

**CAPACITY FOR UNIVERSAL BASIC
EDUCATION (CUBE)**

**Review of Community Level Education
Development Planning (CLEDEP)**

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Acronyms

APG	Action Planning Group (CLEDEP)
CBR	Community Based Research
CLEDEP	Community Level Education Development Planning
CUBE	Capacity for Universal Basic Education
DD	Deputy Director
DfID	Department for International Development
FGoN	Federal Government of Nigeria
JSS	Junior Secondary School
LGA	Local Government Authority
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
LIE	Local Inspector of Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OPR	Output to Purpose Review
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RC	Research Consultant
RTL	Regional Team Leader
SBMC	School-Based Management Committee
SMC	School Management Committee (generic)
SMoE	State Ministry of Education
SPEB	State Primary Education Board
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board (formerly SPEB)
UBEP	Universal Basic Education Project
WB	World Bank

1. Executive summary

The consultant conducted a review of the Community Level Education Development Planning (CLEDEP) initiative of the Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) project between September and November 2005.

The purpose of the evaluation was to document the CBR/CLEDEP process and to identify its strengths and weaknesses with a view to incorporating lessons learned in future similar initiatives. Since CBR and CLEDEP is still under implementation and at an early stage in many states, conclusions are tentative at this stage.

In summary, the evaluation suggests that the key strengths of the CBR-CLEDEP process are: its enthusiastic acceptance by school and community members; its clear and logical structure; its potential for broadening participation in school decision-making and its potential for encouraging the articulation of community-level concerns and priorities around education.

There were, however, weaknesses in relation to the extent to which CBR-CLEDEP at the school – community level is well integrated with other planning processes at LGEA, state and federal level. A key contextual problem is the poor physical infrastructure in Nigerian schools. The IDA Self Help project has limited resources to tackle it and this has constrained the implementation of CLEDEP, since the majority of schools have selected infrastructure projects. This is compounded by a critical lack of focus on quality improvement in the education system as a whole.

Key lessons learned are:

- The need for simultaneous quality and infrastructure development;
- Systematic and equitable investment in school infrastructure is key;
- Accessible supporting materials for schools and communities are necessary;
- A strong and explicit focus on gender mainstreaming must be there in order to ensure women's participation;
- Integrated planning and monitoring at all levels is essential: LGA, state and federal levels as well as community/school;
- Improved monitoring, focusing on impact as well as process, is important in order to gauge the impact of CLEDEP and CBR.
- Better harmonisation between CLEDEP and Self Help would have assisted schools and communities in implementing their projects;
- Understandings of community participation tend to focus narrowly on encouraging community members to contribute in cash or kind, but their needs to be a focus on their rights to a 'voice' in the management and development of their school as well.

2. Introduction

The consultant conducted a review of the Community Level Education Development Planning (CLEDEP) initiative of the Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) project between September and November 2005. The background to the evaluation and TORs are available Annex 1. The consultant's itinerary is shown at Annex 2.

The purpose of the evaluation was to document the CBR/CLEDEP process and to identify its strengths and weaknesses with a view to incorporating lessons learned in future similar initiatives.

Section 3 of the report outlines the context and background to CUBE, CBR and CLEDEP. **Section 4** outlines the methodology of the study. **Section 5** is a detailed description of findings, structured around CBR and CLEDEP outcomes, Self Help, planning and School Based Management Committees (SBMCs). **Section 6** outlines conclusions, in particular strengths and weaknesses of CBR and CLEDEP. **Section 7** draws out lessons learned.

3. Background

3.1 The context

Nigeria is the most populous African country, with a population of around 130 million. Despite recent reforms it still faces huge development challenges. 90 million Nigerians live in poverty (see DFID, 2004). 'Nigeria has the potential to become Africa's largest economy and a major player in the global economy by virtue of its rich human and natural resource endowment. But much of its potentials have remained untapped, and if previous trends continue, Nigeria runs the risk of not meeting... the MDGs by 2015' (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004, 17).

Key issues for Nigeria are poor governance and widespread corruption. Nigeria's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004) was launched in 2004. One key focus of NEEDS is to improve access to basic services, including basic education, through the provision of UBE.

Key donors in the education sector include the World Bank, DFID, UNICEF, UNESCO, JICA and USAID. Since 2005 the World Bank and DFID have worked in partnership, through their jointly developed Nigeria Country Partnership Strategy (World Bank and DFID, 2005). One of the planks of the CPS is the so-called 'lead state approach', 'a means to lever resources to increase impact, strengthen demand and commitment for reform' (World Bank and DFID, 2005, 24).

'Nigeria has poor human development indicators, with significant variations' (World Bank and DFID, 2005). In 2003, about 7.3 million school-age children did not attend primary schools and net primary school attendance was only 60% (64% for boys versus 57% for girls). In the north in particular, the situation is worse – only 34% of girls attend school. The state of education is summarised as follows:

For those children who do have access, the quality of education is insufficient to provide them with basic life skills and knowledge. School infrastructure is poor; over 50% of classrooms need extensive rehabilitation, according to a 1999 survey. Literacy is low; only 45% of urban and 19% of rural primary school age children are able to read part of a simple sentence. The quality of schooling is reduced by large class size, limited pupil-teacher contact, high pupil/teacher ratios, lack of teaching materials and equipment and widespread use of unqualified teachers. Of those students who do complete secondary education, only 11% are admitted into tertiary education. (World Bank and DFID, 2005, 9)

3.2 The project

In September 2003, the IDA-funded, World Bank-supported Universal Basic Education Project (UBEP) was launched to assist the Government of Nigeria in implementing Universal Basic Education. UBEP has a federal component and a State component. At the State level, the focus is on institutional strengthening, increasing school quality (including physical infrastructure, teacher training and learning materials) and 'increasing access to education through innovative approaches and direct support to communities through self-help'.

At the same time, a complementary five-year DFID-funded project Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) was initiated. CUBE is implemented by a consortium comprising the British Council, Cambridge Education and ActionAid Nigeria. The goal of CUBE is Universal Basic Education in Nigeria, and its purpose is the development and implementation of sustainable State programmes for UBE in 16 States with priority to educationally disadvantaged LGAs. See Box 1 below for specific CUBE outputs.

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Enhanced State and Local Government planning, management and monitoring of UBE on a sustainable basis2 Strengthened school management through Local Government and community participation3 Innovative State-based approaches for improving access, quality and equity4 State and UBE strategies incorporate HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, planning for impact, and basic education provision for orphans |
|---|

5 Strengthened federal capacity and systems to finance and support UBE programmes

Box 1: CUBE outputs

The main strategy for achieving Output 2 has been Community Based Research and the development of Community Level Education Development Planning (CLEDEP).

3.3 CBR and CLEDEP

3.3.1 Community Based Research (CBR)

During the inception of CUBE it became apparent that State plans for UBEP/CUBE showed a limited range of activities and strategies for improving access, equity, quality and community participation. This lack of detailed planning was understood to be the result of limited community/local government involvement in the planning process and a lack of understanding of the situation at school and community level (SurrIDGE and Abdulkareem, 2004a).

The Community Based Research (CBR) was therefore initiated by CUBE in 2004 with the objective of 'the collection of qualitative data at school/community level (using community members as researchers), so that by gathering and analysing the data, State Ministries of Education will be able to develop relevant and appropriate strategies to address identified needs'(SurrIDGE and Abdulkareem, 2004a).

To this end, representatives of 16 States including the State Adviser, Project Co-ordinator and a research consultant developed CBR tools in June 2004 and piloted them in July 2004. The tools were then revised (a section on HIV/AIDS was added) and a team of community researchers appointed in each State.. Research questions appear in Box 2 below.

Main research question

- What are the current basic educational needs and expectations of various categories of stakeholders in relation to access, equity and community participation?

Sub questions:

- What are the equity issues?
- What are the quality issues?
- How conducive is the school environment in providing for all children, and how could it be improved?
- What relationship exists between the community and the school and how could it be improved?

Box 2: CBR research questions

Six LGAs were selected in each State, and 10 schools in each LGA (total of 60 schools in each State). Criteria for selection of schools were as follows:

- Where possible at least 1 per Ward
- Combination of rural, semi-urban and urban
- Range of population served by school: large/medium/small
- Socio-economic spread
- Some schools in hard-to-reach areas
- Include special schools e.g. nomadic schools
- Mirror religious representation in the area
- Other criteria specific to the State

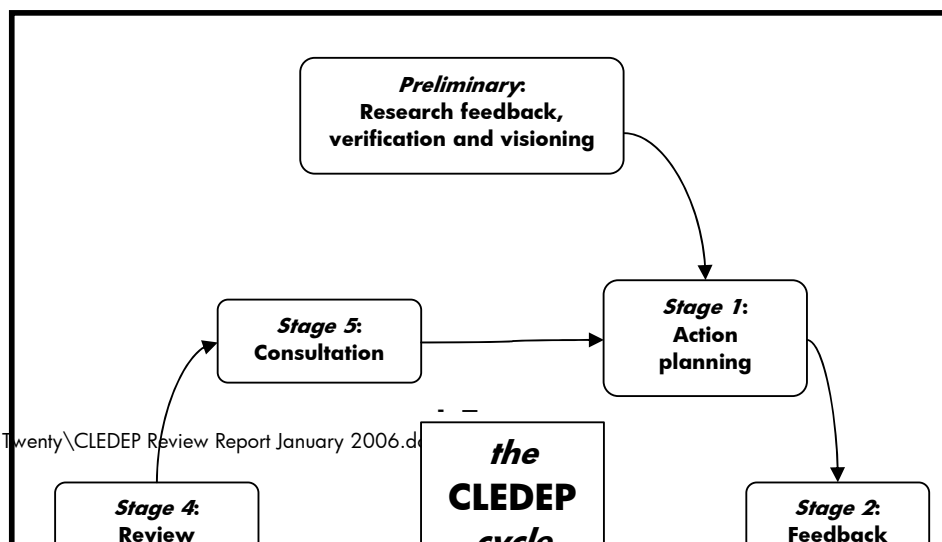
Key stakeholder groups selected and interviewed were the Head teacher, teachers, female students (Primary 5), male students (Primary 5), PTA, mothers, community leaders and out-of-school children.

During October 2004, community researchers were trained in 6 States (Benue, Ekiti, Imo, Katsina, Oyo and Taraba), and the research was carried out in December 2004. In the remaining 10 States, community researcher training was conducted in December 2004 and the research in January 2005.

3.3.2 Community Level Education Development Planning (CLEDEP)

During February 2005 a workshop was held to design a model for community-based school development planning that would build on the CBR. Participants included State Advisers, State Ministry representatives and research consultants. The process was named Community Level Education Development Planning (CLEDEP). CLEDEP was conceived of as an iterative process which would begin by feeding back the results of the Community Based Research to community members. Priorities for action identified during CBR would be confirmed, and then developed into plans by a core action planning group. The plans would then be fed back to community members and implemented and monitored as appropriate. The Action Planning Group (APG) would be responsible for reviewing and then initiating a new cycle with community consultation, action planning and so on (see Box 3 below).

Box 3: The CLEDEP cycle



CLEDEP was to be facilitated by members of the community known as community facilitators. Participants in the development workshop trained State and LGA officials (CLEDEP Phase I) who were in turn responsible for training community facilitators and supporting the CLEDEP process.

3.4 The evaluation

In July 2005 an Output to Purpose review of CUBE was conducted (see Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005). As well as reviewing the project, the OPR team made recommendations for restructuring the project in line with the 'lead states' approach of the newly developed joint WB/DFID strategy (World Bank and DFID, 2005). The OPR report suggested that there had been too great a focus on community-based planning, at the expense of LGA and State level capacity building. As a result the following recommendation was made:

... it is recommended that upon completion of the pilot, project-funded activities in this area should cease, however it is recognized that states may wish to continue using the process from their own budgets. To facilitate this, it is also recommended that the process be evaluated and a synthesis report produced and distributed to all stakeholders (Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005).

This evaluation is a result of the recommendations of the OPR team.

4. Methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to document the CBR/CLEDEP process and to identify its strengths and weaknesses with a view to incorporating lessons learned in future similar initiatives.

Outputs of the consultancy were expected to be:

1. An overall synthesis from state reports of the findings and outcomes of the CBR
2. Comparison of CLEDEP and non- CLEDEP schools/communities in terms of the selection and outcomes of their self-help programmes.
3. An assessment of future community readiness for education planning in both CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools.
4. An analysis of the role and effectiveness of SMCs in both CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools as far as can be discerned at the time of the consultancy.
5. An assessment of the effectiveness of the cascade model used to facilitate the CLEDEP process

6. An analysis of the quality, scope and local ownership of development plans produced - including the level of institutionalisation of the planning process (plans for revision; future initiatives)
7. Reports of community driven/managed and self funded initiatives arising from the CLEDEP plans.

