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## **African Education Challenges and Policy Responses: Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the African Development Bank\***

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### **Abstract**

From marginal access to school before 1960, African modern education systems expanded steadily during the 1960s and 1970s, prompted by high priority given to education. The 1980s experienced stagnation and decline due to drastic decrease in education financing further to the balance of payment and budget deficits, and the ensuing structural adjustment programmes. Since 1990, there have been intensified efforts to reverse the trend through national and international efforts. African education sector continues to face serious challenges of low and inequitable access to education, irrelevant curriculum and poor learning outcomes, inadequate education financing, weak education system capacity, and weak link with the world of work. Drawing on relevant documents and data, the paper discusses briefly those challenges and the education policy measures taken to address them. It also assesses to what extent the Bank response was relevant and effective in addressing the African education challenges. While progress has been made in bringing more children to schools, the results in terms of quantity and quality have been far from the targets particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The paper concludes with a call for a greater effort to keep the promise for education for all and for quality education. This may require an invitation for a new forum on education to take stock and try again more realistic policies and better define means to effectively implement them. The forum's resolutions should not be limited to the primary education but consider the education sector as a whole in the context of globalized economy and labor market.

### **I. Introduction**

Modern education systems in Africa coincided with the installation of missionaries at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Although universal education has been on the global agenda since the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights that proclaimed free and compulsory education to be a basic human right, in Africa, until the end of 1950s access to school was limited to few children<sup>1</sup>. During the 1960s and 1970s, African education

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\* This paper draws on the ongoing Operations Evaluation Department (OPEV) Review of Bank' Assistance Effectiveness in the Education Sector under the overall guidance of Colin Kirk, Director of OPEV. It contains preliminary findings and conclusions from the review, which will be finalised shortly. It acknowledges the contribution of consultants and Peer Reviewers who provided invaluable inputs to the Review: David Berk, Joseph Bredie; Victoria Elliot, M.P. Madhusoodhanan; Paschal Mihyo; and Ronald Ridker. Joseph Mouanda, Evaluation assistant also contributed to the analysis of the education portfolio review.

expanded steadily, prompted by high priority given to education by the newly independent governments, donors, parents and children. This reflected strong faith in the effects of education on national unity, social justice, human rights, and economic and social development. The 1980s experienced stagnation and decline due to drastic decrease in education financing aggravated by balance of payment and budget deficits, and the ensuing structural adjustment programmes.

Since 1990, there have been intensified efforts to reverse the trend through national and international efforts such as Education for All, OAU Decade of Education (1997-2006; 2006-2015), Poverty Reduction Strategies, Millennium Declaration, Fast Track Initiative, Global Action Plan and Debt Relief initiative. However, the African education sector continues to face serious challenges of low and inequitable access to education, irrelevant curriculum and poor learning outcomes, inadequate education financing by the governments and private sector, weak education system capacity, and weak link with the world of work. Recent estimates show that with the current trend, 28 out of the 43 Sub-Saharan African countries for which data are available cannot achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015 as their Primary Completion Rate will still lie under 90 percent (UNESCO-BREDA, 2007).

In accordance with its mandate to contribute to the economic and social progress of the African countries, the African Development Bank started financing the education sector in 1975, eight years after it began lending activities. This was motivated by the fact that human capital is one of the critical prerequisites for sustained development. The Bank adopted the first education policy in 1986 which was revised in 1999. In March 2008, the Bank adopted a Strategy for Higher Education, Science and Technology. Drawing on relevant documents and data, the paper aims at briefly: a) recalling reasons why investing in education matters; b) discussing the African education challenges; c) analyzing the appropriateness of education policy measures taken at the continental level; and d) evaluating to what extent the Bank response was relevant and effective in addressing the African education challenges.

## **II. Rationale of Investing in Education**

A society's ability to develop education and skills of its members is crucial to its ability to grow, as education has positive social externalities that foster economic, social and political changes. According to the 1992 Nobel laureate in economics Gary Becker (1995), the primary determinant of a country's standard of living is how well it succeeds in developing and utilizing the skills, knowledge, health, and habits of its population and that human capital can be neglected only at a country's peril. Empirical evidence shows that human capital and well functioning economic institutions<sup>2</sup> are the two variables that turn out to be important in determining economic success, out of hundreds of variables that have been tried (Barro 1991, Becker 1995, Barro and Lee 2000; Lucas Jr; 2003; Hanushek and Wößmann. 2007). Further, countries with better educated citizens tend to have healthier population, live longer and have healthier children.

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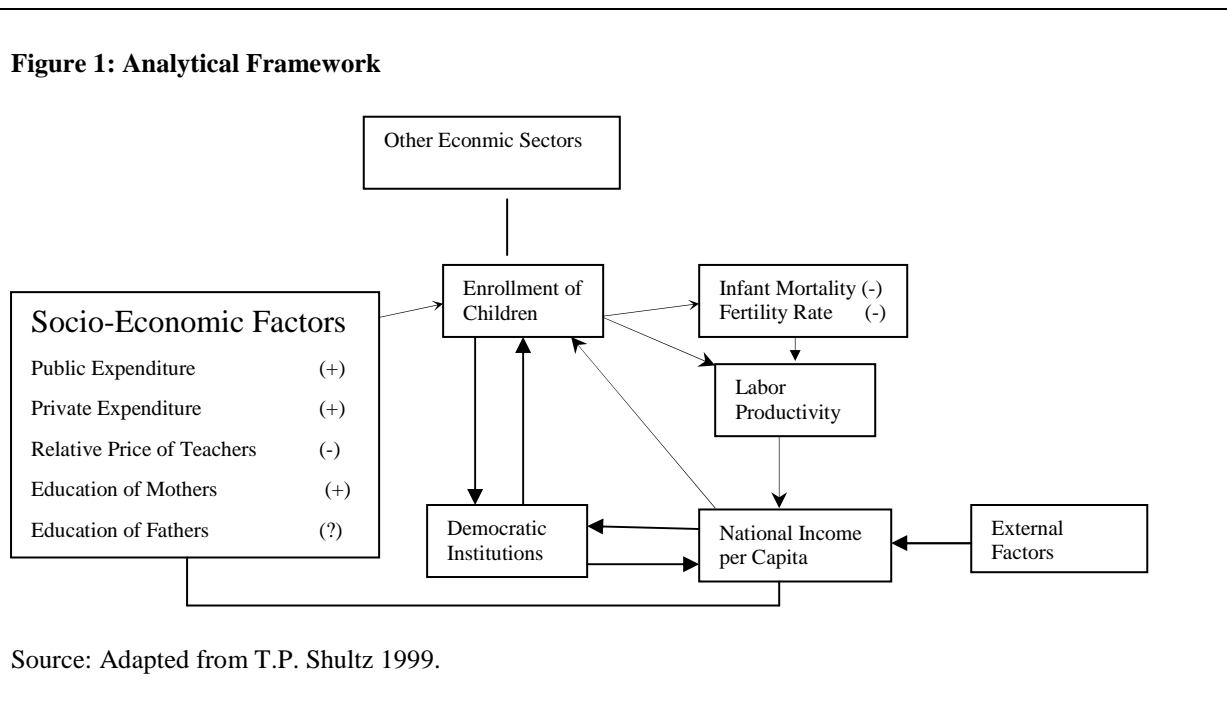
<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, the movement started in a formal international sense in 1924 when the League of Nations adopted the Geneva Resolution of the Rights of the Child. In 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, thereafter ratified by 192 countries (Farrel and Hartwell 2008). The *Article 26 states that*: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit".

<sup>2</sup> Such as established property rights, open labor and product markets, and participation in international markets.

The population of those countries tends to grow more slowly as they move through the demographic transition from a high fertility and high mortality to a low fertility and low mortality equilibrium. This creates an increase in the size of the working age population, which can create virtuous cycles of economic growth commonly referred to as the “demographic dividend” in the context of policies and institutions conducive to growth (Bloom et al. 2007). The health and demographic benefits appear to be extremely important with the secondary education expansion as exemplified by the “East Asian miracle” which was sustained by strong expansion in secondary education on top of near-universal primary schooling (McNicoll 2006).

Although decades of empirical research show that inequalities associated with economic origins or ethnicity are often resistant to education expansion, disadvantaged groups including women tend to benefit from this expansion by promoting a meritocratic basis for status attainment. Likewise, controversies on effects of education expansion on democratisation conclude that it improves informed citizenship of individuals but larger effects are found on tertiary level than lower levels of education, as it is the case for the effects of technological change (Hannum and Buchmann 2003).

A principal policy lesson from the experience of south-east Asian economies is that very often those countries had generalised access to education and health care long before overcoming structural poverty (Sen 1999). This indicates that in the mutually reinforcing circle of human development and sustainable economic development, the former acts as an instrument for the achievement of the latter. However, apart from some rare countries like Tunisia, the development experience in Africa is yet to suggest that this lesson has been internalized significantly.



To be effective, education must interact with other sectors of the economy but it faces competing demands on public budget from other key sectors such as infrastructure and agriculture (OECD 2007). The poor economic and social performance of most African countries could be explained mainly by inadequate promotion of inter-sectoral linkages and

complementarities between education and other sectors by successive governments, in addition to the widespread poor economic management. Figure 1 summarizes some of those interactions. There are several difficulties for testing econometrically causal relationships notably the time lag for a relation to occur and the potential reciprocal and indirect relationships between variables (Schultz 1999)<sup>3</sup>.

