-supporting agents involved in systemic collaborative curriculum development. This framework consists of five interrelated pillars that coincide with the design principles: capacity levels; partnerships through dialogue; ownership & harmonisation; collaborative learning; and strategic thinking & action. Each pillar includes a set of corresponding heuristics, or guidelines. These heuristics should be considered as favourable advice on actions that could positively contribute to the strengthening, fulfilment, implementation and/or realisation of the respective pillars. After successive adjustments, the final prototype of the framework was presented and discussed during a research workshop with experts. Based on that input the framework was further refined, ready to be utilised in practice during three case studies to measure its merit.

10.2.2 Findings of the second stage of the study

The second stage of the research was concerned with the evaluation of the approach and the SCCD framework in curriculum practice to further verify how relevant and consistent, but also how practical and effective both the approach and the framework are for systemic curriculum development. This was done in three selected contexts (four interventions) varying from school-based

curriculum development to curriculum reform at national level. From June 2014 to June 2016, the approach and framework were utilised and validated in Mozambique, St. Eustatius (Caribbean), and Uganda. In each of these contexts, education and curriculum reform interventions took place. All case studies were supposedly set up in alignment with the framework paradigm of systemic, collaborative curriculum development. The scope of the interventions varied and covered different levels: the intervention in Mozambique and one of the interventions at St. Eustatius took place at meso level (provincial and school level respectively), while the intervention in Uganda and the other intervention at St. Eustatius covered macro (national) level. The level of involvement of the researcher also differed: in Mozambique and St. Eustatius the researcher was also involved as curriculum adviser, in Uganda solely as researcher. The aim, the set-up, and the main findings and conclusions of the three case studies are succinctly summarised below per case. Based on the case study findings, the SCCD framework was adjusted to its validated version as presented in figure 10.1 later on in this section.

Girls' education project, Mozambique

Chapter 6 narrated the first case study: girl's education, a project carried out in Mozambique (intervention 1). The project aimed to contribute to the empowerment of marginalised girls by removing inter-related barriers to education that affect them. This case study focused on the curriculum component of the project, and included the adjustment of existing curricula in a gender responsive way. The involvement was supposed to be long-term, aiming at capacity strengthening of partners. The researcher took on the role of curriculum development adviser, and was supposed to work together with education partners on the proposed adjustments of the curricula. The intention was to deploy the framework as a design and development tool to guide the work. However, that proved impossible due to the experienced discrepancy between intended and enacted project execution. Instead, the framework was used as a tool to analyse the intervention.

The outcomes as described in chapter 6 showed that the project was put under enormous pressure due to an accumulation of challenges following from the way the payment by results (PBR) approach adopted for this project was implemented: it proved to be very difficult to combine curricular capacity development with PBR demands, which made framework implementation almost impossible. The analysis showed that all along the line, the project was under severe pressure, leading to a lack of opportunity for curricular capacity development. For example, key stakeholders were not involved (pillar 3), so partnerships (pillar 2) could not easily be built, which had direct implications for ownership (pillar 3)

and collaborative learning (pillar 4). This resulted in a kind of domino effect with regard to the heuristics, and pointed at strong interrelationship between parts of the framework. Many heuristics could not be adopted because others had not been taken up, or because the necessary prerequisites were not in place. Related to the curriculum development component, this resulted in products that were developed without any local involvement, leading to opportunities for capacity development being lost. Ultimately, project outcomes were found to be so disappointing that at the beginning of 2015 the decision was made to review the entire project. Although the framework could not be deployed as initially intended, i.e. as a design tool to shape the intervention, it turned out to be a relevant and usable tool to analyse the project, to identify obstacles to capacity development and their interrelation, and to make clear suggestions for optimisation.

The island-wide transition, and school-based curriculum development at St. Eustatius

Chapter 7 set out the second case study that took place on St. Eustatius. Two trajectories ran more or less simultaneously. The first trajectory concerned an education sector-wide transition from one instruction language to another with associated curriculum consequences (intervention 2a); Together with development teams, a number of curriculum products were developed through curricular capacity strengthening of involved teachers. The researcher was based on the island to supervise and support the curriculum work, which allowed for direct involvement and thus provided a good opportunity to implement and validate the framework throughout the project. In the case of the transition, the funder (i.e. the Ministry of Education) provided ample room for the change-supporting agent to design and to carry out this project with a strong focus on curricular capacity development of relevant stakeholders. Due to this space to design the project as much as possible along the framework, its components could be observed to a large extent, and the outcomes showed the trajectory to be rather promising after the first six months of implementation up until June 2016. Data implied most of the developed curriculum products to be relevant, consistent, practical and assumingly effective, while curricular capacity was strengthened as a result of the trajectory. Most heuristics appeared relevant, although a small minority could not be (fully) observed due to prevailing circumstances, such as time pressure.

During the same period, teachers from the only secondary school on the island were developing their school curriculum (intervention 2b). This trajectory had already started at the beginning of 2014. At that time, the framework had not yet been developed. However, the approach adopted for this trajectory showed

several similarities with the developed systemic collaborative design approach and related framework, which in this case was used as an evaluative tool to analyse the intervention. Related to this second intervention at secondary school level, the analysis showed that because of a significant unbalance in necessary preconditions and other parts of the framework, the outcomes were not as promising as envisaged. The entire process proceeded with difficulty due to a rather unstable school environment including high staff turnover, unfavourable (local) leadership related to the curriculum work (pillar 3), and insufficient communication within and about the curriculum trajectory (pillar 5). In addition, due to accumulated circumstances as described in chapter 7, part of the team operated relatively independent from each other, including from management, which led to a situation where, to a significant extent, individualism seemed to prevail over teamwork (pillar 4). The general impression that derived from survey data was that many teachers did not see the necessity or value of a school curriculum, and felt that this was something imposed by external parties such as the inspectorate and SLO. This all negatively affected the course of the developments, and it remained unclear whether the partly developed but unfinished school curriculum would continue to be used or not. For the analysis of this intervention the framework demonstrated to be a relevant, consistent and practical tool that helped to map the intervention, to point out its imbalances, and provided clear pointers for optimisation.

Lower secondary curriculum and assessment reform, Uganda

Chapter 8 narrated the third case study: the curriculum and assessment reform project for lower secondary education in Uganda (intervention 3). The curriculum in need of revision was perceived to be too elitist and overloaded, characterised by a too strong focus on subject content at the expense of competencies and skills, and taught through inefficient teaching methodologies. The project contained a prominent curricular capacity development component. Under the supervision of international consultants, working groups consisting of staff from key departments developed the curriculum. The project was set up in accordance with the framework paradigm, and therefore provided a good opportunity to further investigate the merit of the framework as an analysis and evaluation tool in an intervention where the researcher was not also involved as change-supporting agent.

The outcomes of the study showed that the adopted project approach was favourable to capacity development, and appeared to be rather successful in that area. However, due to a dramatic unbalance located in pillars 3 and 5, the curriculum's nationwide implementation was severely jeopardized at the time of research in June 2016. During the intervention, a number of key stakeholders

(such as staff from the Ministry of Education and the curriculum and examination departments, representatives from teacher colleges and universities staff) were targeted to be included in the curriculum developments, but not all representatives fully participated (pillar 3). In combination with insufficient communication and sensitisation of stakeholders related to the curriculum (pillar 5), this led to unfamiliarity with and resistance to the curriculum by important stakeholders, including departments within the ministry itself, and to significant project delays. Due to insufficient involvement and engagement from the ministry in the project, and due to insufficient cooperation and coordination between key ministerial departments and affiliates (pillar 3), the project came to a complete standstill, and at the time of writing it remained unclear if, and how the ministry was going to proceed.

The analysis clearly pointed out where the main bottlenecks were located and their interrelation with other parts of the framework. There are indications that curricular capacity was strengthened as a result of the trajectory, but the research also showed that curriculum implementation was severely hampered due to insufficient focus on other areas, mainly related to (a lack of) involvement of relevant stakeholders. Regardless the underlying reasons for this, it does seem to strengthen the theory that when curriculum development is not systemically embedded, the process can easily come to a standstill. A sole focus on only the development of a curriculum is not sufficient.

For the analysis of this case study, the framework demonstrated to be a relevant, consistent and practical tool – i.e. in the hands of the change-supporting agent/ researcher who also designed this instrument - again to map the intervention within a relative short timeframe; to identify bottlenecks; and to provide recommendations for improvements.






 Capacity levels	 Partnerships through dialogue	 Ownership & harmonisation
<p>Curriculum strategies benefit from a thorough curriculum assessment (including a problem, context and needs analysis and analysis of the knowledge base), taking into account multiple and interconnected capacity levels: the individual, organisational and institutional levels, and the social, political and economic context</p>	<p>Curriculum interventions benefit from genuine partnerships based on trust, open mindedness, collegial dialogue and mutual accountability</p>	<p>Curriculum interventions benefit from the presence of a certain readiness for change, coupled with local leadership and ownership; alignment; coordination and cooperation; departing from a shared vision</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn to understand the context to decide what could be influenced and changed 2. Carry out a curriculum assessment with a team consisting of national and international experts, preferably led by a national coordinator 3. Collaboratively formulate a vision as starting point for further curriculum development 4. Translate the outcomes of the assessment into a curriculum development plan, aligned with national education policy and plans 5. Integrate learning into the overall development plan, offering diversified training programmes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commit to long-term partnerships 2. Invest in relationships 3. Adopt a flexible attitude 4. Adopt a coaching and mentoring role while respecting national leadership and autonomy 5. Seek alignment with actors working in the same field, encouraging multi stakeholder partnerships for improved education delivery 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt and promote participatory approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability through encouragement of leadership, involvement, commitment and ownership 2. Consult relevant stakeholders and include suitable professionals to carry out the intervention 3. Make as much as possible use of existing capacity, guiding and coaching national* experts 4. Promote cooperation, coordination and alignment between ministries, and between ministries, NGOs and other change supporting agents to collaboratively work towards fulfilling the curricular and educational development plans

Figure 10.1 The validated framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development

 Collaborative learning	 Strategic thinking & action
<p>Curricular capacity benefits from collaborative, participatory, learning-oriented and context relevant approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability</p>	<p>Curricular capacity development interventions benefit from a systemic perspective, including strategic choices that strengthen ownership and harmonisation, partnerships, collaborative learning and the quality of process and products</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in capacity development as a continuous learning experience: use the entire intervention as a capacity development learning process for all involved stakeholders 2. Adopt and promote collaborative, learning oriented approaches, including (inter)active and comprehensive learning, appropriate to local context and circumstances 3. Collaboratively agree on capacities that are to be developed, on indicators for capacity development goals and successes, and review them on a regular basis 4. Strengthen supply and demand for capacity, both professional content capacity and transversal skills 5. Build in formative and summative evaluations of both products and capacity development process 6. Monitor the role and contribution of practitioners 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge that change takes time, build in and allow sufficient time to carry out the intervention 2. Provide clear and frequent communication regarding, and throughout the intervention 3. Collaborative develop curriculum development strategies, where general feasibility, flexibility and adaptability to local circumstances are key 4. Make curriculum strategies and choices clear and fit for purpose, and adapt if circumstances so dictate 5. Ensure sufficient resources and make an informed decision regarding provision of incentives 6. Provide clear statements of responsibilities of all involved key partners 7. Consider permanent residence in, or frequently visiting the country

Framework refinement based on the findings of stage 2

The outcomes of the three case studies justified some adjustments and overall refinement of the framework. Firstly, the order of some of the heuristics related to the third and fifth pillar were adjusted due to their pre-conditionality over others (see also chapter 9), and are now listed in such a way that the most urgent ones come first. Moreover, the additional heuristic following from chapter 7 (see section 7.3) is added under the fifth pillar. Figure 10.1 presents the validated version of the SCCD framework. Third, an addition to the framework's design was made: the 2D framework version as presented in figure 10.1 is designed in such a way that pillars and heuristics are clearly visible at a glance, which enables practical use. However, this display does not visualise the interrelationship between the pillars, which is propagated to be one of the most important features of the approach, nor does it reveal the underlying systemic curriculum perspective that forms the foundation of this approach. Therefore, in addition to the practicable 2D version, a way was sought to better visualise these important features and components, see also below.

