

Africa Bureau Guidance

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Office of Sustainable Development
Bureau for Africa
U.S. Agency for International Development

USAID's Strategic Framework for Basic Education in Africa



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Foreword

How will the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) support the expansion and improvement of basic education in Africa over the next decade? This paper offers a framework for the Agency and its partners based on recent experience and lessons learned. This framework was prepared under the leadership of the Office of Sustainable Development in USAID's Africa Bureau (AFR/SD), in consultation with a wide range of informants both within and outside the Agency. It builds on prior reviews of USAID programs in Africa, in particular the technical paper *Basic Education in Africa: USAID's Approach to Sustainable Reform in the 1990s* (SD Publication Series: Technical Paper No. 14), the Africa Bureau's annual Results Reviews, and regional consultations such as those organized through the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

This work was undertaken in November 1996 through the initiative of Julie Owen-Rea, education and training officer for the Africa Bureau, by a team comprising Ash Hartwell, Karen Tietjen, and Marcy Bernbaum, with input from Joe DeStefano.¹ Information from interviews and focus groups was collected from more than 80 people, including: USAID education staff serving in Africa and in Washington; African ministers of education and decisionmakers; educators within the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, the ADEA, and the Rockefeller Foundation; non-governmental agencies working in basic education in Africa such as Save the Children, World Learning, World Education, CARE, Inter-Action, Reach and Teach, and the Banyon Tree Foundation; and professionals within firms carrying out education projects in Africa such as the Academy for Educational Development, Creative Associates, the Mitchell Group, the Educational Development Corporation, and the Center for International Research. Also, organizations involved in general development work in Africa were consulted, including the Overseas Development Council and representatives of the Corporate Council for Africa.²

Following these consultations, a draft was circulated for critical comments and feedback. Contributions were substantive, detailed, and generally supportive of the evolving framework. A final draft was circulated in July 1997, requesting critical reviews and comments from all USAID Missions in Africa with basic education programs and from

¹Contractual mechanisms to support this work were provided through the ABEL and IEQ Projects, managed by the Global Bureau's Human Capacity Development Center.

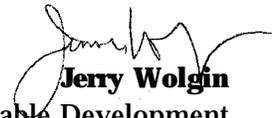
²Appendix B lists those who, either in writing or through interviews, provided substantive input or feedback to the strategic framework.

participants at the international conference *USAID Human Capacity Development for the 21st Century: Reaping the Results of Investment and Experience*, organized by the Global Bureau's Center for Human Capacity Development. The final form of the strategic framework was formally reviewed and approved by senior Africa Bureau and Agency staff in October 1997. We hope it will enhance the contributions of USAID and its many partners to basic education in Africa and beyond.



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Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AFR/SD/HRD	Bureau for Africa/Office of Sustainable Development/Division of Human Resources and Democracy
BOLESWA	Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland Education Research Association
DAE	Donors for African Education
DFA	Development Fund for Africa
ERNESA	Education Research Network for East and Southern Africa
ERNWACA	Education Research Network for West and Central Africa
ESS	education sector support
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educators
FQEL	fundamental quality and equity levels
FQL	fundamental quality levels
GDP	gross domestic product
G/HCD	Global Bureau, Center for Human Capacity Development
NGO	non-governmental organization
NPA	non-project assistance
PA	project assistance
SIP	sector investment program
SPA	Special Program of Assistance for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Social, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter 1. The Context

Purpose of this Document

This paper describes USAID’s strategic framework and provides guidelines for designing, implementing, and evaluating basic education programs in Africa over the next decade.³ The last official guidance was published in 1988 when the Africa Bureau prepared a *Basic Education Action Plan* in order to respond to new Congressional directives for programs in Africa in general and basic education in particular. The updated strategic framework and guidelines in this document reflect Agency policy on development and build on the experiences and lessons learned in Africa from 1988 to 1996.

This framework is not a blueprint for specific interventions, nor does it provide detailed guidance on substantive elements of a basic education program such as information systems development, textbook procurement and distribution, or the assessment of classroom learning. Rather, it presents a strategic approach for supporting education reform, calling for creative interpretation by USAID Missions in partnership with country governments, stakeholders, and other donors, and articulates the precepts that should inform USAID’s investment in education in Africa. It defines parameters and key issues to facilitate analysis and planning. It is a tool for designing, managing, and evaluating specific programs of USAID support.

The Africa Bureau intends this framework to be a work in progress, a platform for planning and action that itself will evolve. As research showing what works in basic education becomes available, as new agendas arise in response to changing economic and social contexts, and as operational breakthroughs or constraints become evident, these will be incorporated into this evolving strategic framework. The framework is thus as much an invitation for contributions as a guide for working on basic education in Africa.

Document Organization

Chapter 1 describes the historical context that establishes the need for and the genesis of USAID’s basic education strategy for Africa, noting experience with and progress in implementing basic education programs since 1988. Chapter 2 sets out the central features of the strategic framework. It describes USAID’s mission and policy on education and outlines the education sector support, or ESS, approach that is central to the framework. It defines the factors determining USAID’s selection of countries that will receive assistance for basic education and the relationship between readiness for reform and USAID support.

³The term *Africa* in this paper, consistent with USAID usage, refers to sub-Saharan Africa.

Chapter 3 examines the implications of the framework for USAID operations, specifically within the context of re-engineering principles and the challenge of managing for results. This section also examines implications for non-project assistance, performance contracting, donor coordination, and USAID staffing. Chapter 4 describes a set of challenges and evolving issues based on recent experience that will need to be addressed in managing basic education programs.

Africa: Focus on Development

Today, as in 1988 when USAID initiated a new era of support to African development, sub-Saharan Africa— in the aggregate— continues to rank lowest on the Human Development Index. In addition to poverty, rampant population growth, and poor health and nutrition conditions, half of the primary school-aged children are not enrolled in school. Of the children who are, fewer than half of those entering first grade will complete the primary school cycle.⁴ Many of these primary school graduates will not have acquired the minimal levels of literacy and numeracy to allow them either to progress to higher levels of education or to benefit from their families' investment in their schooling⁵ (IEA, 1994). Many national education systems are inadequate to provide the amount or quality of schooling to meet the needs of their population, and their capacity is insufficient to foster their growth and reform.

However, Africa is a huge and diverse continent that defies generalization or pessimism. Three times the size of the continental United States, its 500 million people speak over 800 languages and possess an enormous richness and variation in culture and religion. Although the majority of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa experienced political and economic turmoil in the 1980s, resulting in a decline of per capita GDP in 20 countries, the past decade has witnessed positive change (World Bank, 1995). Since 1990, and particularly over the past five years, increasing numbers of countries have moved towards political liberalization and embraced macroeconomic reforms. Their development agendas have become focused on equitable economic growth and have targeted investments to expand and improve the provision of basic education and health care as essential to prosperity and poverty reduction.

From a development perspective, at least four groups of countries present different development challenges. First, there are those such as Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sudan that are caught up in civil strife and/

⁴The coverage and quality of data and indicators on education in Africa is also poor. Many countries do not have accurate, complete, or timely data on enrollment and completion rates. This citation is from The World Bank, 1995. *Priorities and Strategies for Education*. Washington, DC.

⁵Of 28 countries participating in the International Education Achievement tests of 1980-91, two were from Africa— Zimbabwe and Botswana— and had the lowest scorers on the reading achievement tests for 14 year olds. Evidence from Ghana and Uganda based on classroom research of USAID's Improving Education Quality project indicates that the majority of pupils at grade six in those countries have not achieved reading mastery.

or economic collapse. Second are countries such as Nigeria, Niger, and Togo that— while not experiencing violent civil strife— show little movement towards democratizing political systems and whose economies are regressing or stagnant. A third group of countries such as Rwanda, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) are emerging from conflict, where political stability is uncertain, and where the state is striving to gain legitimacy.

There is a fourth group of countries where there is good news— where we see a transition of political systems towards more pluralistic and open societies and where economic reforms are leading to growth (World Bank, 1995; Collier, et al. 1997). Some countries in this group, such as Benin, South Africa, Namibia, and Uganda have made dramatic changes. Others, such as Benin, Ethiopia, Mali, and Malawi are moving from oppressive, dictatorial regimes to more liberal governance. Still others, such as Ghana, Guinea, and Senegal are making progress in reviving their economies. There are also countries in this group, such as Botswana and Swaziland that have made steady economic progress since independence. USAID has worked with many of these countries to improve and expand basic education, with substantial and encouraging results.

This strategic framework focuses on this fourth group. These are countries where USAID support can “help countries that can help themselves.” The framework recognizes that countries are not fixed within such categories, and thus is applicable to countries emerging from crisis— when there is a reasonable expectation that they will move into the fourth group.

