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## MODULE FOUR

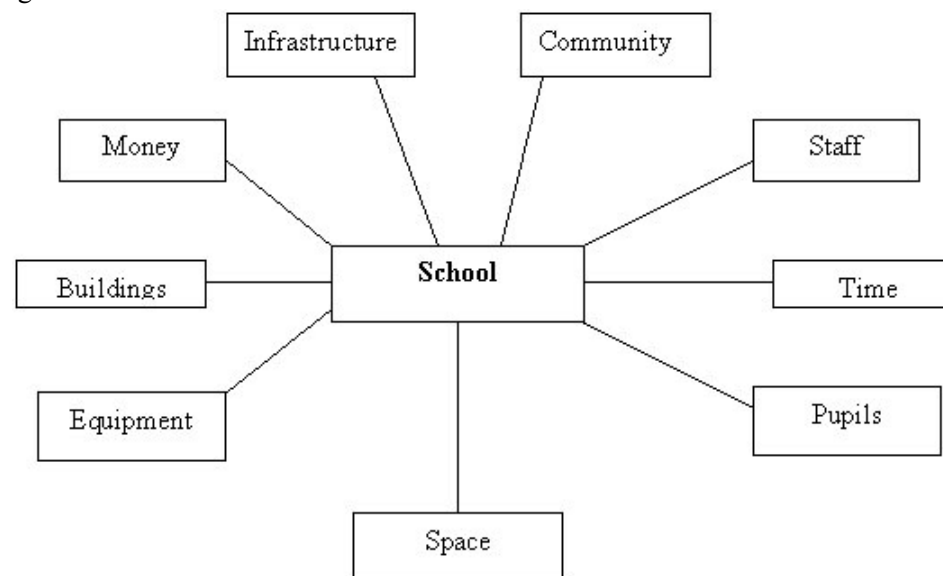
### UNIT SEVEN

#### Resource Maintenance

##### Introduction

A head is charged with the proper utilisation and care of all resources in his or her school. Some of these resources are intangible, for example, time, manpower and space; others require accurate recording and accounting, for example, finance; and a third category needs physical maintenance, for example, school buildings.

Fig 14 School resources



The concern, in this unit, is with learning about the maintenance of tangible resources.

Individual study time: 3 hours

##### Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- distinguish between different categories of resources
- explain the importance of maintaining resources
- describe the procedures to keep resources in your school properly maintained

- identify the procedures for obtaining general and replacement items of supply
- train and supervise inventory holders to care for items in their charge
- keep stock and other relevant school records.

### **Principles and constraints of resource maintenance**

#### ***Activity 7.1***

- (1) Describe the main principles which a school head needs to know about with regard to operating an effective system of resource maintenance in the school.
- (2) What are the main constraints you face as a school head in trying to operate an effective resource maintenance system?

20 minutes

#### **Comments**

Each school head needs to understand the importance of the following basic principles with regard to the maintenance of resources in a school:

- 1 All school buildings, equipment and property must be well maintained.
- 2 A school head must be conversant with government supplies and maintenance regulations.
- 3 All school purchases must be correctly recorded and maintained in good order.
- 4 All school purchases must be used for the purpose for which they were bought.
- 5 Goods and materials must be frequently checked and controlled to ensure their effective use.
- 6 An up-to-date inventory must be kept in every location where there are school resources.

#### **Constraints**

School heads are faced with many constraints which affect their ability to manage school resources effectively. These constraints include:

- insufficient funding
- shortage of personnel trained to handle maintenance and supplies
- lack of effective supervision of staff responsible for maintenance and supplies
- lack of storage space
- insecure storage facilities
- delays in the disposal of unserviceable stock items and equipment
- arrival of replacement orders delayed or misdelivered because of transport difficulties or inefficiencies
- lack of consultation between supplier and user
- increase in maintenance demand because of overuse of limited facilities and equipment.

#### ***Activity 7.2***

As a newly appointed head you arrive at the school which has limited financial resources and find, amongst other deficiencies, many broken windows, blocked toilets, a sports field overgrown with grass and bush and a broken perimeter fence.

Which problem would you tackle first, and which last, and why?

**Comments**

The first step would be to make a list of the main problems to be tackled, and separate them out into different levels of urgency. You would need to do this in conjunction with your staff, including non-teaching staff and your pupils. Then you would need to identify who is responsible for each problem and what resources are needed, are available and could be easily obtained. The next step would be to organise your resources, of people, materials and finance, to tackle the problems. Lastly, you would need to ensure that a regular system of maintenance is put into place, becoming part of the everyday regime of your school.