10.2.3 Overall conclusion

The validation process demonstrated the framework to be a relevant and consistent tool for the design and development of interventions with a strong emphasis on curricular capacity development, as well as for optimisation of such interventions, provided certain conditions are met. The findings of the second stage suggest that the more comprehensive the framework was applied, the more promising the output became. Especially in the case of the transition at St. Eustatius, there are indications that the approach and framework implementation successfully interconnected capacity strengthening of developers with the development of improved curriculum products, as was explicated in chapter 7.

Validation of the approach and framework during the three case studies showed that the paradigm on which the approach is based is relevant; that the SCCD framework pillars cover relevant design principles; and that each pillar includes relevant heuristics. In the hands of the researcher, the SCCD framework demonstrates to be a useful tool for two aims: i) to design and further guide systemic curriculum development interventions, and ii) to map, analyse and evaluate such interventions for optimisation purposes. The pillars and heuristics as captured in the framework appear to be consistent and to contain the most relevant components that are needed to optimally carry out this type of interventions. When taken into account, they appear to have positively contributed to overall balance and success of the interventions. In addition, there are indications that the framework is expected to be effective for such interventions, see also below. The set of design principles (as formulated

at the end of the first stage) that capture the characteristics of the proposed approach remained unchanged after the validation phase. The design principles are framed by analogy with the formula of van den Akker (2013) as presented in box 10.1 below.

If a change-supporting agent is involved in a curriculum development intervention that aims to enhance the sustainability of its outcomes, then it is best advised to adopt a systemic, collaborative design approach that strongly interconnects curricular capacity development of stakeholders and the development of improved curricula, in order to i) optimise the curriculum development process; ii) enhance the quality of the curriculum; and iii) strengthen its implementation, because:



Capacity levels

Curriculum strategies benefit from a thorough curriculum assessment, taking into account multiple and interconnected capacity levels: the individual, organisational and institutional levels, and the social, political and economic context



Partnerships through dialogue

Curriculum interventions benefit from genuine partnerships based on trust, open-mindedness, collegial dialogue and mutual accountability



Ownership & harmonisation

Curriculum interventions benefit from the presence of a certain readiness for change, coupled with local leadership and ownership; alignment; coordination and cooperation; departing from a shared vision



Collaborative learning

Curricular capacity benefits from collaborative, participatory learning-oriented and context-relevant approaches focusing on intrinsic accountability



Strategic thinking and action

Curricular capacity development interventions benefit from a systemic perspective, including strategic choices that strengthen ownership and harmonisation, partnerships, collaborative learning and the quality of process and products

Box 10.1 Validated design principles for a systemic collaborative design approach to sustainable curriculum development

The outcomes of the case studies detected a certain hierarchy within the framework, and pointed out that some pillars and heuristics are pre-conditional for others. This led to adjustments related to the order of some heuristics within the framework. The order of the pillars remained unchanged, since the added value of the framework lies in the interdependence and interrelation between

its main components. However, it is concluded that for visualisation purposes, a more sophisticated display of the framework should be added, see figure 10.2 below. The figure presents the 3D framework version that illustrates the proposed systemic collaborative design approach as an interconnected unity, consisting of the five interrelated pillars with the corresponding set of heuristics, and includes the systemic perspective on curriculum development as integral part. The interrelated pillars of the framework each contain the corresponding heuristics that are etched into the respective pillar. When unfolding the can, the practicable version of the framework is released.

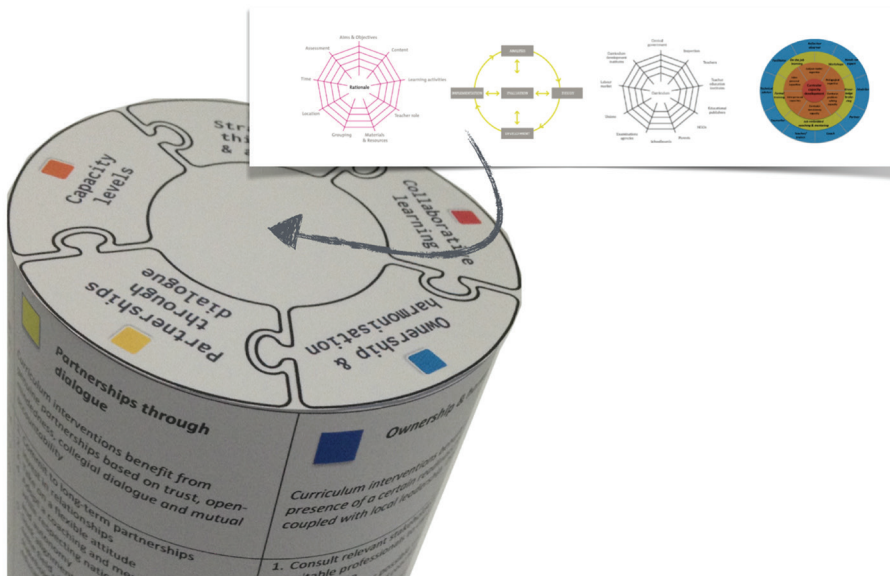


Figure 10.2 The curricular guidance and evaluation can

10.3 REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

10.3.1 Educational design research approach

This study has applied an educational design research. The first stage of the study was concerned with the design and development of a sustainable curriculum development approach including a corresponding conceptual framework in answer to the sub-question related that guided the first stage. The second stage was concerned with implementation and evaluation of this developed approach in practice, making use of an in-built case study approach (Yin, 2003). As intended, the two stages together resulted into a twofold output: a set of validated design principles and, in this case, an empirically underpinned innovative instrument

(see e.g. Plomp & Nieveen, 2013), i.e. the SCCD framework as operationalization of the developed approach. The overall experience with and reflections on this research methodology and the challenges that come with it are discussed below.

Analysis, design and development - stage 1

The main challenge during the literature review and an exploration of practice was that available information was abundant, but remained rather general in nature. Although there is an abundance of literature available related to curriculum development, only few specific studies on curricular capacity development in international development cooperation could be found. It was and is acknowledged that the first part of the literature review does not directly relate to curriculum development. However, this review was considered both necessary and relevant to get a deeper understanding of why, and how the international development sector in general operates the way it does, including its implications. As earlier described, this review yielded a number of themes and insights that formed the basis for the approach under construction. Subsequently, an enquiry into capacity development in the international development sector provided more specific focus towards the research question, which was further specified through the subsequent expert appraisal and exploration of relevant curriculum development interventions, which all built up and enhanced an explicit conceptual framework. Making use of different data sources and types enabled data triangulation and enhanced reliability and internal validity (see McKenney, Nieveen & van den Akker, 2006). The cumulative nature of these activities and their outcomes allowed for evolutionary prototyping, which contributed to improvement and refinement of the approach and related framework (Nieveen & Folmer, 2013).

Implementation and evaluation - stage 2

The implementation and evaluation stage would initially evolve around one long-term international intervention, but it turned out to be fairly challenging to find a suitable case study. However, unexpected possibilities presented themselves along the way. Through opportunity sampling, this resulted in three diverse case studies instead of one, all including a curriculum development component but with a different set-up, covering different parts of the world and with different utilisation of the framework. With the benefit of hindsight, three case studies instead of one offered a much richer opportunity for approach and framework application and their validation. In two out of the three case studies, the researcher also acted in the role of change-supporting agent, i.e. curriculum adviser. This double role was carried out in different cultural contexts and included both benefits and challenges, which are discussed below.

10.3.2 Main biases and challenges

Mitigation of biases

Acting both as a change-supporting agent and as a researcher generated greater opportunity for more in-depth information gathering regarding the process of curriculum development in different contexts. It allowed for a richer range of data collection, which strengthened options for data triangulation. Although critical-constructive detachment is required, this double role was even desirable in order to work with first-hand information related to the development process to increase the chances that outcomes of evaluation activities in fact lead to adjustment and improvement of curricular products (Kuiper, 2009). In addition, through the role of change-supporting agent it was possible to establish good working relationships, as was for example the case on St. Eustatius. Data imply that these relationships contributed to a positive working environment and to overall outcomes as a collaborative effort. At the same time, such a double role could cause role bias, or conflict of interest. Efforts were made to diminish this by on-going reflection in and on action, and by making use of critical friends outside the project. Related to the conducted interviews, this double role was always made explicit at the start of any interview. The researcher specifically emphasised her role as researcher, making clear that through the interviews the perspective of the interviewee was sought while deliberately making use of open-ended questions to avoid steering interviewees into a certain direction. Making use of semi-structured interview schedules based on the framework; recording and transcribing interviews; and carrying out member checks contributed to the reliability of the data set.

Due to the small context of St. Eustatius, selection bias was limited in a somewhat natural way. The principals selected the respective working group members. Due to the relatively small numbers, all teacher surveys were carried out among all schools, including all teachers. For the interviews, in the cases where there was more than one option within a respondent group to choose from, respondents were selected based on their role(s), their working experience on the island, and the level of involvement in the curriculum developments. This worked out relatively well.

For all three case studies the possibility of cultural bias had to be taken into account. Several efforts were made to prevent this by creating an awareness of such possible biases 1) by attempting to be culturally sensitive; 2) by on-going reflection on the researcher/change-supporting agent's role; and 3) through on-going discussions with colleagues inside and outside the interventions.

