

Chapter 3:

Formal Organisation of Ministries of Education

The organisation charts of Ministries of Education in different countries vary widely. Organisation charts may also vary in specific countries at different points in time. This is partly because changes in national priorities and in leadership lead to changes in structures.

Yet despite the variations, some general principles can be identified. This is the concern of this chapter, which compares the structures of ministries of education in different countries. It begins by noting links between structures and objectives. It then turns to grouping of macro functions, the tasks undertaken and not undertaken, deployment of administrative and professional staff, and the need for periodic restructuring.

1. Structures and Objectives

The designers of ministry structures generally have two main objectives:

- a) to cover all essential functions with an appropriate combination of specialists and generalists, and
- b) to secure a suitable hierarchy which provides a framework for decision-making and authority, and which meets the career aspirations of the individuals working in the ministry.

On the first aspect, certain basic functions must be carried out in all Ministries of Education. For example ministries must cater for both primary and secondary schools. They also require staff for policy formulation and deployment of teachers. This common ground leads to considerable similarity in the principal elements of all Ministries of Education.

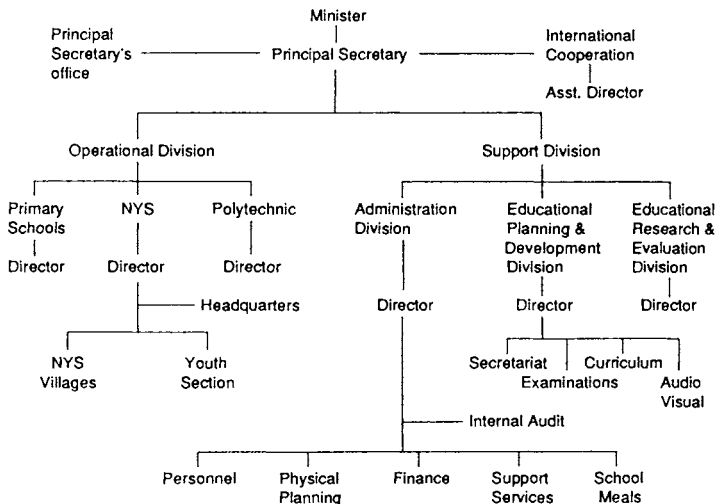
Beyond these basic functions, however, the range of specialist functions is likely to reflect government priorities. For example not all

governments stress kindergartens or adult education. Likewise, some governments are more anxious than others to have school broadcasts, nutrition programmes and textbook-production units. The Commonwealth project showed considerable variety in these aspects.

The project also showed that some ministries have special units for particular projects. For instance in Solomon Islands and The Gambia, high-level project implementation units have been created to take charge of World Bank and other externally-funded projects. Logically, such units should disappear once the projects have been implemented; but in some cases they remain. An example of the latter is the school building unit in Botswana, which was originally created for a secondary school expansion project assisted by World Bank funds. Before the project all government construction was directed from the Ministry of Works & Communication, and when the project was completed that ministry recommended that the unit be disbanded. However, the Ministry of Education resisted closure, so the unit has continued to exist.

It is also instructive to focus on the Ministry of Education in Seychelles. Shortly after Independence, the Seychelles government launched an innovative programme called the National Youth Service (NYS). The programme was seen as both a continuation of formal

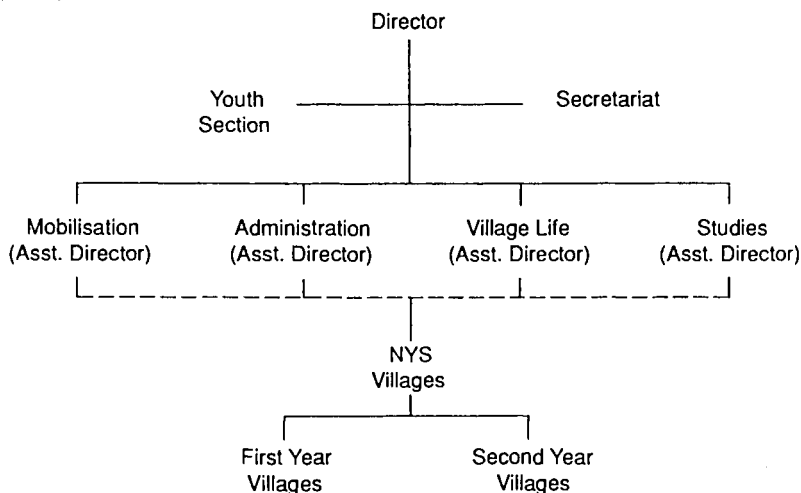
Figure 1: The Ministry of Education, Seychelles, (1990)



