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# SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

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**TRAINING MANUAL**

**REVISED AND UPDATED**

**27 APRIL, 2021**

## HANDOUT FOR THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TRAINING

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## SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (SMCs)

### What is a School Management Committee?

The School Management Committee is the overall governing body of the primary school system. They play a key role in the management of the daily operations of the school, ensuring basic child-friendly standards in the schools and in the oversight of education at the local level.

The School Management Committees came into existence through the Education Act 2004; Part vii section 33(1). The mandate states that:

*“The Minister shall establish a School Management Committee in respect of any government assisted primary school and every management committee so established shall assist in the management of that school in accordance with the rules made by the Minister under this Act”*

The Local Councils and Deputy Directors of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) should ensure the establishment of SMCs in every school. Where this may not be possible initially, arrangements must be made to establish one, embracing a cluster of schools in the chiefdom, a section, a zone or an area, as a preliminary step.

### Features of the School Management Committee

- a) They are legally constituted bodies established by the Education Act, 2004
- b) They assist in the management of government and government – assisted primary schools
- c) They have a membership of seven (7) as indicated in the composition of SMC section below.
- d) The term of office of the members is specific as indicated in the “Terms of office of SMC” below.
- e) Both sexes are eligible for membership
- f) Their actions are controlled by rules made by the Ministry of Education
- g) Each SMC has a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer

### Composition of SMC

- a) The Head Teacher of the School
- b) The Inspector of Schools or his/her representative (now Deputy Director, without voting right)
- c) The traditional ruler of the village or area concerned
- d) Chairman of the Community-Teacher’s Association (CTA) or his/her deputy
- e) The Proprietor’s representative
- f) Female member of a female representative of the Chiefdom Education Committee
- g) A prominent educationist

However, it is recommended that membership be increased by three to make room for increased women and Local Council participation. These would serve as ex-officio members subject to MBSSE approval, through the Local Council.

## Eligibility of the Key Officers of the SMC

### a. Chairman

- Chairman of the SMC should be literate in English, not below the age of 40 years and be respected in his/her community
- Chairman shall be nominated at the first meeting and the Head Teacher shall serve as Secretary
- The Chairman may at any time resign from office by informing the SMC at a meeting or in writing to the Secretary
- In the event of the resignation of the Chairman from office, that office shall be filled through an election at the next meeting
- No Head Teacher should chair an SMC meeting. The Head Teacher is to serve as Secretary. In the case where Chairman is absent, any member except the Head Teacher can chair the meeting

### b. Treasurer

- The Treasurer should be literate in English and have some experience in management and control of funds.
- The treasurer should have a proven formal or informal track record of book-keeping in their previous role.
- The Treasurer shall be nominated at the first meeting and the Head Teacher shall serve as Secretary
- The Treasurer may at any time resign from office by informing the SMC at a meeting or in writing to the Secretary
- In the event of the resignation of the Treasurer from office, that office shall be filled through an election at the next meeting

## Terms of Office of SMC

- The term of office for the SMC shall be for three (3) years from the date of appointment. The members shall be eligible for reappointment for another term of three (3) years. It is commended that no member should serve the committee for more than two terms without a break of at least two terms
- Any member may resign from the committee by informing the Secretary in writing of his/her resignation, having given an advanced notice of at least 2 weeks.
- All membership to the SMC is statutory. Any member who in the opinion of the committee is not adequately fulfilling his/her obligation, the body that nominated the member must be informed for replacement
- Any vacancy of the SMC shall be filled by a replacement from the same category of the persons as the former, and appointed in similar fashion. The replacement shall serve the unexpired term of the person replaced

## Functions and Responsibilities of SMC

The functions of the SMC in relation to the overall management and upkeep of the school are to:

Provide reasonable assessment of the physical conditions of the school facilities to the LC and the MBSSE in periodic reports

- Review the inspection reports relating to the performance of the school, recommend and/or take actions
  - Collaborate in the provision and maintenance of buildings, furniture, equipment and other materials
  - Assist in the formulation, approval and implementation of the school development plan and budget for every academic year
  - Keep records of the accounts and funds of the school and have them audited every year
  - Ensure that it's meetings are regular, productive and that the duties assigned to the various officers of the SMC are carried out in a responsible and efficient manner
  - Approve the school development plan and budget before implementation
- Constantly monitor the activities of the school in order to feedback observations into positive changes or the school

Foster a sense of 'school community' along with the CTA by ensuring the all school staff, parents, pupils and the other all school community view education as an integral part of the overall growth and development of the community

**Table 1: Specific Functions of the Key Officers of the SMC**

| Officer         | Functions  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Chairman</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summons and presides over meetings of the committee</li> <li>• Ensure that all members of the committee fulfil their duties, responsibilities and obligations</li> <li>• Ensures that all sub committees set up by the SMC perform effectively in accordance with their terms of reference</li> <li>• Represent the SMC at meetings summoned by the Quality Assurance Directorate/District Education Office, Local Council</li> <li>• Be the liaison between the Head Teacher, members of the committee and the community in general</li> <li>• Work with the Head Teacher to draft the annual work plan at the beginning of each school year which lists and explains all the key activities the SMC will undertake for the year, including their recommended dates for the attention of the rest of the SMC membership</li> <li>• Guides the process of implementation of approved development plans and the general administration of the school</li> <li>• Reports on funds received and disbursed</li> </ul> |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Secretary</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaises with the Chairman to finalize the agenda for the meeting</li> <li>• Ensures that notice of 14 days is given (except in emergencies) and documents (including minutes) relevant to the business of the meetings are circulated as required</li> <li>• Be responsible for the production and custody of the minutes (meeting notes) of all meeting of the committee, and that all members carry out their responsibilities decided upon in meetings— within the timelines agreed upon</li> <li>• Ensures that all other reports and documents necessary for the work of the committee are properly prepared, safely kept and circulated to the relevant persons and bodies</li> </ul> |
| <b>Treasurer</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Treasurer shall receive and pay into the designated bank account all funds generated/sourced for the committee for and on behalf of the school</li> <li>• Report periodically on the financial standing of the SMC and the school</li> </ul>  |