**Consumable and non-consumable items**

A consumable item is usually of low cost and has a short life span which changes its shape or nature in normal usage. Although from a common sense point of view the school head may decide what is consumable and what is not, it is wise to consult local regulations.

No single factor alone is used to determine the category. Three factors have to be considered, namely: cost, life span and change of shape or change of nature. For example, how would you classify an expensive 20 litre container of dishwashing liquid, or a 40 kilogram cylinder of gas?

**Activity 7.3**

For each of the items in Fig 15 indicate whether they are consumable (c) or non-consumable (n).

10 minutes

Fig 15 Consumable and non-consumable items

chalk  
chalkboard  
textbooks  
school generator  
school vehicle  
pencil  
pupil chair  
typewriter  
beaker  
fuel  
dining hall table

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**Comments**

Common sense will usually be enough to distinguish between consumable and non-

consumable goods, but there are borderline cases. For example, a pupil's workbook is consumable if it is being used more as an exercise book, than as a textbook.

#### Government and Government Aided (Private or Mission) Schools

In a Government School the head follows government procedures when ordering equipment and supplies. These items and services are usually obtained from other government departments. The head does not handle actual cash but works through a system of purchase orders and vouchers.

In Government Aided Schools the head receives a subvention in the form of a regular cheque (quarterly or termly) with which to buy items of supply or effect repairs. This money can be used locally or nationally; tender procedures do not necessarily have to be followed.

#### **Activity 7.4**

Which of the systems mentioned above:

- is the quicker?
- may produce best value for money?
- exposes the head to greater accountability?
- may lead to better maintenance of school resources?

10 minutes

#### **Comments**

The nearer responsibility for the purchase of resources is to the end-users, the greater the chance that more care will be taken in the purchase of appropriate resources, so long as there is an effective system of accountability in place. Resources purchased by the school are more likely to be carefully stored and maintained. If you are the head of a school where resources, including repairs, have to be organised through a system of paperwork, you might like to consider the arguments you and your colleagues could use to persuade the District Education Officer (or whoever the responsible officer might be) to provide a cash vote instead.

#### **Stock-keeping**

Stock-keeping, which is critical to the maintenance of resources, is the process of maintaining inventory data on the quantity and condition of supplies and equipment in order to know what is available for issue and distribution, and also to provide a base for making decisions on procuring additional supplies.

Stock must be classified as consumable or non-consumable and then recorded accurately in the appropriate ledger by the receiving officer (Supplies Officer, or Bursar, or Administrative Assistant, or designated teacher) and checked by the school head.

Consumable items, when issued against signature, are used and the use properly monitored.

Non-consumable items are issued and entered by the officer in charge of supplies on the appropriate inventory card. The items and the card are checked at intervals.

### **Activity 7.5**

Design a page in a ledger for consumable items. Include columns for these entries:

- date of arrival of goods;
- date of issue;
- balance;
- quantity received;
- quantity issued.

(Note: Please check your local regulations to ensure you include everything which is required.)

15 minutes

### **Comments**

When you have completed this exercise go and have a look at the store's ledger used in your school. Check whether the headings correspond to what you have suggested.

### **Ensuring resources are well maintained**

#### **Activity 7.6**

What would you do in each of the situations listed in Fig 16? Distinguish between what you would do immediately, what you would do in the next few days, and medium term.

20 minutes

Fig 16 Example situations

- 1 Pupils are inexplicably hungry.
- 2 There is a dramatic increase in the consumption of fuel in the kitchen.
- 3 Teachers complain of the lack of chalk.
- 4 Pupil chairs are moved from one classroom to another continually.
- 5 Gas cylinders unexpectedly become empty in the science laboratories.
- 6 Wheel barrows are left on the agricultural garden.
- 7 Football kit disappears from the washing line.
- 8 There is an unexplained broken window in a classroom.
- 9 Part of the school fence goes missing overnight.
- 10 A waterpipe bursts, flooding part of the school.

20 minutes

### **Comments**

With most problems or crises there are two solutions; one is the immediate action which is required to bring the problem under control, the other is to find ways of preventing the same thing happening again. Only by developing formal procedures, which must include the regular, frequent inspection of physical plant and stock, can problems be kept to a minimum. Because there is so much to be looked at, much of the work of inspection should be delegated. However, no matter how thorough your procedures may be, critical incidents will still occur!