USAID’s Initiatives in Basic Education

The Call for Action

USAID has been active at many levels of education in Africa following independence in the 1960s. However, in the late 1980s, two legislative events took place that would have a dramatic impact on USAID support for basic education. In 1987, the U.S. Congress passed legislation establishing the Development Fund for Africa (DFA). This legislation resulted from the growing concern that a large number of countries in Africa were caught in a declining spiral of debt and poverty, which required a major shift in macroeconomic policies and a long-term strategy for rehabilitation and growth (World Bank, 1989). The DFA allowed USAID greater programming autonomy and provided the flexibility to find new ways to make U.S. assistance to the region more coherent and effective. USAID’s Africa Bureau took this mandate seriously and concentrated its programs on countries with the greatest growth potential. Working closely with donors and NGOs, USAID took a broad look at the problems in individual countries, and at the national systems and services (health, education, agriculture, etc.) intended to address them. One of the three strategic areas upon which the DFA focused— investing in people— included basic education.

Starting in 1988, in response to persistently low indicators of educational development and with the recognition that human resources development is the foundation for economic and social development, the U.S. Congress established a set-aside for education within the foreign assistance appropriation bill. The legislation defined annual absolute dollar amounts to be spent on education and mandated that 50 percent of the earmark be committed to basic education. The legislation directed USAID to launch new programs in at least five African countries where it did not already have programs.

Nineteen eighty-eight was also a year of intense collaboration between donors, led by the World Bank and African educational leaders, to define policies for the reform of education systems. The publication of the Bank's *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization, and Expansion* set out a broad consensus among national policymakers and donors recommending that countries: 1) place a higher priority on education and human resource development; 2) within the education sector, shift priority to basic education as the foundation for economic and social development; 3) seek ways of achieving efficiencies and cost-recovery for secondary and higher education; and 4) adopt a sectoral rather than a projectized approach to improving access and quality in education. One of the outcomes of the analysis and dialogue leading to this publication was the establishment of the Donors for African Education (renamed in 1996 the Association for the Development of Education in Africa). This regional institution serves as a forum for donor and government collaboration on policy and implementation issues related to educational development in Africa.

Another important event defining USAID's approach to basic education was the Jomtien Education for All Conference in 1990. The Agency helped shape the agenda for that international declaration and committed its support to the proposition that a worldwide initiative was needed to expand basic education opportunity as a fundamental right, as well as the foundation for individual and national development.

USAID's Response

In 1988, in response to the DFA and the basic education earmark, USAID's Africa Bureau issued a *Basic Education Action Plan*. Between 1989 and 1991 the Bureau initiated new programs in basic education in Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Mali, and Namibia. Education programs began in Uganda and Benin in 1992, and in Ethiopia in 1994.⁶ The action plan also guided follow-on designs in Swaziland, Botswana, Lesotho, and South Africa.

⁶USAID in 1988 had ongoing education programs in Cameroon, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, and South Africa, and an education sector grant in Zimbabwe.

The 1988 action plan, the precursor to this framework, targeted two groups of potential beneficiaries: 1) countries that demonstrated greatest educational need while simultaneously maintaining reasonable economic performance and willingness to implement educational policy reform; and 2) countries that had good performance in both the educational and economic sectors but had yet to achieve national efficiency/access goals. The action plan conceived non-project assistance (budgetary support to government) and project assistance as independent modalities for supporting countries, depending on whether they were in the neediest category or the good performance category. The timing and amount of Africa Bureau financing for each country, highlights of the country context, and what USAID did in each country are provided in Annex A.

Progress and Experience

Eight Years of Progress in Supporting Basic Education in Africa

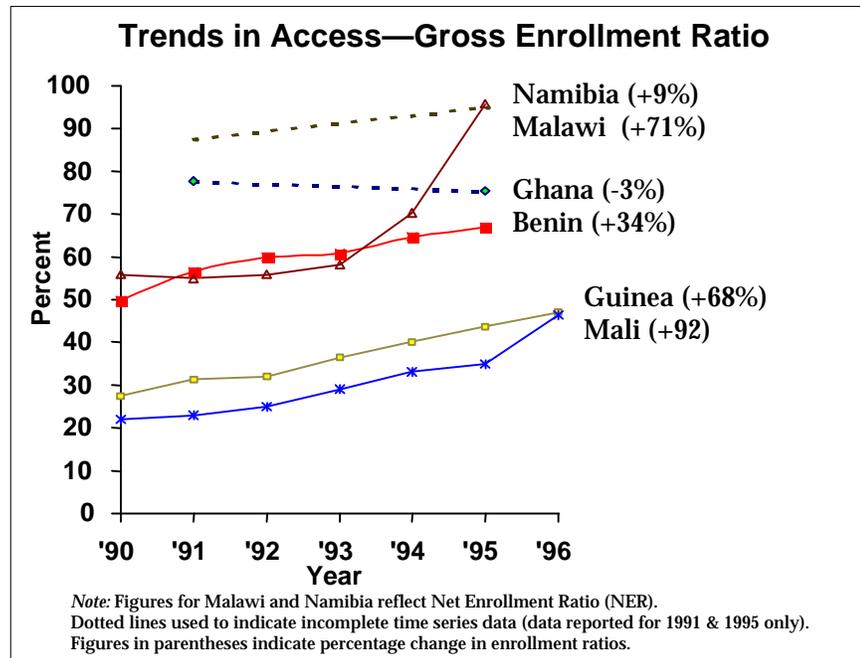
Change in the education sector takes time. Problems with existing systems must be diagnosed, solutions identified, and stakeholders brought on board and convinced of the need to make changes. Moreover, political, social, and cultural obstacles to change must be identified and overcome. A number of USAID's programs⁷ are relatively new and the national education reform efforts they support will take several years to implement and to manifest desired outcomes.

Nevertheless, initial signs in both student outcomes and system changes augur well. Discernible changes have taken place at both levels in countries where USAID, working closely with other donors, has been supporting country efforts to expand and improve basic education. While not comprehensive, the following evidence supports the assertion that countries in Africa, with external support, can make significant progress in improving basic education.

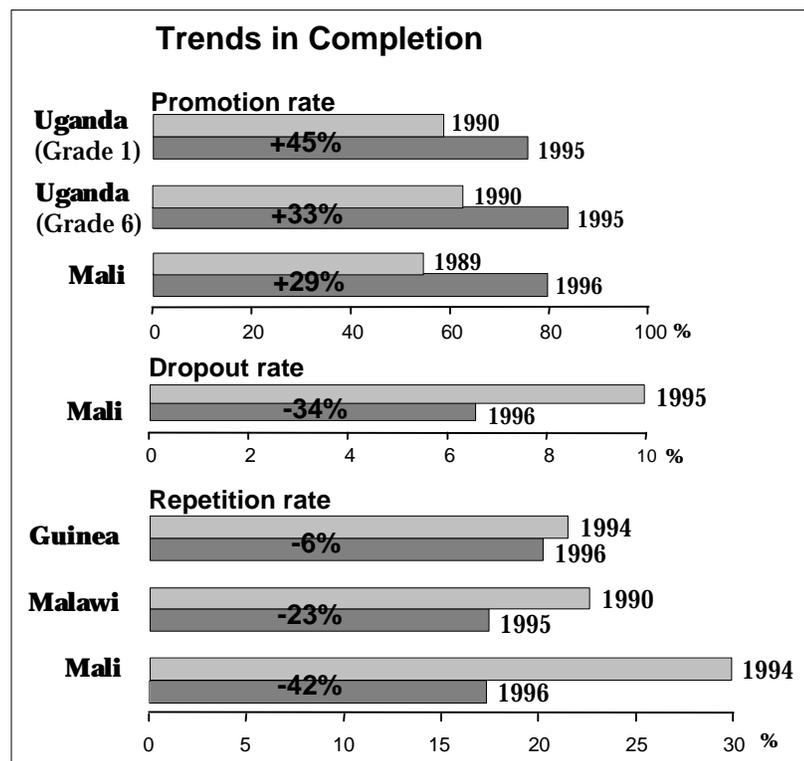
Student-Level Impacts

At the student level there is encouraging evidence of changes in patterns of access, efficiency, quality, and equity. For example, USAID and other donors have helped Malawi, Guinea, and Benin undertake expansions of primary enrollment. Between 1991 and 1997 the enrollment rate in Guinea soared from 28 to 47 percent, in Malawi from 55 to 96 percent, in Benin from 56 to 62 percent, and in Ethiopia (for the two regions in which USAID is active) from 31 to 45 percent. Between 1990 and 1995, rural enrollment increased by 59 percent and 62 percent respectively in Ghana and Guinea (see "Trends in Access," page 6).