## The Nature and Types of SMC Meetings

### Regular Meetings

- The SMC shall meet at least once every term and meetings shall be held preferably in the school
- Notice of every meeting and the agenda of the meeting and minutes of the previous meeting circulated to members not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the date of such meeting. This does not however apply to special meetings
- Four members, including the Chairman and the Secretary, shall constitute a quorum for meetings
- No decision or proceedings of the SMC shall be invalidated on account of any vacancy or absence among the members of the committee as long as the quorum has been obtained
- The Secretary shall ensure that the minutes of the committee meetings are recorded, prepared and distributed to members, related Local Council and the Deputy Director of Education and other relevant bodies/persons within one week of that meeting
- Minutes of each meeting shall be discussed and confirmed at subsequent regular meeting.
- The Chairman and Secretary of the meeting shall sign and date the official copy of the minutes after confirmation
- The Secretary shall ensure that a permanent copy of the signed copy of the confirmed minutes is kept for the records.

## Special Meetings

- The Chairman may at any time summon a special meeting of the SMC by giving urgent notice. Such meetings are called based on:
  - a) A request for that purpose addressed to the Chairman in writing and signed by at least three (3) members of the SMC
  - b) A directive to that effect addressed to him/her in writing by the Chief Education Officer and other Education Authorities such as the Deputy Director of Education

# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

School improvement planning is a continuous process to maintain and improve the access and quality of education for all school-aged children. It is a holistic approach that applies not only to the infrastructural development of the school, but also other aspects of the school improvement including:

- a) Pupils that are in the school,
- b) School-aged children that do not attend school. These can be children that are physically, mentally or practically constrained to attend school.
- c) Pupils that have dropped out from school.

Each and every school can implement quality improvements with due consideration to the following areas<sup>2</sup>:

- Inclusivity and Equity
- Quality of teaching
- Stimulating learning environment
- Emotional wellness
- Physical health

All these quality aspects have an impact on the learning (outcomes) of school-aged children. A few examples include:

- A pupil that feels physically and emotionally safe at school, is likely to attend and perform better than a pupil that is bullied or even molested;
- A school that makes its learning resources available to pupils and use them appropriately, is likely to generate better learning outcomes;
- Pupils that use wheelchairs are more likely to attend a school where they can access classrooms using a ramp;
- Teachers that are regularly observed by a school leader and take care of their own professional development, are likely to become better teachers;
- Schools that have clean toilets for female and male pupils, are likely to be better attended than schools where toilets are not in order or not kept clean.

## **Strategies/Interventions to Improve Access, Quality and Inclusiveness in Schools<sup>3</sup>**

There are many strategies or interventions that schools can implement to improve the access, quality and inclusivity of education. A few examples are:

- A school can hold regular staff meetings to enhance collegiality and facilitate peer support;
- A school can introduce extracurricular activities to develop artistic and musical skills;
- A school can invite and have discussions with parents of children that have dropped out from school or are at risk of dropping out;
- A school can organize a fund-raising with the CTA with the goal of building a new toilet block;

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<sup>1</sup> Source: MBSSE School Quality Assurance (SQA) Hand Book for school leaders, head teachers, principals

<sup>2</sup> ditto

<sup>3</sup> ditto



- A school can organize targeted support for children that are at risk of dropping out;
- A school can organize an open school day with activities organized by pupils, display of student work and an opportunity for parents to speak to teachers;
- A school leader can ask local crafts men and women to facilitate (extracurricular) courses on craft. For example, repairing school furniture
- A school can organize an annual enrolment campaign with the community to increase access;
- A school can form and organize rotating teams of pupils responsible for daily cleaning of school facilities and premises.
- A school can mobilize the community to improve student attendance
- Do we have enough teachers? Do we have a Maths teacher? If no, how do we get one? Do we have cases of absentee teachers or teacher behavior issues?
- What is the dress code of pupils & teachers? Are they peace abiding or violent
- Do parents visit school to monitor child's performance? Do kids study/do homework? Do all students have appropriate learning environment at home? If not, how can SMC support CTA to raise action on this?
- is school clean/bushy? How to make it more attractive & safer for at-risk groups? e.g. is there water? Toilets? What is the pupil: drop hole ratio? Is it safe for girls?
- How can community support school development? Teacher Accommodation

## The Purpose of School Improvement Planning

The objectives of School Improvement Planning are:

- Encourage staff and parents to monitor student achievement levels and other factors, such as the school environment, that are known to influence student success.
- Enhance community participation and ownership of school management and development initiatives
- Strengthen partnerships and unity of purpose among the stakeholders
- Strengthen school management, transparency and accountability for improved learning outcomes.

A school improvement plan thus supports the school to structurally plan, implement, monitor and evaluate school improvements. A school can use the examples highlighted in the introduction above, but it can also come up with new, unique goals that respond to needs and opportunities in the local school environment. The formulation of goals, supported by an implementation plan, make up for a school improvement plan. The School Management Committee (SMC) leads in the development and implementation of the School Improvement Plan and are supported by other stakeholders in a consultative process.

## STEPS TO PREPARE A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN<sup>4</sup>

A school improvement plan can be made in five simple steps: It starts with a situational analysis, followed by the formulation of goals, planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Each step is briefly explained below, followed by a template that the school leader must complete

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<sup>4</sup> Ditto

## **STEP 1 Situational analysis**

### **What are the issues?**

The first step will be to identify the development needs in one of the quality areas. Important questions for the school leader to discuss with the school staff, School Management Committees/ Board of Governors or other members of the team are:

- What are the main problems in terms of access, inclusivity or quality?
- Why is it a problem?
- What are the (root) causes of the problem? When the issues are assessed and described, the team can prioritize the needs and start formulating goals that will address the needs.