education and a scheme for pre-training in vocational and community fields. Students graduating from the NYS were expected to serve as models for the rest of society, concerned about and involved in what was happening around them. Since this was an urgent need for the envisaged New Society, the NYS was called a Service rather than a school.

In the NYS programme pupils reside on campuses called villages, each of which is a self-contained unit with a playground, agricultural plots, fishing facilities, a health centre, a medical doctor, nurses, and a study centre with laboratories, workshops and a library. These special provisions and facilities require their own administrative structures, and in this respect the organisation of the ministry differs from that in other countries (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 2: The NYS Division of the Ministry of Education, Seychelles (1990)



2. Grouping of Macro Functions

Chapter 2 noted a tendency for small states to group several functions in one ministry. It was not suggested that this does not also happen in large states; but it does seem more common in small states. Grouping of functions permits ministries to be larger than they would otherwise

Table 3: The Full Titles and Responsibilities of Ministries of Education in Commonwealth Small States (1990)

<u>Country</u>	<u>Ministry Title</u>
Anguilla	Finance, Education & Community Development
Antigua & Barbuda	Education, Culture, Youth Affairs & Sport
Bahamas	Education
Barbados	Education & Culture
Belize	Education, Sports & Culture
Bermuda	Education
Botswana	Education
British Virgin Islands	Health, Education & Welfare
Brunei Darussalam	Education
Cayman Islands	Health, Education & Social Services
Cook Islands	Education
Cyprus	Education
Dominica	Education & Sports
Falkland Islands	Education (CEO's Office)
The Gambia	Education, Youth, Sports & Culture
Gibraltar	Education, Sport & Postal Services
Grenada	Education & Social Services
Guyana	Education, Social Development & Culture
Jersey	Education
Kiribati	Education
Maldives	Education
Malta	Education & the Interior
Mauritius	Education, Arts & Culture
Montserrat	Education, Health & Community Services
Namibia	Education, Culture, Youth & Sport
Nauru	Health & Education
Niue	Education & Health
St. Kitts & Nevis	Education, Health & Community Affairs
St. Lucia	Education & Culture
St. Vincent & Grenadines	Education, Sports & Youth Affairs
Seychelles	Education
Solomon Islands	Education & Human Resources Development
Swaziland	Education
Tonga	Education, Youth, Sports & Culture
Trinidad & Tobago	Education
Turks & Caicos	Health, Education & Welfare
Tuvalu	Social Services
Vanuatu	Education, Youth & Sport
Western Samoa	Education, Youth, Sports & Culture

be. This in turn gives internal access to a wider range of skills, and it permits more efficient use of indivisible resources.

Table 3 provides specific information on the functions with which education is commonly combined in the ministries of small Commonwealth states. Among the 39 ministries listed, only 12 are exclusively concerned with education. The most common additional functions are

culture, sports, youth, and community affairs. These functions are closely related to education. However, some group education with less closely-related functions. Seven group it with health, and one groups it with postal services.

Moreover the functions of these ministries may be even wider than their names suggest. In Barbados, for example, the Ministry of Education & Culture is also responsible for ecclesiastical affairs; and in Malta the Ministry of Education & the Interior is also responsible for culture, environment, sport, youth and broadcasting.