The approach taken to the review was a qualitative one, with a focus on micro-level case studies of states, LGAs, schools and communities involved in Self Help and CLEDEP. This approach was taken in order to better understand how CBR and CLEDEP were impacting on schools and communities. Another reason is that it is still extremely early in the implementation of CLEDEP activities – at the time of the review some states had not even started CLEDEP training – so there was little point in attempting at this stage a comprehensive outcomes-based review.

A range of methods were employed:

- Review of a sample of CBR and CLEDEP reports
- Learning and reflection workshop with CUBE State Advisers
- Field visits to 5 states, 10 LGEAs, and more than 20 schools (CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP)
- Presentation and discussion with key stakeholders (government, donor and NGO)

Two focus states, Oyo and Borno, were selected for the review; one northern (Borno) and one southern (Oyo); both relatively well advanced in terms of CLEDEP implementation; and one considered 'high' performing (Oyo), one 'low' performing (Borno).

In each of these states, two LGAs were selected, one may semi-urban and one remote rural. In each LGA two focus schools were selected, one CLEDEP and one non-CLEDEP in order to compare CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools. Furthermore, in each LGA five self help plans from CLEDEP and 5 from non-CLEDEP were randomly selected for comparison purposes. See Annex 3 for a table outlining the sample and sources for the review. During school visits a broad range of stakeholders was met, including where possible the Headteacher, Teachers, community representatives (male and female) and members of the various school-based institutions (PIC, APG, SBMC) as appropriate. Key officials at LGEA, State and Federal level were also interviewed (see Annex 4 for people met).

Following the field visits, preliminary findings were presented and discussed with a range of partners including government, donors and NGOs. See Annex 5 for the presentation.

4.1 Limitations

One of the main limitations to conducting the review was, as mentioned above, the very early stage of CLEDEP. In most of the states both CLEDEP and Self Help¹ were at very early stages. In Oyo, both were well advanced with Self Help projects well underway. In Borno, however, schools were still waiting for the first cheque. This means that findings at this stage are necessarily more process focused. The outcomes of Self Help and CLEDEP in terms of impact on student enrolment, attendance, participation and achievement cannot really be judged and any conclusions will be subjective.

Another limitation is the fact that in the two focus states, it proved difficult to access non-CLEDEP Self Help Schools. In Oyo, CLEDEP has been taken up by the State authorities and extended to all Self Help schools. As a result there are no non-CLEDEP Self Help schools. Instead, one LGA where CUBE-sponsored CLEDEP had taken place and one LGA where State Government sponsored CLEDEP was underway were selected.

The consultant experienced great problems negotiating access to appropriate stakeholder groups at school level. This was partly to do with the fact that logistics for school visits were handled by Local Government officials who were inclined to organise formal meetings involving mixed stakeholder groups at schools, rather than separate, informal meetings as requested and required by the methodology. Very often the consultant arrived at schools to discover that stakeholders had been waiting for hours rather than according to the timetable proposed and discussed beforehand. This cut the time and quality of interaction considerably. It also meant that often female community members in particular – if invited - had already left and were not available for discussion.

Access to women for the purposes of the review proved an ongoing problem – not only, as anticipated, in the North but also in the South. Women representatives were often not invited and, when they were invited, tended to be silent. It was extremely difficult in the school/community environment to find space to discuss with female community members and teachers without male representatives and teachers speaking for them. While this was extremely frustrating for the purposes of the research it was also an illustration of the barriers facing women's participation in CLEDEP and Self Help.

For people at school, community at LGA level in particular, furthermore, there was no perceived difference between funding from Federal Government level, DFID, the World Bank. Informants' awareness of the source of Self Help funding and CLEDEP support varied, and there was no real difference between Self Help and CLEDEP in the minds of people at school and community level. This had

¹ References to Self Help relate to IDA-funded Self Help under UBEP unless otherwise stated

implications for the extent to which it was possible to draw out and separate impact and outcomes of CLEDEP and Self Help. Furthermore the arrival of a foreign visitor at a remote school was certainly associated with opportunities for funding and as a result people's responses tended towards the positive and uncontroversial. This is as true at State level as at Community level and I have tried to take account of this bias through triangulation as far as possible.

5. Findings

5.1 CBR

The CBR was conducted here and it helped them a lot. For example we found that some teachers weren't coming to school every day. We are better able to understand the situation.

Education Secretary, Oyo East LGEA

This section addresses the first output of the evaluation:

- An overall synthesis from state reports of the findings and outcomes of the CBR

5.1.1 CBR reporting

The CBR process is outlined in section 3.3.1 above. An analysis and report writing workshop was held in December 2004. Outputs anticipated from the analysis and report writing workshop were that the reports would influence state planning and be used as the basis for school development planning processes in each of the communities (SurrIDGE and Abdulkareem, 2004b). One of the stated objectives of the workshop was 'to discuss ways of feeding findings into state planning' and 'to discuss possible mechanisms by which such a process can be institutionalised'.

Reports were written for each LGA and in some cases for each state. The analysis presented in this report focuses only on state reports where they have been produced, which was only six states at the time of the review. The analysis focused on the following key themes, and can be seen in table form at Annex 6.

- types of priorities identified;
- differences in priorities between stakeholder groups and what gets overall preference;
- response to consultation from wider community;
- variety between communities;
- response of LGA and state officials to the consultation

Each of these issues is dealt with below, but first some conclusions on the process and quality of reporting itself.

The CBR reports include a rich and detailed picture of the educational situation in selected locations in Nigeria from the perspective of a broad range of stakeholders whose views are not commonly sought. As such this is a hugely valuable and fascinating source of data and information.

The value of the CBR is in the process of the research, but also in the complexity of the picture that is built up and how children's educational opportunities are affected by livelihoods of their parents and social and cultural norms. For example in Jigawa, the report reveals that while community members are extremely interested and involved in schools, 'Western' education is viewed with suspicion and the integration of Islamic schools is an important priority. Because the major economic activity is farming and cattle rearing, boys in particular are often pulled out of school to work. Formal education is seen as a waste of time, with few job opportunities for those who graduate from primary school, never mind secondary school. Schools are not particularly learner-friendly: 'little happens in the way of teaching' and it is easy to see how many different factors are at play in terms of educational opportunities.

While this is a brief snapshot only, and will certainly not apply to all children in Jigawa, it shows that blanket decisions on educational policy are too blunt to tackle the issues at hand. It shows the complexity of issues that policy makers and planners must deal with in order to address the situation.

Unfortunately however, very few state reports were produced. The reports that were produced (both LGA and state) are of extremely variable quality. Many are simply lists of what was found, rather than analysis of those findings. What analysis there is, is of questionable quality. The reports also contain very little reflection on the process of CBR itself (with the exception of Plateau state report), which would have been extremely useful for future use of the methodology. None of the reports refer to state or LGA planning processes, nor do they suggest possible entry points for feeding into planning and policy processes. Given that one of the objectives of the CBR process was to feed into state planning, this must be viewed as a lost opportunity.

5.1.2 Priorities identified

In all six of the state reports, the top priority identified was construction and or renovation of classrooms and other school buildings. Four of the six identified furniture as a priority. Textbooks and instructional materials were a priority for five of the six. Teachers – their professional development and deployment – was a priority for four of the six. Other, less common priorities included water (Borno), toilets (Taraba and Jigawa) and fencing (Ekiti and Lagos).

The most common issues, based on each of the six reports under analysis, therefore are:

- 1 Construction/renovation of classrooms
- 2 Textbooks and instructional materials/
- 3 = Teachers (professional development and deployment)/Furniture

While construction of classrooms was at the top of most priorities, it was certainly not the *only* priority identified. Indeed one suggestion from the Plateau state report was that the focus on buildings and furniture may be an attempt to cover up deficiencies in classroom interaction (Ochekpe and Hughes, 2005). We will return to this issue later.

5.1.3 Differences in priorities between stakeholder groups

While there were significant differences between the six CBR reports under consideration, some trends can be identified. Of course these differences are certainly to do with differences in how the research is conducted as much as differences in the situation as perceived by stakeholders.

Headteachers tended to focus more on the supply and provision of infrastructure, textbooks and teachers which is understandable, given their management responsibilities. One exception is Borno, where Headteachers tended to focus more on social issues affecting their students – broken homes, cultural and religious barriers and distance to school.

Teachers tended to be more concerned with teaching and learning materials.

Students (male and female) tended to focus on issues that affected their physical comfort and safety, for example water supply and toilets. Girls in particular mentioned toilets and distance to school. It is interesting to note that boys in both Borno and Lagos mentioned work as a concern (as did girls in Borno).

Community representatives tended to focus on infrastructural and broader community concerns such as water supply and health services, as well as school buildings.

The group without a real discernible pattern was **mothers**: they prioritised infrastructure and cross-sectoral issues in Borno and Lagos; textbooks in Plateau; skills acquisition and scholarships in Taraba; toilets in Jigawa. The reason for this variation is not clear; it may be that mothers responses are even more highly contextualised than those of other groups; alternatively, the variation may reflect problems conducting interviews with women as referred to in the Section 4 (methodology).

Out of school children had the most radically different priorities including skills, labour market and financial concerns as well as social issues such as poverty, broken homes and in some cases, problems with the school. It is interesting to note that according to the Plateau team, 'women and out-of-school youth gave the most honest responses' (Ochekpe and Hughes, 2005).

5.1.4 Variety between communities

Not all of the state reports included an analysis of difference between communities. Borno state report however showed that in many cases, water supply was the number one priority.

In some cases, interesting differences between LGAs are noted. For example, in **Plateau** state, while there are more girls enrolled in primary schools in Bassa, Bokkos, Jos North and Pankshin LGAs, there are fewer girls enrolled in Langtang South and Wase – in Wase in particular the differential is huge (1 186 boys against 773 girls).

In **Plateau** the dearth of female teachers in rural areas compared to urban and semi urban areas was noted and attributed to the influence of spouses and relatives of female teachers exert during the posting process.

In **Taraba**, the researchers noted that many community leaders in Sardauna LGA prioritised roads in order to link schools and communities.

In **Jigawa**, while Gwiwa LGA prioritised furniture and instructional materials, Gagarawa LGA prioritised toilets while Buji and Kirikasamma prioritised infrastructure.

The **Lagos** report highlighted the particular issues facing riverine LGAs: seriously dilapidated schools and poor access.

5.1.5 Response to consultation from schools and communities

In many cases, school and community members were doubtful that anything would result from the CBR. For example at Magaji School, Lapai (Niger State) members of the school community said that they were doubtful that anyone would return on completion of the CBR, and as a result they were happy that researchers did return with a summary in translation².

The process of the research was a source of learning in many cases. For example the Headteacher of St John's school, Efon (Ekiti) described how the CBR helped

² Field visit to Lapai Local Government, Niger, September 2005

them to learn why many children were out-of-school. A community representative from Anglican Secondary School, Efon (Ekiti) said that the CBR was very useful, 'it taught us how to monitor... we gained a lot'³.

In some cases the CBR had clearly prepared community members to participate in the planning processes introduced by CLEDEP. For example at Vallangade, after the CBR 'we had five priorities in mind. When Self Help came and the Headteacher came there wasn't much argument and we told the Headteacher to take the priorities according to the list. The Headteacher thought that water would be very expensive so took classroom and staff quarters as priorities. If he had chosen anything else we would have argued it out'⁴. However, the women we spoke to were not familiar with the Self Help plans. In Borno he State Adviser commented 'the CBR alone has opened up community minds. They feel no one has come to them, and the researchers stayed for two days'⁵.

5.1.6 Response of state and LGA officials to the consultation.

The CBR process has the potential to force an encounter between State and Local Government officials and members of schools and communities. For example the Secretary of Mani LGEA said 'I went there and sat down with the people. They were throwing lots of questions at me'⁶. As a result five nursery schools in the LGA are being reopened, since the large numbers of under-aged children in Primary Schools was identified as an LGA-wide issue.

In some cases, the CBR did turn up examples of problems or issues that had not previously been known. For example in Bayelsa, the Director of Planning hadn't realised the problem of unequal numbers of teachers. The CBR showed the situation was worse than had initially been thought⁷. Similarly, the Secretary, Mani LGEA (Katsina) described how the CBR had revealed a shortage of teachers, which they are now in the process of addressing. In Oyo East LGEA, the Secretary said that the CBR helped them a lot. For example it illustrated the extent of the problem of teacher absenteeism. 'School and community leaders were able to 'rub minds' with CBR researchers. There was a spread of interviewing practices among teachers'⁸.