## **STEP 2 Formulation of goals**

### **How to address the issues?**

Now that the school has analyzed and prioritized the issues, school improvement goals can be formulated. Goals describe the situation when an issue has been fully addressed: Refer examples listed in the introduction of this section. School improvement goals must meet two quality criteria: They need to be achievable and they need to be relevant. Both criteria are explained below.

**Achievable:** It must be possible to implement the goal within its proposed timeframe (maximum one year). This means that the school leader must ensure that necessary resources are made available. It is important to realize that not all school quality improvements require a budget. In fact, there are numerous quality improvement goals that do not cost any money. This makes it easier to achieve the goals.

**Relevant:** Achieving the goal under each dimension means the school quality or inclusivity has improved. The need that was assessed during the preparation phase has been addressed.

## **STEP 3 Planning and implementation**

### **How to achieve the goals?**

The third step of the annual school improvement cycle is the planning and implementation: Important questions for this step are:

- What actions are needed to achieve the goal?
- Who is responsible for implementing actions?
- Which resources (if necessary) are required?
- Where do resources come from? Throughout the year, the school leader ensures that the required resources are identified and allocated. S/he will also ensure that responsible staff or organizations implement the agreed actions: On time and effectively.

## STEP 4 Monitoring

### Are we on track to achieve the goals?

During every stage of the process, the school leader and the SMC/Board of Governors must monitor the implementation progress. Questions to be asked are:

- Are activities implemented on time?
- Are the required resources made available?
- And if not, which action or actions should the school leader take to ensure the goal can be achieved on time? The school leader must meet regularly with the school staff, the SMC/Board of Governors and other involved organizations, to monitor the implementation of the school improvement plan

## STEP 5 Evaluation

### Were the goals achieved?

The fourth stage of the cycle is the evaluation: Towards the end of the year, the school leader will conduct a self-evaluation of the school's performance. Part of the self - evaluation is to assess to what extent the school improvement goals have been achieved. Goals that were not fully achieved will inform the planning of the school improvement cycle for the new academic year

## Basic School Improvement Plan Template

Using the information and steps outlined above, the school can use the following simplified template in preparing the school improvement plan.

**Table 2: School Improvement Plan Template**

| Issues (Order of priority) | Goal (s)/Expected Outcome | Activity | Where (Location/Venue) | Responsible Unit/Person | Cost of Activity (Le) | Resource Availability (Yes/No) | Expected Source of Resource | Implementation Time Line |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1                          |                           |          |                        |                         |                       |                                |                             |                          |
| 2                          |                           |          |                        |                         |                       |                                |                             |                          |
| 3                          |                           |          |                        |                         |                       |                                |                             |                          |
| 4                          |                           |          |                        |                         |                       |                                |                             |                          |

## The SIP Cycle in each school?

Each Head Teacher should start the SIP cycle as soon as they are ready. The first activity that they must undertake is to facilitate the appointment/reconstitution of the SMC as directed by the School Proprietor. Once this has been undertaken schools are ready to start the SIP.

- Conventionally, schools reopen in the month of September for every academic year.
- SMCs by statutory law are required to convene at least once every quarter; in addition, the Committee can meet as and when considered necessary.

- SMCs are expected to develop SIPs at the start of each academic year
- However, depending on exigencies and specific circumstances beyond the control of the School, there is some flexibility as to the correct time to start the School Improvement Program in each school. Each school may have a different SIP start time.
- As soon as schools start the SIP cycle with the Self-Assessment then they must stick to a calendar that involves a 12-month cycle.
- For example, if a school undertakes the first meeting of the School Improvement Committee – Stage 1 of the SIP Cycle – Self-Assessment – in June then it must repeat the Self-Assessment activity within 12 months that is before or during June the following year.
- The 12 months SIP cycle will involve the following processes undertaken by the SMCs:
  - **Planning:** under planning they should offer leadership and ensure comprehensive analysis of the school needs, prioritization of the needs and development of the SIP. This should be an all-inclusive process targeting all the school stake holders.
  - Under **implementation**, they should ensure that the planned activities are implemented as planned.
  - Under **monitoring** they should continuously monitor the planned activities; conduct midterm and end term reviews; and report to the relevant bodies accordingly.
  - Under **resource mobilization**, they should do the following: map out the school stakeholders, identify each stakeholder’s potential contribution to the school; and establish ways of soliciting for their support in the implementation of SIP e.g. through proposal writing, online social networks such as alumni groups, one on one visits etc.

## Establishing a School Management Committee (SMC)/SIP Team

The first activity that the School Head should undertake is to ask the School Proprietors to identify/nominate, subject to approval by the Minister of Education or his representative, members of the SMC. The SMC is responsible for overall management of the school including School Improvement Planning. In line with the composition outlined above, it is important to invite people into the SMC who have a good knowledge of the school and surrounding community.

- Once identified the school proprietor will instruct the Head Teacher to convene the inaugural meeting where the Head Teacher will read aloud the roles of the SMC.
- Prior to this meeting, the Head Teacher will consult the school proprietors and staff to identify, prioritize and prepare budget estimates for the School Improvement Plan
- The Head Teacher then outlines the school improvement priorities and budget estimates which the SMC will scrutinize and approve.
- The SMC through CTA Chairman and Head Teacher convene a Community Parents-Teachers’ Association meeting to discuss/adopt the School Improvement Plan
- Once adopted, the SIP is implemented by the Head Teacher supervised by the SMC

## Guiding Principles of School Improvement Planning

In conclusion, the SIP development process is very important if the expected results are to be obtained. Several key principles have been identified which underpin school effectiveness and continuous improvement. These include:

- *Continuous improvement applies to all schools regardless of their level of performance. All schools have the potential to improve the learning outcomes of students.*
- *Promotion of the best interests of the learner*