### **III. Key Features of Education in Africa**

#### *Education Expansion*

After independence in the early 1960s, education became one of the highest priorities of every new government in Africa. This led to increased expenditures on education, strongly supported by donors who also saw education as a top priority. The result was a great expansion of activities – construction of classrooms, hiring and training of teachers, acquisition of teaching materials – that resulted, during 1960s and 70s, in enrolment growing at a more rapid rate than in any other region of the world. Indeed, by 1980, the aggregate primary enrolment ratio in Sub-Saharan Africa had nearly caught up with those of South Asia and the Middle East (Annex 1). The flip side of this expansion was a drastic deterioration in quality compared with what it was during the colonial period. Inexperienced and partially trained teachers were put into classrooms with minimal supervision and expected to teach an increasing number of children without adequate teaching supplies, textbooks or school buildings.

The African countries followed the education systems and practices of the former colonial powers. In many instances, this was manifested in the curricula detached from the context and expensive education delivery. Curriculum content and teaching methods of the 1940s and 1950s in Europe continued to be used in Africa long after the European practices moved on. In all too many cases, the language of instruction even at primary level was that of the former colonial power. This resulted in an internally and externally inefficient and costly education system, particularly at the tertiary level, producing graduates without appropriate educational content or quality (Mihyo 2005). This also resulted in a mismatch between the world of work and the world of education. The imbalance between supply of and demand for skilled manpower is illustrated by the case of Mali, where only 30 percent of the 1986 university graduates got jobs, and in Guinea, where the unemployment of graduates resulted in 40 percent reduction of university enrolments (Diambomba 1988). Recent data show that only 49 percent of graduates in Benin find a job related to the level of education and that 15 percent of are jobless (Migan 2007, Banque Mondiale 2008).

#### *Stagnation and Decline*

The education expansion of the 1960s was supported by favourable terms of trade for Africa's traditional exports. In the 1970s and 80s, however, most African countries faced a deteriorating balance of payment which was aggravated by the oil price shocks of 1970s and the world-wide recession. Governments reacted by cutting "non-essential" spending, which in the education sector meant a halt to further expansion, decline in maintenance expenditures and reduced supply of teaching materials, and by borrowing from international capital markets. Teacher salaries were maintained in nominal terms but their real value was eroded by inflation. By the mid-1980s, such borrowing had reached crisis proportions, and

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<sup>3</sup> Two recent working papers of the African Development Bank carried out researches testing some of those relationships (Anyanwu And Erhijakpor 2007a and b; Kamara, Bousrih and Nyende 2007).

international institutions, most notably the IMF and the World Bank, began insisting on “structural adjustment,” which meant further cut in social sector spending.

Adding to all this, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which led to attrition of teachers and orphaned children, came along in the 1980s, gathered momentum in the 1990s until very recently when it started to decrease in some countries.<sup>4</sup> During this period, the brain-drain became a major phenomenon in a number of countries. It has been estimated that for a number of African countries, more than 30 percent of their highly skilled professionals have been lost to the OECD countries (Carrington and Detraciage 1998; Haque and Aziz 1998, as quoted by B. J. Ndulu of the World Bank<sup>5</sup>). A common feature of these factors is that they both reduce the productivity of investments in education, making it necessary to educate a larger number of persons to ensure that at least some stay back in the local labour force.

In addition, systemic and institutional factors contributed to the decline. Many African governments in the seventies and eighties put more emphasis on political control and suppressed participation by the private sector and other actors in the provision of education. Schools and the school system were used as institutions for socialization of the youth to the political goals of existing regimes. Like civil defense, education was made an exclusive domain of the state except in limited circumstances where religious organizations were licensed to provide limited services in education and in some cases where trusted institutions affiliated to the state were allowed to operate schools. In the majority of cases, it was indeed part of the public service systems.

This reduced the opportunity for education to become a tool for advancing participatory democracy, reducing social inequalities, reforming the administrative systems and strengthening systems that could reduce corruption, abuse of power and waste. Furthermore, politicization of education dismembered education policy from the overall development policy. It was not made part of the integral process of planning and transformation and never featured in the strategic development plans of even some of the democratic and participatory regimes. In the backdrop of this weakness, the education systems were subjected to erratic, unplanned and constant changes more often than not, depending on which donor country supplied the necessary funds or what was deemed expedient in the circumstances at any particular time.

Combined with continued rapid population growth, the result has been a quarter century of economic stagnation or decline, depending on the country. Africa’s GDP per capita in real terms is about the same today as it was in 1980; for Sub-Saharan Africa, it is 10 percent less. Since 2004, growth rates have improved in almost half of the continent’s countries; but this has not changed the overall picture.

### *Intensified Efforts to Reverse the Trend*

The education sector benefited from several international efforts, in particular requirements that debt relief benefits be spent on the social sectors (AfDB 2007), education targets included in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers,<sup>6</sup> Education For All, pledges to

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<sup>4</sup> The decrease has been observed in Kenya and Zimbabwe and there are signs of decrease in Côte d’Ivoire, and urban areas of Burkina Faso, where also behaviour changed: <http://go.worldbank.org/7UWT7GZOH0>.

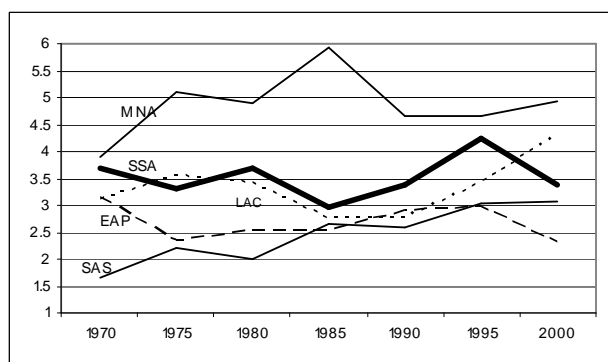
<sup>5</sup> “Human Capital Flight: Stratification, Globalisation and the Challenges to Tertiary Education in Africa” available at: <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCDRC/Resources/Braindrain-HumanCapitalNdulu.doc>.

<sup>6</sup> Education represented, on average, 40 percent of PRSP-related public expenditures (Berthélemy 2004).

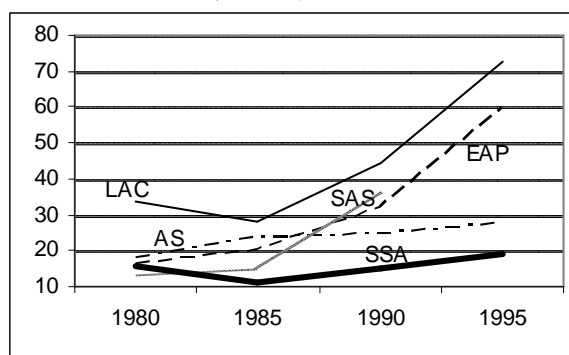
Millennium Development Goals, elimination of primary school fees in an increasing number of countries,<sup>7</sup> and general increases in foreign assistance levels.<sup>8</sup>

Public expenditures on education as a percentage of GDP have held up reasonably well in sub-Saharan Africa, thanks in part to the help from donors; but because of the much lower level of GDP, total expenditures have lagged behind other regions. In the 1970s, per pupil expenditures at primary level were similar to those in other regions but over time have remained roughly constant while those of other regions have increased quite substantially. In contrast, per pupil expenditures at secondary and tertiary levels were substantially higher than those of other regions in the early 1970s, a legacy of early efforts to emulate European education systems. This situation persisted for some time at tertiary level but eventually, along with secondary, expenditures per student began to fall and by 1995 were near or slightly below the average for other regions (Figure 2).<sup>9</sup>

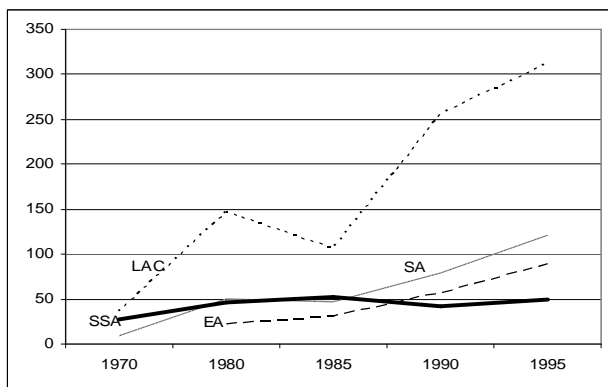
**Figure 2.1:** Public Education Expenditure as % GNP



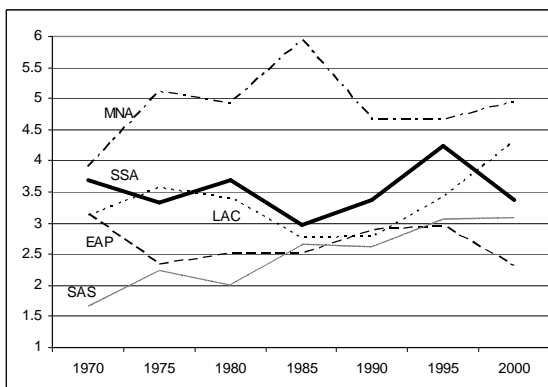
**Figure 2.2:** Public Expenditure on Education, constant 1990 US\$ (billions)



**Figure 2.3:** Public Expenditure per Primary Student, constant 1990 US\$



**Figure 2.4:** Public Expenditure per Secondary Student constant 1990 US\$

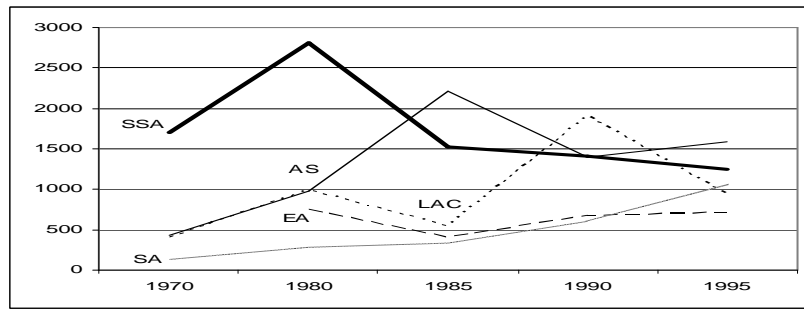


<sup>7</sup> This has proved to be a powerful measure. A case in point is Uganda where the primary school enrolment ratio almost doubled since school fees was eliminated in 1996 (ADEA, *The Challenge of Learning*, 2005, p.37).