One benefit from multi-functional organisation lies in the fact that at the top of the system they share a Minister and a Permanent Secretary, and at the bottom they may pool clerks, typists and transport facilities. However, many multi-functional ministries fail to make full use of the potential advantages of this form of organisation. Chapter 2 presented the example of Montserrat, in which the component parts of the Ministry of Education, Health & Community Services largely operate independently of each other. They engage in little sharing of resources, and linkages within the ministry are little stronger than those between ministries. Similar observations might be made in other countries. They arise in part because traditions have been inherited from larger ministries where close integration is less easy.

3. Tasks Undertaken and Not Undertaken

(a) Tasks Undertaken by Ministries of Education

Small ministries have to set priorities in the work that they undertake. They cannot do everything in as much depth as they would like, and they often have to decide not to undertake certain functions at all. It is therefore instructive to note what types of work are and are not undertaken in different countries.

Table 4 lists key functions which are commonly undertaken in Ministries of Education throughout the world. Against this list the table indicates whether these functions are given specialised units and/or posts in the ministries of 17 Commonwealth small states. The countries have been grouped in ascending order of population size, beginning with Montserrat (population 12,000) and ending with Botswana (population 1,164,000).

From the table, several points emerge:

- a) There is considerable variation. As noted above, this partly reflects the priorities of the governments concerned. It may

Table 4: Specialised Units/Posts in Selected Commonwealth Ministries of Education

Country	Plan- ning	Inspect- ions	Guid- ance	Curric- ulum	Exams	T'chr Trng	Tech. Educ.	Adult Educ.	Pre- School	Research/ Evaluat'n	Broad- casts	Libraries	Int. Aid Unit	Special Educ.	Bldg.
Montserrat	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Cook Islands	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
Kiribati	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
Seychelles	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes
Dominica	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no
Jersey	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	no
Tonga	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
St. Lucia	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes
Western Samoa	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Maldives	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
Brunei Dsm.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
Barbados	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Solomon Islands	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes
Malta	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
The Gambia	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no
Guyana	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Botswana	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	yes

Notes: 1. The countries have been ranked in ascending order of population size.

2. Functions have been indicated only according to whether they are specifically named in the title of a job or unit. Some functions, of course, are still carried out even though they are not identified in the title.

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*	Missed Opportunities for Integration and Efficiency	*
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*	<i>Small states are more likely than large states to have ministries covering multiple functions. In theory, this provides opportunities for integration of functions and for greater efficiency through sharing of resources. In practice, however, this does not seem to happen as much as it might. This is partly because small states have inherited their bureaucratic models from larger states where such integration and sharing is less easy. It represents a missed opportunity.</i>	*
*	<i>In the multi-functional ministries with which you are familiar, how much integration and sharing is there? What are the obstacles to greater integration and sharing, and how can senior administrators get round those obstacles?</i>	*
*		*
* * * * *		* * * * *

- also reflect historical traditions and availability of expertise.
- Some functions are found in almost all ministries. Among the most obvious is curriculum development.
 - Other functions are found less commonly in the smallest states but more frequently in the larger ones. They include planning, inspection, guidance, and examinations.
 - On the other hand, the ministry in the smallest country (Montserrat) has some functions which are not found in the ministries of some larger countries. These include planning, technical education and pre-school education.
 - The ministry in the largest country (Botswana) still does not have all the functions listed. It would seem that this ministry is still not large enough to have all the specialisms that some administrators and educators might consider desirable.

However, the fact that a ministry does not have a special unit or job specifically labelled as responsible for a particular function does not necessarily mean that the function is not undertaken at all. For example in some ministries the word 'Planning' does not appear in the title of any unit or post, but planning is nevertheless undertaken by one or more staff. Similarly although inspections are not specifically mentioned they may be undertaken, e.g. by a curriculum development officer or by the Education Officer (Primary/Secondary). In this respect the table should be treated with caution.