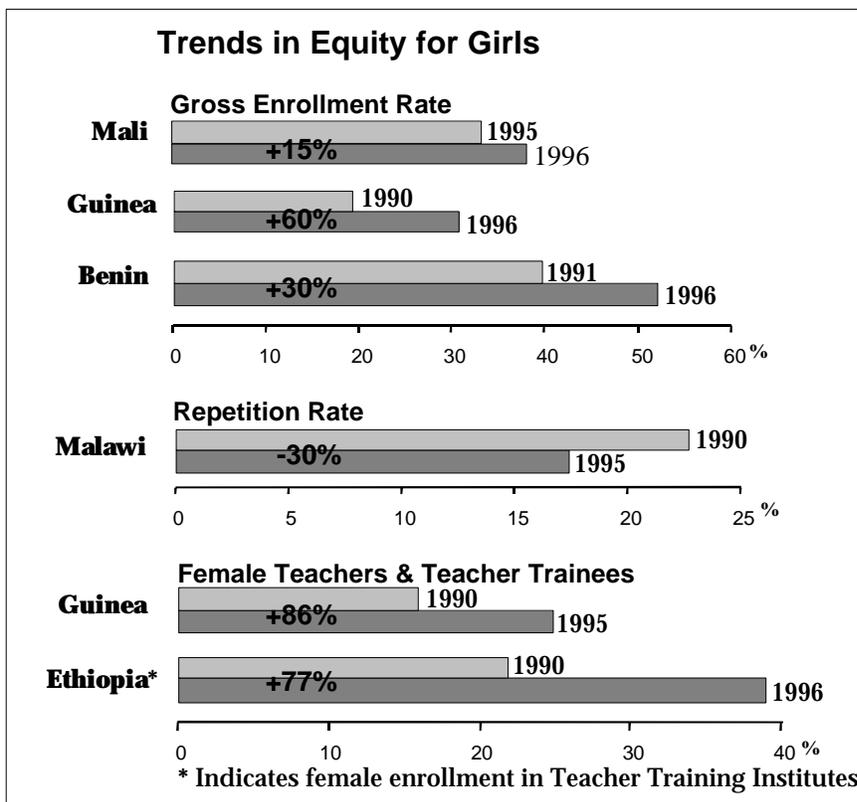
⁷The word "program" has many meanings within the USAID lexicon of usage. Sometimes it refers to the USAID Mission portfolio or— in education— is used to distinguish between USAID's support to a country's government budget, which is *program assistance* (termed NPA, or non-project assistance), and assistance that is managed outside the host-country's government budget (*project assistance*). In this document, unless specifically stated otherwise, we will use the phrase "USAID programs" generically, to refer to all USAID support for education activities.



The dropout rate in Mali decreased by 50 percent between 1990 and 1995; the repetition rate dropped by 23 percent in Malawi between 1990 and 1994; and the student pass rate increased by 45 percent between 1990 and 1995. In Uganda the pass rate has increased overall, particularly in the lower grades. Pupils passing grade 1 rose from 55 to 80 percent between 1990 and 1995 (see below).



Also notable has been the progress made, in a relatively short period, in expanding female enrollment in Guinea, Benin, Mali, and Malawi. In 1992 only 24 percent of the girls in rural Guinea went to primary school, but this rate had risen to 46 percent by 1996. In Benin girls' enrollment for this period increased from 40 to 52 percent, in Mali from 33 to 38 percent, and in Malawi from 57 to 96 percent. In Mali, the girls' primary completion rate increased 48 percent between 1990 and 1994; and in Benin, the girls' leaving exam pass rate increased by 32 percent between 1990 and 1995.

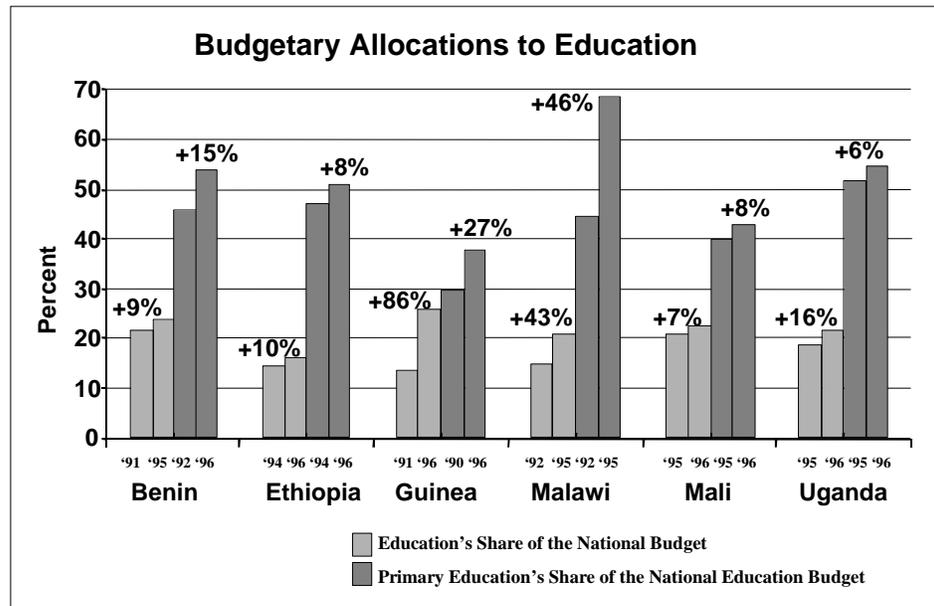


System-Level Impacts

These promising indicators of progress at the student level would not have taken place without these countries undertaking comprehensive system reforms with assistance by USAID and other donors. While there is still a long way to go, there are indications that education systems are providing more and better services to their primary school-aged population.

Guinea, Malawi, Benin, Uganda, and Ethiopia, for example, have significantly restructured their government budgets in favor of primary education. Education's share of the government budget has increased anywhere from 2 to 12 percent over the past five years. Primary education's share of the education budget has risen between 4 and 8 percent, and the recurrent non-salary share of the education budget has

increased between 8 and 14 percent. Also at the policy level, Malawi and Benin eliminated school fees for girls in primary schools, and Uganda and Ghana have reformed textbook procurement policy to allow free and fair competition among private publishers. South Africa recently formulated new, broad policies that involve all communities in governance and created the basis for equity in schools and non-formal education.



Promising starts at institutional reform are also taking place. Ghana, Botswana, and Swaziland, for example, developed student achievement tests. Namibia, Lesotho, and Guinea revised their budgeting and accounting systems. Malawi, with a major programmatic focus on girls, established a Gender Appropriate Curriculum Unit, developed a gender-sensitized curriculum for the first five grades, and is carrying out an innovative social mobilization campaign to persuade parents and communities of the importance of sending girls to school.

At the school level, the percentage of Ghana's children with books and teachers with materials went from 10 to 96 percent between 1990 and 1995. In Uganda, the government has decided to extend an innovative in-service teacher training program to the whole country. And Mali, Guinea, and Benin have introduced reforms increasing community involvement and support to schools.

**Evolution of the
Strategic Framework**

In the time since the 1988 basic education action plan, USAID has learned a number of important lessons. Calling on a variety of flexible contracting mechanisms provided through the Global Bureau's Center for Human Capacity Development (G/HCD) and other partners, the Africa Bureau has been able to provide strategic technical assistance to its field Missions, conduct research and analysis to identify best practices and lessons learned, prepare operational guidance, and consult with its African and donor partners through a network of international and regional fora.

AFR/SD, in its coordination/facilitation role, acts to ensure that lessons learned are folded into new and ongoing programming. In 1995, AFR/SD published *Basic Education in Africa: USAID's Approach to Sustainable Reform in the 1990s*, which took a comprehensive look at the experience of USAID and its partners in Africa and the donor community, and provided guidance to USAID Missions for designing, implementing, and evaluating basic education programs. Building on the 1995 document and incorporating the insights of Agency, African, and donor professionals, this paper takes account of Agency guidance and experience with re-engineering, recent field experience, research and program reviews, and widespread consultations.

Chapter 2. The Strategic Framework for Supporting the Basic Education Sector

USAID's Mission

USAID's mission is to promote sustainable development, which the Agency defines as "economic and social growth that protects the resources of a host country; respects and safeguards the economic, cultural, and natural environment; creates opportunities for enterprises and incomes to grow; is nurtured by an enabling policy environment; and builds indigenous institutions that involve and empower the citizenry" (USAID, 1995). Implicit in this mission is the need to provide the poorest countries and their neglected majorities (women, rural inhabitants, the disadvantaged, and the vulnerable) the opportunity to participate in the process and enjoy the benefits of sustainable development. A vital strategy to accomplish this purpose is to assist host countries to provide, sustainably and with their own resources, quality basic education that ultimately reaches all children.

USAID Policy on Education in Africa

Increasing equitable access to quality primary education and basic education skills is the central objective of USAID's goal for human capacity development. For this to happen, there must be clarity on *what* basic education is, *why* USAID should support basic education in Africa, and *who* should provide basic education in the region.

What is Basic Education?

The Bureau for Africa defines basic education as the opportunity for children, before they assume the productive and reproductive roles of adults, to learn basic literacy, numeracy, problem solving, and other learning skills and values.⁸ While basic education is normally associated with grades 1 through 9, this varies from country to country. Basic skills may be acquired in conventional schools or via nontraditional teaching/learning programs.