<sup>8</sup> International aid to Africa more than tripled between 1995 and 2005 (with most of the increase coming from bilateral donors), according to OECD/DAC Data.

<sup>9</sup> These data come from the SPESA database (<http://www.adeanet.org/spessa99/index.html>). Comparable data for earlier and later years are not available but probably do not change the overall picture substantially.

**Figure 2.5: Public Expenditure per Tertiary Student, constant 1990 US\$**



Idem source: (<http://www.adeanet.org/spessa99/index.html>)

EAP East Asia and Pacific

MNA: Middle East and North Africa

SSA: Sub-Saharan Africa

SA: South Asia

MNA: Middle East and North Africa

LAC: Latin America and the Caribbean countries

#### **IV. African Main Education Challenges**

##### *Access and Equity*

Despite the heavy emphasis on primary education by international assistance in the Education for All framework, 38 million children were never enrolled in school in Sub-Saharan Africa as of 2004 (UNESCO 2006). The problem is more acute in rural areas where infrastructure and teachers are grossly inadequate. It is compounded by the fact that due to poverty and cultural practices many parents prefer children to work on family farms rather than going to school, as the employment prospects of education are grim. This situation calls for improvement in the economic environment and in scaling up education financing by governments and their development partners for building new schools, training teachers and providing educational materials to support African countries in meeting the goal of education for all by 2015.<sup>10</sup> Also, in order to strengthen public perceptions about the value of education reforms are required that can ensure education that prepares children for self-employment and off-farm income generation activities rather than for paid jobs.

The gross enrolment ratio for primary education in Sub-Saharan Africa is 91 percent and the net enrolment ratio is 65 percent implying that there is still a long way to go before achieving universal primary education in Africa. The access problem is acute at all levels of education and is reflected in the low gross enrolment ratios at secondary and tertiary levels which are 30 percent and 5 percent respectively, the lowest level compared to any other region in the world. The girls' enrolment ratio is much lower than that of boys at all levels of education. Though over years the differences have reduced, it still remains very high. Gross enrolment ratio for girls at primary, secondary and tertiary levels are 85 percent, 26 percent, and 4 percent, showing a female-male ratio of 0.89, 0.78 and 0.62 respectively.

Girls in many poor communities still suffer from discrimination when it comes to decisions on whether a boy or girl should go to school. Girls still provide most of the household labour and are forced into early marriage after they have been denied a chance to

<sup>10</sup> According to UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2006), the numbers of additional primary school teachers required to meet the projected needs over the next decade in Sub-Saharan African is 1.6 million.

take control of their own destiny through education. Adolescent pregnancies, puberty rituals and sexual myths, and manipulation of culture<sup>11</sup>, still lead to early entry into marriage and reduce the chances of bridging the gap. Bloom and Cohen (2005) have mentioned other factors which are relevant for the African context: lower market wages for women which can make investing in schooling for boys before schooling for girls a rational economic decision for a family; verbal and physical abuses; a lack of functional, secure toilets for girls; and long distances between home and school, which can deter parents from sending daughters to school; the fact that girls leave parents' household upon marriage. The school systems have a role in tackling these problems and there are increasing initiatives underway to mobilize African societies for sending all girls to school.<sup>12</sup> At the university level, some countries "have introduced quota-based admission policies aimed at gender equity, affirmative action for physically challenged people, needs-based bursaries, preferential admission and courses modules" (Mihyo 2005).

As mentioned above, in the achievement of education MDGs, sub-Saharan Africa lags far behind other regions, with an estimated of 28 out of countries seriously off track and are unlikely to reach the MDGs before 2040 (UNESCO 2006). Easterly (2007) has argued that while this being true, it would be unfair to blame Africa for not achieving the predetermined MDGs, as these goals and targets were arbitrarily designed to measure progress against poverty and deprivation, and that their design makes Africa look worse than it really is. The MDGs were not set in a way that gave a fair picture of progress in all regions. Among other methodological issues, the choice of the benchmark year as 1990 for the MDGs announced in 2000 made Africa look much worse off than other regions as the progress made by 2000 was overlooked. However, the portrayal of Africa as lagging far behind other regions also has the potential for mobilizing greater resources to address the challenging development situation of the continent.

### *Relevance and Quality*

African education system has so far emphasized expansion of education without adequate attention to its relevance, which would lead to wastage of resources. Related to the question of relevance is the language of instruction. Experience shows that the use of African languages during the early years of education may reduce repetition and dropout rates and enable an early earning. This has been demonstrated by the studies of Zambia, Namibia and Tanzania.<sup>13</sup> The relevance issue is more pronounced at the upper secondary, higher and vocational levels where, while expanding access, the alignment of curricula with the needs of labour market assumes greater significance. Science and technology education need to start at an early stage of education. The question as to how to make the curriculum more useful for those who drop out before the end of basic cycle remains unresolved.

A major problem of the most of the schools in Sub-Saharan Africa is the failure to turn out students with appropriate knowledge and skills. A study undertaken during 1995-98 by SACMEQ to measure primary school students' reading ability found that in four out of seven countries, fewer than half of sixth-graders achieved minimum competence in reading. Low achievement is also evident in the PASEC study (1996-2001), conducted in six francophone countries: 14 percent to 43 percent of fifth-grade pupils had 'low' achievement

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<sup>11</sup> Cultural manipulation corresponds to indoctrination that is used to convince girls that certain things even if harmful to their health such as female genital mutilation are necessary if they have to mature to womanhood. In some societies they are told that they cannot be accepted for marriage or they will never get children if they are not circumcised.

<sup>12</sup> It is the case in Benin where the initiative 'Toutes les filles à l'école,' supported by development partners, organizes annual events to motivate parents to send their daughters to school.

<sup>13</sup> ADEA. 2005. *Le programme de lecture dans l'enseignement primaire en Zambie*, Paris: L'Harmattan.

in either French or mathematics. In Senegal, for example, over 40 percent of students had difficulty putting in order numbers with two decimal points. There has even been some backsliding. Comparison between SACMEQ studies of 1995-1996 and 2000-2001 showed a 4 percent decline in grade 6 literacy achievement scores, with the most significant differences occurring in Malawi, Namibia and Zambia (UNESCO 2005).

Earlier studies on factors affecting learning in West Africa (MaClure 1997) indicated that in Ghana many primary and secondary school students had reading problems as they only read for examinations while at university, students tended to exchange text books and did not buy many books for their learning and future use. In Mali and Togo writing skills were found to be below expected standards and very few students indicated interest in improving handwriting skills. Poor grammar teaching was identified as an obstacle in these countries while oral communication problems were noted in Benin and Togo. In Cameroon the problems of communication and writing skills was noted among students and teachers too.

Attempts to identify reasons for these declines point to many factors. These include school types. As shown in the above West African study, single sex schools seemed to perform better than co-education schools in Ghana with all-boys schools performing lower than all-girls schools. On the other hand performance in science classes was poorer than that in non-science based classes. But overall, factors affecting learning in all types of schools included social factors mainly family background, parents' educational levels, proximity of parents to students, and family incomes.

These factors have been identified as critical in other countries of Africa (Datta 1984, Obanya 2002). Most of them emanate from the fact that household income appears to have fallen in most countries including countries such as Malawi where school fees were abolished in 1994. In that country the number of primary school pupils doubled in a decade, and school resources fell in absolute terms over the two SACMEQ study periods. At secondary level, evidence of weak basic skills is compounded by difficulties school leavers have in obtaining suitable jobs. Furthermore, those school leavers are not equipped to create their own jobs as vocational education in Africa has been low. At higher levels, in addition to labour market difficulties, the evidence includes low levels of publication in professional, peer-reviewed, journals and low levels of patents compared to those of other countries.