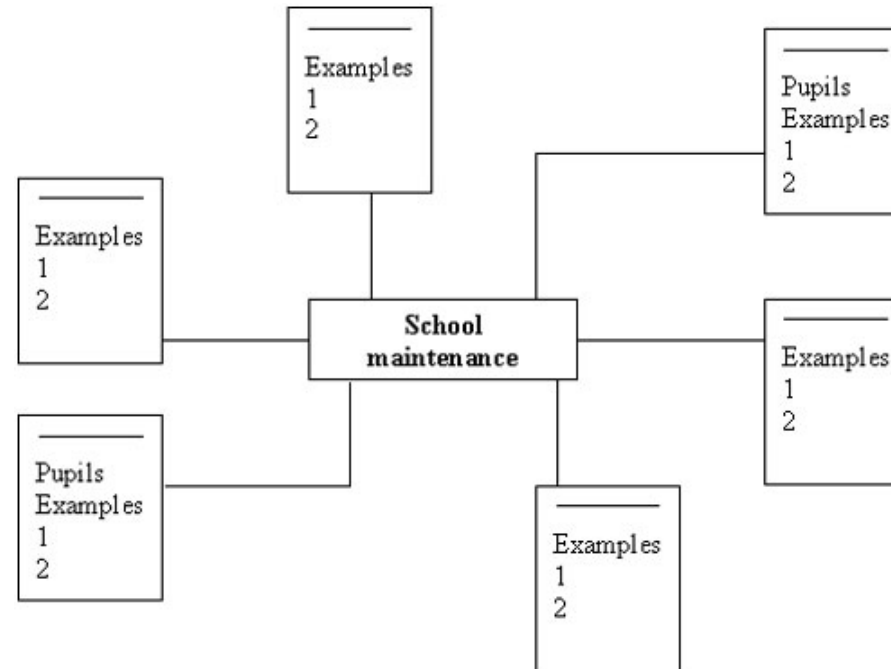
## Sources of school maintenance

### Activity 7.7

Complete the diagram in Fig 17 by filling the blanks with people and agencies who are responsible for school maintenance. For each one give two examples of what they maintain in your school.

20 minutes

Fig 17 Sources of school maintenance



### Comments

You have completed the diagram to show who is responsible for maintenance in your school and examples of what they do. As you completed it you may have thought of areas where your standard of maintenance could be improved, and how you could improve the delegation of responsibility further, as well as your system of supervision and accountability.

## Preventative maintenance

### Activity 7.8

There is always a need for regular servicing and maintenance to prevent disrepair and breakages. Make a list of the equipment and resources in your school which require preventative maintenance, and describe what you do in each case.

20 minutes

### Comments

Which of the following did you include on your list?

- boundary fence o gas oven
- school vehicle o generator
- borehole o cess pits
- planer o access road
- computer o fire extinguisher
- classroom furniture o roofs of buildings
- First Aid kit o photocopier
- typewriter o classroom walls and floors

As the development of your school takes place so the range of resources which require preventative maintenance will increase, as will the cost. The purchase of any resource, whether it is a building or a textbook, must take account of its durability and how much it will cost to maintain each year. An estimate of recurrent costs should be included in any proposal for capital expenditure.

### Checking stock

#### *Activity 7.9*

The frequency with which stock is checked, and interval of time between checks is important.

Complete the form outline in Fig 18 for three different items to show:

- what was checked;
- frequency of checks;
- any abnormalities.

20 minutes

Fig 18 Checking stock

ITEM	TYPE OF CHECK	COMMENT	DESCRIPTION	DATE
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1  
2  
3

### Comments

Which of the following did you include on the form:

- a physical check at frequent intervals
- a random check to ensure the balance of stock is correct
- a check to ascertain when items were issued
- a check that items issued were received?

Did you indicate who the inventory holder is? It is important to note that all inventory holders should receive full instruction on their responsibilities.

### Summary

Money and effort expended on resource maintenance and management is money well

spent. A school head must manage all school resources efficiently in the interests of the school and therefore full, proper and timely maintenance of these resources is imperative. In order to do this, he or she must institute a system of checks, reporting and stocktaking procedures, including the regular supply of replacement parts and servicing.

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