USAID's support for basic education in Africa does not preclude providing support for other levels of education in ways that enhance the development of primary education. Redistribution of resources to favor primary education in many countries entails the reform of higher

⁸The *World Declaration on Education for All* (1990) describes basic learning needs as "both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning."

education to improve efficiency and increase private sector funding. Some activities of higher education can enhance basic education, including policy research, program evaluation, and management training. However, a USAID focus on higher education reform would not likely be the most effective or efficient way of improving primary education.

Depending on country circumstances, early childhood education or adult literacy for parents can also contribute significantly to improving the effectiveness of the primary education system. Recent research has demonstrated the linkage between parental literacy (particularly the mother's), child health, and children's participation and performance in primary school. Yet it would be difficult to justify a major focus for USAID in early childhood development or in adult literacy if the majority of the primary school-aged children lacked schooling, a decent curriculum, or minimally-capable teachers.

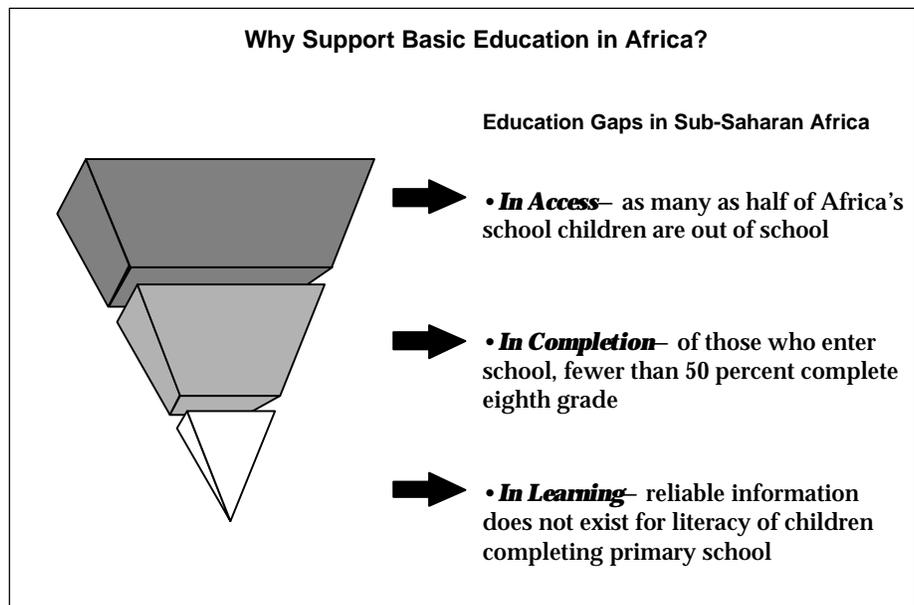
Why Does USAID Support Basic Education in Africa?

Basic education aims to provide essential values, knowledge, and skills to people and, in so doing, to have a long-term impact on a country's human resource base while allowing individuals greater control over their lives. Research in recent years has indicated that the greatest return on investment for countries with low educational attainment is in primary and female education.⁹

USAID's support for basic education in Africa, the region with the lowest primary enrollment rates in the world, is based on the following assertions:

- Educated citizens contribute to economic growth and poverty alleviation;
- Educated individuals have smaller, healthier families, and are more likely to educate their own children;
- Citizens who can read and access information originating outside their immediate locality and who are aware of changes within their society are able to participate more fully and effectively in social change;
- An educated citizenry provides an essential platform for negotiating social differences peacefully, and facilitating the transcendence of ethnic, religious, and ideological conflict; and
- Education systems in Africa are not effectively reaching the majority of children.

⁹In Africa, for example, the standard rate of return for primary education is 27 percent, compared with 12 percent for higher education. Farmers who complete four years of basic education produce 8 percent more than farmers who have none. One year of a mother's education is associated with a 9 percent decrease in under-five mortality.



Who Provides Basic Education?

Basic education is a public responsibility. In today’s world the level of a population’s literacy and its capacity to learn is central to national social and economic well-being. Public spending on basic education especially needs to be a priority in those countries that have not yet achieved near-universal enrollment at the primary level. Public expenditure on basic education contributes to both efficiency and equity, in that it has high rates of return and contributes to poverty alleviation. In Africa annual per-student expenditure in higher education is about 40 times that of per-student expenditure in primary education; yet one-half of the children of Africa are not enrolled in primary school.

It is the state’s role, in consultation with its citizenry, to set a policy framework that aims to provide all citizens the opportunity to receive a quality basic education. Each country, depending upon its history and needs, determines what role the state will play in financing and delivering services and what roles communities, NGOs, the private sector, and external donors will play in financing and delivering services. To ensure that the education system meets a society’s fundamental need for a literate and educated population, the burden on parents should be as light as possible and special incentives arranged for the poor. Ultimately, each country should finance its own basic education system.

Defining Education Reform

Education reform denotes a major change in the philosophy, objectives, principles, and policies espoused by the primary arbiter of resources and provider of education (usually, the government). Education reform should be seen as a sectoral adjustment, in which the goals and mechanisms of the past are transformed to meet not just new, but often radically different objectives, as in the case of changing the focus from tertiary education to primary education. True reform requires that all parts of the system adjust to reach a new equilibrium. An education reform is distinguished by both the magnitude and pervasiveness of the changes required to transform the education system's services and operations to meet country objectives. Education reform generally involves:

■ ***Redefining beneficiaries***

Who will benefit most from allocating public resources to education? Will it be the few or the many, the affluent minority or the poor majority, the rural or the urban populace, exclusively the male population or also females?

■ ***Reallocating resources***

How will resource allocations change? Will a greater percentage of the public budget go to education? Will a greater percentage of the education budget go to primary, secondary, or tertiary schools? Within operating budgets, will more funds go to administration or classroom inputs?

■ ***Revamping education services***

How will the emphasis among the different components (teachers, curriculum, materials, testing, planning, procurement, etc.) be changed? How can these services be made more effective, less costly, and more responsive to student needs and the learning environment?

■ ***Reorganizing education service delivery***

How will the country provide education services? Will the ministry of education need to decentralize some functions? Will some services be contracted out to the private sector?

■ ***Reassigning authority and responsibility***

How will management and financing responsibilities be allotted? What is the role of the government vis-à-vis the private sector; the school vis-à-vis the community or household?

Education reform is not a simple change in one aspect or one institution within an education system. It encompasses a range of changes and actions that will require transformation of all services and operations of the education system.

**The Education Sector
Support (ESS)
Approach**

The Africa Bureau has worked with African governments, other donors, professional organizations, and regional institutions to develop its approach to educational development in Africa. The objective of USAID's education sector support, or ESS, approach is to increase children's participation in quality basic education that the country can sustain. Its central tenet is to support African ownership of the reform process.

In contrast to earlier forms of donor project assistance, which provided external expertise to diagnose and correct specific weaknesses in the education sector, the ESS approach targets reform of the education system itself, helping countries identify and remedy their own problems rather than providing solutions.

Achieving systemic sectoral change requires fundamental reforms in education policy, resource allocation, institutional organization, and operations, including changed roles for schools, teachers, and communities (see box on following page). This complex social transformation must be negotiated by those within the country. Such change occurs when the key practitioners in schools and institutions actively seek to improve performance. Host country ownership of the reform is the starting point, with USAID acting as facilitator, not performer.

In 1995, the Africa Bureau's paper, *Basic Education in Africa*, described the ESS approach and examined USAID's experience in implementing it. The paper identified a number of political, economic, and institutional conditions necessary to launch and sustain meaningful reform, including:

- *Macroeconomic policies that lead to improved economic performance should be in place.* Economic recovery and growth are necessary for the country to sustain expansion and quality improvements in education. At a minimum, economic growth needs to exceed the growth of the school-aged population. External financing can assist in the transition, but a cycle of improved education and improving economic performance must ultimately evolve.
- *A government should be committed to a policy of human capacity development and basic education as a priority for growth.* Government will have to place increased priority on support for primary education and be committed to building the institutional capacity to effectively manage increased financing. This will require political support at the highest levels of government, reflecting a conviction that human capacity is central to the country's development strategy.
- *Committed leadership and a reform strategy should exist within the education sector.* The strategy should evolve from an open and public analysis of problems and solutions, and it should have political and technical champions within the country with whom external donors, including USAID, can work.

Countries where these conditions are not emerging— where there is economic decline, no national political priority for basic education, and no leadership for reform within the education sector— would not benefit from USAID's approach. Within each country where USAID provides support, the ESS approach has been tailored to articulate national policies and strategies, as in the case of Ethiopia (see box).