The fundamental problem however also lies in education policy development and management in African countries. The Jomtien undertaking was to strengthen education by meeting *basic learning needs*. Seven areas covering these needs were identified as surviving, developing learners' full capabilities, enabling learners to live and work with dignity, providing them with capacity to participate fully in development processes, equipping them with skills to improve their quality of life, empowering them to make informed decisions and enabling them to continue to learn. The Dakar Framework 2000, adopted these areas and adopted the four pillars identified in the Delors Report (Delors 1996) mainly that basic education should lead to *learning to be, learning to do, learning to know and learning to live together* (UNESCO 2000; Torres 2004). In the education policies of many African countries there is no indication that after Jomtien or Dakar, education programmes were designed in such a way as to aim at these basic learning needs.

A wide variety of other factors explain these quality problems, depending on the country and the level of education. Low completion rates, teachers who lack qualifications, experience and/or motivation, shortage of teaching materials, weak supervision and

accountability systems, inadequate time-on-task such as absenteeism of teachers, illness, family obligations and political disruptions), and inappropriate curricula (at primary level, teaching in a foreign language, at higher levels, misalignment between subject matter and labour market needs), and shortage of resources allocated to the education sector and misallocation and misuse of resources within the sector are frequently cited reasons.

### *Education Financing*

Education financing by African governments is still very inadequate due to low capacity of many of them to raise taxes for increasing economic and social investments. In terms of percentage of GDP, government financing of education looks substantial but in absolute terms the per capita expenditure on education remains very low (figure 2.1). Hence, most African governments have to rely on international aid for sustaining education financing to cope with the fast growing youth population. There has been a strong mobilisation of support for Education For All since 1990 with the Jomtien conference including other subsequent initiatives such as, Dakar conference in 2000, Fast Track Initiative in 2002, the Global Initiative for Education by UNESCO, and the Global Action Plan, aimed at the attainment of education for all. There also have been significant steps taken by setting up new financial arrangements like budget support and SWAs since the 1990s.

This was a response to disappointing results of decades of project aid to education. Project aid has several limitations as it does not address deficiencies in the broader context where it is introduced. As Colclough and al. (2003) have pointed it out: “For example, newly trained teachers cannot be effective if texts are not available to deliver the curriculum. New teaching materials cannot bring benefits to pupils if teachers are not trained in their use. Providing better teacher’s houses will not improve teacher morale if real reductions in their salaries continue unchecked”. The new financing arrangements design and implementation were supposed to be led by the government in initiating a consultative process with development partners to establish sectoral policy, priorities and performance indicators, required expenditures, management and accounting arrangements. In practice, because of weak capacity in the ministry of education, aid agencies retained the planning, negotiation process, designing and drafting the details of the programs.

However, most efforts may have limited impact because of the way education is financed. Very few African countries have a funding formula<sup>14</sup> for education or other social services and more often than not funding is allocated on the basis convenience and expediency rather than norms based on input and output goals or performance indicators. Budget adjustments are made through administrative decision making across the board directives without prior consultation or risk analysis. As far as the Bank is concerned, the rule of origin constraint prevents from fully put into practice its guidelines on SWAs in education sector, adopted in 2004<sup>15</sup>. Though private sector is involved in education provision, ensuring their participation in education financing to attain the MDGs remains a major challenge.

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<sup>14</sup> Funding formulas are used when funding is related to inputs: student enrolment, number of females or students from disadvantaged communities, foreign students, etc. Support is linked to general objectives and incentives are given for determined inputs or outputs when certain thresholds are crossed or norms met. South Africa is an example with a very comprehensive policy.

<sup>15</sup> By now, the Bank is using Sector Budget Support arrangements for its assistance to : a) the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2006-2010 in Rwanda approved in June 2006; b) the Programme in Support of Second Education Plan in Tanzania approved in 2007; and c) the Uganda support to post-primary education yet to be approved by the Board of Directors.

## *Education System*

African education system is on the whole centralized in nature and characterized by weak management, planning, evaluation, and incentive structures. Most countries do not have reliable information system to facilitate planning, monitoring, evaluation, policy formulation and resource allocation. More seriously, the system is not able to ensure proper use of funds often due to corrupt practices. The highly centralized nature of education delivery in most African countries precludes possibilities of local participation which could resolve some of the issues in resource mobilization, management, accountability, and sustainability of the education system. Most countries have not been able to meaningfully operationalize decentralization due to the problems involved in local capacity development and devolution of power and resources. But in the absence of proper budget and expenditure tracking systems, decentralization has in some cases been rendered ineffective either because of limited financial management capacity or it has simply meant the decentralization of corruption to the local level.

## **V. Africa's Inputs into Development Policy Priorities**

### *Conceptual Confusion*

There has been lack of clarity about what constitutes basic education and literacy education in many African countries. Leadership of ministries has been changed many times over short periods in many countries because of this lack of clarity. Basic and primary education, have been used interchangeably, while literacy has been confused with adult education. In essence basic education unlike primary education is not limited to children and literacy includes children and youth education. Both children and adults need basic of foundational education to enable them to attain the survival, participation and community belonging skills envisaged in the Dakar Framework.

Hence children and adults require basic education and literacy and the education of each group impacts on that of the other. Significantly missing from education policy and planning in the majority of African countries, is the link between children or youth education on the one hand and adult education on the other. As a result there are no synergies between the two systems and the adult education fails to support primary education and vice versa. Adults are excluded from basic education and confined to literacy education while at the same time children and youth have serious literacy problems. Some of the quality problems examined earlier emanate from the failure of adult learning to support primary education and the confinement of basic education to children and youth.

### *Education Planning*

Lack of strategic planning by ministries in charge of education has made it difficult for development partners to build on the identified needs of African governments<sup>16</sup>. The latter have been slow if not reluctant to express their views clearly on development partner policies and approaches. For example after the Dakar World Education Conference in 2000 many donors organized their own conferences and identified priorities that they were going to pursue. Some, for example, UNICEF decided that they would confine themselves to universal

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<sup>16</sup> Since the Dakar forum in 2000, 30 countries out of 53 have adopted the Medium Term Expenditure Framework which relies on constraints and resources of the government to finance the education sector. However, several countries lack administrative capacity to make the approach effective (UNESCO-BREDA 2007).

primary education and though dealing with children they decided to exclude early childhood development and adult education though it impacts on primary education.

The World Bank decided to stick to primary education but agreed to include early childhood education and a little bit of higher education. Most European partners still remained confined to primary education based on the perceived low rates of returns on tertiary education. Only UNESCO, SIDA and the Directorate General for International Development Co-operation of the Netherlands left windows widely open for all components of education. However, African inputs into the post Dakar education policies of partners were minimal even during the first Decade for Education in Africa, which has just ended. In the absence of Africa's inputs into the education and development policies of development partners, some areas such as vocational, teacher and higher education have remained poorly resourced.

### *African Education Priorities*

Analysis of feedback from 21 African countries shows that the main education challenges Africa faced for decades still remain as formidable. Access and equity in education, particularly basic education, quality and relevance of education and education system strengthening remain to be the core challenges. Some respondents specifically mentioned difficulties in enrolment of girls, children in distress conditions and children of pastoral communities. Low capacity of the education system is manifested in inadequacies of planning, supervision and management; inability to reform the system; inadequate incentives to teaching and other staff; and difficulties in mobilizing resources to finance education service delivery. This results in high rates of dropout and repetition, and low external efficiency of the education system.

**Table 2. Ministry of Education Perception of Education Challenges (n=21)**

Challenges	Number of RMCs
Access and Equity	13
Quality and Relevance	13
Education System Strengthening	12

Note: Possibility of multiple answers per country.

As a matter of fact, Africa's priorities need to be re-examined. Obanya (2002) has identified ten of the priorities. First, there is need to put the political fundamentals right: create more space for inclusive, participatory and devolved planning in the education systems. Second, integrating and mainstreaming education into national strategic planning. Third, there is need to adopt a holistic approach to education. Fourth, education needs to be given the priority it deserves within the context of competing social and economic needs and programmes. Fifth, if adequate and equitable levels of education attainment and achievement have to be reached, there is need to involve all potential actors in the delivery of education services. Sixth, the achievement of the above goals requires the creation of conducive conditions for supporting innovative initiatives in the provision of education. Seventh, African needs higher levels of enrolment at all levels of education but quantity without improvement of quality undermines the fundamental objectives of education for all. Eighth effective resources planning and management requires increased transparency in the mobilization and management of resources. Ninth, African cooperation and exchange of experiences and best practices is essential for moving forward the education development agenda. And finally lack of creative thinking and activities undermines the efforts of development partners.

## **VI. Bank Response to Education Challenges**

While the Bank started its lending operation in July 1966, it is only in 1975 that it financed its first projects in education and in health. The first education project was in Mali to finance a polytechnic institute. In 1986, the Bank adopted its education sector policy, which was revised in 2000 to better address long-standing as well as new challenges. From 2005, with change in Bank management, the Bank went through an institutional reform which delved into more selective interventions with a more focus on infrastructure, private sector development and regional integration at the expense of the social sectors, and within the education sector, on Higher Education, Science and Technology, and Vocational Training at the expense of primary and lower secondary. This emphasis on these sub-sectors was motivated by their relative neglect by other donors which concentrate their assistance to basic education. In March 2008, the Bank adopted its Strategy for Higher Education, Science and Technology.