However the CBR was also a source of discomfort to LGAs in some cases. The Regional Team Leaders (RTLs) observed that 'the CBR makes Local Governments jittery – people start to make demands – it reveals things'⁹. In terms of building

3 Field visit to Efon Local Government, Ekiti, September 2005

4 Visit to Gwoza LGA (Borno), November 2005

5 Interview SA Borno, November 2005

6 Field visit to Mani Local Government (Katsina) September 2005

7 Interview with RTL (South) September 2005

8 Interview with Secretary, Oyo East LGEA (Oyo) November 2005

9 Interview with RTLs, September 2005

capacity for people at community level to articulate their demands, this should be seen as a key strength of the CBR process.

5.1.7 Outcomes

Some schools reported positive changes as a result of going through the CBR (pre-CLEDEP and Self Help). For example at Muduru Model Primary School, Mani (Katsina) members of the Action Planning Group and reported an increase in students passing the Common Entrance Exam. They said that this was a direct result of the CBR, because the CBR had identified teacher concerns (lack of training, that they were rarely paid on time) as a significant issue and which, since the CBR, had been addressed by the LGEA.

During research feedback, Primary 6 pupils at Community Central Primary School, Ofekata, Orodo, Mbaitoli LGA (Imo) who had been in Primary 5 during CBR in 2004 said that some of the changes they had suggested had already taken place, including renovation of school buildings, and provision of desks, chairs and table for all pupils and teachers. They were brought about by SPEB in the mean time.

One of the thorny issues thrown up by the CBR was that while it was clearly seen as a positive and useful process, it is relatively labour intensive, requires highly trained facilitators and is therefore difficult to replicate beyond the pilot area.

Summary

- The process of CBR was viewed extremely positively by school and community members. The CBR revealed important issues and encouraged analysis at the school/community level, and often catalysed community, school and LGA into taking action.
- While construction and renovation of classrooms was the top priority in nearly all cases, other non-infrastructure issues were also consistently identified through the CBR process. Furthermore, not all stakeholder groups prioritised infrastructure, although they tended to 'win out' in the prioritisation exercise.
- The CBR highlights significant differences in the situation and priorities *between* LGAs and stakeholder groups. This complexity and diversity suggests it is not helpful to assume that we know what issues there are.
- The CBR was seen as positive spur to action or as a threat, depending on the outlook of the LGEA or state in question.
- CBR reports are a rich source of information on the complexity of educational provision – and the problems facing it – in Nigeria. However, many of the CBR reports were of poor quality which has detracted from their value in terms of engaging in policy and planning processes questionable
- The potential for CBR to inform planning and policy processes has not been capitalised upon.

5.2 CLEDEP process

We thought it was going to be the usual training extended to officers. It was different... it opened our minds to the great advantage the state can get by involving the local community.

Oyo State Project Team

This section addresses the fifth output of the evaluation:

- An assessment of the effectiveness of the cascade model used to facilitate the CLEDEP process

Feedback on rounds 1 and 2 of CLEDEP was, on the whole positive. For example 'the training was well conducted'¹⁰. In particular, 'the field visit was useful – they learnt so many things'¹¹. The CLEDEP process, at the core of the training, was felt to be 'good, logical and easily adaptable... the logic was easily understood by communities – it's an eye opener'¹². As one Headteacher put it, 'the five steps of CLEDEP are very useful'¹³. One of the RTLs suggested that the Phase II training was most effective when presented in local language.

One of the key approaches of CLEDEP training is to 'force' the encounter between state and LGA officials and members of schools and communities. 'the idea that officials come to the community and sit down and discuss is inspiring'¹⁴.

However some state advisers and research consultants in particular expressed the view that the quality of training had been diluted by the second round. In particular, a key problem was the fact that Round One did not incorporate time for developing the training skills of those who would be responsible for delivering Round Two. The time delay in between the two rounds and the implementation of CLEDEP (round 3) was felt to have further exacerbated this problem.

Another issue was that the training had a dual purpose which resulted in a lack of clarity at times – it was designed both to raise awareness as well as to train trainers and facilitators. One suggestion from State Advisers was that more effort should have been put into raising awareness of senior State Ministry of Education (SMoE) officials to get them involved in CLEDEP from the beginning. Another State Adviser noted that in some cases local government response was lukewarm – only 'lower cadres' were really involved as trainers¹⁵.

¹⁰ Interview with Katsina State Project Co-ordinator, September 2005

¹¹ Interview with RCs, Kaduna, September 2005

¹² Interview with RCs, Kaduna, September 2005

¹³ Interview with Headteacher, St John's Anglican Primary School

¹⁴ Interview with RTL (South), September 2005

¹⁵ State Advisers' workshop, September 2005

Further clarity was also required in terms of the relationship between CLEDEP, Self Help and SBMC formation.

The selection of trainees in CLEDEP I and CLEDEP II was also an issue. Some advisers had problems with the politics of selection of trainees for CLEDEP I. There was also a problem with very few women trained – particularly CLEDEP I, since in most cases at least one woman representative was selected for each community in CLEDEP II. As can be seen in table 5.1 below, only 20% of CLEDEP I trainees were women, whereas 25% of CLEDEP II trainees were women. These rates of female participation are disappointing, and a more directive ‘quota’ of women at the training stage could have helped to mitigate some of the problems with women’s participation at the community level. As one RTL said, ‘the quality of facilitation determines what happens at the community level’¹⁶. The attitudes that lead to this situation are deeply entrenched. For example on education secretary said that ‘women believe that men will do everything’ and that women’s passivity requires the selection of men.

State	CLEDEP 1			CLEDEP 2		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Plateau	26	3	29	142	41	183
Katsina	32	2	34	109	11	130
Bayelsa	27	3	30	154	10	164
Oyo	30	8	38	530	290	820
Borno	16	1	17	116	8	124
Benue	26	4	30	120	4	124
Lagos	26	17	43	139	49	188
Enugu	15	4	19	0	0	0
Ebonyi	13	6	19	0	0	0
Imo	22	5	27	0	0	0
Taraba	27	5	32	0	0	0
Kaduna	19	5	24	114	61	175
Rivers	22	9	31	0	0	0
Niger	28	11	39	232	68	300
Jigawa	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ekiti	26	8	34	124	116	240
Total	355	91	446	1780	658	2448
%	80%	20%	100%	73%	27%	100%

Table 5.1: CLEDEP trainees by gender

¹⁶ Interview with RTL (North), September 2005

One of the problems raised is that some aspects of the CLEDEP cycle require technical input and support that, at present, LGEAs are not empowered to provide, for example monitoring and visioning. Indeed some frustrated LGEA secretaries said that they had no money with which to conduct monitoring and were not receiving promised funds from the State.

The following case studies illustrate the experience of state advisers whose states were judged to be 'high achieving' in relation to CLEDEP as well as those that were judged to be 'low achieving'.

More systematic sensitisation of policy makers at state level in MoE and related ministries is required – particularly the Commissioner. SUBEB is very important, particularly the Chair and Directors need high awareness for an initiative like CLEDEP to succeed.

'If you visit my house and want to introduce a change, you may want the head of the compound to be aware.'

It is about recognition, responsibility and monitoring [i.e. Senior state people need to recognise the value of the process; take responsibility for it; and have a role in monitoring it in order for it to be successful].

The states that have done well are those states with support at high level. Oyo for example the environment of the state is favourably disposed and the SA has access to high officials.

Most people in Ministries are inept of ideas; learning is old and dormant. I did a feedback of the research findings for the commissioner. He said 'but for the state adviser I have never stayed in a presentation for this long'

One of her problems is 'political intrigue' at the state level. SUBEB was more powerful than the Education Commissioner and had direct links to the governor. He said 'I am a commissioner in name only. If I say anything they will resist'. The EC refused to see her so she sent news direct to the governor.

But in the end why should they get involved? Projects should start from state demands. In the end states were lukewarm towards it. States thought they would get money and resources direct from CUBE; they misunderstood and CUBE should have made this very clear. CUBE without funds was not received with favour. The process of building state capacity should be thought through.

Box 4: State Adviser, 'low' achieving state

My previous job at a parastatal (mass literacy) means that I have good connections with state level people and they are very supportive. I have a very good relationship with the project co-ordinator'

Box 5: State Adviser, 'medium' achieving state

I got CLEDEP integrated through having a good relationship with the Governor. The Governor is interested in and committed to education. I sent the Commissioner a report and video. He got interested and wanted it rolled out. They have trimmed the training to 3 days. Currently first rolling out of round 2 – 145 participants all went on field trip to one school that day! Interested because it is an effective way of getting community involved.

CLEDEP will make more impact if the School Management Committees are in place before the training. This will minimise the problems and confusion that arose with the setting up of many committees; the Action Planning Group, the School Project Implementation Committee.

Box 6: State Adviser, 'high' achieving state

These examples show how the impact of State Advisers and the opportunities open to them was extremely personalised; those who were able to engage politically were in a much stronger position to gain support for and push through programmes like CLEDEP.

Summary:

- CLEDEP training was well received; however this was partly because of limited opportunities for professional development for state, LGA and LGEA officials.
- The core CLEDEP process was judged logical, accessible and useful at all levels.
- There were some problems with using the same training materials for, essentially, different purposes in CLEDEP 1 and 2: CLEDEP 1 was focused on orientating State and LGA officials, while CLEDEP 2 was for training community facilitators to facilitate CLEDEP on the ground.
- More attention should have been paid to 'preparing the ground' and enlisting support and awareness of senior officials at LGEA and State level.
- Gender representation in CLEDEP training was poor and could have been improved through quotas for female participants.

5.3 CBR-CLEDEP outcomes

This section addresses the seventh output of the evaluation:

- Reports of community driven/managed and self funded initiatives arising from the CLEDEP plans.

It also addresses more general outcomes of the CBR-CLEDEP process including perspectives of members of schools, communities, local, state and federal government and development partners.

5.3.1 Outcomes

There is evidence of community driven initiatives arising both from CBR and the CLEDEP process. For example, five nursery schools have been opened in Mani LGA as a result of findings from the CBR indicating that underage children in Primary 1 are a problem for primary schools. There were many examples of communities inspired by CBR/CLEDEP to continue activities already planned or to initiate new ones. For example Biu Central Primary school (Borno) where community members focused on completing a school fencing project commenced by PTA ten years previously.

Another example is Community Central Primary School, Mbaitoli LGA (Imo). Primary 6 pupils explained that many of the changes they had recommended during the CBR process had been implemented by the school, community and the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), including renovation of school buildings, provision of desks, chairs and tables and increased numbers of teachers. One school in Benue had already completed the renovation of seven classrooms by the time CLEDEP training started.

In many cases communities had become impatient waiting for funds arrived, and had started work. For example at Vallangade community representatives said 'almost all of us have gone to the river to bring sand for the Self Help project. We are ready to do things. We are told the fund is coming but we are waiting to do something'¹⁷.

There is evidence that members of the community are invited to the school on a more frequent basis as a result of going through CLEDEP training. For example at Janzama Primary School, Mani (Katsina) female community representatives said that they are now invited to the school more frequently than before as a result of CLEDEP, usually to discuss school problems and ways of solving them.¹⁸ Furthermore in some cases visits by outsiders have increased, as noted by village elders at Muduru School, Mani (Katsina)¹⁹.

In the case of Vallangade Primary School (Borno) the impression is that the community has so enthusiastically embraced the CLEDEP process that perhaps Headteacher and Teachers feel left out of the process. Members of the community

¹⁷ Visit to Gwoza LGA (Borno), November 2005

¹⁸ Visit to Mani LGA (Katsina) September 2005

¹⁹ Visit to Mani LGA (Katsina) September 2005

said that they see school issues as an extension of village issues so discussions and decisions are made through the village meeting. Headteacher and Teacher seemed unclear about the proposed plans and the process by which they had been decided.

There is evidence that the process has prompted members of schools and communities to become more demanding of government, an extremely positive development. For example in Borno 'the community was asking challenging questions'²⁰. Representatives from schools and communities have been coming to his office and also Education Secretaries' offices to ask about the progress of Self Help funding for example.

There is also some evidence of improved enrolment, attendance at schools that went through CBR and Self Help, for example at Baga Budumary School, Kukuwa (Borno) the Headteacher said '*There is increased retention of and attendance of students as a result of talking to the community*'. Attendance rates have risen from 53% in the second term of 2004-5 to 66% in the 3rd term; and an expected 70%+ in the current term. He says this is a result of talking to the community, holding meetings and the Self Help funded plans.

Some communities have taken up the CLEDEP process more broadly. For example at Vallangade, community members said 'we even use CLEDEP in village meetings. It is useful for working out good, bad and achieving consensus. It is a way to involve everyone. Formerly, one or two people would suggest and then just go ahead.'²¹

Some officials also talked about CLEDEP learning having an impact on their personal and family lives, as a logical way of planning. One Education Secretary for example said that through CLEDEP 'people of diverse backgrounds sit together and relate together'. He gave the example of himself and the LGA project co-ordinator who did not really speak due to political differences, but since going to CLEDEP training together have got on and worked together.