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* **Who does the Planning?** *
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* *Some ministries are too small to have specialist planners.* *
* *But this does not mean that planning is not undertaken.* *
* *Instead it is done by other officers, either individually or* *
* *collectively. In Dominica, for example, planning is under-* *
* *taken by a team of senior personnel chaired by the Chief* *
* *Education Officer. A similar system operates in Kiribati* *
* *and Cook Islands.* *
* *This model has much to commend it. First it shows a* *
* *way round the manpower constraints in a small system; and* *
* *second it ensures that all senior officers are involved in* *
* *planning.* *
* *The second point may be underlined by reference to* *
* *Botswana. The Ministry there does have a planning unit,* *
* *but has suffered tensions between the role of that unit and* *
* *the necessity for all senior officers to plan ahead. Because* *
* *they do not have planning units, this difficulty simply does* *
* *not arise in Dominica, Kiribati and Cook Islands. Thus* *
* *what appears from one angle to be a problem might seem* *
* *from another angle to be a virtue!* *
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(b) Tasks Delegated to Other Government Bodies

The previous section highlighted work undertaken and not undertaken by various Ministries of Education. But tasks not undertaken by Ministries of Education may still be undertaken by other Ministries. Examples generated by the Commonwealth project include:

- *Statistics.* In Botswana, school statistics are collected and processed by the Central Statistics Office; and in Solomon Islands they are processed by the Ministry of Finance.
- *Buildings.* In Seychelles, Brunei Darussalam and Dominica, most responsibility for government school buildings rests with the Ministry of Works.
- *Salaries.* In Dominica, The Gambia, Brunei Darussalam and St. Lucia, teachers' salaries are paid by the Treasury Department of the Ministry of Finance.

- *Printing.* In Dominica, all printing is done by a central government unit.
- *Examination Results.* In Guyana, examination results are processed by the National Data Management Authority.
- *Religious Education.* In Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Religious Affairs administers the Religious Teachers' Training College and the Religious Schools. It also advises on the religious curriculum in other schools.

When work is distributed in this way, the Ministries of Education gain access to the expertise of the other ministries. The arrangement also permits the government to establish central units which are large enough to employ specialist personnel and gain economies of scale.

However, it is important to note some potential drawbacks. For example a 1977 report in Botswana noted that although the range and quality of education statistics was very impressive, the data were underutilised by the Ministry of Education. One reason was that the statistics were collected by the Central Statistics Office. Since that time the situation has improved. But it is worth stressing the need to maintain good links to avoid problems of this sort.

Similarly, it is essential for Ministries of Education to ensure that the other agencies understand their detailed requirements. For example, because the staff of the Ministry of Works are unlikely ever to have been teachers, their architectural designs may not pay sufficient attention to educational needs. Again, therefore, careful liaison is essential.

(c) Tasks Undertaken by Non-Government and by External Bodies

The third category embraces tasks which are not undertaken by the government but which are instead undertaken either by non-government or by external bodies. In both economic and managerial terms it is often more sensible either to delegate tasks to voluntary agencies, or to contract work to the private sector. The government is then able to concentrate on doing well the key functions that it does undertake.

Among the examples generated by the Commonwealth case studies were:

- *Pre-School Education.* In Kiribati, pre-schooling is left to parents and to such private organisations as the Save the Children Federation and the Kiribati Pre-School Association.
- *Special Education.* In St. Lucia, special education is chiefly

provided by voluntary agencies such as the St. Lucia Blind Welfare Association and the Lions Club.

- *Inspection.* Jersey has a contract with the UK government for the services of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs). The Jersey authorities have a separate contract for advisory services with the East Sussex Local Education Authority.
- *Examinations.* The countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean have grouped together to form the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC); the countries of the South Pacific have formed the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA); and The Gambia is a member of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). An alternative pattern is followed by Seychelles and Botswana, which use the examinations of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, the City & Guilds of London Institute, and the Royal Society of Arts. Jersey also uses British examinations.
- *Printing.* In contrast to the practice in Dominica where all printing is done by a central government unit, in Guyana, St. Lucia and Brunei Darussalam printing is contracted out to the private sector.
- *Distribution of Supplies.* The ministry in Montserrat used to procure and sell textbooks to students, but found this process cumbersome and wasteful of time. The business has now been assigned to a private firm. A similar arrangement operates in Guyana.
- *Food.* Brunei Darussalam contracts to the private sector for supply of food to school canteens; and Guyana contracts out the manufacture and distribution of biscuits for the supplementary school feeding programme.
- *Teacher Training.* Dominica Teachers' College restricts its focus to teachers for primary and junior secondary levels. No provision is made locally for senior secondary subjects or for technical/vocational education. Trainees in these subjects have to go to regional institutions in Antigua, Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, and St. Lucia, or to such countries as the UK, USA, Canada and France.
- *Publishing.* In Guyana, enrolments at the middle and upper secondary levels do not justify printing and publishing for the Guyanese system alone, and books are therefore imported. A similar situation exists in Dominica, The Gambia and many other small states.