### *Education Policies and Strategies*

#### **A. Bank Education Policy 1986**

Between 1975 and 1985, the Bank did not have any articulated policy for the education sector. An analysis of Bank education portfolio indicates that the education projects addressed primarily Secondary TVET followed by Higher Education. In January 1986, the Bank published its first education policy to respond to the following concerns: (a) access and equity in education; (b) quality and internal efficiency of education; (c) relevance, utility, and external efficiency of education; (d) management, organisation and planning of education; and (e) education cost and financing of education. This policy placed great emphasis on the early years of schooling, and accordingly the Bank supported development of the much-needed infrastructure to help expand access to basic education in RMCs.

The revised education policy in 2000 reported that at the policy level: a) the Bank education interventions failed to adopt an integrated and balanced approach to addressing both quantitative and qualitative aspects of education; b) the Bank neither paid due attention to co-ordination of education projects with other development activities at the community level, nor gave adequate support to programmes that target girls and women and other disadvantaged groups; c) operations were often prepared after little or no consultation with stakeholders and the beneficiaries on whose lives the schools were supposed to impact; d) issues of sustainability did not receive adequate attention as did the role of the Bank in assisting RMCs in education sector programmes, in promoting private sector and regional education projects (ADB 2000). At the operational level, the same policy observed that the Bank projects were characterised by unrealistic schedules, high cost due to long delays at different stages of project cycle, inadequate and irregular supervision and weak database for monitoring evaluations and impact studies.

## B. Bank Group Revised Education Policy 2000

Following the agenda set by global conferences,<sup>17</sup> the Bank redefined its priorities and strategic approach for its support to the development of education. The Education Sector Policy 2000 was also developed in concert with the new Vision of the Bank (1999), which attached a great deal of importance to human resource development leading to poverty reduction. It also was in tune with the operational priorities of ADF VIII that emphasised universal primary education by 2015 and elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005.<sup>18</sup> Among the new areas of educational interest emerging from the agenda set since 1986 Education Sector Policy were women's and girls' education, application of new technology and distance education, environmental education, population and AIDS education, and peace education.

The revised policy placed greater emphasis on impact and sustainability of educational outcomes. Its financing was guided by five principles: a) a more holistic approach to education that continues to give priority to improved access to basic education, while advocating development of secondary, technical and vocational, and tertiary education sub-sectors; b) African countries ownership, responsibility and control of operations; c) a participatory approach including partnership with other stakeholders, an active role played by the civil society along the project cycle; d) promotion of regional integration to increase opportunities to face the challenge of globalisation through financing international institutions' 'centres of excellence'; and e) support to non- and for-profit private sector which represents an opportunity for expanding access to education. Furthermore, the revised policy put greater emphasis on: a) Bank's increased involvement in policy formulation and implementation; b) the importance of sectoral linkages; and c) the role of private sector and civil society alongside the public sector.

Based on the analysis of the most critical issues of education in Africa and in order to assist in consolidation and expansion of qualitative achievements of the past, the Bank defined three main priority areas:<sup>19</sup> (a) quality basic education for all including formal and non-formal education; (b) provision of middle and high-level skills that involves the expansion and quality improvement of general secondary education, technical and vocational education and training, and higher education; (c) organisation and management of the education sector.

The revised education policy defined five strategic actions for achieving these policy objectives consisting of improving: (a) access to educational opportunity with an emphasis on policies supporting Universal Primary Education by the year 2015; (b) social and gender equity in education; (c) quality of instruction and output by strengthening physical and human resources at all levels of the education system, stressing on qualitative investments which had been neglected in past interventions; (d) management and planning capacities

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<sup>17</sup> Among conferences which outlined the importance of education and its place in development and which contributed to setting a new agenda for education in Africa are: (a) the Conference on Education for All in Jomtien (1990); (b) the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995); (c) the Social Summit in Copenhagen (1996); (d) the World Conference on Higher Education in Paris (1998). The Assembly of Heads of States and Governments of the Organization for African Unity endorsed the outcome of these conferences and the period 1997-2006 was declared "Decade of Education in Africa."

<sup>18</sup> ADF VII emphasised primary and vocational training, institutional development stressing on educational management, selective interventions in tertiary education, support to labour market reforms, employment creation and provision of training, and addressing the problem of child labour practices.

<sup>19</sup> Basic education includes primary education and the first cycle of secondary education, covering duration of 9 or 10 years depending on countries.

including Ministry of Education data gathering/analysis/storage, decentralisation, and professional education networks; and (e) educational financing mechanisms.

To address specific needs of African countries, the policy recommended new adaptable lending instruments (Project Loans, Policy Based Lending, Sector Investment Programmes) and Non-Lending Instruments (Technical Assistance Grants). The Bank was committed to support a Sector-wide Approach sustained by extensive investigative and analytical work in order to operate within a common framework with other development partners. It was also committed to promote participatory approaches in all stages of project cycle to ensure broad-based ownership and sustainability, donor co-ordination for enhancing the synergy in education sector financing and development of institutional and human resource capacities; and institutional arrangements with attention paid to the involvement of all stakeholders and provision of technical assistance grants, the support to the design and formulation of policies and sector programmes, the preparation of projects and programmes, and other technical support as appropriate.

### C. Higher Education, Science and Technology Strategy Paper 2008

This paper approved by the Board in April 2008 builds on the prevailing Bank education policy and aims at developing a framework for scaling up the Bank's involvement in tertiary education and on the international commitment to support the revitalization of higher education in Africa. Recent studies have emphasized the possibilities of technological catch-up and impacts on economic growth from focusing on higher education, and within higher education on science and technology (Bloom, Canning and Chan 2005; Juma and Yee-Cheong, 2005; OECD and World Bank 2007). This area has also been neglected by other donors.<sup>20</sup> Further, it is expected that this strategy would foster partnership with the private sector, promotion of regional integration, reduction in the outflow of higher level skilled manpower from Africa, and a greater emphasis on infrastructure development. The strategic focus on higher education, science and technology was designed in accordance with the recommendations of the High Level Panel commissioned by the President of the Bank to advise on future directions (AfDB 2007).

The strategy proposes three 'strategic pillars,' viz. a) support to national and regional centres of excellence in the priority areas of agriculture and livestock, engineering, health, ICT, financial management and services, and tap the expertise within the African Diaspora for science and technology innovation (STI) activities in the centres of excellence and networking with existing science and technology institutions; b) building infrastructure for higher education, science and technology with focus on countries emerging from conflict, by undertaking enhancement of ICT infrastructure, rehabilitation and/or building of national infrastructure for technology development, development of HEST for teaching facilities and equipment, support to sustainable technology development infrastructure, especially science parks; and c) linking higher education, science and technology and productive sectors by working with partners to undertake STI national and regional skills profiles, support RMCs in developing national innovation action plans, strengthen HEST-industry linkages, with emphasis on setting up of 'incubators,' increasing participation of women in the science and technology field, cultivate technology development through partnership with private sector, and integrate indigenous knowledge into innovation systems.

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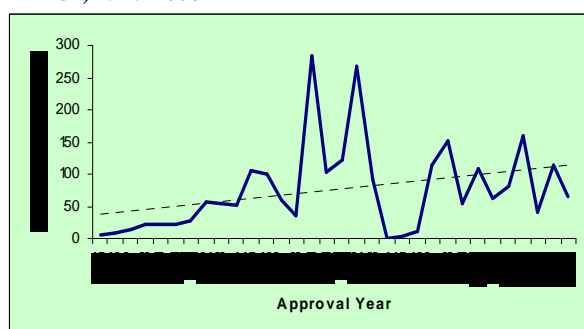
<sup>20</sup> From 1985 to 1989, the World Bank spent 17 percent of its world-wide education budget on higher education, but from 1995 to 1999, this proportion dropped to just 7 percent (AfDB, 2007, p. i).

Despite the commendable efforts at narrowing down the focus, the paper still covers a broad and somewhat separable range of topics. One is curriculum reform at primary and secondary level, to introduce more mathematics and science. Another is the need to help fill higher level skill deficits, a task arguably approached most effectively and efficiently by promoting development of European type polytechnics, plus the regulation and quality enhancement of rapidly growing number of private institutions attempting to fill this gap. Yet another is higher education, which among other things requires two separate tasks: reform of domestic institutions to make them cost-effective and development or enhancement of pan-African centres of excellence. A final, somewhat separable topic is support for research which should include more than science and technology research, and which must involve working with both centres of excellence and regional research institutes. Responsibility for all these topics might be put into one institutional unit called HEST; but to have a significant impact, each requires one or more individuals who specialize in and work full time on the topic and adequate budgetary support.

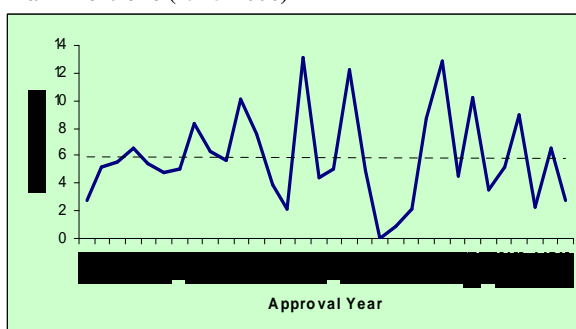
### *Bank Education Financing*

From 1975 to 2005, the Bank approved 185 projects – including 24 studies – representing 231 operations (loans and grants) totalling UA 2.25 billion, of which the concessional African Development Fund (ADF) window represents 62.3 percent, the African Development Bank (ADB) window 36.6 percent, and the Nigeria Trust Fund resources 1.1 percent. The education portfolio was characterised by a quasi-continuous increase for the period 1975-1985 after which it started to widely fluctuate with a maximum of UA 193.93 million in 1993 and zero commitment in 1994 and only UA 3.05 million in 1995. This period corresponds almost to the crisis the Bank faced in the early nineties to the extent that by 1994-95 due to non-availability of ADF resources, the Bank financed very few projects and no education project was approved (figure 3). The education portfolio corresponds to 5.2 percent of the Bank total net lending for 1975-2005 period. Table 3 below shows that while the annual approval increased by almost 2.5 between the pre-policy period and the first policy period, it remained at the same level from the first policy and the second policy.