The Case study of Pulka School below shows how Self Help played out in a non-CLEDEP school.

Pulka Primary School was established in 1967. It is a very large school with 1402 students (838 boys, 564 girls) in a semi-urban area of Gwoza LGA. Gwoza is an agricultural and partly mountainous LGA in the eastern part of Borno state bordering Cameroon.

²⁰ Interview with Borno Self Help Desk Officer, November 2005

²¹ Visit to Gwoza LGA (Borno), November 2005

The school is non CBR, non CLEDEP but had applied for self help funding for construction of a classroom block. The school is extraordinary in that it has not a single item of furniture. There is also a severe shortage of classrooms - while some of the classes are housed in classroom blocks, most have two classes in one room. In some cases there are up to 120 students in one room. Primary 1 and 2 sit outside under a tree.

The Headteacher and PTA Chair explained that the main changes that the school has experienced recently are an increase in enrolment. They also now have a pre-school and some toilet blocks. Their main priorities, apart from a classroom block, are to get furniture. For the second phase of Self Help they plan to apply for instructional materials. At the moment they only have teachers' copies of textbooks, no student copies, and not even a register.

In terms of how the decision was taken to apply for funds to build a classroom, the Headteacher explained 'I discussed with the PTA chair, met the village head and Chair of Local Government.'

Their plan for raising the community share of self help funding is to form a fund-raising committee. 'There are many rich people, traders in the area. It will not be a problem. This is a commercial village. We want to raise about 600,000 Naira. We don't necessarily expect a contribution from all'

The Headteacher was positive about the Self Help process, pointing out that the building in which were sitting which was built by contractors was poorly constructed, with large holes in the floor. 'This is a good way to do it. The other building was given to a contractor. It cost a huge amount of money. Look at the floor. It is broken. If you do it yourself it will be better'.

According to the PTA chair, PTA meetings happen once a term, with additional, emergency meetings where necessary. Usually more than 200 people attend, the majority men, but some women. They held an emergency meeting last term, in order to discuss the self Help plan. He admitted however that only PTA executives attended, as well as local invited dignitaries.

A discussion with three teachers revealed that they had no idea about the Self Help plans. We met community members and parents outside the school – male and female – and likewise, they had not heard of the plans and complained that 'there are PTA meetings on paper, but not in practice'.

Box 7: Pulka Primary School, Gwoza (Borno)

As a non-CLEDEP, non-CBR school, Pulka School illustrates how decisions around Self Help have been taken without the knowledge of the wider community.

5.3.2 Community and school perspectives

Responses of Headteachers was generally very positive. For example the Headteacher of Efun II school, Egbeda (Oyo) said '[CLEDEP] is good because it makes parents know their responsibility. The community is happy because government involves them.'²² The Headteacher of Magaji Primary School, Mani (Katsina) said that CLEDEP was 'a key to the treasure of co-operation, understanding and motivation of the community'²³

The assumption that the community expects government to do everything for them and will not lift a finger for school maintenance is not borne out by the case study evidence. For example at Vallangade Primary School, Gwoza (Borno), the Headteacher said that 'the community are doing their part. If the school is damaged they renovate. They are co-operative'²⁴. Also at Community High School, Owobale, Egbeda (Oyo) community representatives pointed out that they have always been very much involved with the school and its maintenance.²⁵ Whenever ceilings were blown off, the community repaired them – this happened just 3-4 months ago.

One issue that community members consistently raised was the fact that their problems or issues were not limited to the education sector and that where, for example, water supply, access roads, or health facilities could be the most serious issue impacting on children's education. This requires a cross-sectoral response that CLEDEP was not designed to deal with.

On the other hand some community members, for example women at Muduru, Mani (Katsina)²⁶ pointed out that improvements since CBR and CLEDEP were due to government taking action – either on the basis of improved information coming out of the CBR or as a result of LGA staff visiting and engaging with schools and communities.

Olivet Baptist High School is a large school in an urban area near Oyo town in Oyo East LGA (Oyo state). There are around 1700 students in three Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) and 1 Senior Secondary School all on one site. Olivet JSS1 has 416 students (204 girls and 212 boys). It comes under Self Help and the project selected is the construction of a toilet block with 8 toilets. Previously there were just a few pit latrines, not well maintained.

²² Visit to Egbeda LGA (Oyo) November 2005

²³ Visit to Mani LGA (Katsina) September 2005

²⁴ Visit to Gwoza LGA (Borno), November 2005

²⁵ Visit to Egbeda LGA (Oyo) November 2005

²⁶ Visit to Mani LGA (Katsina) September 2005

The Headteacher, with the PTA chair and 2 PTA members went to CLEDEP training in July for 3 days. He says they were given a list of projects to choose from, including classroom renovation, fencing, borehole, VIP toilet. He can't recall where the list came from but thinks it might have been the Local Inspector of Education (LIE.).

All the parents were called – around 250 came – and they chose to construct a borehole. Later the Old Boys Association agreed to construct a borehole so they changed their priority to toilets. They received 450,000 Naira through Self Help and raised 90,000 from the community. They asked each parent to contribute 200N – most students paid. This is on top of the 150 Naira levy that parents pay per term. However this was not enough to complete the project and it is now stalled. The LGA chairman promised a contribution of 20,000 Naira but it hasn't materialised.

The Headteacher says that there has been a dramatic change in the relationship between school and community.

Mr Adebayo is a PTA member, community leader and has been a leading light in the Self Help project:

'We were very pleased to be informed that there is a World Bank assisted programme in the community. That a world body can think that Nigeria needs such a gift motivated us to put in effort and time... When the idea was given to us, we were ready to give counterpart funding. If they contract something it won't go anywhere.

There are some parents who are unable [to contribute]; not that they are not willing... It is not difficult to find people to do the physical labour. We pay them, but if the work cost 2000 Naira we beat it down to, say, 1500 Naira – the rest is a contribution.

There is a saying 'it's the people that want to be helped that will start it'. Otherwise people will just sit down thinking that someone will come and do it'.

Box 8: Olivet Baptist High School, Oyo East LGA (Oyo)

This case study shows how Self Help can act to cut the cost of school infrastructure – in this case because members of the committee persuade workers to work at a reduced rate. At the same time this works ultimately to reduce opportunities and profits for local workers and benefits to the local economy from new school buildings.

5.3.3 Government perspectives

The UBEC representative interviewed said that it is really too early to review CLEDEP. It was acknowledged however that CLEDEP added value to self help through the capacity building support provided. A key issue at Federal Level is how transfer the learning from CLEDEP to SBMC development, 'strengthening local level governance' and making connections with other departments.

Members of Oyo State Project team²⁷ said of CLEDEP that 'it has enriched our capacity'. 'The second round was very interesting and very beneficial. Every participant claimed that they gained a lot. It was a sharp digression from the normal training. It introduced a new culture of supervising and executing government projects'.

One officer said that 'CLEDEP has helped me as an officer to plan better – even in the office... It's a plus for the State; we have better insight into school management and policy formulation'. However, having said this, they said that they wanted CUBE to run refresher training. When asked why they could not now do this themselves, they insisted that they have the capacity, but do not have resources.

There was also a perception that the quality of community participation had improved. However, to a certain extent community participation is understood as getting communities to contribute money and resources. One common perspective from State level was that CLEDEP would be cost-saving. As on State PC said 'education is expensive to the government – provision of education will be more cost effective [with CLEDEP]. A lot of the burden is being taken off the government'.²⁸

There was also a sense in some cases that State officials had not been involved enough in the process. One PC said 'co-ordinators should have been kept up with developments'. This resonates with observations from State Advisers that high officials at state and LGA level should have been carried along with the CLEDEP better.

However the CLEDEP approach has the potential to have an impact on attitudes at state level. For example on State PC said that previously, 'the authorities thought they could provide classrooms, furniture, teachers and assumed that teaching and learning is taking place'. CBR and CLEDEP by implication raise the issue that other factors are at work.

²⁷ Interview with Project Co-ordinator and other SMoE and SUBEB officers, Oyo State, November 2005

²⁸ Interview with Project Co-ordinator (Katsina) September 2005

The case study from Borno state (see Box 11 below) illustrates some of the political challenges faced at state level.

In Borno the CBR was conducted in January 2005 in 62 schools in 6 LGAs. 200 schools were selected for IDA Self Help funding. These schools were selected by LGAs, but no one was able to clarify on what exact criteria this selection was conducted. However, all 62 CBR-CLEDEP schools were included in the Self Help list.

There were delays in initiating the CLEDEP process in Borno. According to the State Adviser, initially there was a lot of resistance to the programme. CLEDEP was not in the 2005 budget. As the State Self Help Desk Officer described it 'the state took some time to accept it at first, because it was a new system, not in the workplan'²⁹. The SA tackled this lack of enthusiasm by circulating widely CLEDEP reports from 'early' states - Niger and Katsina. At the same time, 'people started going to SUBEB and asking, when is this happening in Borno?'

The World Bank is also perceived as having delayed the programme. Despite the fact that the programme was initiated in February 2005, CLEDEP phase 1 training was not conducted until August 2005.

This meant that, unfortunately, Self Help projects had been selected before schools were trained in CLEDEP. Proposals for Self Help were selected under extreme time pressure in May 2005 – schools effectively had 72 hours to submit proposals.

Eventually, state officials became very positive about CLEDEP. However 'the community was asking challenging questions'.

A recent challenge has been funding monitoring activities – since LGEAs have no funds for monitoring, external funds must be sought. Financial control by the state is deeply entrenched: 'all the money is controlled by the accountant General'.

Borno has a particular problem in that many positions are vacant at state level – there is no self help desk officer, no HIV/AIDS desk officer (he left to join UNICEF-funded GEP), no EMIS desk officer. Furthermore the structure is skewed, so that the Project Co-ordinator is also the Deputy Director of SUBEB. 'This is not workable – SUBEB has no authority'. Added to this there have been three Commissioners for Education in the 1.5 years that the SA has been in post. At one point there was no commissioner at all for four months, which seriously held up CLEDEP implementation.

²⁹ Interview with Borno State Self Help Desk Officer, November 2005

There is also tension and political interference between those in political positions and implementers. In Borno it seems that while Self Help cheques have been ready for two months, their distribution has been delayed because SUBEB wishes the Governor to be present at the launch, but so far he has not been available.

Box 9: Borno State

At the Local Government level, one State Self Help Desk Officer suggested that LGEAs stand to lose from the establishment of SBMCs, since all contractual issues will be dealt with by SBMCs. They also stand to lose resources from NGOs and donor agencies, the more decentralised it gets³⁰.

There was evidence of very positive response to CLEDEP at local government level however. One LGA Self Help Desk Officer said 'CLEDEP will help any community; even in your own house. In Self Help, the Headteacher and the PTA chair have decided on a project. People say he is spending money on a machine. CLEDEP is not like this. Even in the classroom it is useful to get many ideas, and to bring all the children to understand each other... It is very good, very clear for people'³¹. This officer had passed on CLEDEP training above and beyond the 'selected' schools and was of the firm opinion that it had the potential to strengthen the work of the LGEA. See the case study of Mile '3' Primary School for details of his influence.

One LGA project co-ordinator said 'CLEDEP is very good because people are carried along. CLEDEP is well accepted by the community. People had always been alienated.'³² The challenge is ensuring that monitoring happens, because, he says, then it will give results. There was a perception that the work of the LGEA will be made easier, according to Education Secretary, Mani LGEA. One LGEA Secretary said of CLEDEP 'before, we were just paying salaries; now we are much more involved with communities, teachers, monitoring'. One Area Education Officer said 'we now know it is not good to work in isolation. We will do joint work, planning together. Because of CLEDEP we have seen the light'³³

However, he added, 'we have not been given one *kobo* for this work. They only money we get is for teachers' salaries. We are supposed to get funding from the State, but it doesn't come. The state is holding on to everything'³⁴. He told a sad story about the time he requested some chalk from the State, and they sent him just seven boxes. As soon as the Headteachers heard they raced to LGEA HQ to get their hands on what little was available.

³⁰ Interview with State Self Help Desk Officer (Borno) November 2005

³¹ Interview with Self Help Desk Officer, Kukuwa LGA (Borno) November 2005

³² Interview with Project Co-ordinator, Egbeda LGA (Oyo), November 2005

³³ Interview with AEO, Efon, Ekiti

³⁴ Interview with Education Secretary, Kukuwa LGEA (Borno), November 2005

Another LGEA Secretary said 'I am happy about the exercise. It enhances the relationship between community and school... the community now understands that any resources belong to them. They used to vandalise benches, classrooms'. The most common response to the serious problem of vandalism is to hire security guards – usually paid for by levying pupils. This comment is also very much at odds with the findings that many communities have been involved in the upkeep of their schools for a long time. It underlines the fact perhaps that communities are not homogeneous and may include vandals as well as those who take responsibility for school property.