- *Participation of stakeholders:* requires involvement of all key stakeholders is central to the realization of the set goals and objectives
- *Consultation at all stages:* all relevant stakeholders will be consulted at every stage of the SIP development process
- *Transparency and accountability to the public:* to enhance support and ownership the whole process will open to public scrutiny.
- *Teamwork:* the success of the SIP will depend on collaborative action by all the stakeholders.
- *Efficiency and effectiveness:* available resources should be used efficiently toward achieving expected results
- *Commitment:* successful school improvement depends on the willingness and commitment of schools to take responsibility.
- *Honesty and frankness*

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUMMARY AND GROUP WORK <sup>5</sup>

- A school improvement plan is a set of goals and actions that help the school make structural quality improvements.
- Five steps are described in the manual that help the school leader (and SMC / Board of Governors) prepare and implement a school improvement process namely:

Step 1 – Situational analysis: What are the issues? What are the (root) causes?

Step 2 – Formulation of goals: What is the desired situation?

Step 3 – Planning and implementation: What actions are needed to achieve goals?

Step 4 – Monitoring: Are we on track to achieve the goals?

Step 5 – Evaluation: Have the goals been achieved?

### **When we talk about school quality improvements, we consider the following 5 areas**

- the quality of teaching
- the emotional wellness of pupils and staff
- physical health - inclusivity and equity
- a stimulating learning environment (including infrastructure)

### **Reflection**

- Name five general areas where quality of schools can be improved
- What are the five steps to implement a school improvement plan?
- Is each step of the planning process clearly described? Is there anything that requires additional explanation?
- Share a number of examples of good school improvement goals that are not related to building toilets or fixing infrastructure
- Share few examples of school improvement goals that do not require any budget
- How would you start the process of making a school improvement plan?
- Who would you consult? And how?

### **Group exercise - Form groups with five persons per group**

#### *Instructions*

- Follow the steps to develop a school improvement plan use the scenario that the trainers will distribute
- Then complete Table 2 (Just one improvement goal)
- Make sure your school improvement plan meets the following criteria: Achievable, relevant, specific, measurable, time-bound
- Make sure that each proposed action is specific: It needs to be clear how each action contributes to achieving the goal
- Make sure all participants are actively involved in the process

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<sup>5</sup> MBSSE School Quality Assurance (SQA) Complete Training Guide

*Any questions during the activity? Ask the trainers!*

**Each group briefly present the school improvement goal**

***Review***

- Did the situational analysis result in a clearly described issue? Are the causes well understood?
- Does the goal clearly correspond with the issue?
- Is the goal achievable, relevant, time bound, specific, measurable?
- Are proposed actions for implementation specific? Is it clear how each action contributes to achieving the goal (E.g.: Holding a meeting is not a specific action)?
- Are the goals relevant?
- Any other questions or comments

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### What is financial management?

Good financial management ensures that the resources available to the school are used for the maximum benefit of the learners. More specifically, **Financial Management** means ensuring that every Leone spent is used for the most effective purpose and that every Leone can be accounted for once it is spent. The guidelines assist the Head Teacher, SMC Treasurer, SMC members, school staff and other community members to manage funds effectively at the school and account for all funds received and spent.

Good financial management requires technical skills. However, it also requires high ethical principles. **Accountability** and **Transparency** are two important principles that underpin good financial management. In all transactions, the school and community need to engage in clear and transparent communication. All funds and resources received as funds spent or resources used must be documented.

### What is the basis for Financial Management in Schools?

One function of the SMC is to support development activities and to manage funds for these activities. In many schools, the school Head Teacher or Deputy Head also play a financial management role.

### Basic Principles of Financial Management

Accountability and transparency are two important principles that should govern the work of the school and SMC in all their work and in particular with activities relating to the management of resources both financial and material (e.g. management of exercise books, sports' equipment, textbooks).

### What is accountability?

Accountability means being able and willing to explain your actions and the way you have used school/public resources that have been put in your care. It also means being able to state the reasons for your actions and taking responsibility for them. Effective accountability is demonstrated by keeping good records of the money or other resources in your care.

The school is legally accountable to the government and to the school community as represented by the SMC. Monitoring accountability involves ensuring that all financial transactions have the necessary supporting documentation (e.g. receipts, quotations, etc.) and physically verifying the existence of items upon which expenditure is claimed or the activities that have taken place.

### What is transparency?

Transparency means being open and honest in your actions and making it clear to others what you and your team are doing on behalf of the entire members and why you are doing it:

- SMCs should be transparent in all their dealings. This should be done through holding regular meetings that require the SMC to account for their actions in a public forum. Such meetings should be held at regular intervals during the year (termly) with additional meetings should any major issue arise. SMCs must also display key decision or/and a school improvement plan on the school notice board.



- Communities need to be sensitized on the importance of transparency and accountability from the SMC representatives that they have elected.

## Roles and Responsibilities

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### *Roles and Responsibilities*

Clear roles and responsibilities are important. Knowing who can withdraw funds and authorize and record spending of grant funds is important to ensure accountability and transparency. Involving community stakeholders in all aspects of school improvement—including budgeting and reviewing finances—can strengthen transparency and accountability.

- **Develop plans and budgets collaboratively.** If your school develops a SIP and budget with objectives identified in collaboration and consultation with the community, then the community will understand spending priorities and feel ownership.
- **Make accounts public and conduct regular financial and procurement reviews. Use the school notice board.** It is necessary to give regular and full reports to your school and community about the monies received and how and it is to be spent. For example, in a tender of school notebooks, this includes sharing information on which suppliers won the bid, the unit cost and the total amount. This will build the parents' confidence and willingness to participate.
- **Make decisions public and involve others in the implementation of activities.** For example, stakeholders should know which classes are to benefit from new desks being made; they should understand which class the newly recruited teaching assistant is supposed to support, etc.
- **Plan community fundraising activities.** School fundraising activities should be held to raise money to conduct activities in the SIP.