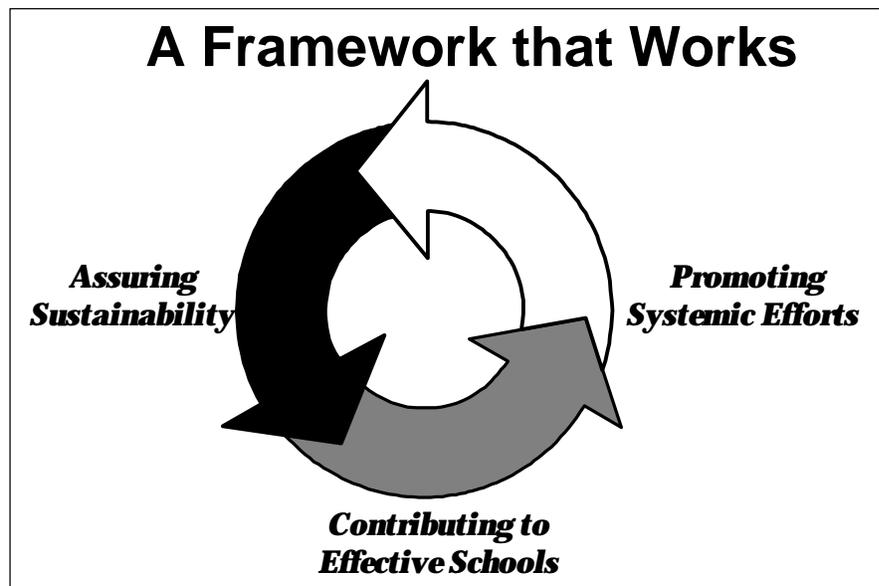
Ethiopia: The S4 Principles

The basic education reform will be:

- **Systemic**—address the whole of the education system, not isolated problems.
- **Strategic**—opt for those actions and investments most likely to result in real reform.
- **Sustainable**—be managed and ultimately financed by Ethiopia.
- **Shared**—be developed and implemented with stakeholders and partners.

The Framework

The ESS approach itself has evolved, based on analysis of USAID programs in Africa and ongoing dialogue with other donors and partners. This strategic framework reflects this growing understanding and places emphasis on: 1) school and community change; 2) systemic reform, with USAID's programs strategically supporting each country's policies, plans, and capacities; and 3) African ownership of the reform process, which is central to sustainability.



The programs in basic education that USAID supports should be viewed through three complementary and overlapping lenses:

- ***Does the program contribute to effective schools?***
- ***Does the program promote systemic reform efforts?***
- ***Are the reforms and activities sustainable?***

In designing, implementing, and evaluating basic education programs, Missions should— in collaboration with host countries and other donors— use these criteria as a basis for collectively determining objectives and allocating funds. Moreover, the three questions should serve as checks against one another; all three must win affirmative answers. Each lens— effective schools, systemic efforts, and sustainability— presents a set of factors and considerations that must be addressed in combination in order to achieve enduring educational development.

Focus on Effective Schools

The school is where the education system meets its target— the learner. Rapid population growth and economic decline have eroded the quality of schooling in Africa. Many schools have unqualified and unmotivated teachers, dilapidated and overcrowded classrooms, few instructional materials, and untrained management. These poor conditions have led to a decrease in participation rates as parents withdraw children who are not learning. If enrollment and primary school completion rates are to increase, and if a large proportion of pupils are to acquire useful knowledge and skills, the effectiveness of schooling must improve.

An *effective school* is the crucible where policies, inputs, and services of an education system come together to support teaching and learning. The myriad elements that compose educational quality work within the culture of each school's social system to enhance children's participation and learning. In an effective school children engage fully in the learning process. School effectiveness can be judged by the level of designated skills, knowledge, and dispositions its students master over a given time. In primary schools the foundation is pupil mastery of functional literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, and social relationships.

Central policies and resources may provide necessary but insufficient conditions for improving school effectiveness and pupil learning. There is a minimum level of physical facilities, instructional materials at hand, trained staff, and effective management required for schools to function properly. There are many, perhaps a majority, of primary schools in Africa that fall below such a minimum standard. It must be a priority of any county's basic education reform to define that minimum level in relation to its resources, and to plan for schools to reach that level.

USAID, other donors, and education ministries have tended to assess reform in terms of aggregated information related to these inputs, e.g., number of teachers trained, pupil/teacher ratio, curriculum reformed and instructional materials designed, number of books procured and delivered, classrooms built or renovated, and per/pupil expenditures. These intermediate services are essential, but by themselves do not transform the processes of teaching and learning in schools and classrooms. It is within the school itself that all the components of the system come together, through the actions of the school head and teachers in their interactions with each other and the students, to determine the quality of teaching and learning.

There are many factors associated with school effectiveness, but there is no universal formula for creating effective schools. Research demonstrates that the transformation from poorly functioning to effective schools requires supporting inputs, effective management and utilization of the inputs at the school level, and a process of analysis and follow-up action by practitioners and policymakers. Key elements that

Key Elements of Effective Schools*

- *A school climate that supports learning* by having high expectations for children; capable, motivated teachers; strong leadership; high learning time; and an organized, relevant curriculum.
- *Effective learning and teaching strategies* through variety in teaching methods and materials; integration with children's experience and culture; and frequent assessment of student learning and feedback.
- *Supporting conditions and inputs* including community involvement and support; nourished and healthy children who are ready to learn; functioning government policies on school management, financing, resources and evaluation; a qualified teaching staff; adequate materials and school facilities; and regular supervision and professional support to teachers.

*Derived from Heneveld, 1994

must be analyzed and acted upon to improve schools and student learning (see box).¹⁰

There are no simple answers to the complex problem of improving school effectiveness and children's learning within a national system. The factors identified above are starting points in the analysis, and need to be examined in light of the context and conditions within each country. This makes it critical that host-country policymakers, managers, and practitioners themselves engage in a learning process based on an ongoing exploration and analysis of the relationship between school conditions and student learning, linked to national policy.

The emphasis placed here on effective schools should not result in a narrow and fixed program with a single formula for improvement. Throughout the world there are many changes taking place in the way schools organize for learning.¹¹ A number of countries have initiated school-based programs that put into practice what is known about the process of learning. These include *Escuela Nueva* in Colombia, and community schools in Guatemala, upper Egypt, and Baluchistan in Pakistan. Initial analyses of these approaches have been positive, indicating high levels of pupil participation, learning achievement, and cost effectiveness. In supporting the transition to effective schools, African policymakers and educators, with USAID and other donor support, will want to critically examine and build on these experiences.

¹⁰The identification of these factors draws on research and evaluation within the United States, internationally and, specifically, recent work within Africa (Sashkin and Egermeier, 1993; Carron and Ta Ngoc, 1993; Heneveld, 1994). The USAID Global Bureau's Improving Educational Quality (IEQ) project provides a valuable set of papers and reports on the improvement of school effectiveness.

¹¹Recent research within the cognitive sciences has demonstrated every child's capacity to *grow intelligence*. Schools as presently organized do not effectively build upon or develop this capacity. Teachers generally treat *school knowledge* as independent of the knower, a detached body of information to be mastered by each pupil. This does not contribute much to the development of critical intelligence or build the creative and problem-solving capacities that are so needed in today's rapidly-changing world.



What USAID Can Do To Support Effective Schools

- ✓ Support policy dialogue and research that places school-based reform at the center of the policy agenda and institutional development activities.
- ✓ With government and NGOs active in specific communities, develop targeted, sustainable school-based interventions that seek to understand— in collaboration with school staff— what the school and teachers can do to improve student learning.
- ✓ Support the development of a system of continuous assessment that will help teachers and pupils (and parents) know what has and has not been learned, diagnose problems, and remedy them. A feedback system based on this information can then be used to inform school, regional, and national-level decisions about resources, training, and supporting services.
- ✓ Reformulate institutional development and staff training activities to support school-level reform. For example, teachers at specific schools might be involved with resource persons in analyzing, piloting, and evaluating new approaches to teacher in-service training, instructional materials, and/or student assessments. The impact of these new approaches on student learning and behavior should be the benchmark of their effectiveness.
- ✓ Seek information and analysis of cost-effective, alternative models for school reform from within Africa and from other countries to stimulate and inform policy dialogue.

Promoting Systemic Reform

Effective schools are the result of an education system that works: where policies, services, and inputs unite with budgets, institutions, decision-making processes, dialogue, and feedback to support school change. Simply expanding the existing education systems in most countries will not remedy the dysfunction caused by:

- Policies that cause inequitable and inefficient allocation of resources;
- Insufficient *public* resources to fund significant improvements in the coverage of the education system and the quality of its services;
- Lack of institutional capacity to plan for, manage, and sustain education development; and
- Low household demand for, involvement in, and support for the schooling offered.

Systemic reform requires viewing the education system as a whole. It entails a comprehensive analysis and treatment of the myriad elements and dimensions of an educational system, and addresses the critical linkages between educational policy, resource availability, institutional capacity, educational services, management/administration, and stakeholder interests and roles so that no one component or aspect conflicts with or acts as a brake on another's development. This approach

contrasts to earlier attempts by both countries and donors to improve a single aspect or element of a system without acting on the many other complex and interdependent elements.