There is evidence to suggest however that while LGA officials are very good at paying lip-service to the participatory principles of CLEDEP, in fact top down and directive attitudes towards schools and communities are very deeply entrenched.

5.3.4 Development partner perspectives

According to the World Bank's education adviser, positive aspects of CLEDEP include its contribution to understanding the needs of communities, its capacity to assess and meet the needs of communities and its potential contribution to the establishment of SBMCs³⁵.

However, the OPR team concluded that CUBE's focus on CLEDEP had been to the detriment of other activities to strengthen the planning capacity at state level:

'During CUBE to date, greatest emphasis has been placed on increasing community participation through action research approaches. Until March 2005 there was relatively little improvement in State planning or assistance with meeting spending targets. An outcome of this is that states generally did not receive adequate capacity building in the preparation of acceptable planning and procurement documentation. As a result there have been delays in releasing funds that would ultimately benefit the communities (Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005, 10).

So according to this, the emphasis on CBR-CLEDEP has been at the expense of *'shorter-term but potentially high impact capacity improvements in State planning and procurement skills... the hitherto over-emphasis on community research makes it difficult to be confident that by the end of the project (March 2008) the outputs will achieve the project purpose'* (Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005, 13).

In terms of recommendations, one of the areas raised is that the findings of CBR must be used with a view to *'reducing the numbers of out-of-school children'* (Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005, 22). Furthermore:

³⁵ Interview with Education Adviser, World Bank, November 2005

... it is recommended that upon completion of the pilot, project-funded activities in this area should cease, however it is recognized that states may wish to continue using the process from their own budgets. To facilitate this, it is also recommended that the process be evaluated and a synthesis report produced and distributed to all stakeholders (Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005).

A key concern for the World Bank now is how to scale up and integrate the positive aspects of CBR-CLEDEP³⁶.

5.3.5 Sustainability

In Oyo State Officials decided to extend CLEDEP to all Self Help schools in the belief that it improved the process. To this end the training was cut to three days and training sessions for hundreds of participants held – a kind of watered down CLEDEP. Some of the schools visited in Oyo – Egbeda LGA – came under this programme. The only discernible difference was, possibly, a greater emphasis on CLEDEP being linked to physical infrastructure development rather than broader school development. In Niger state the research consultant believes that CLEDEP will continue ‘with or without DFID’³⁷.

In Borno the State UBE Self Help Desk Officer expressed the opinion that ‘we plan to cover the primary schools that were not included. We will use CLEDEP because in Borno we can’t cover all LGAs within one week – there are no roads and other geographical challenges. We can call all the Headteachers and organise CLEDEP. It saves us time. We will just monitor them from time to time’. So, CLEDEP is seen as time and labour saving because of its cascade model. Similar sentiments were expressed by the PC, Katsina. This is positive if it encourages decentralisation of control; but, without a concurrent decentralisation of resources this has limited value.

The other side to this issue is that States are mistaken if they think that CLEDEP will save them money. A process that emphasises participation is necessarily more labour intensive – although ultimately more effective – than a purely top down process. If it is being done ‘on the cheap’, it has less chance of being effective.

State officials in Katsina are more reserved – as the PC points out ‘World Bank money is not going to be there forever’ and future sustainability is an issue. One State Adviser said that state officials did not accept his role because they felt he was there to ‘police’ state funds.

³⁶ Interview with Education Adviser, World Bank, November 2005

³⁷ Interview with Research Consultants, Abuja, September 2005

There has also been interest in CLEDEP from other institutions and organisations – for example in Niger the Emir of Bida expressed the wish that his officials participate in the training. Also from schools outside CLEDEP; three schools have approached the education secretary, Mani, asking to be included.

The following case study of Mile '3' Primary School, Baga, Kukuwa (Borno) illustrates how scale-up of CLEDEP is going on unmarked and unheralded at the local level.

Mile '3' Primary School is located in Kukuwa LGA in the far eastern part of Borno state. It is a dry and sparsely populated area, although not far from Lake Chad with substantial fishing and smuggling trade. It is a predominantly Muslim area.

Mile '3' was established in 1992 by members of the local settlement as an Islamic school. The Headteacher is himself from the village – just a secondary school graduate when appointed, he now has NC qualification. At the time of the visit it had 317 students (217 boys, 100 girls) and was housed in 3 reed buildings. There are noticeably more girls in lower classes, fewer in higher classes – suggesting that while many girls are enrolling, they tend to drop out as they progress.

In 2003 the Education Secretary (Kukuwa LGEA) saw that parents had constructed buildings and suggested that they came under government control, to which parents agreed. It transpired in fact that parents had started a concrete building in the village but the ES had advised them to abandon it and start the school afresh on a bigger patch of land outside the village. To what extent this was for the good of the school – or because the ES was annoyed at not being consulted – is not entirely clear.

Mile '3' was not a CBR or CLEDEP school, but was included in Self Help. However, the LGA Self Help Desk Officer, who had been trained under CLEDEP 1, thought that CLEDEP would be useful for the community in terms of organising itself so he extended some training to them. In fact it turned out that he has a dual role – as well as Self Help Desk Officer he is School Supervisor for this school.

The Self Help project is going to be construction of classrooms (Phase 1) and staff quarters (Phase 2). At the moment staff are accommodated in village houses and it is not satisfactory. However, they say that money will not stretch to all those things. They will not impose a specific levy on communities; rather, they will wait for the self help money to arrive and then see what is needed. They are confident that they will forge ahead once the money arrives.

In terms of recent changes to the school, APG members said that they used to have the problem of too few teachers and teaching materials. The buildings were fragile and the roof would frequently blow off during wind and rainfall. Parents would come together to fix it. With government support, they have more teachers and some money e.g. for roofing materials. Now for the first time they are getting children into secondary school and the children can speak a little English.

They say that CLEDEP has helped them because 'before we were running the school without any planning'. So they gathered members of the community; informed them about CLEDEP and the process for airing their views and integrating their opinions. The APG was formed by selecting representatives from each Ward of the village. They find the feedback and review aspects of CLEDEP particularly useful. Formerly, they say, a few people would decide what to do. They would collect resources and go out and do it. Now they do it together. This reduced 'blames and challenges because the community knows priorities and at the end they will witness. Before only the 'executive cadre' of the PTA was involved, not a congress. Now they have extended it to the wider community. They even had a meeting about our visit.

Box 10: Mile '3' Primary School, Kukuwa LGA (Borno)

This case shows the strength of CLEDEP as an accessible framework for community-based planning.

Summary

- Contrary to popular belief, in many of the schools visited, communities have always been involved in the physical maintenance and development of the school.
- Community response to CLEDEP was very positive, and there are many examples of community driven initiatives as a result of CBR and CLEDEP.
- There is evidence that schools are inviting parents and community members to the school more frequently; however it seems that in some cases Headteacher and teachers are marginalised in the process
- There is evidence that CLEDEP has raised the capacity and willingness of school and community members to make demands on LGA and government officials.
- There is also evidence of CLEDEP being taken up and used beyond the school environment, for example in village committees and even in personal and family lives of officials and community members.
- There is evidence of increased enrolment and attendance in some CLEDEP schools, but it is impossible at this early stage to separate the effects of CLEDEP and Self Help.
- Many of the community's concerns however fall outside the education sector, e.g. roads, water, health.

- At Federal level, CLEDEP was well received although there are concerns about scaling up the approach and linking it to improvements of local governance.
- At State level, there is evidence of initial resistance in many states, partly because CUBE does not directly disburse funds. Positive aspects of CLEDEP mentioned by state officials are the improvements to community participation and also lessening the financial burden on the state. Community participation, however, seems often to be understood as the extent to which communities contribute money and resources to school improvements, rather than participation in decision making and wider aspects of school development.
- LGA and LGEA staff were very enthusiastic about CLEDEP, particularly its potential to help communities organise themselves. However the lack of capacity and resources at LGEA level to monitor and support CLEDEP has severely hampered its implementation.
- The World Bank perspective is that too much time and effort has been expended on community-focused work through CBR and CLEDEP at the expense of State capacity building
- Oyo state has extended CLEDEP to all Self Help schools with some success, so scale up is possible. Other states are less interested and positive.
- CLEDEP has also been spread at the local level for example by LGA Self Help Desk officers
- The amount of technical support required should not be underestimated. It would be a mistake to see CLEDEP or any other participatory process as a short cut or cheap option. Participatory approaches are by definition more time consuming and more expensive than top-down approaches, but the long term benefits are potentially great. CLEDEP or any other participatory approach to school planning will require realistic and sustained investment and support if those benefits are to be realised.

5.4 Self Help

...[B]efore they would just send a contractor, they would clear an area, and no one knows why it is being done. This has raised the consciousness of communities. We send our children to school. We encourage teachers.
PTA member, Baga Budumary Primary School, Kukuwa LGA, Borno

This section addresses the second output of the evaluation:

- Comparison of CLEDEP and non- CLEDEP schools/communities in terms of the selection and outcomes of their self-help programmes.

5.4.1 Differences between states

See Table 5.2 below for an approximate timescale for the implementation of CBR, CLEDEP and self help. There were however significant differences between

the states in terms of the time scales and patterns of implementation of self help and CLEDEP.

	2004		2005			
CBR	Develop and pilot tools	Train CRs	Conduct research	Analysis and report writing		
CLEDEP			Develop CLEDEP	Training state, LGA, community levels	Implementation	
Self Help					Self help proposals submitted	Implementation
SBMC					SBMCs constituted	

Table 5.2: CBR/CLEDEP implementation timetable

In Oyo for example, CBR was completed in December 2004 and CLEDEP Phases I and II were completed by August 2005. The first IDA-funded Self Help projects in CLEDEP schools were underway during the consultant’s visit in September 2005. By contrast in Jigawa CLEDEP Phase I has not yet been initiated. Furthermore in some states there are schools that have been through CBR and self help but not CLEDEP; others that have been through CLEDEP and self help without CBR.

In Ekiti the balance of Self Help funding was yet to be given. Some schools had received first batch funding even before CLEDEP training. In Niger, many schools were still in the process of developing Self Help proposals and only one CLEDEP school – Lapai – had already done so.

As a result a comparison between CLEDEP and non CLEDEP schools in terms of the selection and outcomes of Self Help was difficult for a number of reasons. Firstly, self help projects are not fully underway in many states. Secondly, in Oyo, CLEDEP has been extended to all self help schools. However some case schools were visited and tentative conclusions drawn.

5.4.2 Selection of projects

In practically all the schools visited, infrastructure projects had been chosen. It did not appear to make any difference whether the school had been through CLEDEP or not. A detailed analysis of eighteen self help plans in Oyo and Borno (see Annex 7) revealed that all eighteen first round Self Help projects were

infrastructural. Of these, 16 involved the construction or renovation of classrooms. The remaining two involved the building of a school fence.

In the case of Borno, schools had been asked to submit second round (non-infrastructural) proposals at the same time as first round proposals. In nine cases out of ten, schools had opted for construction of staff quarters which comes under staff welfare in the Self Help manual.

There was anecdotal evidence of differences in *process* between CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools. For example, officials from Igede LGEA (Ekiti) said that through CLEDEP 'people have been working together as a team', including community, school, church and students³⁸. This also extends to co-operation between local government officials and other stakeholders: 'people looked at education from a different perspective – LG officials sitting down with NGOs – this was the first time'³⁹.

There was also evidence of much wider participation in CLEDEP schools. One community representative from Janzama Primary School (Katsina) said that 'everyone from traditional rulers, educated elites, Islamic educationalists and artisans were involved'⁴⁰. This is not to say that understandings and practice of broad-based community participation has been achieved – this is a process that takes years and continuous support and reinforcement. For example the Headteacher of one CLEDEP school in Ekiti, when asked about the next round of Self Help funding said that they will inform the community of their decision. When questioned on this, a teacher said 'we are here, we know what is needed'⁴¹, suggesting that the approach of involving and discussing with community representatives has not fully been taken on board.

There was also anecdotal evidence of differences in the *quality* of the plans between CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools. One LGEA Secretary said that CLEDEP plans are better 'because they have been trained, and are better at selecting priorities'⁴². A state official in Niger suggested that the quality of planning is better at CLEDEP schools because more people are involved in the planning process⁴³. At one school in Borno one school wanted to re-prioritise its self help project after going through CLEDEP⁴⁴.