Practical challenges

Doing research in real-world settings comes with real-world practical challenges. In Mozambique, the language barrier seriously challenged conducting the interviews. Although efforts were made to learn Portuguese and an intermediate level was achieved by the time the researcher arrived in the province, this turned out to be insufficient for carrying out formal interviews. Due to a lack of translators, this limited the options to carry out interviews with English-speaking stakeholders only. This was further challenged by frequent absence of some of the targeted partners. In addition, one of the targeted English-speaking partners that were present eventually declined the interview invitation due to the enormous time pressure all staff was facing, there was no time to sit down and talk about the project. This all resulted in a smaller number of conducted interviews than initially targeted. However, this was compensated by numerous more informal conversations and meetings that were held with a wide range of partners in English and Portuguese, which provided rich data from a wide range of perspectives and stakeholders and enabled stronger triangulation.

In the case of Uganda, the role was limited to that of researcher only. SLO, including the researcher, visited Uganda in 2012 to facilitate a curriculum development course. During a short period of time, SLO worked closely with the staff from the curriculum and examination departments. The existing contacts with management and staff from the curriculum department that maintained over time facilitated an easy entrance for the researcher. These existing relationships also made it easier to conduct interviews as an outsider, participants appeared at ease and seemed to feel free to speak. The interviewees were selected based on criteria of involvement in different learning area working groups, to include a wide perspective on the development work. At the time of interviewing, several subject experts were involved in sensitisation activities that took place in several parts of the country. This implied that not all staff was present, and in several cases selection was based on the practical consideration of availability at the office. Despite support from the curriculum department, it turned out difficult to interview staff from other involved departments, such as the teacher trainer department, examination department and universities. On-going efforts were made to arrange appointments but this was not as successful as hoped, due to a lack of response and hierarchical barriers encountered. This was partly overcome by conducting a number of interviews through Skype after the visit.

10.4 REFLECTION ON THE DEVELOPED APPROACH AND SCCD FRAMEWORK

Quality of the approach and framework

The approach and framework could be regarded as a compilation of a broader body of knowledge and experience. The strength and added value of the study lies in the provision of a concise synthesis of a wide and somewhat fragmented field of knowledge, and following from that in the provision of a comprehensive set of validated design principles as contribution to the knowledge base. The synthesis enabled the formulation of design principles that brought together and interconnected a number of fundamental, but often stand-alone insights as coherent components of a comprehensive and systemic approach, and eventually resulted in the above presented, validated SCCD framework. As such, the framework also contributes to the field of practice by presenting a conceptual, guiding tool, designed to draw particular attention to the most essential characteristics that are needed to strengthen curricular capacity of counterparts and work towards the development of quality curricula. The approach and framework are not prescriptive: when used as a design and development tool, it provided guidance and overview; it helped to remain focus on the different areas; and in the case of the island-wide trajectory at St. Eustatius, it demonstrated encouraging results with regard to the intended outcomes: implementation of improved curricula, as described in chapter 7. When deployed as an analytical tool, it enabled accurate mapping of the situation and provided clear indications and pointers for improvement of the intervention. Based on the small-scale where it was validated up until now, there are indications that the approach and framework are also practical and expected to be effective. The findings from the cases studies of Uganda and St. Eustatius indicate that through capacity strengthening the development (and on St. Eustatius also the implementation) of quality curricula could be realised. However, related to the actual framework practicality, it should be noted that so far, only the researcher has worked with the framework in practice, see also section 10.5.

Comprehensive framework application versus reality

This research identified and demonstrated the need to apply the SCCD framework as much as possible as an interconnected and coherent unity, and also underlined that it is not linear. When and how heuristics could best be considered depends on the context and the phase the intervention is in, which calls for certain competencies and experience of change-supporting agents. Some heuristics require one-time application; others are of a more on-going character. Taking into account that the strength of the approach lies in its

comprehensive and systemic nature, random selection of components should be prevented. The starting point should be to consider and apply the framework as comprehensively as possible. In that sense, the metaphor to think of the framework preferably as a meal instead of a menu remains into effect. However, at the same time questions were raised whether the entire framework can, or must be fully observed at all times. The research indicates that this is not the case. As specified in chapter 5, the included heuristics should be considered as conceptual rather than procedural guidelines. The design of the framework is principle-based, which implies that principles rather than sequence are used to determine composition, depth and relationships among design and development activities (Tessmer & Wedman, 1990).

Framework application may be different depending on the context and aims of an intervention. A two-year curriculum intervention is likely to provide more space for in-depth framework application compared to facilitation of a two-week curriculum course. In addition, how much influence in framework application could be exerted also depends on the point of entry of the change-supporting agent in an intervention; on the level of involvement and commitment of partners; and on project parameters.

Change-supporting agent's point of entry

The point where change-supporting agents enter a curriculum reform project usually does not cover the full cycle of core activities for curriculum development – analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation – see fig. 1.2 (Thijs & van den Akker, 2009). Involvement of curricular expertise is often mainly limited to the development stage: supporting agents are usually called in after a project has been drawn up at the stage when the developments actually start, and mostly see their contracts end at the time when the curriculum materials are delivered and handed over. Limited involvement of curriculum expertise has consequences for the approach and the fullest possible framework application, and may at least partially explain the limited, or alternative application of heuristics in some, or several parts of the framework. Staff involved in overall project analysis and design is often not specialised in curriculum matters, as was the case in almost all studied interventions. Lack of involvement of curriculum expertise in the early core activities of curriculum reform may explain how curricular proposals could end up in project plans, including associated timeframes that are unfeasible. In addition, the implementation and evaluation phases are often not sufficiently supported. Curricular capacity that may have been strengthened during previous stages quite likely needs further input and consolidation during the implementation phase. Insufficient input at this stage at worst undermines or frustrates the capacity development trajectory and its

yields, because newly acquired capacities are not yet consolidated, and possible additional capacity cannot be strengthened. The importance of on-going support beyond training, or beyond the delivery of the developed curricular materials is repeatedly underlined in the literature related to professional development (see e.g. Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Guskey, 2000; Joyce & Showers, 2002). For that reason, input should ideally be provided during all stages of curriculum reform for optimal efficiency and thus for enhanced sustainability.

Framework as a shared responsibility

Although the framework was initially developed as a conceptual tool for change-supporting agents, its comprehensive perspective actually implies acknowledgement of the framework and its application to be a shared responsibility of all partners involved. Involvement and commitment of partners could be promoted and encouraged through the collaborative, comprehensive approach itself, but quite likely also by deliberate promotion of framework application as a joined effort. Deploying the framework as a collaborative instrument between partners, and, if possible with other influential stakeholders at (policy) decision-making levels, may increase awareness of the importance of the approach and may help to mitigate frequently experienced pressure as described in the case study chapters, such as the lack of involvement of relevant stakeholders. However, it is also recognised that due to existing power differentials and factors of political and cultural nature, reality is often less clear-cut than desired.

Project parameters

The cross-case analysis (chapter 9) drew attention to the fact that all interventions were bound to project parameters that, to a large extent, determine the available space for framework application. Such parameters include project duration, accountability, funding arrangements and conditionality, which are often closely related to each other. Although the framework does to a large extent take such parameters into account, direct influence by change-supporting agents on project parameters is often limited, in particular with regard to funding arrangements. This requires increased awareness and understanding from e.g. funders, but also from local authorities related to the influence that parameters may have on the course of an intervention. Cognizance of framework content may help to raise this awareness, and could possibly also lead to an increase of that space.

Layers of necessity

Taking the above-mentioned factors into consideration, it could be helpful to build in a so-called 'good-enough-for-now' indicator that can be adjusted to the exigencies of time and resources, following the layers-of-necessity model (Tessmer & Wedman, 1990). Within this model, different layers could possibly be matched to the necessities of a project depending on available time and resources, and thus imply possibilities for alternatives in case the full framework cannot be followed. Ideally, this should be discussed and determined with partners. However, it should be noted again that obviously there are limitations: too severe time and resource constraints will make capacity development more difficult, if not impossible.

Stratification of interventions

The approach and SCCD framework were implemented during different types of interventions that took place at various levels, with different purposes. Curriculum development processes are often characterised by a certain stratification that usually becomes more complex as the scope of an intervention increases: interventions at meso level may appear more manageable compared to interventions at macro level, because reforms at national level are often more far-reaching and thus more complex compared to smaller-scale interventions. This raises the question to what extent the scope of an intervention influences the overall applicability of the framework. The outcomes of the case studies provided ground to assume that the framework is applicable to different kinds of curriculum development interventions, irrespective of their scope. However, especially interventions at national level require a thorough systemic overview of this stratification, to avoid the possible pitfall of assuming that when curricular capacity development at macro level is strengthened, capacity strengthening at lower levels will automatically sort itself out. This could be addressed by carrying out a thorough curriculum analysis, and carefully taking into account the heuristics as stated under the first pillar. Collaborative activities centred around the curriculum spider's web and systems web could be supportive for the identification of relevant stakeholders at all levels, and to determine when and how they should be included. This may prevent capacity development to start from scratch again once an intervention goes from one stage to the next, also coined as the concentric ownership model (Berkvens, 2012).

10.5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.5.1 Final considerations

Validated approach including framework

This research has provided a validated approach, including a conceptual framework that could positively contribute to the overall sustainability of curriculum development by placing curricular capacity development and participation at centre stage. The findings of the trajectory on St. Eustatius indicated that the adopted approach enabled capacity strengthening, through which quality curriculum materials could be developed and implemented. To a certain extent, this also applied to the Uganda case study. Although the quality of the developed Ugandan curriculum was not assessed in-depth for this study, the iterative way of curriculum development in this intervention, including on-going formative evaluation and consultation pointed towards contextualised, relevant and usable curriculum products. But although these two interventions provided indications that capacity strengthening has led to the development of improved curricula, for more robust statements related to the actual practicality and effectiveness of the framework additional research is required.

Competencies of change-supporting agents

The research pointed out that a comprehensive, systemic curriculum perspective calls for a set of specific competencies of change-supporting agents. In addition to sound curriculum knowledge, this includes being culturally sensitive, diplomatic, and having good interpersonal skills. It is also essential to be aware of the different roles a supporting agent could take on. Agents should adopt the most suitable role for the different activities, in line with the context, in order to properly support partners in such capacity development endeavours. In this light, the curricular capacity development disc (see fig. 5.2) turned out to be a helpful tool to determine the type of relevant activities and appropriate roles, and proved to be useful to remain focus in this area.