**Fig. 3.1: Education Sector Financing (Amount UA million) 1975-2006**



**Fig. 3.2: Share of Education Sector Approvals in Total Bank Portfolio (1975-2006)**



DAC-OED data shows that the ADF education portfolio for the period 1990-2005 was 5.5 percent of the total concessional international aid to the education sector. This represented a third of the IDA's education portfolio (15.6 percent) and slightly less than the European Commission education portfolio (6.7 percent). Education sector financing in Africa was dominated by bilateral donors (70.4 percent) compared to multilateral donors (29.6 percent). However, the most striking fact is the fast growth of the bilateral donors' contribution which rose from 40.4 percent in 1990 to 82.9 percent in 2005.

Although both education policies put an emphasis on basic education, the portfolio analysis shows that from the inception until 2006, priority was given to secondary education, including general and vocational education, technical and teacher training, accounting. Within the secondary education, TVET which was very prominent in the pre-policy period declined

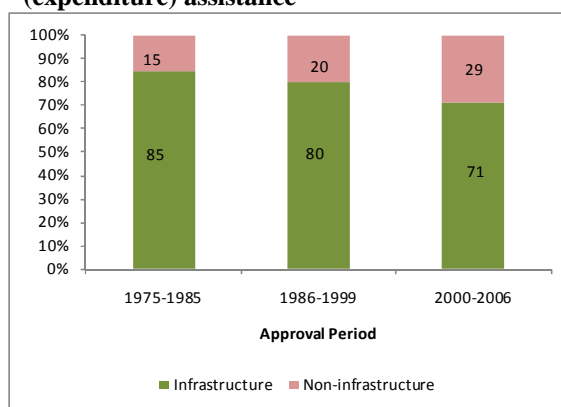
**Table 3: Component/sub-sector-wise distribution of education sector financing (1975-2006)**

Sub-sector / Components	Percentage			
	1975-85	1986-99	2000-06	Total
Secondary TVET	60.8	28.4	15.3	30.5
Secondary General Education	5.9	23.7	43.9	26.0
Primary Education	8.6	27.9	17.0	21.6
Higher Education	15.3	8.3	7.2	9.2
Non-formal Education		1.1	2.5	1.3
Pre-Primary Education		0.8		0.4
Institutional Development	4.2	4.0	9.1	5.4
Project Management	3.8	4.0	4.6	4.1
Studies	1.4	1.9	0.4	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Average annual Approvals (UA million)</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>100.7</b>	<b>104.7</b>	<b>75.5</b>

drastically in the first and second policy periods to the benefice of Secondary General Education. Like wise, higher education declined over time. More interestingly, the recent education strategy emphasis corresponds to what actually the Bank was doing when there was no strategy. Likewise, the challenges and constraints identified for the first education period were prevailing during the second.

The Bank has overwhelmingly directed its support to infrastructure comprising buildings, equipment and furniture. The emphasis placed on this category of assistance continuously declined over time vis-à-vis the soft categories contributing to institutional development including training and technical assistance, and teaching supplies and operating costs. The assistance to infrastructure represented 85 percent of the education financing during the pre-policy period. It declined to 80 percent during the first policy period and then to 71 percent during the second policy period.

**Fig. 4: Education financing by categories of (expenditure) assistance**



The gradual increase in Bank assistance to soft categories was consistent with the trends in international assistance for social sector. For instance, the portfolio review carried out by the World Bank in 2004 for its review of the assistance to the primary education indicates that before mid-1990s, most of the funding for primary education went to hardware (civil works and material support), but in more recent years that has fallen to just over 50 percent (World Bank 2004 and 2006).

## VII. Bank Effectiveness

### *Quality at entry*

A quality-at-entry assessment based on a sample of 38 education projects selected from 37 countries and approved during 1975-2005 was carried out with a view to determine the quality of the design, changes in design quality over time, and consistency of the projects with the sector and operations policies.<sup>21</sup> This analysis is supplemented by findings on design quality dimensions drawn from the project completion reports and project performance evaluation reports. The analysis shows that overall 74 percent of the projects had satisfactory quality-at-entry rating. While 76 percent of the projects were satisfactory during the first policy periods 1986-1999, the level of quality declined marginally to 71 percent during the second policy period 2000-2005 (Table 5.1 below). This decline however is not statistically significant.

**Table 4: QAE dimensions and percentage of projects rated satisfactory during two policy periods**

Project Quality Dimensions	Percentage Satisfactory or Better		
	1986-99 [N=21]	2000-05 [N=17]	1975-2005 [N=38]
Strategic Relevance and Approach	86	88	87
Poverty, Gender and Social Development	71	100	84
Environmental Aspects	76	94	84
Technical, Financial and Economic Analyses	81	65	74
Policy and Institutional Aspects	67	65	66
Implementation Arrangements	62	65	63
Risk Assessment	48	53	50
Fiduciary Aspects	30	65	45
<b>Overall Quality</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Bank Inputs and Processes</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>50</b>

The quality dimensions of strategic relevance and approach; poverty, gender and social development; and environmental aspects were found to have performed consistently satisfactorily in over 70 percent or above during both periods. Technical, financial and economic analyses performed highly in the first period but declined in percentage terms in the second period. Policy and institutional aspects and implementation arrangements were found to be satisfactory respectively in 66 percent and 63 percent of projects.

Areas of particular concerns are: a) Bank inputs and processes; b) risk assessment; and c) fiduciary dimensions with very low rating of 50, 50, and 45 percent respectively. While risk assessment and fiduciary aspects improved over time, performance of the Bank inputs and processes remained more or less unchanged. Low performance with respect to the above quality dimensions is one of the explanations for the serious implementation problems faced by such projects and the difficulties in meeting development objectives.

<sup>21</sup> The assessment is based on the standard QEA variables of: a) strategic relevance and approach; b) technical, financial and economic aspects; c) poverty, gender and social development; d) environmental aspects; e) fiduciary aspects; f) policy and institutional aspects; g) implementation arrangements; h) risk assessment; and i) an analysis of the Bank inputs and processes.

## Implementation Performance

This decrease is more pronounced for activities and works assessment which also indicates the slowest ratings among the performance indicators. Implementation performance ratings show that only about 10 percent of the projects evaluated were not satisfactory. This seems to be unrealistic especially when read along with the reported project recurrent problems and obstacles. Ratings for the ‘expected development impact’ were found to be particularly high, reflecting an evident optimism on the part of the project managers.

The number of problematic projects<sup>22</sup> has consistently declined since 2000 with its lowest level ever in 2004 but has significantly increased since 2005. The Annual Portfolio Performance Review reports in the past had set a target to limit the problematic projects to around 10 percent. According to the latest report, the Bank has been able to achieve that level by 2004 with only 10.3 percent of projects rated problematic. In education sector, that level was achieved in 2002 with 9.7 percent problematic projects before an increase resumed in 2005 (Table 6.2).

**Table 5: Satisfactory Implementation Performance of Education Projects (1998-2006)**

Implementation Performance Criteria	Supervision Year/Percentage of Projects								
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Compliance with Conditions	66.7	67	73	84	87	90	88	90	86
Procurement Performance	71.4	85	61	83	90	90	96	91	89
Financial Performance	64.3	80	73	83	89	91	93	86	86
Activities and Works	57.1	91	77	82	89	86	87	84	71
Implementation Progress	66.7	91	71	90	93	93	100	93	90
Overall Assessment	65.2	83	71	84	89	90	93	89	84
Expected Impact on Development	85.7	100	93.9	100	93	96.6	96.4	97.2	97.1
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>66.7</b>	<b>95.5</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>94.8</b>	<b>91.7</b>	<b>94.8</b>	<b>96.4</b>	<b>97.2</b>	<b>94.3</b>

**Table 6: Problematic projects in Bank portfolio**

Supervision Year	Problematic Projects (all sectors %) †	Problematic Projects (Education %) ††
1998	20.0	47.4
1999	11.2	13.0
2000	13.9	46.5
2001	12.2	15.3
2002	14.3	9.7
2003	10.4	8.6
2004	10.3	3.6
2005	-	7.0
2006	-	11.4

† Source: Annual Portfolio Performance Reviews.

†† The number of supervisions recorded in the Bank database appears to be incomplete for 1998-2000 and hence the percentages of problematic projects for those years may not be accurate.

<sup>22</sup> The Bank considers a project to be ‘problematic’ when either the average score of implementation performance or the expected impact on development goes below 1.5 on the four-point scale 0-3.