## What is the role of the SMC in managing school funds?

The SMC plays an important oversight or 'watchdog' role on the use of school funds. The SMC:

- Monitors the effective use of funds at the school level and reports any instances of malpractice to the District Education Office (DEO).
- Ensures compliance with PBF guidelines, including transparency, accountability and eligible expenditures.
- Witness delivery of materials to the school and any payments made for services (e.g. to laborer's or teaching assistants).

## Summary of roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders

The Head Teacher and SMC Chair are held overall accountable for the use and management of all funds received at schools, including PBF. Failure to comply with guidelines will result in the appropriate legal measures against the Head Teacher and SMC Chair. The SMC Chair and the Deputy Head Teacher or Teachers supports the Head Teacher. The SMC Treasurer plays an important role in recording financial transactions, drawing up documents and maintaining records. A summary of roles and responsibilities is below.

| TITLE  | RESPONSIBILITIES  |
|--|---|
| <b>SMC Chair</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oversees all aspects of SIP development and implementation, as well as financial management at the school.</li> <li>▪ Provide oversight of fund use and witness actions of withdrawal of money, authorization of payment and receipt of goods.</li> <li>▪ Sign off on the SIP and the school budget.</li> <li>▪ Sign off on requests for access / use of funds from fee subsidy account.</li> <li>▪ Sign off on purchase decisions and payment authorizations for SIP and PBF activities. Sign off on financial reporting documents and local purchase order.</li> </ul> |
| <b>SMC Treasurer</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain cash book, other financial records and keep the petty cash.</li> <li>▪ Writing of payment vouchers.</li> <li>▪ Pay vendors for purchases of goods and services.</li> <li>▪ Ensure proper filing of financial documents.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>SMC Representative (representing the community and parents)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sign off on requests for withdrawal of grant money.</li> <li>▪ Oversee monitoring of SIP activities.</li> <li>▪ Support SMC Chair responsibilities.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Head Teacher</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sign off on the SIP and the school budget.</li> <li>▪ Sign off on requests for withdrawal of funds from fee subsidy account.</li> <li>▪ Sign off on purchase decisions, local purchase order and payment authorizations for SIP and PBF activities.</li> <li>▪ Sign off on financial reporting documents.</li> <li>▪ Provide general oversight of financial transactions and record-keeping, including ensuring payment is made for goods and services.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Deputy Head Teacher/ Other Teachers</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support Head Teacher record-keeping, reporting to school community and with other duties as assigned.</li> <li>▪ Chair SMC procurement sub-committee.</li> <li>▪ Receive goods, ensure delivery notes are completed and maintain stock book.</li> </ul>  |

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## School Financial Management and Procurement Cycle

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### **Financial Management Cycle**

There are three important parts to the financial management cycle:

- Whenever money is received or spent – at least three people must witness the action.
- Whenever money is received or spent – the action must be documented in writing.
- Financial Management reports are shared with the school community on a regular basis to support transparency and accountability.

Starting from 2017, PBF is being provided to support SIP implementation in selected primary and JSS schools. The MBSSE has endorsed that these funds are paid to school fee subsidy accounts. Therefore, PBF will be payable to such bank accounts. If a school does not have a bank account, it is necessary for the school to open an account so that it may receive the PBF into its bank account. If the school account is dormant, it is necessary that the school re-activates the account.

### ***The following requirements apply concerning the use of school bank accounts***

#### New Accounts

1. If a school does not yet have a bank account, it should open one
2. The SMC in consultation with DEO is free to choose one commercial bank that the schools should use
3. It is recommended that, when choosing one bank, the school gets from the proposed bank a letter confirming that the bank will accept liability in the event that a loss has occurred because the bank accepted a withdrawal that was not consistent with the mandate as described in #5 below.
4. It is recommended that a savings account be opened, rather than a current account, as the charges are lower for savings accounts
5. The name of the account must be “[Name of school]” account, or something similar, so that it is clear that the account is for the use of the school community and not for individuals.
6. The bank mandate should be set up with the signatories for the account as per MBSSE practice for fee subsidy accounts.
7. There should be not auto-teller card for the bank account. The bank mandate should make this clear.

#### Existing Accounts

8. A school that already has a bank account may continue to use it so long as it is fully consistent with 5, 6 and 7 above.
9. In the event a school has an existing account that it wishes to use for PBF but the account is not currently consistent with 5, 6 and 7 above, it should be possible to change the name signatories, etc. if the current signatories write formally to their branch requesting such a change

10. *If a school already has a bank account and the school wishes to use it to hold PBF funds, the school is **REQUIRED** to notify the DEO of the bank account with a letter including the Name on the Account, the Bank Name and Branch and the Account Number (BBAN).*

All accounts, new and existing

11. A school bank account that is used for receipt of PBF may be used for other receipts so long as they are in connection with school improvement. Receipts which are personal may not be mixed with PBF
12. The cashbook is essential to control of the control of public monies and PBF.
13. The liability in the case of any misuse of public monies and PBF funds rests with the individuals who are the signatories to the bank account where those individuals have been negligent or dishonest.

## Summary of Key Points

- Signatories must check all supporting documents before approving any payment voucher for goods and services.
- All payments should be immediately recorded in the cash book.
- All payment vouchers, requisitions, bank statements, and paid cheques should be properly filed in chronological order for audit and reporting purposes.

## Activity Verification and Reporting

### Verify activity completion

At any time, the government or representatives thereof may perform an Activity Verification exercise. To do this, the verifiers will visit the school and complete Form 9: SIP/PBF Activity Verification. This form is used for the verifiers to review the school records and to verify that the activities included in the SIP and Form 3 took place, as well as any other activities financed by PBF.