During the course of the research, the SCCD framework has been a regular point of discussion with other curriculum experts, but it has not been utilised in practice by others yet. Although up to this point the framework has only been used by the researcher, it is plausible that other experienced curriculum experts will be able to work with it, provided that they have sufficient curriculum expertise; are preferably experienced working in international contexts; are familiar with the underlying theory of the framework, but also that they endorse this theory by being willing and able to work in the proposed collaborative and participatory manner. In order to increase the framework's usability for less experienced curriculum experts, future research should focus on the development of a

framework manual, possibly through activities as described in chapter 5, such as training, workshops, or on the job coaching that could assist in framework application.

Because of the extensive character of the framework, it was not always easy to keep full overview of framework implementation, which – as also discussed in section 10.4 - is likely to become gradually more complex once the scope of the intervention increases. In order to increase the framework's overall applicability, it may be useful to further develop a virtual version of the framework that could serve as a roadmap and manual. This virtual version should include the exact same components but could be presented in a more interactive way: visualised as a network of nodes that iteratively leads users through the intervention and draws attention to particular crossroads and specific crucial activities that should be carried out by means of asking (recurring) questions and the provision of reminders. A first prototype of a virtual framework version is developed and tested on a small-scale with encouraging results. It is assumed that after further development, such an interactive version could be a useful supportive addition during all stages of an intervention and would be particularly suitable when the framework is deployed as a design and development tool.

Framework limitations

Working with the framework in different contexts pointed at some complexities and limitations, and it should have become clear that the framework is not considered to be a magic bullet that is easy to apply. The case study analysis learned that none of the interventions met all the necessary conditions, which ensured that the framework was nowhere fully applied. The research also showed that the most vulnerable parts of the interventions under scrutiny mainly related to local leadership and ownership as defined in the third pillar, and linked to that to strategic thinking and action in the fifth pillar of the framework. The formulated statements per pillar specify preconditions that are essential for systemic curriculum development interventions, such as strong partnerships, the necessity of local leadership and ownership, and readiness for change. One of the most essential preconditions for sustainability remains this local commitment and the need for at least approval from decision-making levels. Even if an intervention delivers a quality curriculum through successful curricular capacity development, its sustainability is nevertheless in serious jeopardy in case it is not allowed to be implemented. The necessity of such preconditions marks the limitations of the framework. Without sufficient leadership, involvement and cooperation at decision-making level, it may still be possible to collaboratively develop with local partners at lower levels, but it could considerably reduce prospects of sustainability.

Application of the approach beyond the international education development context

Although this study focused specifically on systemic collaborative curriculum development in international development, and thus mainly included developing countries, the need for a systemic collaborative design approach exceeds the international development context only and may be relevant to other contexts as well. For example, several Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe (CIDREE) yearbooks (see e.g. Kuiper & Berkvens, 2013; Nyhamn & Hopfenbeck, 2014) show that also in European countries there is a need for a more sustainable approach. Countries like Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands apply collaborative approaches with mixed experiences and outcomes. Other countries that are less familiar with collaborative curriculum development approaches have also commenced involving a multiplicity of education stakeholders. Due the general theme the framework addresses, it is plausible that it may supersede curriculum development within the context of international development cooperation and could possibly also be used beyond. Further research should determine to what extent the framework might also be applicable to other contexts.

This research showed how adoption of a more sustainable approach to curriculum development, where strengthening capacity is considered to be a precondition for the development of quality curriculum materials, could lead to more successful and sustainable outputs. The corresponding SCCD framework is, as its name suggests, specifically designed for curriculum development interventions. In order to further increase the actual practicality and effectiveness of the framework, more research with framework application is recommended. In addition, although the framework is designed from the viewpoint of curricular capacity development, there are indications that the framework could still be relevant, practical and effective if the curriculum content is replaced with a different type of subject matter characterised by an interrelated focus on capacity development within the international development sector. It would be interesting to further investigate to what extent the framework could also be used for capacity development interventions in other sectors, such as for example health or community development.

10.5.2 Recommendations

Application of the approach and the SCCD framework appears to enable and support sustainable curriculum development and serves as the primary recommendation by itself for change-supporting agents, but also for partners, governments and organisations involved in curriculum development interventions. In addition, the research raised a number of supplementary

recommendations that are provided below, broken down into three categories: recommendations for change-supporting agents; for organisations involved in curricular capacity development; and for (national/local) governments and (school) management.

For change-supporting agents intending to work with the framework it is recommended to:

- Consider the framework as a comprehensive guiding and evaluation tool, and use it in the most interconnected way possible. Be aware that application is not linear. When and how a specific heuristic should best be taken on depends on the specific context, the point of entry in a trajectory, and the specific phase the intervention is in. Some heuristics require implementation at a certain stage, while others apply on a more on-going basis.
- Promote and encourage utilisation of the framework as a shared responsibility for all involved partners.
- Be aware of the various supportive roles that may apply to different activities and different levels of capacity. Consider which activity matches best with what role in relation to capacity development.
- Create an awareness of the point of entry of the change-supporting agent and ensure a certain level of clarity regarding aims and objectives, roles, responsibilities and tasks of all partners.

For organisations involved in education and curriculum reform interventions that focus on capacity development (including NGOs; civil society organisations; funding bodies), it is recommended to:

- Acknowledge that change processes and capacity development take time. Allow sufficient time for learning, for shaping and for carrying out the intervention including its embedded activities in the proposed collaborative way, and adapt project requirements accordingly and compatibly.
- Include curricular expertise during all stages of the process (analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation) in order to avoid unrealistic and unfeasible proposals, and to increase learning and levels of capacity, including consolidation of newly acquired capacities.
- Acknowledge that comprehensive curriculum development touches upon different areas within the education sector and requires

involvement of a broader group of stakeholders. Involve them accordingly to increase ownership and broad-based support.

- Acknowledge that the outcomes of capacity development trajectories cannot be fully predicted in advance. Adopt contextualised strategies and avoid blueprints and straightjackets.
- Build in sufficient flexibility to allow for adjustments and refinement of project strategies and plans if circumstances so dictate.

For (national/local) governments and (school) management involved in education and curriculum reform interventions:

- Acknowledge the important role governments play related to education and curriculum reform programmes and projects. Overt commitment and active involvement are indispensable.
- Acknowledge that systemic curriculum development touches upon different areas within the education sector and could require involvement from several ministerial departments and affiliates
- Provide ample leadership, coordination and communication, and promote cooperation between the different involved departments.

It is anticipated that the framework could be used by change-supporting agents and their partners as a guiding tool that assists them in designing, developing and/or optimising curriculum development interventions, and will contribute to increased sustainability of output and outcomes, leading to enhancement of education.

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Nederlandse samenvatting

Inleiding

Curriculumontwikkeling is weer terug op de internationale onderwijsagenda. Wereldwijd is een toenemende vraag waarneembaar naar onderwijsprojecten met een curriculumcomponent, al dan niet uitgevoerd onder de vlag van internationale samenwerking. Zulke projecten staan doorgaans in het teken van internationale afspraken die gemaakt zijn met betrekking tot de toegankelijkheid en de kwaliteit van onderwijs. Hoewel er veel vooruitgang is geboekt op het gebied van toegankelijkheid, zijn andere onderwijsdoelen en vooral de kwalitatieve component nog niet overal behaald. De verwachting is dat dit op korte termijn ook niet zal gebeuren. Er blijken grote discrepanties te bestaan tussen internationaal geformuleerde idealen en de realiteit waar veel landen mee te maken hebben. De verbetering van de kwaliteit van het onderwijs staat daarom de komende jaren prominent op de agenda: het vierde doel van de mondiaal onderschreven en leidende *Sustainable Development Goals* (UNDP, 2015) legt nadruk op het versterken van de onderwijskwaliteit. Echter, in de praktijk blijkt dat de duurzaamheid van onderwijsontwikkeling te wensen over laat. Uiteenlopende bronnen geven aan dat dit mede wordt veroorzaakt door gebrekkige lokale capaciteitsopbouw, met als gevolg dat onderwijshervormingen en ontwikkeling van curricula onvoldoende passen bij de context waarvoor ze bedoeld zijn en de ontwikkeling geen optimaal vervolg krijgt in de periode na afloop van het project.

Het nationaal expertisecentrum leerplanontwikkeling in Nederland (SLO) heeft ruime ervaring met het ondersteunen van curriculumontwikkelingsprojecten in het buitenland, altijd op verzoek van de betreffende landen. De ervaring leert echter dat ook de uitkomsten van deze trajecten vaak minder sterk zijn dan beoogd, en uiteindelijk onvoldoende bijdragen aan duurzame verbetering van kwaliteit van onderwijs. In veel gevallen lijkt dit veroorzaakt te worden door een te enge benadering van curriculumontwikkeling die vooral gericht lijkt op ontwikkelen van syllabi met doelen en inhoud; door een sterke neiging tot het vinden van snelle oplossingen en resultaten; en door het in onvoldoende mate betrekken van de juiste stakeholders bij het proces. Interventies zijn door allerlei beperkingen vaak eenzijdig gericht op de curriculumhervorming zelf, met onvoldoende aandacht voor curriculaire capaciteitsversterking van partners waarmee gewerkt wordt.

De Nationale UNESCO Commissie voelt zich sterk betrokken bij het verbeteren van onderwijs en onderkent daarbij het belang van het ontwikkelen van kwalitatief hoogwaardige curricula. Vanuit dat vertrekpunt is het hier beschreven onderzoek

geïnitieerd. Om curriculum en curriculumontwikkeling een prominentere rol te laten spelen bij onderwijshervormingen zijn twee zaken van belang. Ten eerste vereist het dat curriculumontwikkeling vanuit een breder perspectief wordt aangevlogen. Dit betekent naast het ontwikkelen van bijvoorbeeld syllabi ook aandacht voor de rol van leraren, de context en samenhang binnen het gehele onderwijssysteem. Ten tweede is het van belang dat de lokale curriculaire capaciteit versterkt wordt, zodat naast korte termijnoplossingen het land ook op langere termijn juiste curriculaire keuzes kan maken die aansluiten bij de betreffende context. De bestaande curriculumliteratuur geeft voldoende inzicht in en reden tot een breder perspectief op curriculumontwikkeling. Het tweede punt – optimalisatie van curriculumontwikkelingsinterventies waarbij curriculaire capaciteitsversterking centraal staat – vormt de kern van dit onderzoek.

Doel van het onderzoek en onderzoeksvraag

Het hier beschreven onderzoek richt zich op het ontwikkelen van een integrale curriculum-ontwikkelingsaanpak waarbij de lokale capaciteitsopbouw centraal staat en die bijdraagt aan het versterken van de duurzaamheid van curriculumontwikkeling. Onderzocht is welke principes ten grondslag liggen aan een dergelijke aanpak, en hoe de aanpak nader geoperationaliseerd kan worden. De onderzoeksvraag die in deze studie centraal stond luidt als volgt:

Wat zijn kenmerken van een duurzame curriculumontwikkelingsaanpak die curriculaire capaciteits-versterking van lokale partners centraal stelt en die toepasbaar is binnen de context van internationale ontwikkelingssamenwerking?