Contracts for Specific Needs: A Curriculum Example

In 1975, the authorities in The Gambia established a Curriculum Development Centre. In what is now agreed to have been an unwise decision, they followed a large-state model with specialists in almost every subject and level. The result was a unit with no less than 35 posts.

The Centre's role and output was reviewed in 1988. It was observed that the body was much larger than the country could afford, and a different mode of operation was recommended. As the report pointed out:

Devising a curriculum to meet needs while remaining responsive to the economic and educational realities of society ... can benefit from specialist involvement. But in this activity such specialists could be used as managers rather than as writers of curriculum plans....

It is hugely wasteful of trained manpower to maintain a body of specialists with a wide range of curriculum specialisms just in case any one specialism needs a new curriculum. Curriculum planning needs itself to be planned on a project basis. Curriculum specialists can manage projects and within them work with subject specialists from the teaching field in the development of a new curriculum plan.

The report recommended a cut in the number of posts from 35 to seven. The smaller team, it suggested, should see themselves as managers working with teachers, external consultants and other specialists on a project-by-project basis. Such a system would be less wasteful of scarce manpower, more flexible, and perhaps able to deliver better products. The resulting unit would be much more appropriate to a small state.

(d) Tasks not Undertaken at All

Finally under this heading, in some countries various tasks are not undertaken at all. In most cases the authorities would like to undertake these tasks if they could; but they recognise the limitations on their resources, and set priorities.

Among the examples are that St. Lucia has no school broadcasts or teachers' resource centre. Research is also neglected, both in St. Lucia and in many other countries. Perhaps even more striking, neither Solomon Islands nor The Gambia has any secondary school inspectors; and Jersey has been unable to prepare regular reports or to undertake long-term planning.

These might seem to be serious limitations in the education systems of the countries concerned, and certainly it is necessary for the authorities to be aware of the situation. But it is also essential for small states to set priorities and to be realistic. Whilst secondary school inspectors are certainly important parts of any education system, it is possible for schools to operate without them. Also, it must be pointed out, many larger states have inspectorates that operate so inefficiently that some (especially remote) schools never actually see an inspector for years at a time, and are thus in a position which is little different. The same may be said about long-term planning, for it must be admitted that many larger states also lack effective long-term planning and yet somehow seem to muddle through.

Another category may be exemplified by special education. All populations have pupils with special education needs. However, in small states the number of pupils with specific types of need may be very limited. Even in states which have personnel trained to serve epileptic children, for example, the number of children requiring help may be too small to justify the employment of a full-time professional. In these cases it is sometimes preferable to arrange for children with special needs to go abroad.

It may be suggested, therefore, that the authorities of small states are right to set priorities, and to decide that some functions regrettably cannot be undertaken at all. Only in this way can the small states hope to do properly the functions that they do undertake. Some functions, such as school broadcasts and research, seem to be ready candidates for low priority (though this view might not be shared by ardent advocates of these activities).

On the other hand, neglect of such functions as long-term planning really cannot be recommended. Such neglect is likely to waste resources. This is a problem in all states, but is especially difficult to afford in small ones.