Systemic reform is a country's responsibility: it can be supported but not directed by external donors. It involves six key linkages. These linkages reveal the complexity of an education system and highlight the need for thorough analysis and planning, complementary actions, partnerships between public and private sectors, and coordinated support by funding agencies.

Linkage #1: Education Subsectors

USAID's policy in Africa is to focus on the development of the *primary education* subsector. This does not mean, however, that its development occurs in isolation and that other subsectors (e.g., secondary, higher, and vocational education) and their constituents need not be taken into account. The education system as a whole must adjust to reflect new priorities and needs. Expansion in one subsector may require reduction in another. Given the historical tendency in Africa for public expenditure to favor higher education, it is inevitable that the higher levels of education will need to adjust financing policies and operations to support the reform of basic education. Potential resistance to and the actions and costs associated with these changes should be taken into account in the course of a country's planning and undertaking— as well as donors' supporting— a reform of basic education.

Example: *A country has determined that improving the primary education subsector requires that per-pupil expenditures at the university level be reduced, teachers at secondary schools be redeployed to primary schools, and inefficient vocational training programs eliminated. It has developed plans for and agreements with the non-primary subsectors that reflect the restructuring of education sector finance.*

Linkage #2: System Components

The education system is routinely broken down into components— e.g., infrastructure, teachers, curriculum, instructional materials, and examinations— that are further delineated into functions and operational units to provide and manage related educational services. Typically, both national and donor efforts to improve basic education have focused on a discrete component (or subset thereof) of a system, generally with the expectation that this alone would be sufficient to attain a more general goal. Systemic reform requires that linkages with other key components be identified and provided for. This does not mean that, at any one time, countries and donors must simultaneously address all components. Rather, the focus should be on a critical mass of key components that will permit the system to improve.

Example: Increased access requires classroom construction and recruitment of sufficient numbers of teachers to staff the new classrooms. Improved classroom instruction requires better in-service teacher training and reinforcement by appropriate teacher terms of service, teacher support/supervision, and instructional materials.

Linkage #3: System Arenas

Education systems are notoriously “loosely coupled.” However, for substantive change in even one of the system components to take place, complementary actions must occur simultaneously or in close succession in different arenas in the education system. These are the *policy*, *institutional*, *school/classroom*, and *community* arenas. *Policy* has been recognized as a defining and organizing force for educational development. Considerable attention has been given to “getting policy right” so that national education reform efforts correspond to the objectives they espouse and the resources they are allotted. However, good policies require competent *institutions* to formulate them, translate them into strategies, secure the resources to fund them, and carry them out with timely delivery of inputs and services to the schools. *Schools* must adopt, interpret, and use the inputs, processes, and procedures in the ways called for by the policies. *Communities* must accept the policies and provide support for the resultant services. By recognizing the need for action in all these arenas, systemic reform coordinates the policies, resources, means, mechanisms, and actors so that national reform initiatives arrive at the school and penetrate the classroom.

Example: A policy calling for greater textbook availability (as a means of improving educational quality) requires: institutions to plan the budget, manage the production or procurement, and deliver the books to schools; schools with teachers that understand the content of the material, have mastered the pedagogy required for their use, and are motivated to use them; and communities that are willing to support or finance in some way the purchase and replacement of books.

Linkage #4: Locus of Governance and Management

Fundamental reorganization of the management structure of the education system, entailing the reassignment of decision-making authority, implementation and financing responsibility, and accountability and oversight, should figure prominently in most education reforms. Many countries' education sectors are characterized by highly-centralized management structures, in which decisions about resource allocation and provision of educational services are concentrated at the top of the education system hierarchy, with little scope for input or feedback from lower management levels of the education system (e.g., regional and district offices), school and teaching personnel, and communities, parents, and students. The potential disadvantages of this are manifold.

Example: *Highly-centralized systems can lead to uninformed or unresponsive policy decisions from the top or decision-making level; inadequate understanding about policy implementation requirements from the middle or managing level; lack of compliance with or resistance to policy initiatives from the lowest or school level; and alienation from the externally-imposed education system at the client or community level.*

The definition and the formulas for decentralizing management of the education system are many and largely untested in developing countries. It is generally argued that the devolution of decision-making to loci closer to the community or “client” may stimulate innovative solutions, harness local expertise, motivate support, and increase oversight, provided that the devolution *is compatible with national policy objectives and equity standards, and commensurate with revenue-raising authority and analytic, administrative, and accounting capability.* Systemic reform calls for the reexamination and reconfiguration of the loci of decision-making authority and management responsibility— and related incentive and compensation structures— to ensure that reform policies and associated educational services reach the intended targets, are delivered by the most efficient means, are understood and adapted by the users and beneficiaries, and any performance shortfalls are quickly identified and remedied.

**Linkage #5:
Stakeholders**

The education sector has traditionally been seen as one that consists of “suppliers” of educational services (i.e., the ministry of education) on the one hand, and “consumers” (i.e., students and their parents) on the other. In reality the education sector’s stakeholders are numerous and their roles diverse. Education is a “public good” in which all of society has an interest, and a significant proportion of public resources are devoted to it. Both public and private sector financing, cooperation, and support is essential to education development, and their lack could prove injurious to meaningful improvements (as evidenced by teacher strikes, university student riots, religious opposition, and parental disinclination to invest in schooling).

The public sector includes the ministry of education, certainly, but also the ministry of finance and other social sector agencies, such as the ministries of health and social affairs, that both regulate and vie for scarce public resources. The private sector includes private suppliers of education; interest groups and supporters such as business/industry, religious communities, NGOs, benevolent associations, and teacher and student unions; and the direct beneficiaries, such as communities, households, parents, and students. This broad array of stakeholders also implies multiple roles, which often overlap, ranging from consumers and beneficiaries to providers, financiers, and advocates.

Example: *The traditional “targets” (i.e., households, parents, and students) often bear the largest financial responsibility and the greatest risk; teachers are both suppliers to and beneficiaries of the system; and NGOs and religious institutions may serve as suppliers and advocates.*

The complex political economy of the education sector requires participation in and ownership of both the process and results of problem identification, strategy building, and reform implementation to: 1) arrive at informed and appropriate solutions; 2) achieve consensus, cooperation, and acceptance; 3) fairly and efficiently distribute financing responsibility; and 4) dislodge entrenched interests in the status quo. Experience and research show that educational reform must be demand-driven, and its success depends on the ongoing support and involvement of the stakeholders in this dynamic process. Systemic reform will require that fora, mechanisms, and systems (e.g., national/regional conferences, advisory groups, town-meetings, parent-teacher-student associations, and NGO umbrella organizations) be put in place to give voice to both the outspoken and seldom-heard groups, to support their development, and to integrate and respond to their concerns.

Linkage #6: Donors

Donors and external funding agencies are also stakeholders in the education sector with interests in educational development, although controversy certainly surrounds the amount of influence and the roles they should be accorded. USAID believes that the reform of an education system and the provision of education is a national responsibility, involving both public and private sectors. Funding agencies cannot and should not assume these roles. In addition to the fundamental issue of governance and a nation's right to define and control a powerful tool of social, political, and economic development, funding agencies do not have the resources necessary to finance basic education. As systemic reform in education generally necessitates inter- and intrasectoral resource reallocation, it is linked to larger efforts to better manage public revenues and expenditures.

Nonetheless, funding agency input and support are important factors in mounting and realizing systemic reform. Recent evidence shows that USAID support has catalyzed education reform, introduced important issues for consideration (e.g., girls' education, participation, and community schools), strengthened national efforts in technical analysis and planning, facilitated the reform process, and provided critical resources to cover the transition costs of reform. But funding agency effectiveness to advance systemic change is contingent on partnership with the national polity and coordination and cooperation among donors. Funding agencies should base their assistance efforts on the country's reform objectives, plan, and budget. Too often, donor funding of pet projects has contributed to the compartmentalization of the sector, preventing comprehensive development.

Example: By either pooling their resources through shared performance conditions or by providing complementary assistance to the countries (e.g., curriculum development and textbook revision), funding agencies can maximize both the impact of their investments and the ability of the country to achieve and sustain systemic reform.