Het onderzoek is onderverdeeld in twee fasen met aparte deelvragen:

Fase 1: Analyse, ontwerp en ontwikkeling

Welke ontwerpprincipes voor de beoogde aanpak kunnen uit de theorie en de praktijk worden afgeleid, en hoe kan deze aanpak vorm krijgen in een conceptueel raamwerk dat kan dienen als richtinggevend instrument voor curriculumexperts die dergelijke interventies ondersteunen?

Fase 2: implementatie en evaluatie

Hoe bruikbaar en doelmatig zijn de ontwikkelde aanpak en het raamwerk voor verschillende soorten curriculaire capaciteitsversterkingsinterventies binnen de context van internationale ontwikkelingssamenwerking, en wat zijn de implicaties die de toepassing van deze aanpak met zich meebrengt?

De uitkomsten van dit onderzoek hebben geleid tot een gevalideerde aanpak inclusief conceptueel raamwerk - *the framework for systemic*

collaborative curriculum development - dat zowel gebruikt kan worden bij zowel het ontwerpen en uitvoeren als het analyseren en evalueren van curriculumontwikkelingsinterventies.

Onderzoeksopzet

Om antwoord te kunnen geven op de onderzoeksvraag is gekozen voor een ontwerponderzoeks-benadering. Deze benadering heeft een tweeledig doel: (i) op onderzoek gebaseerde oplossingen ontwikkelen als mogelijk antwoord op complexe problemen, en (ii) een bijdrage leveren aan de kennisbasis.

De eerste fase bestond uit een verkenning van de literatuur en de praktijk. De literatuurstudie richtte zich op een exploratie van de ontwikkelingen binnen de sector van internationale ontwikkelingssamenwerking tussen 1945 tot 2015, en op het concept van capaciteitsversterking. Dit heeft inzichten opgeleverd op onder andere het belang van een sterke nadruk op capaciteitsversterking en aanbevelingen voor duurzame ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Deze inzichten vormden een eerste basis voor de beoogde aanpak en een eerste prototype van het raamwerk voor systemische en participatieve curriculumontwikkeling. Vervolgens is de focus verlegd van de theorie naar de specifieke onderwijs- en curriculumontwikkelingspraktijk, door het uitvoeren van interviews met experts van relevante organisaties, en bestudering van een aantal recente curriculumontwikkelingsinterventies. Op grond van deze uitkomsten zijn de principes en aanbevelingen uit de literatuurverkenning verder aangevuld en is het tweede prototype van het raamwerk ontwikkeld.

Tijdens de tweede onderzoeksfase zijn de aanpak en het raamwerk beproefd in drie gevalsstudies: een project ter bevordering van onderwijs voor meisjes in Mozambique (1); het transitieprogramma (2a) en curriculumontwikkeling in het voortgezet onderwijs (2b) op St. Eustatius; en de curriculum- en assessmenthervorming van de onderbouw voortgezet onderwijs in Oeganda (3). In deze gevalsstudies zijn de praktische relevantie en consistentie, en de mate van bruikbaarheid en mogelijke effectiviteit van de aanpak en het raamwerk verder onderzocht.

Resultaten

Het *framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development* vormt een uitwerking van de voorgestelde aanpak en is gebaseerd op ontwerpprincipes ten aanzien van capaciteitsniveaus, samenwerking op basis van dialoog, eigenaarschap & harmonisatie, samenwerkend leren en strategisch denken & handelen. De ontwerpprincipes zijn gericht op versterking van lokale capaciteit, en vormen samen het paradigma achter de benadering en het raamwerk. Elk

ontwerpprincipe is vervat in een pilaar, en verder uitgewerkt in de vorm van een aantal heuristieken. De aanpak met het raamwerk zijn middels drie gevalstudies beproefd op twee functies: als praktisch instrument dat sturing en houvast biedt bij het ontwerpen en uitvoeren van curriculumontwikkelingsinterventies, en als evaluatief instrument om lopende of afgeronde interventies te analyseren of te evalueren.

Onderwijs voor meisjes – Mozambique (1)

Dit project had als doel meer meisjes onderwijs te laten volgen, en te werken aan het opheffen van barrières die hen daarbij de weg staan. Eén daarvan is het op landelijk niveau vastgestelde curriculum, en daarmee samenhangend de manier van lesgeven. De casus richtte zich vooral op de curriculumcomponent van het project dat als doel had om samen met lokale onderwijspartners het bestaande curriculum dusdanig aan te passen dat deze meisjes en jongens gelijke kansen op onderwijs biedt. Het raamwerk zou door de onderzoeker en tevens curriculumadviseur worden ingezet als ontwerp- en ontwikkelinstrument om het curriculumwerk vorm te geven. In de praktijk bleek dit niet goed mogelijk: de discrepantie tussen het beoogde projectontwerp en de manier waarop het uiteindelijk in de praktijk werd uitgevoerd bleek te groot. In plaats daarvan is het raamwerk ingezet als instrument om te analyseren hoe de interventie versterkt zou kunnen worden. De betrokkenheid bij dit project omvatte de periode van juli – december 2014. Voor het project leidde deze analyse tot de volgende bevindingen: het project is vanwege een opeenstapeling van factoren en de wijze van financiering - *payments by results* - onder grote druk komen te staan. De analyse laat zien dat deze druk over de gehele linie leidde tot een gebrek aan mogelijkheden voor het versterken van de curriculaire capaciteit. Belangrijke stakeholders waren niet betrokken, wat het moeilijk maakte om partnerschappen op te bouwen en samen te werken (pilaar 2). Dit had direct gevolgen voor het eigenaarschap (pilaar 3), en het samenwerkend leren (pilaar 4). Deze situatie kan het best omschreven worden als een domino-effect van falende implementatie. Uiteindelijk werden de tussentijdse projectuitkomsten als dusdanig teleurstellend beschouwd dat begin 2015 het besluit werd genomen om het gehele project te herzien. Geconcludeerd kan worden dat het raamwerk uiteindelijk een relevant en bruikbaar instrument bleek om interventie te analyseren, om obstakels te identificeren die capaciteitsversterking in de weg stonden, en om aanbevelingen te doen die het proces zouden kunnen optimaliseren. De analyse wijst ook op een sterke onderlinge connectie en samenhang van de pilaren binnen het raamwerk, wat zichtbaar werd door het hierboven beschreven domino-effect.

De transitie (2a), en curriculumontwikkeling in het voortgezet onderwijs (2b) – St. Eustatius

Binnen de gevalsstudie op dit Caribische eiland vonden gelijktijdig twee interventies plaats: een eiland-brede transitie (2a), en de ontwikkeling van het schoolcurriculum voor de (enige) school voor voortgezet onderwijs (2b). De transitie stond geheel in het teken van de overgang naar een andere instructietaal: van Nederlands naar Engels. Samen met ontwikkelteams bestaande uit leraren uit alle lagen van het onderwijs en ondersteund door SLO zijn curriculummaterialen ontwikkeld, waarbij de nadruk lag op curriculaire capaciteitsversterking van de betrokken leraren. Dit hield in dat het project zo veel mogelijk kon worden vormgegeven en uitgevoerd aan de hand van het raamwerk. De betrokkenheid bij dit project omvatte de periode van januari 2015 tot juni 2016. De uitkomsten tot na de eerste zes maanden van het valideringsproces tot juni 2016 laten een positief beeld zien. Er zijn aanwijzingen dat de capaciteit van de betrokken leraren als gevolg van dit traject is versterkt. De gegevens laten zien dat de ontwikkelde curriculumproducten grotendeels als relevant, consistent en praktisch werden ervaren, en mogelijk ook effectief zouden kunnen zijn. Het raamwerk bleek een relevant, consistent en bruikbaar instrument in handen van de onderzoeker, doordat veel maar helaas niet alle heuristieken voldoende in acht konden worden genomen. Dit is terug te voeren op een aantal beperkende omstandigheden, die vooral terug te leiden zijn tot de hoge tijdsdruk.

De tweede interventie betrof de ontwikkeling van het curriculum op de school voor voortgezet onderwijs op het eiland. Bij de start van deze ontwikkelingen in 2014 was het raamwerk nog niet ontwikkeld maar de voor deze interventie gekozen participatieve aanpak kende een sterke overeenkomst met de onderliggende principes. Dat maakte het raamwerk tevens geschikt als instrument om de interventie mee te analyseren en aanbevelingen te doen voor optimalisatie van het ontwikkelingsproces. De analyse op de middelbare school laat een ander beeld zien dan bij de transitie. Vanwege het ontbreken van een aantal randvoorwaarden en een daarbij behorende disbalans die door het raamwerk werd blootgelegd waren de uitkomsten niet zo veelbelovend als gehoopt. Het gehele proces verliep moeizaam vanwege een instabiele schoolomgeving, gekenmerkt door een relatief hoog personeelsverloop, onvoldoende lokaal leiderschap en eigenaarschap met betrekking tot het curriculumwerk (pilaar 3), en onvoldoende communicatie binnen en over het traject (pilaar 5). Daarnaast bleek een deel van het team tamelijk onafhankelijk van elkaar en van het management te opereren, wat leidde tot een situatie waar individualisme voor een groot gedeelte werd verkozen boven teamwork, en wat het samenwerkend leren sterk bemoeilijkte (pilaar 4). De onderzoeksgegevens demonstreren dat

een groot deel van de leraren het nut of de noodzaak van een schoolcurriculum niet inzag, en vond dat ontwikkeling hiervan min of meer was opgedrongen door externe partijen zoals de inspectie en SLO. Deze bevindingen hebben het ontwikkeltraject negatief beïnvloed. Het blijft vooralsnog onduidelijk of het deels ontwikkelde maar zeker nog niet afgeronde schoolcurriculum blijvend zal worden gebruikt en verder zal worden uitgewerkt of niet. Het raamwerk bleek ook in dit geval een relevant, consistent en praktisch instrument om de interventie en de complexiteit in kaart te brengen, en voor het doen van aanbevelingen ter optimalisatie.