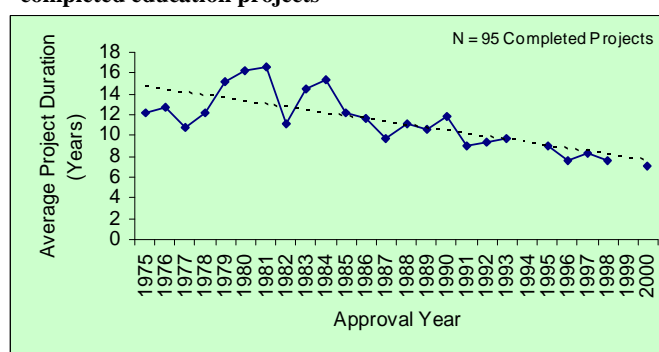
Time Overrun of Completed Projects: The average time overrun of 95 completed projects during 1975-2000 was 6.4 years. The time overrun decreased over the years from 7.2 years during 1975-79 to 2.6 years during 1995-2000 (Table 6.3). In addition to the signature, effectiveness and implementation delays, a contributory factor for the long time overrun was the delay in closing the projects. It has been noted that some projects have remained in the 'active' project group for a long time possibly with a small disbursement balance. It appears that the projects in countries that have gone through socio-political instabilities and Bank sanctions have taken longer to complete.<sup>23</sup>

**Table 7: Average time overrun of completed education projects**

Approval Year	No. of Projects	Time Overrun (Years)
1975-1979	14	7.2
1980-1984	19	9.6
1985-1989	26	6.4
1990-1994	25	5.4
1995-2000	11	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>6.4</b>

The Bank has set a cut-off period beyond which the operations are considered as 'ageing,' i.e., 8 years from approval for investment operations and 5 years for institutional support operations. The average age of completed projects was 11.3 years and 76.8 percent of the projects took more than 8 years to complete. The institutional support operations (such as technical assistance for feasibility studies, project preparation, and institutional support grants) also have taken much longer duration to complete. Average age of such operations was 7.5 years and 19 out of 28 (67 percent) of those have taken more than 5 years to complete.

**Fig. 5: Average duration between approval and closing date of completed education projects**



## VIII. Results

The Bank contribution consisted mainly in supporting access to education. Data from the 50 PCRs show that most of the planned outputs have been achieved and in some cases overachieved (Annex 3).<sup>24</sup> This is reflected in the high satisfactory rating for the efficacy criterion which stands at 82 percent. The performance ratings for education projects show that 62 percent of the 50 education projects for which PCRs were prepared had satisfactory overall outcomes. The performance of education sector

**Table 8. Satisfactory Project Performance Ratings and its Components**

Project Approval Period	1977-1985	1986-1998	1977-1998
Evaluation Criteria	[N=15]	[N=35]	[N=50]
Project Outcome	60	80	74
- Relevance	67	94	86
- Efficacy	60	91	82
- Efficiency	33	34	34
Institutional Development	47	66	60
Sustainability	33	60	52
<b>Overall Outcome</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>62</b>
Borrower Performance	47	46	46
Bank Performance	33	46	42

<sup>23</sup> For example, the Bunumbu Teacher Training Project of Sierra Leone was approved in 1977 with the stipulated project duration of 4 years was closed in 2006 after a time overrun of 24.5 years. The Technical Teacher Training College Project of Rwanda was approved in 1984 for the planned duration of 4.5 years but was closed only in 2005 with a time overrun of 16.3 years. Both countries experienced long delays due to conflicts.

<sup>24</sup> Outputs achieved by 51 completed projects (other than the 50 projects with PCRs) were not available, as the Bank project database management system has not recorded outputs planned and achieved by projects. Even the output data in PCRs were not always presented systematically and unambiguously. This difficulty could be easily addressed by revising and upgrading the data management system to enable tracking of project outputs.

was found to be lower than the Bank's infrastructure sectors such as: Power (88 percent) and Industry, Mining and Quarrying (76 percent) followed by Transport sector (68 percent). However, education sector has performed better than Agriculture and Rural Development, Communication and Adjustment sectors in which the satisfactory projects account for 57, 56 and 49 percentages respectively. This seems to match with the pattern observed in the Asian Development Bank where transport and communication outperformed the social infrastructures whereas agriculture was performing lower than the social infrastructures.<sup>25</sup> Such common patterns may indicate the nature of different sectors that may be recognised in the strategic choices for financial support.

There has been a significant improvement in the overall performance of education projects approved during the pre-policy period compared with that of the first policy period, i.e. from 40 percent to 71 percent satisfactory. Projects financed in ADB countries have performed better than those in the ADF – 88 percent satisfactory for ADB projects compared with 50 percent for ADF countries. The overall outcome of all education projects of the World Bank for projects closed during 1990-2001 was estimated to be 78 percent compared with 72 percent for all World Bank projects (World Bank 2006). Previously, Stout et al. (1997) estimated that overall, 63 percent of completed HNP projects received satisfactory ratings, compared with 81 percent of the education projects and 73 percent of all human development projects approved during 1971-1985. For the Asian Development Bank, the overall outcome was rated at 76 percent for the education projects closed during 1990-1997. Although the comparison may not be done systematically because of methodological issues, those data indicate that the performance of the Bank's projects has dramatically improved from the pre-policy period to the first policy period, and was not much below that of its sister institutions.

Ministries of Education which responded to the 2007 Operations Evaluation Department Survey consider the Bank effective in addressing these challenges to a great extent. Their ratings were high for access and equity and education system strengthening but the Bank effectiveness was perceived to be low in addressing quality and relevance. More than half the respondents consider the Bank's performance better than that of other international development agencies with respect to overall outcomes, construction and sustainability aspects. The Bank fares less favorably in teaching supplies, technical assistance, policy dialogue and institutional development.

**Table 9: Satisfactory overall project outcomes by sub-sector/level**

Education Levels	Number satisfactory	Total no. of projects
Secondary	10	13
TVET	6	9
Education System	2	3
Basic	12	23
Higher	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>50</b>

Note: Education projects usually address multiple sub-sectors/levels. Hence, the 50 education projects were identified by the major sub-sector / level for classification purposes.

*No policy conclusion could be drawn from this results as the number of projects is small.*

**Table 10: Comparison of the Bank with other Donors (n=21)**

Achievements	Better	Similar	Worse	NA
Construction	12	7	1	1
Overall Outcome/Impact	12	6	1	2
Sustainability	12	7		2
Teaching Supplies	9	8	2	1
Institutional Development	9	2		10
TA and Policy Dialogue	6	10	3	2

<sup>25</sup> The project performance ratings by sector in the Asian Development Bank showed an increase in performance over the period 1970-1997. The overall performance for transport and communication was 82 percent, social infrastructures 55 percent, and agriculture 47 percent. Social infrastructures include a diverse group of subsections: urban development, water supply and wastewater treatment, sanitation, education, and health and population (Asian Development Bank, 2007).

## IX. Concluding Remarks

In 1999, the revised Bank's education policy rightly observed that: "development of education in Africa is taking place within the difficult context of poverty, insufficient economic growth compared to the high population growth, low productivity, high unemployment, HIV/AIDS pandemic, and persistent weak governance and armed conflicts in some cases.<sup>26</sup> In recent years, the challenges of globalisation and the consequent intensification of international competition, as well as the rising prominence of science and technology, all have combined to pose significant new challenges, which must be overcome if Africa is to emerge as an equal partner in the global arena in the 21<sup>st</sup> century".

Since then, the problems of relevance, unequal and low access to educational opportunities, poor quality of education, poor managerial and planning capacity, poor financing mechanisms, weak link between education and labour market, still remain as major constraints. The inadequacy of and inefficiency in delivery of resources to education and health has led to limited human capital in Africa and prevent African countries from taking substantial benefit from economic globalisation and development support.

There have been several international initiatives to address different challenges. Already in 1961, during the UNESCO Conference on African Education, sub-Saharan African countries committed themselves to achieving, by 1980, universal primary education. This promise was again made in 1990 to be met in 2000 leading to the same results of promising too much compared to what was workable. It may be opportune, as Sperling (2001) has put it, to try again by convening a third international conference for education for all. This conference should define more attainable objectives, reconsider the whole education system instead of limiting itself to primary education, and formulate more realistic means to get there. So far, the education initiatives were generally taken in haste; they were overoptimistic and implemented in rush without adequate preparation or capacity to deliver on them. Greater effort is required in other areas such as economic policies, governance, health and population policies.

The Bank's contribution to the education sector was concentrated on improving access. The policy papers reflected the ongoing thinking on education but the projects were more often geared by demands from regional member countries, which explains the disconnect between the policies and the actual portfolio commitments. Whereas the first and the second policies put emphasis on basic education and selected interventions at higher level, the new Bank strategy has reversed the emphasis: priority to higher Education, Science and technology with selective interventions at lower levels. The Bank has most of the time delivered on its commitment but with inordinate delays due to many challenges involved in the design and implementation of projects. In several cases, this was due to delays experienced on the part of countries, as some took too long in commencing and completing operations or in some cases raising topping up resources.

It is obvious that the effort and the kind of education African countries are providing to the youth now will determine the future of Africa. As Leibnitz said, "Le présent porte en son sein le future." With increasing democratisation across the continent, a reduction in military dictatorships, the strengthening of advocacy groups on education issues, increasing role of the media, the launch of the African Youth Parliament, the widening space for debates

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<sup>26</sup> For instance, the First Decade of Education for Africa (1997 – 2006) declared at the Heads of State Summit in Yaounde in 1996 witnessed conflict in up to twenty-one African countries that disrupted education systems or undermined its gains (Njenga, 2006).

and exchange of ideas between African leaders and their citizenry, possible reduction in internal strife and the changing policies of Africa's development partners, there are all the necessary ingredients for change that will enable African countries to make quality education services more available, accessible and affordable.