³⁸ Visit to Igede LGA, Ekiti, September 2005

³⁹ Interview with Research Consultants, September 2005

⁴⁰ Visit to Mani LGA (Katsina) September 2005

⁴¹ Visit to Efon LGA (Ekiti)

⁴² Visit to Mani LGA (Katsina) September 2005

⁴³ Interview with DD Planning, research and statistics, SUBEB, Niger

⁴⁴ Interview with RCs, September 2005

Janzama Primary School was established in 1992 and is located in a semi-urban area of Mani LGA. At the time of CBR it had 184 students (154 boys, 30 girls) and 12 teachers (3 female, 9 male). It has 8 classrooms. Two of the classrooms were constructed by the PTA; another was initiated by the PTA and then funded by UNICEF. There is also a library under construction by the community. There are even boarding facilities.

The school went through CBR and CLEDEP. The main problem identified during CBR was inadequate instructional materials. The Headteacher and PTA chair were trained as community facilitators. This they say involved sharing CLEDEP, and they then started to organise a series of meetings. Even before this, however, the PTA chair did all that he could to involve the community.

The APG has been established. Members were picked from the PTA. The APG is understood as being a sub-committee of the PTA, and reports to the PTA. The APG is now in the process of preparing an estimate for the cost of toilets. They also want to construct a surrounding wall to avoid encroachment. 'We are ready to contribute 20%. Some will build walls, some will dig holes'.

According to APG members, members of the community are now more concerned with what teachers are doing, and they visit the school regularly to monitor. This is in fact new. A community meeting is usually held at the end of every month. It is broadcast by radio. Before CLEDEP it was just a meeting: CLEDEP has formalised the system that was there before. There is a cycle. Members of the APG said that key changes at the school in the last year have included construction of more classrooms; more teachers posted; NYC members posted; and academically the school has improved.

Four female PTA members said that key changes have been additional classrooms, the library, children are given exercise to do, there is additional furniture, there is a preschool. This is seen as a very good school, because it won the 'queen's competition' [a competition organised by the traditional leader]. They say that they are now invited to the school more frequently, because of CLEDEP. They discuss the school's problems and ways of solving them. 'We are all invited and involved; our concerns are taken into consideration'. At the last community meeting, the project was identified – toilet and fencing – and all were made aware of the APG. Other issues not yet addressed are the water supply issue and instructional materials. There are not enough textbooks to go round and children have to share. This was not discussed at the meeting. In some subjects, children do not have textbooks at all.

Box 11: Janzama Primary School, Mani (Katsina)

This case begs the question of why the priority identified during the CBR – instructional materials – and which clearly remains an issue – has not been addressed during/through the CLEDEP process. It also suggests that there is more community activity around the school as a result of CLEDEP.

5.4.3 Why physical infrastructure?

Why are schools overwhelmingly opting for infrastructure projects, even when they have been expressly requested to make the second phase of Self Help non-infrastructure? This is in spite of the fact that the CBR raised many non-infrastructure issues (e.g. at Magaji School the issue of low enrolment and attendance of Hausa girls was not addressed through CLEDEP).⁴⁵

The first and most obvious reason is the deplorable state of physical infrastructure in many Nigerian schools. Many schools are still using school buildings built in 1955 that had not been maintained or added to for 50 years. Many buildings were observed to be physically unsound and unsafe.⁴⁶ Furthermore, in many cases the number and size of buildings is insufficient for the numbers of students. In many cases the numbers of students have increased since the recent enactment of UBE laws and policies. This situation of too few classrooms that are not in a fit state for educational purposes is exacerbated by new policies for example in Oyo state which states that the teacher-pupil ratio must have no more than 30 students⁴⁷.

The second reason is that school and community leaders want to have something tangible to show for their efforts. For example the APG chair at Magaji School said 'we want the classroom to look as beautiful as the university under construction in Lapai'⁴⁸. This appears to be bound up to some extent with the wish to avoid suspicion of having used government funds inappropriately: a physical, tangible structure is seen as a way to remain above suspicion.

The third reason is that in most cases decision makers at community, school, LGA and state level do not have the experience of, or exposure to, quality education and innovative approaches to school improvement in order to develop proposals

⁴⁵ Visit to Lapai LGA (Niger) September 2005

⁴⁶ 'The standard of construction ranged from the very good, through the more or less acceptable, to the extremely bad. Even where buildings had originally been constructed to reasonable standards, the complete lack of repairs or maintenance since construction has rendered many of these buildings to a state of almost total disrepair' (Wakeham, N. (2006), *School Upgrading Programme: Evaluation of Current Practice*. Abuja: Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE).)

⁴⁷ One unanticipated side effect of this is that in Ibadan for example, High School students in particular have problems finding a place and must travel to outlying schools. Many students at Owobale Community School travel half an hour from Ibadan every day at significant cost to their parents.

⁴⁸ Visit to Lapai LGA (Niger) September 2005

to improve the quality of teaching and learning. When questioned about improving the quality of education, many Headteachers and education officials proposed infrastructural development. Of course while decent buildings are one important aspect of creating a favourable learning environment, they are not the be all and end all. As one Local Inspector of Education (LIE) put it, 'when you have infrastructure, students will want to go there'⁴⁹.

This situation is exacerbated by the fact that school management and development is understood as a largely administrative task. During the review it was extremely rare to hear education officials or teaching staff discussing qualitative issues. The culture of education management is such that discussions about how many bricks and bags of cement are required are more commonplace than discussions about whether and how children are learning. To a certain extent this resonates with the observation in Plateau state CBR report that the focus on physical infrastructure draws attention away from the lack of focus on teaching and learning within the education system.

A further obstacle to non-infrastructural projects is that the structure and application process for self-help funding seems to encourage and expect infrastructural projects. This message has been distilled from state through LGEA down to school level so that schools effectively have little choice in the projects that are selected. This tendency is exacerbated by tight timeframes for submission of proposals. In Borno, schools were given 48 hours to submit proposals. As a result most of the proposals from each LGEA are identical and would seem in some cases to have been written by the same hand.

Added to this is the fact that the format of self help applications to a certain extent pre-supposes that proposals will be infrastructural. This is noted by one SUBEB official in Niger state, who says that all the plans he has seen so far have been for infrastructure, apart from one proposal for instructional materials. This, he suggests, is partly down to the format: 'there is no space for other issues'. The OPR sees CBR findings as justification of the infrastructure focus:

Two of the key findings of the community based research component (CLEDEP) were (i) the high level of commitment shown by communities to the development of their schools and (ii) the provision of facilities was, by far, their number one priority. In consequence, it can be expected that over the life of the UBE project a high percentage of available resources will be used for this purpose (Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005, 32).

Although there is clearly a desperate need for the development of physical infrastructure in Nigerian schools it is also clear that infrastructure development

⁴⁹ Interview with LIE, Akinyele LGA (Oyo) September 2005

must be accompanied by attention to other aspects of school development including the quality of teaching and learning.

The view of UBEC on this is that once infrastructural needs have been dealt with, it will be able to focus on quality issues. However, experience from school visits demonstrates that this assumption does not necessarily hold. During school visits in Ekiti, for example, school leaders continued to say that infrastructure was their first priority even though, with self help funding, their student:classroom ratios were at an acceptable level.

Another reason is that continuity between CBR and CLEDEP was not as strong as it could or should have been.

St Benedict's school was started in 1930 and was originally a church-owned school. It has 325 students (so far – enrolment was still underway – previous year 455) and had only 6 classrooms. Two additional classrooms were constructed under self help in August 2005. The school had also been through Community Based Research and CLEDEP and has received one Self Help grant. There are 22 teachers at the school, all female apart from one male.

The school has many students and they are short of classrooms. During the Community Research a shortage of classrooms and shortage of furniture were the main issues identified.

'If we can do self help we can give the school some assistance' (PIC members). The decision to apply for Self Help funding to build two classrooms was the decision of the community. We talked to them; gave them feedback; met regularly.

Members of the community gave sand and money – around 22,000 Naira. The church gave us a payment of 60,000 Naira (this used to be a church school). They also came to do manual labour. Pupils carried sand and pebbles. We got donations of planks from parents.

'It joins us together, community members count themselves as part of the work; a personal work for themselves. People were very happy about the renovation work. This school has suffered a lot from not getting any help. Now they are ready to co-operate.'

When asked about what non-infrastructure project they planned to select for Self Help Phase 2, they could not think of anything that is not infrastructure.

They prefer the money to be given direct to the community because the contractor may take it. It allows them to put in more effort. The community is also happy. Work would not have been so good otherwise.

Box 12: St Benedict's Catholic Primary School, Igede-Ekiti (Ekiti)

This case illustrates that community efforts have always been there in terms of school construction; that school/community members prefer Self Help to contractors; and how school leaders have problems in turning their thoughts to anything that is not physical.

5.4.4 Outcomes

Although it is really too early to judge outcomes, according to the Headteacher of Anglican Secondary School, Efon 'Self Help has given us a beautiful environment and reduced truancy'. The new intake had already reached 125, as compared to 65 in the year 2004-05. This increase was attributed to the new buildings, but also to the fact that results had been good. Community representatives at St John's Primary School, Efon (Ekiti) said 'we are grateful to God. The government has not forgotten us'⁵⁰. Headteacher and community representatives at Muduru Primary School, Mani (Katsina) said that attendance had improved because of new classrooms and raised awareness of parents⁵¹.

It should be mentioned however that enrolment increases are probably also in part due to other factors such as the UBE law and other initiatives such as the introduction of feeding programmes – as mentioned by the Headteacher of St John's Primary School, Efon (Ekiti)⁵².

Many communities however have given more than the 20% figure suggested, up to 50-60% of the total suggested, according the Self Help Desk Officer in Borno.⁵³

There is a perception from state and LGEA officials however that the implementation of Self Help has been more satisfactory in CLEDEP schools. Members of the project team (Ekiti) suggest that in terms of rate of work, CLEDEP schools have performed better and done the work more quickly. 'They showed more interest than those who are not trained'⁵⁴. This is echoed by the Self Help Desk Officer in Borno who said that Self Help schools that have also been through CLEDEP are 'faster and more challenging'⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Visit to Efon LGA (Ekiti) September 2005

⁵¹ Visit to Mani LGA (Katsina) September 2005

⁵² Visit to Efon LGA (Ekiti) September 2005

⁵³ Interview with State Self Help Desk Officer (Borno) November 2005

⁵⁴ Visit to Ekiti, September 2005

⁵⁵ Interview with Borno State Self Help Desk Officer, November 2005

There are also suggestions that through CLEDEP the Self Help process has been more participatory. For example one education secretary mentioned that previous self help pilots had been 'just between the head of the school and the office', while in Self Help through CLEDEP 'so many people are involved – local government, community, State, villagers'.⁵⁶

The more participatory nature of CLEDEP results in greater transparency and accountability during the implementation process. The Area Education Officer at Efon (Ekiti) said that as the money is spent, community members know about it and approve⁵⁷. CLEDEP schools 'have gained a lot', he suggests. They plan, review, implement better. They conduct a market survey before making a proposal, monitor well and the account keeping is better.

The Headteacher of Vallangade school notes that their first Self Help project (under PEP II) under which they constructed 2 classrooms resulted in an increase in enrolment: 'when people see the renovation, they start giving us their people'.⁵⁸

Aguo Baptist Primary School is in Oyo East LGA, in the eastern part of Oyo State. It is in a remote rural location. It was started in 1955 by the Baptist Church. Since then, no new buildings have been made apart from a two-room block built by the community in 2000. There are 230 pupils at the school – 111 boys and 119 girls. Children come from nearby villages, at the most 2-3km away.

The school comes under Self Help, although it did not take part in CBR. The Self Help project chosen was renovation of the community built block, which is nearly complete apart from the finishing touches. The Headteacher, Mr Popoola, along with three community members went to CLEDEP training in Ibadan. 'We were so pleased... The focus was on involving the community in how to go about erecting schools: classrooms, fence, borewell.'

We called on five members initially – the APG. Then 15 came. We presented everything to them. Then we had a PTA meeting, to which all members came. They chose a classroom because it is getting older and may fall down at any time.

Some members of the community were concerned that the money was not enough. Some didn't like it, but the support of philanthropists we insisted we

⁵⁶ Interview with LGEA Education Secretary, Egbeda, Oyo, November 2005

⁵⁷ Visit to Efon LGA (Ekiti) September 2005

⁵⁸ Visit to Gwoza LGA (Borno) November 2005

could do it. We got 315,000 Naira from the World Bank and raised 20,000 in cash and kind. The final payment is due in the next week or two. However, we have no furniture for the new block. We are advised we will have to take it up with SUBEB.

The community appreciated it. They never thought something like this could come. People have come from far and near to see it.

The PTA chair says that they asked everyone to contribute 500N however that in the end not everyone contributed – it was mostly the PIC and APG. Parents complained that they didn't have enough money. This was mainly to do with the time of year – in July no one has money, whereas at harvest time (December-January it wouldn't have been a problem.)