Curriculum en assessment hervorming voor de onderbouw voortgezet onderwijs – Oeganda (3)

De derde casus betrof het curriculum en assessment hervormingsprogramma voor de onderbouw van het voortgezet onderwijs in Oeganda, CURASSE. Het betreffende curriculum werd als te elitair en te overladen ervaren, gekenmerkt door een te sterke focus op vakinhoud ten koste van competenties en vaardigheden, en werd onderwezen op een inefficiënte manier. Werkgroepen bestaande uit experts van verschillende onderwijsdepartementen hebben het nieuwe curriculum ontwikkeld, ondersteund door internationale consultants. Hierbij is sterk ingezet op versterking van lokale capaciteit, zoals het paradigma achter de benadering en het raamwerk voorschrijft. Daarom bleek het een goede mogelijkheid om de bruikbaarheid van het raamwerk als analyse-instrument verder te onderzoeken, in dit geval een interventie die is uitgevoerd zonder verdere betrokkenheid van de onderzoeker. De uitkomsten laten zien dat de gekozen projectaanpak bevorderlijk was voor die capaciteitsversterking en tamelijk succesvol was op dat gebied. Maar een significante disbalans in de pilaren 3 en 5 zorgden er op het moment van onderzoek (juni 2016) voor dat landelijk implementatie van het nieuwe curriculum onder grote druk is komen te staan. Het doel van de interventie was om samen met een brede vertegenwoordiging vanuit het onderwijsveld het nieuwe curriculum te ontwikkelen. De praktijk wees echter uit dat een deel van deze stakeholders niet in voldoende mate betrokken was en niet geparticipeerd had (pilaar 3). In combinatie met onvoldoende communicatie met en bewustmaking van stakeholders met betrekking tot het nieuwe curriculum (pilaar 5) heeft dit geleid tot onbekendheid met en weerstand tegen het curriculum bij diverse groepen, inclusief het ministerie van onderwijs, en tot grote vertragingen. Vanwege onvoldoende betrokkenheid van het ministerie bij het project, en vanwege onvoldoende coördinatie en samenwerking tussen belangrijke departementen en aanverwante organisaties (pilaren 2 en 3) is het project uiteindelijk stilgevallen. Op het moment van schrijven in juli 2016 was niet duidelijk of en hoe het ministerie verder wilde gaan. De analyse heeft aangetoond waar zich de grootste struikelblokken bevinden,

inclusief de samenhang met andere delen uit het raamwerk. De resultaten laten zien dat de curriculaire capaciteit als gevolg van deze aanpak lijkt te zijn versterkt, maar ook dat curriculumimplementatie ernstig gehinderd is door onvoldoende realisatie van andere delen van het raamwerk, wat grotendeels terug te voeren is op het gebrek aan betrokkenheid van belangrijke stakeholders. Ongeacht de achterliggende redenen hiervoor lijkt het de theorie te ondersteunen dat curriculumontwikkelingstrajecten relatief eenvoudig tot stilstand kunnen komen wanneer ze niet voldoende systemisch zijn opgezet en ingebed, zoals voorgesteld in het raamwerk. Een te eenzijdige focus op alleen de ontwikkeling van het curriculum zet onvoldoende zoden aan de dijk. Ook in deze casus bleek het raamwerk een relevant, consistent en praktisch instrument in de handen van de ontwikkelaar, dat behulpzaam was bij het binnen een kort tijdsbestek in kaart brengen van de kwaliteit van interventie; bij het identificeren van knelpunten en het geven van aanbevelingen voor verbetering.

De uitkomsten van de gevalsstudies gaven aanleiding om het raamwerk op een aantal punten aan te scherpen. De volgorde van sommige heuristieken is aangepast omdat in een aantal gevallen een heuristiek voorwaardelijk bleek voor een andere. Ten tweede is er een heuristiek toegevoegd onder de vijfde pilaar, om het belang van curriculaire ondersteuning tijdens opeenvolgende projectfasen te benadrukken. Ten derde is er een aanvullende versie van het raamwerk ontwikkeld. Het tweedimensionale prototype van het raamwerk zoals gepresenteerd aan het einde van de eerste fase (figuur 5.1) en de gevalideerde versie aan het einde van de tweede fase (figuur 10.1) is praktisch en werkbaar gebleken, maar geeft de achterliggende curriculumtheorie onvoldoende weer. De aanvullende, driedimensionale raamwerkversie (figuur 10.2) doet dit wel door middel van visuele integratie van de curriculumontwikkelings- en capaciteitsversterkingstheorie waarop het raamwerk is gestoeld.

Conclusies

Het onderzoek heeft een benadering opgeleverd die gebaseerd is op een set gevalideerde ontwerpprincipes. Het bijbehorende raamwerk als operationalisering van de benadering vervat deze ontwerpprincipes in vijf pilaren die elk een aantal corresponderende heuristieken bevatten. Dit raamwerk is ontwikkeld als richtinggevend instrument voor curriculumexperts die betrokken zijn bij curriculumontwikkelingsinterventies met een sterke nadruk op capaciteitsversterking, binnen de context van internationale ontwikkelingssamenwerking. Geconcludeerd kan worden dat het raamwerk een relevant, consistent en, in de handen van de onderzoeker, praktisch instrument is voor het ontwerpen en ontwikkelen van curriculuminterventies met een sterke

nadruk op capaciteitsontwikkeling, en voor het analyseren en optimaliseren van dergelijke interventies. Het raamwerk blijkt relevant en consistent en lijkt de relevante componenten te bevatten die nodig of van belang zijn bij het ontwikkelen en uitvoeren van dergelijke interventies.

Het onderzoek suggereert dat hoe samenhangender het raamwerk in het geheel wordt toegepast, des te positiever de uitkomsten zijn. Gezien de relatief kleine schaal waarop het raamwerk en de aanpak zijn gevalideerd, en gezien het feit dat het raamwerk tot nu toe alleen door de onderzoeker is gebruikt, is voorzichtigheid met betrekking tot uitspraken over praktische bruikbaarheid en mogelijke effectiviteit op grotere schaal geboden. Desalniettemin zijn er in het geval van de transitie op St. Eustatius aanwijzingen dat implementatie van de aanpak en het bijbehorende raamwerk positief hebben bijgedragen aan het versterken van de koppeling tussen de curriculaire capaciteitsontwikkeling van leraren en de ontwikkeling van verbeterde curriculumproducten. Ook in het geval van Oeganda zijn er aanwijzingen dat door een dergelijke aanpak het ontwikkelen van kwaliteitscurricula door capaciteitsversterking van betrokken stakeholders mede is mogelijk gemaakt. Verder onderzoek moet uitwijzen in hoeverre de aanpak en het raamwerk daadwerkelijk en zeker ook op langere termijn effectief zijn. Daarnaast wordt aanvullend onderzoek aangeraden om de praktische bruikbaarheid van het instrument voor een omvangrijkere groep gebruikers te vergroten.

De kracht en toegevoegde waarde van het onderzoek liggen in het aanreiken van een synthese van een omvangrijk en soms wat gefragmenteerd kennisgebied. Deze synthese heeft het mogelijk gemaakt om een set ontwerpprincipes te formuleren waarmee een aantal fundamentele, maar tot nu toe vaak opzichzelfstaande inzichten bij elkaar worden gebracht als coherente componenten van een systemische curriculumontwikkelingsaanpak. Deze aanpak heeft vervolgens gestalte gekregen in *the framework for systemic collaborative curriculum development*. Dit raamwerk is bedoeld als praktisch, richtinggevend instrument, en dusdanig ontworpen dat het de aandacht vestigt op de meest essentiële elementen die nodig zijn om de curriculaire capaciteit van betrokkenen te versterken en tegelijkertijd te werken aan het ontwikkelen van hoogwaardige curricula, zonder voorschrijvend te willen zijn. Voorts heeft het onderzoek aangetoond dat het raamwerk niet lineair is, maar dat de heuristieken onder de pilaren juist vanwege het systemische karakter zoveel mogelijk in samenhang dienen te worden toegepast. Dit betekent niet dat alle delen van het raamwerk te allen tijde volledig benut zullen kunnen worden. Dit vloeit meestal voort uit beperkingen binnen een context, zoals beschikbare

tijd en middelen. Het streven zou echter wel moeten zijn om het raamwerk zo volledig mogelijk te implementeren.

Het raamwerk is in eerste instantie ontworpen voor curriculumexperts die betrokken zijn bij curriculumontwikkelingsinterventies in een internationale context en dergelijke trajecten met technische assistentie ondersteunen. Maar gezien het systemische en daardoor veelomvattende karakter van het raamwerk en de vaak beperkte invloedssfeer van externe experts zou toepassing van het raamwerk idealiter als een gedeelde verantwoordelijkheid moeten worden beschouwd. Betrokkenheid en toewijding van partners zouden bevorderd kunnen worden door de voorgestelde participatieve aanpak op zich, maar daarnaast wellicht ook door het stimuleren van toepassing ervan als gezamenlijke activiteit. Hiermee wordt bedoeld dat door gezamenlijke planning van een curriculumtraject, idealiter vanaf de initiële fase, bewustwording van de systemische, participatieve aanpak kan worden gecreëerd. Dit kan het belang ervan onderstrepen en zou tevens kunnen helpen bij het verminderen van veelvoorkomende, in alle gevalsstudies beschreven knelpunten. Tegelijkertijd wordt erkend dat door politieke en culturele factoren de werkelijkheid vaak weerbarstiger is dan gewenst. Diverse randvoorwaarden die zijn geïntegreerd in het raamwerk, zoals veranderbereidheid en betrokkenheid van relevante stakeholders, kunnen moeilijk worden afgedwongen, wat tevens de belangrijkste beperking voor toepassing van de aanpak en het raamwerk markeert.

Dit onderzoek hoopt met de ontwikkelde aanpak en het bijbehorende conceptuele raamwerk een bijdrage te leveren aan het versterken van de duurzaamheid van curriculumontwikkelings-interventies binnen de context van internationale samenwerking. Met de bevindingen en aanbevelingen uit dit onderzoek wordt beoogd een bijdrage te leveren aan de kennisbasis met betrekking tot curriculaire capaciteitsversterking en de curriculumontwikkelingspraktijk. Die bijdrage bestaat uit een gevalideerd conceptueel raamwerk dat door curriculumexperts gebruikt kan worden als richtinggevend instrument bij het ontwerpen, ontwikkelen en analyseren van curriculaire capaciteitsversterkingsinterventies.

Curriculum vitae

Corine Vis was born in 1976 in Alblasserdam, the Netherlands. After finishing secondary school, she studied Tourism, Culture and Communication at the international University of Applied Sciences NHTV in Breda, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in tourism in 1999. From 2003-2005 she studied to become a teacher and a second bachelor's degree in Education was obtained in 2005 at the University of Applied Sciences Inholland, Dordrecht. During her international Development Management master studies, she worked in Cambodia and Suriname as an education and curriculum development advisor. After obtaining the master's degree in 2012 at the Open University in London, she started her doctoral research into optimising curricular capacity development in 2013 at Utrecht University. During her time as a PhD student, she worked as a curriculum adviser for the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) in several contexts worldwide, including Mozambique and St. Eustatius (Dutch Caribbean). Currently, Corine works as a curriculum specialist in the Basic Education Quality and Access (BEQUAL) programme in Laos PDR.