## PUPIL MANAGEMENT

### Enrolment, attendance, retention and punctuality

Pupil Management starts from the home. SMCs should understand that students spend less than 8 hours in the school. For over 16 hours, students stay at home with their parents or in the community with other members of society. Pupil management therefore, cannot be complete without the involvement of the home/parents and community.

The need for pupils to be enrolled in school is well understood. However, unless they attend regularly and punctually they will not learn and are at risk of dropping out. Ensuring that pupils are enrolled and then attend regularly and punctually is a shared responsibility between the SMC and the head teacher. A successful school will be aiming for gender parity in enrolment, attendance and completion rates.

### Enrolment

The school must have accurate information about the number of pupils currently on the school's roll. In addition, a good head-teacher must be able to predict the likely number of pupils for the next academic year (and longer if possible), as this is essential information for school planning.

The SMC should:

- draw on their knowledge of children in the community to contribute to the statistics held by the head teacher or senior member of staff
- encourage community members to be active in seeking maximum and timely enrolment and high levels of retention, paying attention to gender equality and local issues, such as boys being kept from school for farming. This might be through community meetings, visits to the homes of individual families where children are not attending school, or other informal contact. Such meetings and related activities documented to keep tract of enrolment efforts.
- establish mothers' clubs, where they do not already exist, to encourage the enrolment and retention of girls in school.
- encourage the participation of fathers in school, to do the same for boys.
- draw on other community organizations, where relevant, to address particular enrolment or retention issues
- seek information through these activities about possible barriers to enrolment or retention, and address as part of school development plan.

#### *How to promote full enrolment*

Schools have developed many strategies for improving enrolment, including sensitization meetings and "Big Bang" campaigns. While these may have their place, unless schools are able to retain their pupils, enrolment efforts are largely wasted. Ensuring that children achieve in school and that parents know about this achievement is the best recruitment campaign a school can have.

Schools should be carrying out enrolment registration for new students during the third term, before the summer holiday. They should make every effort to finalize registers as early as possible during the first term. Late enrolment causes problems in covering the syllabus, as children who enroll late either miss vital foundation knowledge or the whole class is delayed whilst newcomers catch up. The school should set a realistic target for getting as many pupils enrolled as possible and the SMC should be involved in ensuring that parents know what this date is and why prompt enrolment is necessary.

## Attendance, punctuality and preventing drop--out

If pupils do not attend regularly or are habitually late for school, they miss vital lessons and are unable to build on previous learning, resulting in slow progress. Once the pattern is established, it is likely to get worse. As pupils fall further behind, work becomes more difficult, and their motivation for learning is reduced. In turn, this is likely to lead to more absence, even to dropping out of school altogether. It is important that early action is taken to address absence and lack of punctuality.

## How to ensure regular attendance and punctuality

Accurate attendance registers must be kept by all staff at all times. They must be completed twice for each shift, both at the start of the session and after break.

To ensure regular attendance and punctuality, the head-teacher will:

- ensure that all staff keep their registers accurately on a daily basis, carrying out spot checks to ensure that this is the case. (For guidance on completing registers, see box below)
- ensure that all teachers are keeping a check on pupils who are beginning to develop a pattern of lateness by carefully recording any lateness (more than fifteen minutes after the start of the session)
- make sure the requirements about attendance and punctuality are clearly understood by pupils, parents and the community verbally and by the use of posters etc.
- require parents to account for their children's absences by sending verbal or written messages to school, for example in the case of illness
- ask the SMC to request explanations where absences are not notified by parents or where the reason for absence is not judged to be valid
- ensure that all registers are closed properly every term (i.e. an account of the total attendance for the whole term is prepared). In order to make the closing of the register easier, head teachers should ensure that teachers total the weekly attendance *every Friday at the end of the day's sessions*.

To ensure regular attendance and punctuality the SMC should:

- ensure that parents and community members are informed about the school's expectations for attendance and punctuality
- encourage community members to be active in promoting maximum attendance and punctuality
- follow up specific cases of unexplained or unnecessary absence with parents

- involve other organisations such as mothers' clubs and the CTA and other community organizations to address attendance and punctuality of girls in school and identify any barriers
- collect information on any barriers to good attendance and punctuality.

## How to prevent drop--out

The Head Teacher should work with the SMC to take action to prevent pupils from dropping out by:

- studying the school registers and other records to identify individuals or groups of pupils, or patterns of poor attendance and punctuality, and passing the information to the SMC for appropriate action
- arranging guidance and counselling for any pupils identified as being at risk of dropping out of school and liaising with parents
- providing information to the SMC about any pupils either at risk of dropping out of school or who have done so, so that they can take action
- analyzing the records of pupils who drop out of school by gender and grade to identify possible factors, and reporting their findings to the SMC.

## Rewards for attendance and punctuality

All of the ideas listed above are important for trying to retain pupils within school. But once poor patterns of punctuality and attendance begin it is hard to turn the situation around. Good schools try to prevent the problems from the beginning, where possible. Celebrating good attendance and punctuality may be an effective strategy. For example, senior teachers might compare class records and display the results to encourage competition on a weekly or termly basis. The *class* with the best record may be given a small reward, for example in the form of a few minutes extra playtime, additional opportunity to take part in a sporting activity (ensuring that this is equally popular with girls as well as boys), or an exemption from school chores for a period of time. Similarly, rewards in the form of termly or annual certificates or small prizes may be effective in encouraging individuals. The school might consider using a small proportion of school funds to provide these, if attendance and punctuality are identified as priorities in the school development plan.

## Pupil behavior and discipline

### School dress

Wearing uniform, including a badge, helps to promote school identity, fostering a feeling of belonging and a sense of pride in being a member of the school. In addition, uniforms offer some advantages for the pupils. Being in uniform can offer a degree of protection to the child, especially to the girl child, and the wearing of uniforms can mask economic differences between pupils. The school, home and community should advise the SMC of ways to ensure no child is excluded from school through poverty, perhaps by including the provision of support for needy children in their activities. Creative ways of using revolving funds like those managed by mothers' clubs would ensure that this does not become a year--on--year drain on the school's development funds.