What USAID Can Do to Promote Systemic Education Reform

- ✓ Define and maintain its role as a facilitator— not a doer— of educational reform and avoid imposing solutions or policies, based on the recognition that successful reform is endogenous or homegrown.
- ✓ Assist the country in planning its reform systemically, taking account of and planning for the various dimensions, complementarities and linkages discussed above. Joint analyses— including comprehensive sector analyses or targeted studies— can provide critical technical data, contribute to ongoing dialogue among country officials, other stakeholders, and funding agencies, and build country capacity.
- ✓ Develop its program of support with reference to the country’s agenda for reform and other donor activities and select strategic areas for support that represent key pressure points in system transformation (e.g., planning/statistics, teacher management/training, etc.).
- ✓ Help a country identify and put in place the structures, procedures, and practices necessary to 1) plan and manage the education system (e.g., transparent budgeting/accounting, data collection, and analysis, information distribution, and dissemination, venues for participation of civil society in policy determination and decision-making, etc.); and 2) manage, monitor, modify, and guide the reform process itself (e.g., reform steering committee, monitoring and evaluation system to gauge systemic reform progress and diagnose impediments to changing structures and services, public information campaigns, etc.).
- ✓ Promote national policy dialogue and support the creation of mechanisms to foster wide participation of actors within and outside the official education community.¹²

¹²For discussion and guidance, see the multi-volume series *Education Reform Support*, SD Technical Papers Nos. 47-51, developed and funded by USAID’s Africa Bureau and produced by USAID’s ABEL Project.

**Assuring
Sustainability**

A fundamental shift in USAID's approach to education since 1989 has been its emphasis on *sustainability*. The argument for sustainability finds its origins in the current political climate and the lessons of previous development assistance that: funding agency budgets represent only a fraction of what is required to provide universal education; foreign assistance budgets are shrinking; and dependency on external funding does not lead to improved capacity or efficient educational investment decisions. Sustainability is achieved when a country's development and growth derives from its indigenous human, institutional, and financial resources. In education, assuring sustainability means that countries must be able to plan, manage, and finance national education objectives without technical or financial assistance from USAID or other donors.

There is no well-trodden path to guide funding agency support of sustainable development. In most countries in Africa (and elsewhere), the transition from "assisted" to "sustained" is an evolving story and one whose critical last chapter has not yet been written. Experience suggests, however, four key principles that should guide USAID (and other donors):

- Support *systemic reform*, not single interventions;
- Invest in education reform efforts that have *broad public consensus and ownership*;
- *Strengthen institutional capacity* for managing/implementing the reform; and
- Support reforms that can *ultimately be financed by resources within the country*.

Principle #1: Systemic Reform

Systemic reform is not only essential to ensure the effectiveness of the education system as described in the previous section, it is also critical to the sustainability of reform. Sustained education development depends on comprehensive system change – not just improved inputs, a number of demonstration schools, or better policies and more resources, but all these elements in combination, which are the means of reshaping the way national institutions organize to support what teachers, students, and communities do in schools. To endure, all the elements and dimensions of a system must complement, support, and coordinate with each other.

Principle #2: Consensus and Ownership

Lasting reform— regardless of the sector— is unlikely to take place if the changes are not politically and socially acceptable. Without the approval, endorsement, and support of the affected population, efforts to introduce innovations and improvements may be actively resisted or ignored. This is particularly true in the education sector, which serves a vast clientele as the majority of households have come to expect or aspire to primary schooling for their children, and all of society has a stake in the economic and social benefits associated with education.

Substantial improvement in many African education systems requires pervasive and significant change in the status quo, with the inherent potential for controversy, as there are perceived “winners” and “losers.” The daily operations of the education system are driven by countless self-chosen responses of practitioners, who carry reforms to the school and implement them in the classroom; the interest groups and opinion leaders, who campaign for or against the reform and mediate public opinion; and parents, who determine whether and for how long to enroll their children.

Moreover, in most countries, the financial and in-kind contribution of households and communities is essential to overall sector financing. If decisionmakers pursue education reforms in isolation— no matter how well-intentioned— without consulting sector stakeholders, they risk crafting inappropriate or misunderstood policies. This often results in loss of popular support, jeopardizing both desired student outcomes and financial viability as stakeholders “vote with their feet,” by reducing household contributions and their children’s participation in the schooling offered.

Consensus or approbation of the reform measures by stakeholders is important. But “ownership”— the recognition of a vested interest and a sense of efficacy in being able to influence decisions— is increasingly seen as a necessary element in the formula for sustainability. Both the success and durability of reform efforts depend, to a large extent, on a sense of ownership by the government, the ministry of education, the teaching corps, interest groups (e.g., religious and business community), and the direct consumers of schooling (communities, parents, and children). Such ownership derives from participation in the identification of the problem, definition of the solutions, and development of the policy framework and strategy. In addition, ownership is enhanced by a recognition of the contributions of the all stakeholders, an articulation of roles and responsibilities, and involvement in ongoing management, decision-making, and oversight.

Unfortunately, ownership is not automatic or achieved by goodwill alone. Within a country, the fora and mechanisms for participation, dialogue, and negotiation are often absent or deficient. The lines of communication are tenuous so that parents— and even teachers— are often not aware of education policy decisions, nor are they able to transmit their concerns and opinions back to policymakers. Moreover, the public sector often lacks the willingness and ability to listen to and understand the private sector. And, many private sector groups lack the capacity, confidence, organizational skills, and resources to permit themselves to be heard.

USAID has supported efforts to promote and improve policy dialogue from both sides. It has worked with governments to develop communication mechanisms, improve information dissemination, and solicit and respond to stakeholder views. It has also supported efforts by

U.S. and local NGOs (in Benin, Malawi, Mali, South Africa, and Ethiopia) to bolster community capacity and participation in the national dialogue and education reform process.¹³

Finally, USAID (and other donors) must take care not to so strenuously champion their own solutions for education improvement that they do not listen to the government and ministry of education. USAID's schedule for getting program agreements in place and committing funds to specific planned results must accommodate the time and processes needed for host-country analysis, dialogue, and ownership. Experience has shown that joint sectoral analyses and research studies are one way of leveling the information playing field, providing the base for USAID and other donors to situate assistance based on a national agenda and program. It is important to recognize where a country is on the reform continuum and respect the pace of reform.

**Principle #3:
Institution
Strengthening**

An indispensable ingredient for sustainable reform is the ability of education sector institutions to translate policies and resources into effective services and programs. Ministries of education have often had difficulty managing reforms, even though they have been able to sustain existing services. Among national institutions and their staff, low motivation, poor training, lack of incentives, and an overly hierarchical bureaucratic control system impede decision-making and frustrate the delivery of essential services to schools in a timely and effective manner. Sustainable education development requires a network of institutions, most often public sector but also private ones, that individually and collectively plan for, manage, and maintain a reformed education system.

USAID's current approach to institutional strengthening incorporates many of the lessons from its own and other donors' past experience. Evidence from more than 35 years of donor support for training and technical assistance tells a cautionary tale. Despite large investments of foreign assistance in institutional development, the bureaucratic transformation needed to support education reform is not in place¹⁴ (Ridker, 1994). This suggests that such assistance should be recrafted, not abandoned.

USAID's approach to supporting education reform emphasizes the centrality of institutional development, but it recognizes that institutional development is not a substitute for commitment to educational reform and national leadership. It is a corollary and a necessary condition.

¹³Not all participation is equal. Consultation with all stakeholders on every decision is obviously neither feasible nor productive. The blueprint for the timing, venue, nature of decision, and participants is evolving.

¹⁴In an insightful analysis, Ridker notes, "TA for training and institution building has used up large amounts of foreign assistance with few improvements in domestic capacity to show for it. Indeed, it may be that in subtle ways TA is doing more to increase dependence on its continuance than it is to increase local capacity."

Ensuring rational organization

Successful institutional development is more likely to take place and take hold in a system that is rationally organized. The organization and management structure should be examined for redundant or conflicting functions among the different divisions. Roles, responsibilities, and intended results of each should be delineated to ensure that they are coordinated and support one another.

Supporting technical and management institutions

The education system consists of institutions with technical and management responsibilities. The technical institutions, such as those that deal with teacher training, curriculum development, instructional materials, testing and examinations, etc. provide services aimed directly at the school and classroom. The administrative or managerial institutions, such as finance and accounting, planning and information, personnel, etc. provide functions essential to the operation of the overall system, supporting the work of the technical services. For sustainability, the coordinated development and strengthening of both types of institutions are essential.

A notable facet of USAID's approach to institutional development has been its support of both management and technical services. USAID has worked to develop the planning, budgeting/accounting, and monitoring capacity of ministries of education, so that countries are better able to plan for their needs, determine resource parameters and trade-offs, assess progress, and diagnose blockages.

Developing institutions, not just individuals

The focus of USAID's approach to institutional development is on the *institution*, not the individual. Too often in the past, institution strengthening consisted of the intensive training of a few highly placed specialists, largely ignoring the procedures, processes, systems, and support staff that make up an institution.¹⁵ With the inevitable departure or promotion of these specialists, the long-term and enduring potential of donor investment disappeared. While USAID and other donors can provide effective technical support to institutions, this assistance is defined in terms of working with all the employees of an institution to define their respective roles, develop the most efficient procedures and tools to carry out the institutional mandate, and master the analytic and technical skills that will permit the institution to perceive, negotiate, and craft new roles (and approaches) in a constantly evolving system.