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* **An Experiment to Cover Previously Unmet Needs** *
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* *As in many other small states, the authorities in Maldives* *
* *have found it difficult to cover all needs with a small cadre* *
* *of Ministry personnel. Among the neglected functions has* *
* *been inspection and advisory support for schools.* *
* *To meet this need, the authorities are investigating the* *
* *potential of committees of teacher educators, curriculum* *
* *developers and senior teachers. The system cannot afford to* *
* *make such people full-time inspectors and advisers, but it is* *
* *obvious that they have much to offer. The model shows one* *
* *way in which small states can pool resources to cover needs* *
* *that would otherwise remain unmet.* *
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4. Administrative versus Professional Staff

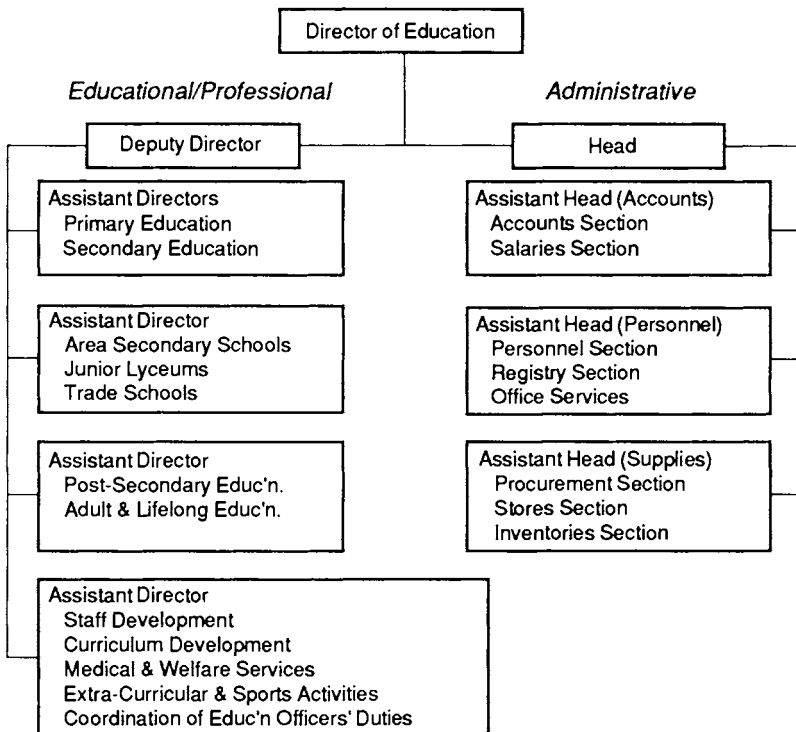
Many ministry organisation charts, in both small and large states, show a distinct separation between administrative and professional staff.

- The administrative officers are responsible for the functions that are required in ministries of all kinds, such as accounting, payment of salaries, transport and clerical services.
- The professional officers are responsible for the functions that are found only in Ministries of Education. Such functions include inspections, curriculum development, and technical education.

The two groups often have different career paths, and perhaps even different conditions of service. The administrative officers commonly move from one ministry to another, thereby gaining both breadth of experience and avenues for promotion. The professional staff are more commonly recruited from within the education system, and are often former teachers and school heads.

Among the small states covered by the Commonwealth project, this type of system was particularly clear in Malta (Figure 3). Comparable arrangements, though perhaps not quite so clear-cut, may be found in Barbados, Jersey, St. Lucia, Solomon Islands and Tonga. The chief virtue of the system is that the two groups of officers can receive different forms of training and supervision.

Figure 3: The Department of Education, Malta (1989)



However, this type of system can create major difficulties. Ones common to all ministries, large and small, include:

- *Classification.* It is sometimes difficult to classify occupations. For example, should officers responsible for school buildings work in the administrative wing on the grounds that buildings are needed by all ministries and are thus a general function? Or should the officers work in the professional wing on the grounds that the buildings required by the Ministry of Education are different from those required by other ministries, and that professional educators have better ideas how schools should be most appropriately designed? Similar questions may be raised about the educational planners, researchers, and various other specialists.
- *Tension.* The system can lead to considerable tension between

the two groups. Through their work in other ministries the administrators often have greater experience of the whole government system, which may lead them to consider the professionals too narrow in outlook. On the other hand the professionals may feel that they have great depth in the education system, and they may resent the 'interference' of the non-professionals.