ANNEX 1

Guiding questions expert appraisal – IIEP

■ Philosophy and design

1. According to IIEP, what are the specific design principles for capacity development at the Technical Cooperation/Technical Assistance (TC/TA) level?
2. Are there any design principles that are particularly hard to apply/adopt? If so, which ones? Could you state reasons why? How could they best be dealt with?
3. IIEP specifically focuses on educational planning and management. Through this work with educational managers and planners, does IIEP know if there are any issues in the field of curricular capacity? If so, how does IIEP deal with that? E.g. are trainees being referred to other UNESCO offices and/or partners?
4. What are the main reasons why capacity development projects are less sustainable than envisaged? What could an organisation like SLO, that designs and carries out curricular development courses, do to prevent that from happening?

■ Organisation of activities

5. Who are the main contributors to the capacity development courses that IIEP carries out? Why these?
6. In what way are capacity development activities usually carried out? (For example, through workshops, training, working together with counterparts, online, etc.) Why are these the preferred methods? How effective are these and do you have any suggestions for more effective means?
7. In general, are activities of IIEP supply or demand driven? In both cases, does consultation with stakeholders take place? If so, how? If not, why not?
8. To what extent are activities embedded into overall regional/national capacity development strategies? If so, how well? If not, why not?

■ Evaluation of activities

9. Does IIEP evaluate the educational courses that they carry out? If so, how? What are the main outcomes, and how well are these related to the original design principles? Is there a difference in the level of satisfaction of trainees on the one hand, and IIEP on the other hand? If any, which parts of the courses could be improved?

10. Does IIEP specifically evaluate participants' learning? If so, how? Do participants receive any formal certification afterwards? To what extent does IIEP support trainees after the course is finished?

■ **Possible future activities**

11. How do you envisage a potential partnership between UNESCO, IBE and SLO in relation to the development of a possible curricular capacity development course for Asia?

ANNEX 2

Guiding questions expert appraisal – not for profit organisations

■ Philosophy and design

1. Could you please briefly describe what your organisation does in relation to (curricular) capacity development? Who is the main target group? Who selects the target group? Are activities long or short term?
2. What are the main design principles of your organisation regarding (curricular) capacity development?
3. Are there any of the design principles mentioned in Q2 that are hard/harder to apply or adopt? If so, which ones? Could you think of reasons why? How do you deal with that?

■ Organisation of activities

4. Who are, or should be, the main contributors to (curricular) capacity development? Why these?
5. In what way are (curricular) capacity development activities usually carried out? (For example, through workshops, training, working together with counterparts, online, etc.) Why are these the preferred methods? How effective are these and do you have any suggestions for more effective means?
6. In general, are these activities supply or demand driven? In both cases, does consultation with stakeholders take place? If so, why? And how? If not, why not?
7. To what extent are activities embedded into overall regional/national capacity development strategies? If so, how well? If not, why not?

■ Evaluation of activities

8. Does your organisation evaluate the (curricular) capacity development activities that are carried out? If so, how? What are the main necessary improvements? Are you as satisfied as the customer? If not, why not?
9. Does your organisation evaluate participants' learning? If so, how? What are the outcomes, and how well are these related to the original goals and design principles? (Do participants receive any formal certification afterwards?)

ANNEX 3

Semi-structured interview schedule advisers Mozambique

Girls' education project

1. What is your role in this project?
2. When did the project start? How is the project evolving until now? According to you, are there any factors that facilitate and/or hinder the process?
3. According to you, what is the vision for, or rationale behind this project?

Stakeholders, inclusion and ownership

4. In your opinion, who are the main beneficiaries of this project? To whom do you feel most accountable? Do you feel all relevant stakeholders are included? If not, who is missing?
5. According to you, who leads this project? To what extent is there local ownership? How does it show?

Capacity development and your placement

6. How do you see capacity development? To what extent do you feel the project contributes to capacity development? How does it show? If anything, what should be done differently?
7. To what extent do you feel your work contributes to capacity strengthening of partners/beneficiaries?
8. Are there any issues at the moment that you feel are of importance, which are not yet mentioned?

ANNEX 4

Semi-structured interview schedule implementing partners Mozambique

Girls' education project

1. How did your organisation get involved in this project?
2. When did the project start? How is it evolving until now? According to you, are there any factors that facilitate and/or hinder the process?
3. According to you, what is the vision for, or rationale behind this project?

Stakeholders, inclusion and ownership

4. In your opinion, who are the main beneficiaries of this project? To whom do you feel most accountable? Do you feel all relevant stakeholders are included? If not, who is missing?
5. According to you, who leads this project? To what extent is there local ownership? How does it show?

Capacity development

6. To what extent do you feel the project contributes to capacity development? (of beneficiaries, partners, advisers...). Do you feel local existing capacity is fully used? How does it show?
7. Are there any issues at the moment that you feel are of importance, which are not yet mentioned?

ANNEX 5

General questions curriculum working groups St. Eustatius

Curriculum development Pre-primary (PP)/primary (P)/secondary (S)*

* Please indicate which level you teach

1. According to you, what is curriculum?

2. Do you feel a curriculum is important for your work? Why/why not?

- Thank you for your time -

ANNEX 6

First questionnaire working groups St. Eustatius

Transition from Dutch to English as language of instruction – St. Eustatius

- Where do you teach? Day care
 Primary school
 Secondary school

Introduction

The transition from Dutch to English as the language of instruction at all schools implies an innovation in education, including changes in the curriculum. In order to guarantee a contextualised curriculum that well matches Statia's needs and wishes, teachers from all three levels of the education system will be directly involved in the developments. You are a member of one of the working groups that will develop the continuous learning strands, term overviews and identify relevant teaching and learning resources, and we are interested in your perspective and opinion. Below you find 10 statements that relate to the transition from Dutch to English as language of instruction at Statia. Please tick the box that best fits your opinion. You can specify whether you completely agree; agree, partially agree; or disagree with the statement. You don't have to fill in your name; the data will be processed anonymously.

	Statements	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
1.	It is clear to me what needs to happen during the coming period, in order to start the new school year teaching in English as the language of instruction.				
2.	The transition to English as the language of instruction is an important step that will positively contribute to the improvement of education for all students.				
3.	It is important that teachers are directly involved in the development of the curriculum, because they are well aware of the needs and wishes in education and know what is best in the Statian context.				
4.	There is sufficient curricular expertise present on the island to carry out this transition.				
5.	Curriculum development is part of the duties of teachers.				
6.	The learning strands and the term overviews will make the work for teachers more insightful and will provide them with a clearer overview.				

7.	I see participation in this curriculum development process as an opportunity to further strengthen my professional knowledge and skills.				
8.	Good teaching and learning resources are sufficient to be able to teach.				
9.	I am a member of this working group because I was told to take part.				
	I am a member of this working group because I find it important to directly contribute to the improvement of education on Statia.				
10.	There is sufficient time available to carry out this transition.				

11. Are there any other matters you would like to mention related to the transition, that you feel are important?

Thank you for your cooperation -

ANNEX 7

Questionnaire subject experts St. Eustatius

- What is your role in this trajectory?

- How were the workshops set up? To what extent was that successful? Are you satisfied with the course? Why/why not?

- If any, what factors or circumstances facilitated or hindered these workshops?

- How could the overall ownership and responsibility of the working groups further be increased?

- Thank you -

ANNEX 8

Second questionnaire working groups St. Eustatius

Transition from Dutch to English as language of instruction – St. Eustatius

- Where do you teach? Day care
 Primary school
 Secondary school

Introduction

The transition from Dutch to English as the language of instruction at all schools implies an innovation in education, including changes in the curriculum. In order to guarantee a high-quality, contextualised curriculum that matches Statia’s needs and wishes, teachers from all levels of the education system are directly involved in the developments. You take part in one of the working groups that are developing the continuous learning strands and term overviews, and we are interested in your experiences so far.

Below you find a number of statements and open-ended questions that relate to the curriculum development process. Through this research we try to get a better impression of the equality of the process and products, in order to make adjustments if possible. Please tick the box that best fits your opinion. You can specify whether you completely agree; agree, partially agree; or disagree with the statement. You do not have to fill in your name; the data will be processed anonymously.

	Professional development	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
1.	The workshops in which I have participated so far have been a valuable use of my time				
2.	My first impression regarding the development of learning strands is consistent with the expectations I had in advance				
3.	So far I have a clear overview of the development process				
4.	There is a strong commitment within the working group				
5.	There is sufficient room for my own input				
6.	There is sufficient room to exchange experiences and knowledge within the working group				
7.	The St. Eustatius context is sufficiently taken into account in the development of the learning strands				

	Management & organisation	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
8.	The composition and size of the working group enables us to work efficiently				
9.	The way in which the working groups are being supported strengthens my involvement				
10.	The available time was sufficient to reach the goals that were set at the beginning of the workshop				
11.	To me, it is clear what is expected of me within the development process				
12.	I like the way in which SLO facilitates the workshops				
13.	SLO-experts have extensive knowledge regarding curriculum development in general				
14.	SLO has a clear view on the development process				
15.	SLO-experts are sufficiently skilled in managing the working groups				

Open-ended questions

1. What do you expect to learn during the remainder of the curriculum development process?

2. Are there any factors that currently facilitate or complicate the process? If so, which?

3. According to you, what should be SLO's role within the development process?

4. Are there any other matters related to the transition that you would like to draw to the attention?

Thank you for your kind cooperation –

ANNEX 9

First questionnaire primary education teachers St. Eustatius

Transition St. Eustatius – Evaluation continuous learning strands and term planners

Which group(s) do you teach? Group(s)

Introduction

As from this school year, all primary schools have switched from Dutch to English as the language of instruction. This transition has a direct impact on daily practice in the classroom, in particular for the subjects English, Math and Dutch as a strong foreign language (NVT). Three working groups have worked on the continuous learning strands for all three subjects, and following from that, term planners for the first term were developed. The learning strands reflect the content and targets during the respective school years. The term planners are a practical translation of the learning strands and provide an overview of what content and learning activities are dealt with during a specific term. The aim of the learning strands and the term planners is to provide teachers more structure and overview. Through this questionnaire we would like to learn more about the experiences of teachers who have been working with the learning strands and term planners in practice, and what could possibly be improved. Please find below eight statements and an open-ended question related to working with the learning strands and the term planners.