The Bank can play a key role in mobilising resources and intellectual energies within Africa and outside to open discussions on what kind of education is needed for African countries, and how it should be delivered in a manner better than it has been the case so far. African countries and the region as a whole need effective education and employment policies to address new opportunities and threats within the globalisation process. Actions may be required at regional and sub-regional levels – yet African policies and institutions are still weak and they need better and increased international support for developing education systems.

## Annex 1: Educational attainment of the total population aged 25 and over by region (%)

Region (no. of countries)	Year	Pop. over 25 (mill.)	Highest Level Attained (percentage of population 25 and over)							Average years of school	Gender Ratio <sup>1</sup>
			No school	Primary		Secondary		Higher			
				Total	Complete	Total	Complete	Total	Complete		
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa (22)</b>	1960	41	76.0	17.9	5.8	5.9	1.5	0.2	0.1	1.39	59.3
	1970	52	71.9	20.1	4.4	7.1	1.7	0.9	0.7	1.63	55.4
	1980	66	61.8	28.6	6.7	9.0	2.5	0.7	0.5	2.14	54.0
	1990	90	51.5	35.3	8.1	11.5	3.3	1.5	1.2	2.79	62.6
	1995	104	45.6	32.5	7.3	19.0	6.8	2.6	2.0	3.62	
	2000	120	43.5	34.2	7.7	19.2	6.6	3.0	2.4	3.78	70.5
<b>Middle East/ North Africa (11)</b>	1960	19	82.3	12.9	5.0	3.7	1.8	1.1	0.6	1.14	51.3
	1970	25	78.3	13.9	5.1	5.9	3.0	1.8	1.1	1.51	43.9
	1980	34	67.3	18.4	6.5	10.4	5.5	3.9	2.4	2.47	49.7
	1990	50	51.6	25.4	8.8	17.1	9.3	5.9	3.7	3.77	56.9
	1995	59	43.9	28.7	9.9	20.0	10.8	7.4	4.7	4.46	
	2000	68	37.0	31.6	10.9	22.2	12.1	9.1	5.9	5.08	67.5
<b>South Asia (7)</b>	1960	248	77.3	19.3	5.2	3.3	1.3	0.1	0.1	1.31	25.3
	1970	304	74.2	19.8	7.4	4.6	1.8	1.2	0.9	1.75	29.2
	1980	382	72.4	12.2	4.3	13.1	4.9	2.3	1.6	2.48	35.0
	1990	499	60.3	21.8	7.8	14.2	5.6	3.7	2.6	3.34	44.0
	1995	574	54.7	26.2	9.4	15.2	6.0	4.0	2.8	3.73	
	2000	660	48.4	30.6	11.0	16.7	6.5	4.3	3.0	4.19	53.1
<b>East Asia/ Pacific (10)</b>	1960	79	61.3	31.4	15.0	5.7	2.3	1.6	1.1	2.26	49.0
	1970	100	43.7	43.8	17.4	9.7	4.7	2.8	1.8	3.29	57.2
	1980	131	30.1	49.4	17.3	15.6	8.0	4.8	3.2	4.39	67.9
	1990	178	33.1	35.1	18.3	24.1	13.6	7.6	5.2	5.35	76.1
	1995	205	27.1	36.6	18.9	26.2	15.0	10.1	6.8	6.03	
	2000	233	22.8	37.7	19.3	27.4	15.6	12.1	8.1	6.50	83.5
<b>South America/ Caribbean (23)</b>	1960	82	38.7	49.3	13.1	10.0	3.8	2.0	1.3	3.13	82.9
	1970	104	35.7	50.9	17.4	10.9	4.5	2.6	1.7	3.49	78.9
	1980	139	28.4	53.2	13.4	12.9	5.4	5.5	3.6	4.07	89.5
	1990	186	20.6	53.9	15.5	16.6	7.0	8.9	5.8	4.97	93.6
	1995	215	19.2	51.8	14.8	18.4	7.8	10.5	6.9	5.38	
	2000	246	17.7	50.6	14.4	19.9	8.4	11.8	7.7	5.73	95.7

[1] Gender ratio for Average years of school.

Data Source: Barro-Lee 2000, [http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/ThematicDataOnEducation/CountryData/total\\_age25.xls](http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/ThematicDataOnEducation/CountryData/total_age25.xls)

## Annex 2. Comparison Between the Three Education Policy Documents

	<b>Education Policy 1985</b>	<b>Education Policy 1999</b>	<b>Strategy for HEST 2007</b>
<b>Objective</b>	To maximise the impact of Bank Group's activities in education upon the achievement of the overall development objectives, and complement the efforts of individual governments and of other national and international assistance agencies.	To attain basic education for all. Education projects and programmes primarily targeted at meeting the needs of the disadvantaged groups in countries.	To assist RMCs in developing the necessary skills to increase economic competitiveness and sustain growth.
<b>Critical Problem Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disparities in access and equity in Education</li> <li>• Inadequate quality and internal efficiency of education</li> <li>• Inadequate relevance, utility and external efficiency of education</li> <li>• Poor management, organisation and planning of education</li> <li>• High education costs and crisis in education financing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited access to educational opportunity</li> <li>• Unequal access to educational opportunity: gender and other disparities</li> <li>• Poor education quality</li> <li>• Poor management and planning capacities</li> <li>• Inadequate financing mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Africa lags behind in harnessing benefits of S&amp;T for development, in the absence of a complex set of institutions, agents, policies, linkages and networks.</li> <li>• Capacity, policy and market related barriers that thwart the potential of S&amp;T-related ideas, products and processes from contributing to development</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic education: primary education; non-formal education</li> <li>• Manpower development: technical and vocational training in agriculture, industry, animal husbandry, fishing and trade</li> <li>• Institutional development: education management and administration; financial administration including restructuring of costs; assessment of the education sector and preparation of social policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality basic education for all</li> <li>• Provision of middle and high level skills</li> <li>• Organisation and management of the education sector</li> <li>• Selected Higher Education interventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to existing national and regional centres of excellence</li> <li>• Building, upgrading and rehabilitation of infrastructure for HEST: selected higher education, inter-state research schools and centres</li> <li>• Linking HEST and the productive sectors</li> </ul>
<b>Guiding principles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lending programme to be guided by country specific education sector assessment</li> <li>• Education to be considered as a basic human right and a means to achieve other human rights</li> <li>• Education is a means of accelerating development, improving productivity and promoting economic growth</li> <li>• Strategically designed education projects to assist RMCs overcome some of the problems identified</li> <li>• Engage in ongoing dialogue with RMCs, development partners, and scholars to keep abreast of new orientations and developments in education and HRD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holistic and integrated approach</li> <li>• Ownership, responsibility and control of RMCs</li> <li>• Participatory approach</li> <li>• Regional integration</li> <li>• Private sector and non-profit education providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional vision</li> <li>• Holistic approach</li> <li>• Focus and selectivity</li> <li>• Partnerships</li> </ul>
<b>Approaches, Scope and Intervention Mechanisms</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector-wide approach</li> <li>• Participatory approach</li> <li>• Donor co-ordination</li> <li>• Institutional arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership with other donors, institutions and RMCs</li> <li>• Market segmentation approach to suit the needs of different country typologies</li> </ul>

### Annex 3. Selected Outputs of 50 Education Projects

Outputs	Number		Percentage achieved
	Planned	Achieved	
<b>Pre-primary Education</b>			
Pre-primary schools constructed	5	5	100
<b>Primary and Junior Secondary Education</b>			
Schools constructed	959	939	98
Classrooms constructed	3,271	3,151	96
Student intake capacity created	119,402	112,160	94
Textbooks provided	1,022,500	1,580,500	155
Teachers trained	1,195	2,325	195
<b>Secondary Education</b>			
Schools constructed	1,879	1,874	100
Textbooks provided	534,643	515,323	96
Teachers trained	5,624	5,922	105
<b>Secondary Vocational &amp; Technical</b>			
Schools constructed	146	146	100
Laboratories/workshops equipped	1,089	1,081	99
Polytechnics constructed	8	7	88
Vocational Teacher Training Centres	20	28	140
Teacher training capacity created	1,740	1,740	100
Teachers trained	10,472	13,012	124
<b>Higher Education</b>			
Higher Education Institutes constructed	6	6	100
<b>Teacher Training (Primary, Sec., Tech.)</b>			
Teacher Training Centres constructed	12	11	92
Student intake capacity created	2,960	2,260	76
<b>Non-formal Education</b>			
Young Farmers' Training Centres built	345	293	85
Adults provided with literacy	11,304	11,304	100
<b>School Health</b>			
Health Units established	177	126	71
Toilets constructed	2,434	2,216	91
<b>Education Administration</b>			
District Inspectorates strengthened	18	18	100
Education Inspectors trained	88	88	100

*Note: A more comprehensive list of outputs of 50 education projects is given in the Working Paper on Portfolio Analysis available at OPEV upon request.*

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