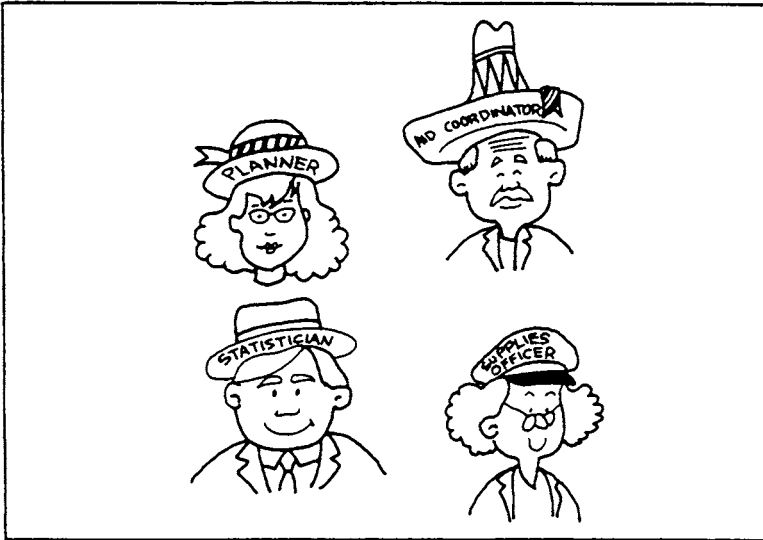
Two additional problems are especially serious in small states:

- *Deployment.* Division of personnel into separate groups creates an obstacle to deployment of individual officers in both types of work. For example, it would obstruct deployment of a single individual for both inspection of teachers (most commonly considered a professional function) and appraisal of ministry personnel (most commonly considered an administrative function). Almost by definition, small states are faced by scarcity in manpower resources. They can ill afford obstacles to use of talents in a broad range of jobs. Also, they need the flexibility to group tasks to make up reasonable workloads for individual officers.
- *Career Paths.* Small ministries often face problems of stagnation caused by the lack of promotion posts (discussed at greater length in Chapter 4). Division of personnel into two categories may make these problems worse. Professional officers are likely to be refused access to administrative vacancies, and thus have even more restricted career opportunities than would otherwise be the case. But the administrative officers can always move to other ministries. This gives the administrators an advantage not gained by the professionals, and further exacerbates tensions.

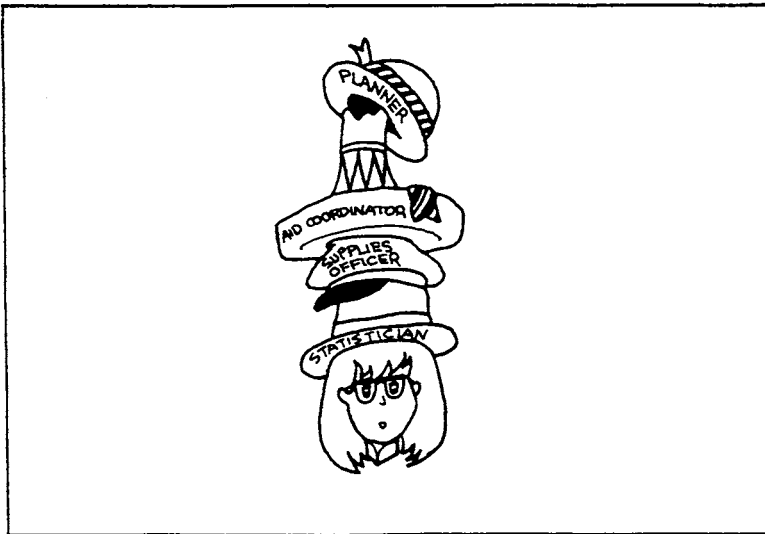
These points suggest that small states would be wise to avoid rigid compartmentalisation of functions. Separation of administrative and professional functions does have a rationale; but in small states the disadvantages are more likely to outweigh the advantages.

5. The Need for Periodic Restructuring

The Commonwealth project showed that many Ministries experience frequent structural change. It is not uncommon for ministry walls to display organisation charts which were drawn up recently but which are



In a large ministry, staff can specialise. Each person can wear a different 'hat'.