Please tick the box that best fits your opinion. You can specify whether you completely agree; agree, partially agree; or disagree with the statement. We ask you to answer the statements per subject, as specified below. So for example, it is possible that you agree with a specific statement related to math, but not English. If you do not teach a certain subject you can leave that box blank. Your experiences are important, that is why we kindly ask you to fill in this questionnaire as precise and honest as possible. The information you provide will serve as useful input for the development of the next planners.

Statements

	Statements related to the learning strands <input type="checkbox"/> Please tick this box in case you have not examined the learning strands (yet)	Subject	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
1.	The learning strands contribute to a better structuring of education	English				
		NVT				

2.	The learning strands provide a clear overview of the general targets per school year	English				
		NVT				

	Statements related to the term planners	Subject	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
3.	I use the term planners exactly as they are developed	English				
		Math				
		NVT				

4.	I use the term planners as guidance, but I come up with my own teaching and learning resources/learning activities/theme's, etc.	English				
		Math				
		NVT				

5.	I do not use the term planners at all	English				
		Math				
		NVT				
6.	The term planners make the work for teachers more structured and insightful	English				
		Math				
		NVT				

7.	The design of the term planners is clear and obvious	English				
		Math				
		NVT				

8.	It is clear to me how I can use the planners	English				
		Math				
		NVT				

Open-ended question

Please describe:

- Possible bottlenecks you have experienced while working with the term planners *(Clearly indicate what subject you are referring to)*

- Suggestions for improvements
(Clearly indicate what subject you are referring to)

- On behalf of the colleagues from the working groups: thank you for your time and cooperation-

ANNEX 10

Second questionnaire primary school teachers St. Eustatius

Transition St. Eustatius – Evaluation learning strands and term planners

Which group(s) and subject(s) do you teach

Group(s) Subject(s) English Math NVT

Introduction

As from this school year, all primary schools have switched from Dutch to English as the language of instruction. This transition had a direct impact on daily practice in the classroom, in particular for the subjects English, Math and Dutch as a strong foreign language (NVT). Three working groups have worked on the continuous learning strands and term planners for all three subjects. The aim of the learning strands and the term planners is to provide teachers more structure and overview. Through this questionnaire we would like to learn more about your experiences working with the learning strands and term planners in practice, and what could possibly be improved.

Below you find eight statements related to the learning strands and the term planners. Please tick the box that best fits your opinion. You can specify whether you completely agree; agree, partially agree; disagree with the statement. We ask you to answer the statements per subject, as specified below. So for example, it is possible that you agree with a specific statement related to math, but not English. If you do not teach a certain subject you can leave that box blank. Your experiences are important, that is why we kindly ask you to fill in this questionnaire as precise and honest as possible. The information you provide will serve as useful input for the development of the next planners. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

	Statements related to the learning strands	Subject	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree	Don't know
9.	The learning strands contribute to a better structuring of education	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

10.	The learning strands provide a clear overview of the general targets per school year	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

	Statements related to the term planners	Subject	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree	Don't know
11.	I use the term planners exactly as they are developed	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

12.	I use the term planners as guidance, but I come up with my own teaching and learning resources/learning activities/theme's, etc.	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

13.	I don't use the term planners at all *	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

* If you (partially) agree with this statement, briefly state the reason why you don't use the planner(s):

.....

14.	The term planners make my work easier	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

15.	The design of the term planners is clear and obvious	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

16.	It is clear to me how I can use the planners	English					
		Math					
		NVT					

- Thank you for your time and cooperation -

ANNEX 11

Survey teachers secondary school

From 2014 onwards, you have participated in the development of the school-based curriculum for the GVP. Developing this curriculum formed part of the Education Agenda 2011-2016, and SLO was requested by former management to support this trajectory. The aim of this trajectory was to develop a high quality, contextualised curriculum that matches the context of St. Eustatius. You as teachers have been directly involved in the development of the curriculum materials, including the continuous learning strands and the term planners for your subject suitable to the Dutch system, and to the first year of the CXC programme. Currently, SLO-UNESCO conducts research into optimising curriculum development processes with the aim to increase the sustainability of such trajectories. Therefore, we are interested in your experiences and perspectives related to the curriculum development process at the GVP. Your opinion will enable us to get more insight into the adopted approach, and to make adjustments if needed. Below you find a number of statements and multiple choice questions related to the process of the school-based curriculum development at the GVP. Please tick the box that best matches your opinion. You can specify whether you completely agree; agree, partially agree; or disagree with the statement. You do not have to fill in your name; the data will be processed anonymously. Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

-> Please indicate in what year you have started working at the GVP:

.....

	Statements	Completely agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
1.	As a school, it was necessary to think about education and the curriculum, because until recently there was hardly anything documented.				
2.	The developed curriculum is well aligned with the mission and vision of the GVP				
3.	It was clear to me from the beginning what we were working towards				
4.	It is important that teachers are directly involved in the development of the curriculum, because they know what is best for the Statian context				
5.	I use the term planners that are developed for my subject				
6.	The learning strands have made my work more structured and insightful				
7.	Developing curriculum is a task of teachers				
8.	Participation in this trajectory has strengthened my professional skills and capacity				
9.	A school curriculum as developed now is unnecessary. Textbooks only are sufficient to be able to teach.				
10.	There was sufficient time to develop the curriculum				
11.	There was sufficient support available to teachers to develop the curriculum				
12.	Learning strands do not have any additional value for teachers				
13.	Management actively supports us to further develop and implement the curriculum				
14.	The learning strands and term planners are only developed for external agents				
15.	There was sufficient room for my own input and contribution				
16.	I feel the curriculum is now finished				

Open-ended question:

Are there any specific additional issues you would like to bring related to the curriculum development process at GVP?

ANNEX 12

Semi-structured interview schedule project coordination staff St. Eustatius

The island-wide transition trajectory

1. Why was the transition put in motion?
2. What is your role in this trajectory?
3. How would you describe the process so far? According to you, what factors facilitate and/or hinder the process? How does it show?

Stakeholders and ownership

4. To what extent are schools, school boards, education officials and support agencies involved in the transition? How does it show?

Capacity development

5. According to you, is there sufficient capacity on the island to carry out the transition? How does it show?
6. Are there any other issues related to the transition that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

ANNEX 13

Semi-structured interview schedule principals primary education

The transition

1. Why was the transition put in motion? To what extent do you feel the transition was necessary?
2. What is your role in this trajectory?
3. How have you experienced the process so far? According to you, are there any factors that have facilitated and/or hindered the process? How does it show?

Approach

4. How would you describe the adopted approach for development of the curriculum?
5. To what extent do you feel this approach has contributed to capacity development of teachers involved? How does it show?

Stakeholders and ownership

6. To what extent do you and your school feel involved in the transition? How does it show?
7. Are there any other issues related to the transition that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

ANNEX 14

Semi-structured interview schedule school board members St. Eustatius

The transition

1. Why was the transition put in motion? To what extent do you feel the transition was necessary?
2. What is your role in this trajectory?
3. How have you experienced the process so far? According to you, are there any factors that have facilitated and/or hindered the process? How does it show?

Approach

4. How would you describe the adopted approach for development of the curriculum?
5. To what extent do you feel this approach has contributed to capacity development of teachers involved? How does it show?

Stakeholders and ownership

6. To what extent do you and your school feel involved in the transition? How does it show?
7. Are there any other issues related to the transition that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

ANNEX 15

Semi-structured interview schedule management secondary school St. Eustatius

School-based curriculum development

1. Why was the trajectory of school-based curriculum development put in motion? To what extent do you feel it was necessary?
2. What is your role in this trajectory?
3. How have you experienced the process so far? According to you, are there any factors that have facilitated and/or hindered the process? How does it show?

Capacity development

4. How would you describe the adopted approach for development of the school curriculum?
5. To what extent do you feel this approach has contributed to strengthening curricular capacity of your team? How does it show?

Stakeholders and ownership

6. To what extent do you feel the team owns the developed curriculum? How does it show?
7. Are there any other issues related to the trajectory that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

ANNEX 16

Semi-structured interview schedule teachers secondary school St. Eustatius

School-based curriculum development

1. Why was the trajectory of school-based curriculum development put in motion? To what extent do you feel it was necessary?
2. What is your role in this trajectory?
3. How have you experienced the process so far? According to you, are there any factors that have facilitated and/or hindered the process? How does it show?

Capacity development

4. How would you describe the adopted approach for development of the school curriculum?
5. To what extent do you feel this approach has contributed to your professional capacity development? How does it show?

Stakeholders and ownership

6. Do you use the developed curriculum materials? Why/why not?
7. To what extent do you feel the team owns the developed curriculum? How does it show?
8. Are there any other issues related to the trajectory that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

ANNEX 17

Semi-structured interview schedule external support staff St. Eustatius

School-based curriculum development/transition

1. Why was the trajectory of school-based curriculum development/the transition put in motion? To what extent do you feel it was necessary?
2. What is your role?
3. How have you experienced the process so far? According to you, are there any factors that have facilitated and/or hindered the process? How does it show?

Capacity development

4. How would you describe the adopted approach for development of the (school) curriculum?
5. To what extent do you feel this approach has contributed to capacity development of involved teachers? How does it show?

Stakeholders and ownership

6. To what extent do you feel the schools own the developed curriculum? How does it show?
7. Are there any other issues related to the trajectory that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

ANNEX 18

Focus group discussion points working groups St. Eustatius

Flip chart text:

1. Key learning points

**2. Experiences with this curriculum
development process**

ANNEX 19

Semi-structured interview schedule developers Uganda

CURASSE project

1. According to you, to what extent you feel the reform was necessary?
2. What is your role within CURASSE?
3. How have you experienced the process? What factors have facilitated and/or hindered the process?

Project approach

4. How would you describe the overall approach adopted for this reform?
5. To what extent do you feel this approach contributed to capacity development of stakeholders? How does it show?
6. What is your experience working with the consultants?

Stakeholder inclusion and ownership

7. With whom was the curriculum developed? Were the right stakeholders included during the development process? If not, who were missing?
8. To what extent do you feel the new curriculum is now owned by relevant stakeholders? How does it show?
9. Are there any other issues related to the project that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

ANNEX 20

Semi structured interview schedule consultants/ministry staff/funder Uganda

CURASSE project

1. According to you, to what extent you feel the reform was necessary?
2. What is your role within CURASSE?
3. How have you experienced the process? What factors have facilitated and/or hindered the process?

Project approach

4. How would you describe the overall approach adopted for this reform?
5. To what extent do you feel this approach contributed to capacity development of stakeholders? How does it show?

Stakeholder inclusion and ownership

6. With whom was the curriculum developed? Were the right stakeholders included during the development process? If not, who were missing?
7. To what extent do you feel the new curriculum is now owned by relevant stakeholders? How does it show?
8. Are there any other issues related to the project that you feel are of importance, which have not yet been mentioned?

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