There is one dissenting voice however – a teacher questions why the government doesn't do anything for teachers. He says they never really had the option of anything other than infrastructure. He thinks that the government pushed schools into infrastructure projects because it is in competition with private schools. He would have preferred self help to have done something for teachers.

Box 13: Aguo Baptist Primary School, Oyo East (Oyo)

The focus of CLEDEP as understood by the Headteacher suggests that CLEDEP has been adapted to lean further towards physical infrastructure improvement.

5.4.5 Problems

Problems with Self Help were identified during the OPR. The popularity of the IDA Self Help component confirms the above assertion. However the team were concerned about the unit costs of the buildings, the speed of delivery, their quality and the low level of community involvement in the process (Kirkcaldy and Macrae, 2005, 32).

One of the reasons revealed during the research for poor quality of buildings is the lack of technical support for community members carrying out construction projects. For example at St John's Anglican Primary School, a newly built classroom was under termite attack but LGEA officials seemed not to be in a position to offer support and advice. This was underlined by a recent report on the state of school buildings in Nigeria (Wakeham, 2006):

The standard of construction of buildings being constructed by communities is even worse mainly because they are being given no technical assistance or professional supervision and the amounts of money being used to construct the buildings are inadequate. Many of the buildings seen will not have long useful lives, their classrooms are too small and many of them will lose their roofs in the first bad storm (Wakeham, 2006, 6).

School and community representatives often raised the problem of uncertainty over when funding would be received. In Borno, where many communities had been waiting six months for the release of Self Help funding, the delay was having a real impact on the enthusiasm and motivation of community members. For example at Baga Budumary Primary School, members of the APG say that they are not going to go any further until they see the money. In fact they seem quite annoyed that the self help money has not yet materialised. 'We need something in the purse'. This is echoed at state level by the Commissioner for Education (Ekiti): 'we need quick approval of proposals. We are ready to spend the money'. One Education Secretary said of Self Help funds that 'the distance between release of the 70% and the rest is too long – one to one and a half months is enough.' He added that in general there is not enough funding, and that 'education secretaries need to be empowered'. Fuel for monitoring visits is expensive and he sometimes ends up paying out of his own pocket.

Local Government officials in Ekiti raised the problem of 'poor workmanship' in Self Help projects and noted that timing of the projects may not be in the best interests of the school.

There were suggestions also that Self Help had 'eclipsed everything else'⁵⁹ that CLEDEP was trying to do – i.e. a broader model of school development planning, with Self Help funding as just one of a range of sources of support and funding for schools and communities.

Another issue is to do with the targeting and selection of Self Help schools: see the case study of Efun II Primary School, Egbeda (Oyo):

Efun II Primary School was formed by splitting the original Efun Primary School in 2002 when it grew too large and now shares a site and some buildings with Efun I Primary school. The schools are located in Egbeda LGA, in a peri-urban area not far from Ibadan. Together, they have 1250 students and 80 teachers. (This shows the extreme imbalance of teachers in urban areas – the student:teacher ration here is just over 15:1.)

Egbeda is part of the second wave of Oyo CLEDEP: that is, facilitation is state funded not CUBE funded. Efun II has been selected for Self Help funding while Efun I has not. This raises the question of on what criteria Self Help schools were selected. According to state officials it was done by LGAs and SUBEB on the basis of need (primarily infrastructural need).

⁵⁹ Interview with Research Consultants, September 2005

The Self Help project that has been chosen is construction of a new block of classrooms for Efun II. Meanwhile the Headteacher of Efun I is trying desperately to get funds – and to divert self Help funds for her project which is shoring up a block of classrooms that is being undermined by water. Indeed community representatives whose children are in Efun II raised the problem of the damaged building as being critical.

Box 14: Efun II Primary School, Egbeda (Oyo)

It is easy to understand the friction that the situation with Self Help funding is causing in these two schools – to all intents and purposes they are the same school, the most pressing problem (as perceived by parents and community members) relates to the school that does not come under Self Help funding. From their perspective the choices about where funding goes are nonsensical.

This point was emphasised by Secretary Oyo East LGEA who pointed out that only 18 out of 33 primary schools are getting self help. 'The other schools hope that one day they will get it'. Of these 15 schools, he says, five need urgent refitting, and one has no roof so that during the rains children have to stay at home.⁶⁰

Another key issue is the cost to members of the community of Self Help. Furthermore there is evidence to suggest that communities in poorer resourced schools away from administrative centres are taking on a proportionately greater burden of Self Help costs. At Magaji Primary School in Niger state, the levy on parents had been increased from 30 to 100 Naira per year to help pay for the Self Help project.⁶¹ For example at Aguo Primary School, (Oyo) one rural school, APG members said that they were asking each parent to contribute 500N towards the construction of the new Self Help project. They admitted that few parents had come forward with this amount and they, the committee members, had ended up making most of the contributions. In contrast, at the very much better resourced, semi-urban Olivet Baptist High School a few miles up the road (see Box 10), parents were being asked to contribute 2-300 Naira each. The suggestion is that poorer resourced rural schools are bearing a greater burden of self help contributions than better resourced, more central schools. Self Help risks exacerbating inequalities if this is not addressed.

There is evidence to suggest that Self Help places a greater burden on poorer communities. A UBEC representative said that since communities can choose to contribute in kind rather than cash, this should not really be an issue. However the point is that schools in remote, rural economies are multiply disadvantaged, have fewer resources in the first place, lower enrolments, their catchments are

⁶⁰ Interview with Secretary, Oyo East LGEA (Oyo) November 2005

⁶¹ Visit to Lapai LGA (Niger) September 2005

poorer and yet the demands they make on parents and communities – whether in cash or kind - are concomitantly greater.

The Federal Government recognises that equity is a major issue and has established an additional fund, the UBE intervention fund, to target 'disadvantaged states, LGAs and communities⁶².' A discussion of targeting led the DD to say that 'even if the selection is short-circuited, since it will be continuous – a time will come when they have all gone through'. This suggests within government a rather 'catch-up' approach to disadvantaged communities which, rather than seeking to level the playing field, assumes that resources will eventually reach all schools, including the most disadvantaged.

However doubts must remain over states' capacity, understanding and will to seek out and target the really disadvantaged areas and communities. The consultant contends that resources must be targeted specifically and continuously at poorer communities, schools, LGAs and states or the gaps will continue to widen.

Summary:

- Self Help projects have been favourably received.
- Infrastructure projects were overwhelmingly selected for Self Help projects in both CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools. Physical infrastructure projects are preferred partly because of the deplorable state of many schools in Nigeria. Other reasons for this preference are the wishes of Headteachers and community leaders for a tangible investment in the school. Furthermore, there is little exposure to quality schools and innovative approaches to school development within schools, communities or the education administration. The format and process of Self Help funding combines with the above to mitigate against non-infrastructure projects
- There is evidence to suggest that planning, selection and implementation of self help projects in CLEDEP schools was more inclusive and participatory than in non-CLEDEP schools
- However, lack of technical support for Self Help construction projects may result in poor workmanship. Uncertainty and unpredictability of Self Help funding causes problems for school plans. There is some evidence that Self Help eclipses other initiatives.
- Self Help risks placing a greater financial burden on poorer communities, since those communities that are already advantaged are in a better position to help themselves. Careful targeting and realistic funding of Self Help is therefore required.

⁶² Interview with DD social mobilisation, UBEC, FGoN

5.5 Planning

This section addresses the third and sixth outputs of the evaluation:

- An assessment of future community readiness for education planning in both CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools.
- An analysis of the quality, scope and local ownership of development plans produced - including the level of institutionalisation of the planning process (plans for revision; future initiatives)

5.5.1 Community readiness for education planning

In CLEDEP schools there was an overwhelming readiness on the part of community members to give time and resources for the school. For example at Vallangade, Gwoza (Borno), community members said 'We come together to mend the school. Formerly we saw this as the responsibility of the government. Now we are ready to do anything for the school, based on what we have observed.'⁶³

The view of LGEA and state officials, generally speaking, was that communities are more prepared to contribute time and resources to school improvement. However, this is not the same as readiness for education planning. There was no evidence of schools producing development plans above and beyond self help plans. In this respect the broader education planning goals of CLEDEP have been eclipsed by the financial and time pressures of the self help programme.

One of the issues is the common view of planning held by members of school communities. 'There is no school plan because there are no resources to plan with', according to one Headteacher⁶⁴. At Olivet Baptist High School the Headteacher said 'if there is no money we cannot plan... we plan from time to time as funds are released'⁶⁵. This was a commonly expressed view of planning at community, school and LGEA level – to wait until resources come in and then sit down and decide what to do with them. None of the schools visited had a plan based on identifying and defining their needs and then seeking resources to undertake changes. To a certain extent this is a reflection of the lack of control felt by school and LGEA managers. It is also a significant obstacle in terms of introducing and institutionalising a new planning process, whether CLEDEP, Self Help or Whole School Development Planning.

A common complaint of LGEA and State officials was that schools and community members expected the government to do everything for them and

⁶³ Visit to Gwoza LGA (Borno), November 2005

⁶⁴ Visit to Oyo East LGA (Oyo) November 2005

⁶⁵ Visit to Oyo East LGA (Oyo) November 2005

expressed the view that one of the strengths of Self Help and CLEDEP was that it empowered communities in terms of giving them a mandate to take responsibility for school improvements. However it would seem at the current time that any potential for empowerment is still severely restricted by resource constraints and in particular the stranglehold that the State maintains over resource distribution. Until this can be addressed, it is unrealistic to expect schools and communities to undertake a more proactive form of planning.

Nonetheless there are some encouraging signs in that some expressed the view that CLEDEP provided a useful model for on-going planning and problem solving. The five person Action Planning Group set up during the CLEDEP process makes decision making easier according to Research Consultants⁶⁶. In Borno, members of Vallangade village committee were using the CLEDEP cycle for planning and implementing projects beyond education, including the recent renovation of their access road⁶⁷.

5.5.2 Quality, scope and local ownership of plans

It is understood that this aspect of the evaluation refers to expected school plans – above and beyond Self Help plans – that would be produced through the CLEDEP process. In none of the schools visited was there evidence of any ‘paper’ plans in that sense; however, where the CLEDEP process had thrown up issues and projects that could be addressed, this had been done in many cases.

If, in terms of the quality and scope of such plans, we refer to the extent to which they are based on an all-round assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the school in terms of all key aspects (including say teaching and learning, community participation, management and leadership as well as infrastructural issues) then for the most part it cannot be said that the plans were of high quality. The reasons for the overwhelming focus on infrastructural projects and the powerlessness felt by school communities in terms of raising resources are discussed elsewhere.

In terms of local ownership, there is evidence that in CLEDEP schools there was a much greater sense of local ownership than in non-CLEDEP schools. For example at Baga Budumary Primary School, Kukuwa (Borno), neither parents that we met nor even teachers in the school had any idea about what proposal the school leadership had submitted for self help funding. The process of decision-making, even within the limits described above, was more inclusive and broader-based than in non-CLEDEP schools. One of the unexpected outcomes of this was that Headteachers explained that through the CLEDEP process they were less open to charges of corruption or siphoning off school funds.

⁶⁶ Interview with Research Consultants, Kaduna, September 2005.

⁶⁷ Visit to Gwoza LGA (Borno), November 2005

Huge challenges remain however in terms of building and safeguarding women's participation in school CLEDEP and other participatory community processes. While this is particularly the case in Northern states, the challenges in the South must not be overlooked.

5.5.3 LGEA and state planning

There is evidence in several cases of Local Government officials see CBR and CLEDEP as an aid to planning and implementation. For example the chair of Musawa LGA (Katsina) took the CBR report to council for deliberation and called PTA and Nigerian Union of Teachers leaders and asked them to focus on the issues in the report. In Mani LGA in Katsina, officials hope to roll out CLEDEP training to all schools⁶⁸.

State Self Help Officer Borno said that there is a good fit between CBR and processes of LGEA planning. In Oct/November each LGEA is asked to bring its priorities for the next year to discuss budgets. Whether it actually happened directly this way, however, is unclear.

There is also evidence of institutionalisation at the state level, for example in Oyo, where all Self Help schools are receiving adapted CLEDEP training. However, in Oyo there is little concrete evidence that CBR-CLEDEP has influenced state or LGEA planning, according to the state Adviser.

Some state officials recognise that there tends to be a limited view of what planning encompasses, which makes it difficult for state authorities to take account of the complex issues raised by the CBR. For example the UBE co-ordinator (Katsina) said that the authorities tend to look at the problem as one of enrolment; the challenge is to increase enrolment; and the means to that is to build more classrooms. There is, he suggested, a tendency to over-simplify which is challenged by CBR reports. 'It is too soon to see if planning capacity is different – the demands of the community are going to be better articulated in line with actual needs'⁶⁹. This is an opinion back up by observations of the Regional Team Leaders who suggest that planning was taking place without really knowing what the issues were. This relates back to the point about a failure at all levels of the system to engage with the complexity of the situation and to develop appropriate solutions.