But in a small ministry, staff must be multi-functional. This has many implications for structures, recruitment and training

already out of date. Although this may reflect shortcomings in the whole process of determining structures, it is not necessarily bad. Again, small countries may need flexibility and fluidity even more urgently than large ones.

It is useful here to return to the point that small states can ill afford to waste the talents of specialist personnel. This applies to promotion posts as much as to original groupings of functions. For example, if a good planner or a mathematics specialist is promoted to Permanent Secretary, it is essential for scarce skills still to be harnessed. It may be necessary to redraw part of the organisation chart.

It must be recognised that this viewpoint runs contrary to traditional perspectives in public administration, and it could appear to lead to constant change in structures and lines of authority. Yet paradoxically it could also reduce change and instability, for individual officers can continue with at least part of the work they have been doing even after they have changed posts.

Enlarging on this, it is true that ministry organisation should begin with objectives rather than people. This principle warns against creation of posts merely because talented or influential individuals happen to be available, for such procedures lead to unbalanced organisations in which some functions are overstaffed and others are completely understaffed. Nevertheless, the relative shortage of talent in small states requires some flexibility in structures and job definitions. It is more desirable to define positions around the skills and competence of available personnel than to define ideal jobs for people who do not exist.

6. Summary

This chapter began with the point that ministry structures ought to reflect objectives. Partly because the objectives and basic frameworks of school systems in all parts of the world are very similar, the structures and functions of Ministries of Education are also very similar. However, it is possible to find variations, e.g. according to the emphasis on kindergartens or adult education. The example of Seychelles and its National Youth Service has also been cited.

The second section focused on grouping of macro functions. It provided information on the functions with which education is grouped in Commonwealth small states. It might be assumed that in these multi-functional ministries it is possible to achieve greater linkages and integration between the different functions. Analysis of specific ministries indicates that this is achieved to some extent. However, many multi-functional ministries fail to make full use of the potential advan-

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* **Structures and People** *
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* *In many small ministries there is a tendency to fit structures* *
* *to people as well as to fit people to structures. Although this* *
* *also happens in large ministries, it seems to be more common* *
* *and more visible in small ones.* *
* *This practice runs counter to the traditional norms of* *
* *public administration. It can lead to constant revision, e.g.* *
* *because senior posts have to be created for influential indivi-* *
* *duals due for promotion, or because individuals return from* *
* *overseas with specific skills. It can also lead to distortions in* *
* *the overall structure.* *
* *However, in small states it is easier to raise arguments in* *
* *favour of the practice. The most cogent argument is that* *
* *human resources are too valuable to be wasted by rigid* *
* *structures. This is another example in which the philosophy* *
* *of public administration developed in large states may not be* *
* *completely appropriate to small ones.* *
*

tages of this form of organisation. This deserves close attention from senior administrators and policy-makers.

Section 3 turned to the functions undertaken and not undertaken by individual Ministries of Education. Small ministries have to set priorities in what they do. Some tasks may be delegated to other ministries, and other work may be left to non-government or to external bodies. Also, some tasks may be contracted to the private sector. These strategies may make considerable sense in both economic and managerial terms. However, the section observed that even with such strategies, in some states various tasks are still not undertaken at all. In some instances this may be serious, though it must be recalled that in practice they are not always undertaken in large states either.

The fourth part of the chapter focused on the common tendency to separate administrative from professional officers. This practice is based on a sound rationale, but it can also raise problems. In small states rigid compartmentalisation is particularly undesirable because it restricts opportunities for combining jobs to make reasonable workloads.

Finally, the chapter has noted the need for periodic restructuring. Although constant change leads to its own problems, it is especially

important in small states to make good use of available talent. Senior policy-makers and administrators must of course constantly bear in mind the objectives of the organisation, and it is dangerous to create posts merely because individuals happen to be available. However, it is also dangerous to set up rigid structures. Flexibility is perhaps needed more urgently in small than in medium-sized and large states. Well-conceived periodic changes in structures help organisations to meet their objectives and to make optimum use of available personnel.

Further Reading

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