## School health

### ***What is a healthy school?***

Some people believe that health and health education are simply matters of keeping clean and not becoming ill. The World Health Organization (WHO) reminds us that the idea of health is something far wider than hygiene or the 'absence of disease'. It involves: physical health: being fit and well mental, emotional and social health: we need to be happy and well balanced, and able to use our minds efficiently as well as our bodies.

A healthy school strives to set a good health example to its pupils, and to the community it serves by:

- providing a clean and safe environment
- having access to clean and safe water for both sanitation and drinking purpose
- providing the best possible nutrition
- agreeing a set of good health rules which give the children the opportunity to learn and practice good health habits, good hygiene habits and a good safety code
- offering guidance and counselling to pupils who need them.

### ***Water supplies and hygiene***

Infection from stools through dirty hands is the most common and most easily prevented source of diarrhoea and many other diseases. The best health resource a school can provide are adequate and clean latrines together with clean drinking water and water for washing hands. The building and maintenance of latrines and the maintenance of wells should be considered when developing school improvement plans. But even where latrines and water supplies are poor it is possible to improve hygiene practices by:

- making sure that the safest possible toilet rules are made and that the pupils keep them
- providing enough clean safe water for drinking and hand--washing
- making sure that pupils know how to use the well properly and that the area around it is kept clean
- burning or burying rubbish to prevent flies from breeding.

## Ensuring the best possible nutrition

A school garden is an extremely valuable resource for a school. It has two main uses:

- growing vegetables for improving pupils' nutrition
- providing a teaching and learning resource across the curriculum.

In addition, where space allows, mothers' club members can be given a plot for growing vegetables in order to help mothers learn better vegetable growing techniques and improve their family nutrition. This is an excellent example of how the school can contribute to improving the life of the community and should in turn strengthen community involvement in the life of the school. Working in a school garden should never be used as a punishment for pupils.

### **Why establish a school garden?**

- to complement and supplement the school feeding programme, improving the pupils' nutrition, enabling them to learn more effectively



- to enable schools to provide a more attractive meal, thereby enhancing enrolment, attendance and retention of pupils
- to provide a learning resource in all areas of the curriculum. In addition to its obvious usages, young children can learn to count and measure plants; it can be used for teaching shape and area; it can be used as a stimulus for writing etc.
- to teach pupils to work co-operatively, creating an appreciation of team work and improving pupils' social skills
- to improve environmental attitudes and awareness
- to increase pupils' self-esteem and self-worth by making successful contributions to feeding the school.

## Managing a school garden successfully

In managing school farms and gardens consideration should be given to the following:

- Hiring a gardener/farmer to assist in running and maintaining the school garden classes, food production and overall garden state
- making school gardening part of the curriculum
- involving parents and the community in making the garden productive
- making use of the produce of the farm or garden to supplement school feeding
- managing any funds raised from the sale of surplus produce transparently and honestly in line with the financial guideline.

## TEACHER MANAGEMENT

The SMC, as custodian of the school, has overall responsibility in the management of the School including oversight of teacher and student performance. The Head Teacher is directly responsible for day-to-day school administration functions, including teacher management which is done in accordance with the Education Act of Sierra Leone, relevant Labour laws and regulations and the Code of Ethics and Conditions of Service for teachers.

This notwithstanding, below is a general checklist for SMCs and Head Teachers to use in Teacher Management including things to observe/monitor in the learning process & school environment:

- attendance of teacher –regular & punctual; no unexcused absenteeism or late coming
- teacher dress code – conventional with long sleeve office shirts; no sleeveless shirts, T-Shirts, pictures, no hangings or dangling regalia
- attitude towards management and colleague staff
- how has the teacher organised the classroom in terms of furniture, light, teaching-learning materials, and general sitting arrangements taking into consideration height, sightedness and hearing?
- Is there an attendance register? If yes, how far does it backdate? According to the register, for how long and how regular are the classes? Who completes the attendance register?
- does the teacher create a literacy environment: are there pictures, printed posters on the wall? Hand written materials/printed books/learner generated materials?
- is teacher actively teaching or non-subject related “story telling” to merely ‘buy time’?
- Ratio of talk time between the teacher and students; does teacher dominate & control without creating room for students to participate & explore their own talents/knowledge/experience?
- is the teacher guiding, steering or is s/he like just non-existent in the classroom?
- Does the teacher encourage quicker learners to participate while also encouraging slow learners to speak up and catch up?
- Does the teacher allow some students to dominate the discussions/activities?
- Does the teacher interrupt the students, shout them down or shame them?
- Does the teacher allow students to interrupt, shout down or shame each other?
- Does the teacher use graphics/teaching aids/tools? If yes, which one?
- Does the teacher use the tool to deepen understanding? Or just to do an activity?
- Are the students familiar with this tool?
- How many participants are enrolled?
- What is the pupil: teacher ratio?
- Self confidence and ability to speak out/express self opinion.
- Teacher willingness to keep children in school/contribute in reducing school drop out
- Willingness and Ability to monitor and help education of children

## SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### Community Involvement using the example of the Makengi Primary School?

- What role do parents play to support the reading program at Makengi Primary School?
- What would be required at your school to emulate the example of Makengi Primary School?
- Who would take the lead in bringing about the desired changes in your school?

### Who Are Community Members?

- Village authorities, including chiefs
- Inspectors and supervisors
- Religious and traditional leaders
- Family members: mothers, fathers, grandparents and caregivers
- Girls, boys and youth
- Women's group members
- Community based organizations (CBOs) members
- People with disabilities
- School administrators
- Representatives from locally identified vulnerable groups
- Businesses/entrepreneurs

### Examples of Community Participation

- Check on student dress code
- Enforce school attendance and discipline
- Discourage, report and punish indiscipline, misconduct, drug abuse and violence
- Provide land for school development
- Protect school and school property
- Cooperate with and support school management and staff
- Contribution of money, materials and labor.
- Work with SMCs to identify ways men and women may contribute, which do not unfairly burden a population group.
- Attendance at SMC/school meetings.
- For individuals who may not be able to attend, work with SMC secretary of to find a way to share meeting materials and proceedings.
- Participation in school open days.
- Participate in school development planning process by contributing ideas and suggestions and monitoring and evaluating school development plans.
- Participation in campaigns for fundraising and awareness creation to increase enrolment and retention of children in schools.