Summary:

- Community motivation as a result of going through CLEDEP is high. However there is little evidence of planning in the sense envisaged by CLEDEP: i.e. for

⁶⁸ Interview with RTL (South), September 2005

⁶⁹ Interview with State UBE Co-ordinator (Katsina), September 2005

- all key aspects of school quality development. Potential for *real* community-based planning is hindered by highly centralised state control of resources.
- However there is evidence of much broader ownership of planning and decision-making in CLEDEP schools than in non-CLEDEP schools. There is also evidence of CLEDEP being taken up and used by communities beyond school.
 - Women's participation remains a huge challenge, not only in the Northern states.
 - Many Local Government Officials see CBR and CLEDEP as an extremely useful process.
 - Some state officials recognise the potential benefits of CBR and CLEDEP for state level planning but there is resistance due to entrenchment of the traditional, top-down system of planning.

5.6 School Based Management Committees (SBMCs)

This section addresses the fourth output of the evaluation:

- An analysis of the role and effectiveness of SMCs in both CLEDEP and non-CLEDEP schools as far as can be discerned at the time of the consultancy.

There are many differences in the extent to which the formation of SBMCs has been progressed in the states visited. For example in Borno, the process is well advanced while in Ekiti and Oyo it is not. The issue of SBMC raised high emotions in many cases.

Many people feel that the process of SBMC formation has been too quick. Given the history of similar structures in Nigeria that have been imposed by the government there is a need to address some of the resistance at all levels. Influential people at state level are afraid of SBMCs⁷⁰; Headteachers and PTA chairs are also afraid that their powers are being usurped. They are also considered a threat for LG officials⁷¹. There are also suspicions that where SBMCs have been formed, they are not in line with criteria.

The case study of Baga Budumary School, Kukuwa (Borno) below illustrates how SBMC can be integrated with other school institutions.

Baga Budumary Primary school is on the outskirts of Baga town, a bustling trading town and crossroads near to Lake Chad. The school was established in 1992, has 388 students (199 boys and 189 girls) and 13 teachers, including one female teacher.

⁷⁰ Interview with State Adviser and State Officials, Niger, September 2005

⁷¹ Interview with Katsina State UBE Co-ordinator, September 2005

A mixed group of school and community representatives (all male) said that there have been many changes over the past 3 years. They have made concerted efforts to send their children to school. They have constantly checked on the school, to ensure that there is quality teaching. Many more children are now going on to secondary school. We have built an additional classroom. This is due to the concerted efforts of the community. There has been an increase in the number of teachers. In the past they weren't so scrutinised by the community.

The community is now more involved 'because communities are now wiser and more conscious'. The need for education is becoming more obvious. People want to participate in politics: 'I didn't go to school, and I cannot participate in politics' said the PTA chair.

Before not much attention was given from outside apart from the LGEA secretary. During CBR, the priorities identified were, in order, improve teachers' welfare and motivation; provide clean water supply; provide furniture; build more classrooms; provision of teaching materials. Since the CBR, many people have been to visit the school. Some consultations were done even after the CBR. As a result performance has been higher because of better co-operation between teachers and parents.

The Self Help project selected was firstly the construction of a wash bore-hole; secondly the construction of four mud brick staff quarters. 'Since the commencement of Self Help people from outside are coming to assist. They are giving directly to the community. Before they would just send a contractor, clear an area and no one knows why it is begin done.'

The Headteacher and one teacher were trained as CLEDEP community facilitators. In September they held a meeting of stakeholders to elect the APG. They have opened a bank account and put in some new windows and doors. Now, however, they are not going to go any further until they see the money. In fact they seem quite annoyed that the self help money has not yet materialised. 'We need something in the purse'.

They see their SBMC as comprising representatives of different stakeholder groups to aid with consultation.

There is increased retention of and attendance of students, according to the Headteacher. Attendance rates have risen from 53% in the second term of 2004-5 to 66% in the 3rd term; and an expected 70%+ in the current term. He says this is a result of talking to the community, holding meetings and the Self Help funded plans.

Box 15: Baga Budumary Primary School, Kukuwa, Borno State.

In this case the school management had seen CLEDEP as integral to the process of forming SBMC so that the SBMC members are seen as representatives of the wider community and responsible for representing their views at committee meetings. As one Borno State Official said 'Constituting SBMCs with CLEDEP is much easier because they have a purpose.'⁷² This is backed up by one State Adviser considered that 'the process of community consultation is important for the formation of SBMCs'⁷³. This suggests that the power to constitute school committees should lie to a greater degree with the community – so as to take account of local differences – rather than with the state.

One state Self Help Desk Officer said that constituting SBMCs with CLEDEP 'is much easier because they have a purpose'⁷⁴

Summary:

- SBMC formation needs to be more community driven: the CBR/CLEDEP process shows the effectiveness of constituting a committee with a purpose in mind
- Consultation and representation functions of SBMC need thinking through.
- The CBR and CLEDEP process itself has acted as a catalyst for community driven initiatives in some cases.

⁷² Interview with Borno State Self Help Desk Officer, November 2005

⁷³ Interview with State Adviser and State Officials, Niger, September 2005

⁷⁴ Interview with Borno State Self Help Desk Officer, November 2005

6. Conclusions: Strengths and weaknesses of CBR-CLEDEP

6.1 Strengths

The response to CBR-CLEDEP has been extremely positive at community level. This is partly due to the fact that schools have been neglected for so long; but also related to the fact that community members have, in many cases, been involved in developing and maintaining schools for a long time.

The CLEDEP cycle is easily understood and used by community members. This logical approach to planning appears to be accessible and innovative enough to stimulate their interest but not so technical that they cannot understand, own and adapt it.

There is some, limited evidence that CBR and CLEDEP has informed LGEA planning. LGEAs, however, have such limited role, resources and power themselves that the potential of CBR in particular has not been fulfilled in this respect.

At state level, officials were positive about CBR and CLEDEP (despite early resistance) mainly because they perceive it is time, resource and labour saving. While this may, in the short term, reap positive benefits in terms of state acceptance of community-based planning, in the longer term this is problematic – community based, participatory planning will by definition take longer and cost more than ‘old style’ top down planning but rewards will be seen over the longer term.

CLEDEP and CBR have the potential to raise community level demand for action on education. This is an extremely positive outcome.

CLEDEP broadens participation in school decision-making. Although there is limited scope for comparison, CLEDEP would seem to have the potential to broaden participation by communities in school planning and decision making.

The CLEDEP process may support effective SBMC formation. Although to early to form conclusions, there was a strong feeling that SBMCs will be more effectively formed if attached to a process, rather than ‘by decree’.

6.2 Weaknesses/challenges

There are few instances where CLEDEP plans have focused beyond infrastructural development. This is despite the fact that through the CBR, issues that went far beyond school infrastructure emerged as priorities. This relates not only to chronic under-investment in school infrastructure, but also to

a systemic failure to analyse, discuss and prioritise the goal of quality teaching and learning for all children.

Quality of CBR-CLEDEP reporting and monitoring has been poor and insufficiently integrated with other monitoring mechanisms. Too few clear and accessible state and LGA level CBR reports were produced and used strategically. While there is admirable process monitoring in many states, there is limited impact monitoring at state and LGEA level. Furthermore monitoring of CBR/CLEDEP schools has not been systematic nor joined up to wider EMIS development.

There is little evidence of CBR-CLEDEP influencing state level planning. This is partly due to poor monitoring mentioned above; but also due to resistance from state planning officials.

There is some evidence to suggest that teachers and Headteachers are insufficiently integrated into CLEDP process. This varies from school to school; but it is important that they, too are empowered to work in partnership with parents and members of the community for the improvement of their school.

There is limited evidence of improved participation by women through the CLEDEP process, although the CBR was effective at least in bringing women's and girls' voices further to the fore.

7. Lessons learned

Simultaneous quality and infrastructure development

The huge demand for improved school infrastructure has eclipsed other, equally important aspects of school development (partly because these other aspects are less familiar, more complex and require specialist input). Given the status quo, this is inevitable and efforts to improve quality (focusing on teacher – pupil interaction, students learning, school management and leadership) in Nigerian schools need to be undertaken simultaneously with infrastructure development. This is very much in line with the approach taken in CUBE's Whole School Development Planning (WSDP) model, which encourages planning around a number of key areas of school effectiveness including professional leadership, shared vision and goals, a learning environment, concentration on teaching and learning, purposeful teaching (Griffiths and Blundell, 2005).

Systematic and equitable investment in school infrastructure

Community-led efforts through Self Help are not, by themselves, sufficient or appropriate to solve the infrastructure crisis in Nigerian schools. It is unrealistic to expect poor communities to take on this burden, and ultimately damaging to the longer term goal of improved community participation. Sustained, systematic investment in schools must be planned, so that all schools meet a minimum acceptable standard for students' comfort and safety. Self Help should be the 'icing on the cake', rather than a cheap short cut to improved infrastructure.

One danger of community-based schemes is that without careful targeting they can, in fact, act to increase disparities between communities, as highlighted by Bray (2000) in his survey of community participation in education:

In general... community inputs by themselves are much more likely to increase disparities. Where community initiatives imply self help, the communities most likely to help themselves are those which are already advantaged (Bray, 2000, 26).

There is evidence of this happening with Self Help. In order to prevent this, resources must be targeted at relatively less advantaged communities in order to close gaps between schools and communities. That means training officials at Federal, State and LGEA level in social analysis skills and putting in place frameworks to ensure that selection of 'disadvantaged' schools, LGAs and communities is done rigorously and effectively. For this reason the consultant supports the recommendation of the School Upgrading Programme

consultants (Wakeham, 2006) that selection of schools for upgrading and construction should be informed by systematic mapping of schools and communities, and be accompanied by increased training and resources for communities involved. It cannot be automatically assumed that officials have the skills and inclination to select less advantaged schools.

Accessible supporting materials

State and LGEA officials all commented on the importance of accessible supporting materials; that is, clear, concise materials translated into the local language. Outcomes of CBR and school plans should also be made available to ensure transparency and ownership. The proposed WSDP programme goes a long way towards this by proposing a WSDP document template. This template must be translated to ensure accessibility by SBMC and community members as well as teachers, Headteachers and officials.

Top down as well as bottom up planning

CLEDEP and CBR were extremely well received at school/community level but were insufficiently linked in with Local Government and State planning and resourcing processes, leaving it rather 'out on a limb' and dependent on the input of the CUBE State Advisor. Capacity building and resources must simultaneously be focused at Local Government and State levels: a simultaneous top-down and bottom-up process. This capacity should not just be for technical/implementation purposes, but to promote a stronger focus on quality education.

Impact as well as process monitoring

Monitoring of CLEDEP impact should be integrated with the introduction of State and Federal level EMIS. This will allow states to make a comparison between CLEDEP and CBR schools and non-CLEDEP-CBR schools using appropriate indicators. At present monitoring at the State and LGEA level is primarily process monitoring (focused on visiting, checking and supporting schools in the CLEDEP process), rather than impact monitoring (making evaluative judgements about the impact of the work) or participatory monitoring (based on the priorities and observations of school and community members themselves). There is space for all of these but there is a disproportionate focus at present on process monitoring.

Strengthened focus on gender mainstreaming

More could and should be done at all levels to emphasise the need and benefits of gender mainstreaming, for example in selection of participants and during field visits. That means, for example, explicitly specifying the involvement of female members of the community, female parents, female SBMC members, female teachers and female students in the CLEDEP process. The experience of CLEDEP indicates that if this is not explicitly spelled out, by

default the majority of participants will be male. WSDP could tackle this issue by explicitly demanding female participation in its manual and guidelines for meetings.

Harmonisation with Self Help

Better harmonisation with Self Help would have prevented some of the delays and frustrations experienced by school and community members in getting their projects started. On the other hand, Self Help has assumed the position in the minds of many – particularly at State and LGEA level - as the only possible source of support for schools. More emphasis should be laid on supporting schools and communities in accessing alternative sources of support and funding. This needs to be emphasised at the State and LGEA levels, so that officials are not simply promoting Self Help funding to the exclusion of other sources of support.

Community participation

Understandings of community participation among State, LGEA and school officials, and within Self Help documents are largely limited to a narrow view of getting community members to contribute money, resources and labour to their schools, thus taking some of the burden from the State. This is short-termist and ultimately counter-productive. It is important to place greater emphasis on the school as an institution that is accountable to parents and communities, and that members of the community have a right to a say in how the school is managed, as well as a responsibility to support it. There is too much emphasis on the responsibilities of community members towards the school, and not enough on their rights to a say in their children's education.

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