- Collaborate with school personnel to visit households with out of school learners to determine barriers (particularly for girls and children/youth with disabilities) to school enrolment and attendance.
- Encourage community members to visit the school regularly and act as a school advocate.
- Work with the Head Teacher to create a welcoming physical environment for family and community members visiting the school.
- Disseminate calendars of school activities to provide advance notice to parents and guardians.
- Host open days.
- Promoting the school (teachers and learners) to participate in community development activities, such as clean-up campaigns or tree planting.
- Encouraging the community to interact with teachers and learners regularly to understand the problem of learners and monitor progress on their performance.
- Encourage families to participate in school open days.
- Urging community members to provide accommodation and other assistance for teachers, particularly newly transferred teachers.
- Hold school and community-based meetings to help parents understand the needs of the school and teachers and thereby be in a position to provide appropriate support.

### Community engagement.

- Conducting awareness campaigns to promote community involvement in education. The campaigns should target parents and community members to help them better understand the benefits their children will gain as a result of their involvement in school programs.
- Establishing two-way communication channels and encouraging continuing dialogue between the community and the school. This helps the community understand that the responsibility of educating children cannot fall to the school alone; rather, it requires community involvement to achieve better learning outcomes.
- Encouraging the school to use the local language in meetings with parents and community members and in social events organised by the school.
- Encouraging effective community participation. Collaborating with community leaders, chiefs, elders, religious leaders and Councillors helps to positively promote community participation in education in all community gatherings, occasions/celebrations and meetings.
- Discussing the learning environment with government<sup>3</sup> authorities and encouraging community members to talk with local government and education authorities to consider education improvement a priority in their plans.
- Inviting community members to participate in school open days, such as School Visitation and Parent Days, and giving parents opportunities to address the gathering with words of encouragement.
- Work with community members to visit the school regularly and interact with teachers and learners to know their problems.

- Urge community members to provide accommodation and other assistance for teachers, particularly newly transferred teachers.
- Encourage teachers to participate in community programs—such as community development activities, like clean up campaigns and tree planting—to help them socialize and interact with community members.

## Facilitate Establishment of Mother Clubs

Mothers' clubs already exist in many communities. Where a mothers' club does not already exist, it is necessary to start one. One way of doing this would be for two or three women on the Community Participation Sub--committee to organize an initial meeting to discuss the idea with other women among the school's stakeholders.

The overall aim of mothers' clubs is to raise their community's awareness of the importance of girls' education. They can promote girls' access to school, prevent them dropping out of school and promote good school performance on the part of girls. This may involve counselling girls themselves, and/or their mothers and fathers. Sometimes, there will be sensitive issues to deal with, as when a family wants their daughter to drop out of school to get married, or a schoolgirl becomes pregnant. Mothers' club members should be prepared to talk to the girls and families concerned, and encourage parents and guardians to keep girls at school, at least until they have finished upper basic and preferably through secondary education too.

## Establish relationships between the school and other agencies and other schools

SMC members must be able to interact well with people both within and outside the school. This will enable them to develop effective networks with other stakeholders and tap all sources of support for the benefit of pupils. It will be useful for the SMC to keep themselves aware of any NGOs which fund particular projects. In addition, NGOs may also offer practical support in schools. These partnerships can help in direct support with teaching and learning, as well as other aspects of the school. All staff and parents should be encouraged to see such partnerships as positive, and to welcome the volunteers into the school. As well as the financial benefits that some networks can bring, there are other advantages to schools of having partnerships with other schools. Ideas about curriculum development and teaching methods can be shared, and pupils can learn about the world outside their own area in practical ways. In some cases, exchange visits take place between teachers and even pupils to expand their understanding.

## Deepening Parent Involvement

The parent among many other things should help to check that students:

- Attend school regularly and on time
- Stay in class through out the school period
- Drop properly at home, in the community and when they go to school
- Study at home and are assisted/encouraged by their parents
- perform their homework
- stop dropping out
- do not arrive late at school

- respect their peers, teachers, school authorities and community members
- do not take alcohol, drugs or intoxicating substances
- do not go to school hungry
- are healthy, happy and sound at all times

The parent, as the primary educator of his or her child, has certain education responsibilities that are attendant upon parenthood. Parent involvement is an important aspect of education and that it does not happen by itself. Principals and teachers are responsible for bringing it about. Without cooperation between the parent and the teacher the child cannot be sufficiently educated. Parent involvement has a significant effect on the quality of the pupil's teaching and learning experiences in the school and on their results.

### **The need for and the value of parent involvement**

Parent involvement not only has great advantages; there are also several reasons why it is vital for parent involvement to come into its own.

### **The nature and scope of parent involvement**

The concept of "parent involvement" can be interpreted in various ways in terms of their interest and degree of support. Accordingly, four types /categories have been identified.

The home and school have just joint responsibility for a child's development. What happens to him in either place affects his total behavior. Working separately, the school and the home fail to provide adequately for child welfare. Parents and teachers are both engaged in educating and teaching the same child. In the interests of the same child, the contact and cooperation between parents and teachers should denote a partnership. Therefore, the SMC should bring the school and the community closer together in an atmosphere conducive to uniting the work of home and school.

**DON'T YOU THINK WE CAN HAVE SOME FORM OF CONCLUSION OR SUMMARY AT THIS POINT TO CLOSE THE MANUAL?**