¹⁵This is not meant to minimize the importance of creating "policy champions" by providing specialized training to individuals who are generally placed in strategic, authoritative positions. USAID has found that these individuals can be highly effective in advocating and popularizing an approach or subject that is new to the system or institution, such as girls' education. This, however, is not a substitute for, but a complement to, institutional development.

Creating learning organizations

Because of the dynamic nature of education development, a key objective in institutional development is to foster institutional ability to function as learning organizations. This is the capacity to start a “virtuous cycle” of improving performance through examining the results of intentional action: to seek out relevant information on strategies, actions, and results; to organize and facilitate deliberation around this information; to make decisions using that information; and to put these decisions into action. Further, the institution should develop the capacity to revitalize itself and replenish its staff as needed. This means that institutional support should address self-management functions within the institution, as well as those functions that relate more directly to its official mandate.

Focusing on the entire institution

Another aspect of USAID's approach to supporting institutional development is to focus on the *entire* institution, not just the top echelons of staff or the centrally-placed main office. Many African countries are attempting to decentralize or deconcentrate many of their services so that they are more regionally-based and better able to respond to the communities they serve. Local offices and personnel are often called upon to perform tasks that are new to them, such as preparing budgets or procurement orders. This calls for both improved or new skills and better procedures within the local offices, and new lines of communication and management practices and procedures at the central headquarters. Support of institutional development must take into account and address the needs of field offices as well as main ones.

Supporting NGOs and research institutions

Recently, attention has been directed towards institutions in the private sector, such as local NGOs, the for-profit sector, and communities.¹⁶ As governments recognize that education must be a shared responsibility if national goals are to be met, their policy frameworks will increasingly provide for private sector input and services. An increasing number of countries have, with USAID support, initiated incentive grants to fiscally accountable bodies such as schools, school clusters, sub-national institutions, NGOs, and district authorities.¹⁷ Often, NGOs and community-based groups lack the managerial skills and

¹⁶This is not a new concept or practice in Africa. Until the 1970s the great majority of primary schools in Anglophone Africa were what are called *grant-aided*. They were founded and managed by religious bodies and received grant support from the state.

¹⁷In Uganda and Guinea USAID programs have supported grants to communities for increasing girls' participation. In Ghana grants are to be provided to schools and districts implementing the Fundamental Quality Level planning system. The World Bank has developed an innovative grant program for clusters of schools and teachers. USAID in South Africa has pioneered grants to NGOs developing innovative curriculum, materials, and training approaches. In Uganda the Improving Education Quality Project worked through the Uganda National Examinations Board to award grants for researchers focusing on schools, pupil learning, and teacher's conditions linked to national reform intents.

technical capacity to respond effectively. USAID in some cases has provided this support. For example, in Mali where 15 to 20 percent of primary school students may eventually be enrolled in community schools, USAID has provided assistance to strengthen local NGO ability to support the schools.

In addition to the traditional public sector and the emerging private sector institutions, there is another category of institution that bears some consideration. This includes research organizations and institutions, which may be either public or private. Although they are not major players in basic education development, their potential for making a positive contribution is not negligible. Research organizations at universities or private institutes can serve as investigative tools for the ministry of education and be the source for introducing new ideas, methods, and personnel into the institutional structure of the education system. Institutional development plans should consider these potential partnerships and linkages.

Too often, change and reform is defined solely as more students performing better in school. While this is USAID's ultimate goal in supporting education, an axiom of sustainability prescribes that it do this through supporting each country's institutional capacity. As the education sector is never static, only the existence of effective institutions able to respond positively to change ensures that educational reform is sustainable.

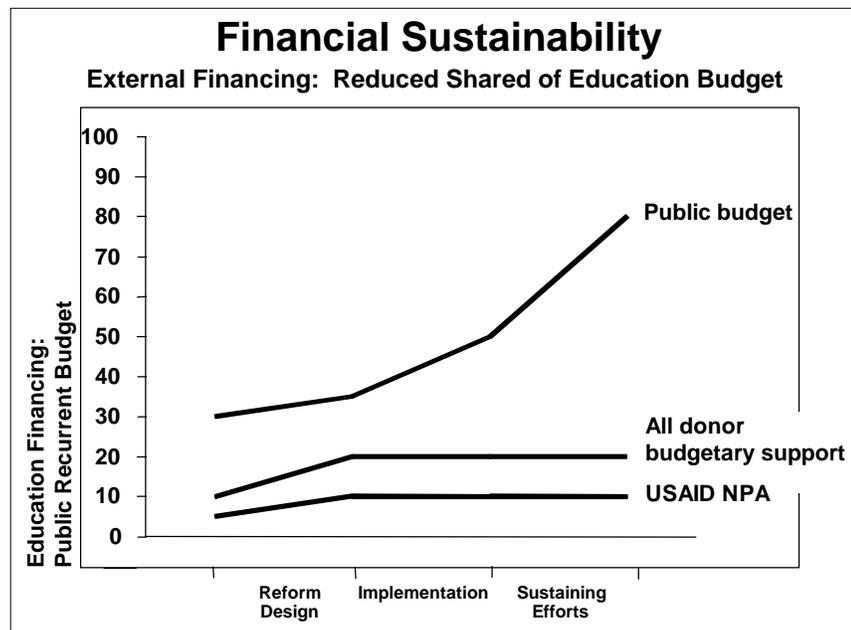
Principle #4 Realistic Public Financing

Policy reform and public finance should be inseparable. Sustainable education development means that national reforms will ultimately be financed by public and private resources within the country. USAID and other donor support and assistance efforts must move toward this objective. This is a fundamental principle that may seem obvious. However, it is unfortunately violated frequently by countries and donors.

Assessing public financing

Occasionally, both countries and donors attempt to undertake or support a monumental reform effort without considering the resource parameters affecting the country and the sector. The reform process should start with a realistic assessment of the macroeconomic framework and potential for growth. Although many countries have successfully tackled the often controversial issue of resource reallocation, both within and among sectors, it is clear that in most countries the education budget must continue to increase at a rate that far outpaces population growth if access and quality goals are to be attained. These resources ultimately will have to come from a larger public sector budget, which in turn will derive from a larger economy rather than just a greater public share of GDP.

Since 1988 USAID has defined its financing strategy as the provision of 1) financial (budgetary) support to assist the education system in the critical period of transition to reform and “adjustment,” and 2) targeted technical assistance and limited commodities to build country capacity and knowledge needed to implement the reform and manage the education system. As the reform progresses, both the absolute amounts of and the percentage of the education budget representing USAID and other external funding should diminish.



Planning reform within financing parameters

The indispensable point of departure for planning a reform is a credible analysis of economic growth potential and determination of the resource envelope available to education. It is imperative from both the country perspective and for the viability of USAID assistance that a realistic sustainability assessment determines the long-term financing requirements, and whether 1) the country’s projected public and private resources are likely to be sufficient for financing the reformed system, and 2) the country is likely to maintain the necessary level of commitment to financing basic education. USAID can assist the government to plan the reform by developing different budget scenarios tied to results and to explore various financing options, such as the type and amount of contribution from households, communities, and other private sector entities.

In designing its support program, USAID should not promote or invest in any reform or activity that exceeds country resources or that the country is unlikely to continue funding. USAID should avoid using project funds to finance a portion or aspect of the reform that entails

assuming recurrent costs of routine operations, unless it is demonstrated that the public and/or private resources will be in place after USAID support has ended. Experience has demonstrated that it is important both symbolically and substantively that the recurrent expenditures for activities that are to become a standard part of ministry operations appear as line items in the government budget.

Developing systems to track expenditures

A significant barrier to realistic planning and responsible management is the lack of transparent budgeting and accounting systems and documents. This deficiency is coupled with the absence of standardized unit costs and budget norms tied to clear quality standards, essentially eliminating the basic tools for planning and management. USAID has been successful in helping several countries develop the financial systems required for pragmatic planning and accountability. These tools and the capacity to analyze their content has enabled ministries of education to negotiate budgetary allocations with the ministry of finance and claim the resources needed to implement the national reform.

In summary, a reformed education system put in place with external assistance should ultimately be sustainable by the host country without technical or financial assistance from USAID or other donors. USAID should not undertake to support an activity that exceeds the limits of the country's anticipated resources for education or when there is no plausible public capacity for managing the process of systemic reform.



What USAID Can Do To Assure that the Reforms it Supports Are Sustainable

- ✓ Support and adopt a systemic reform approach.
- ✓ Assist countries with the development of means and fora for policy analysis and dialogue among stakeholders, education practitioners, and donor partners, so as to establish consensus on a national agenda and program for reform.
- ✓ Focus on developing institutional capacity by working with institutions to establish systems and procedures to deliver better service more efficiently and to respond to the changing needs of an evolving system.
- ✓ Help the government situate its educational reform within realistic resource parameters and create the tools and systems necessary to oversee and plan for improvements in coverage and quality within those parameters.
- ✓ Do not undertake to support an activity that exceeds the limits of the country's anticipated resources for education or for which there is no plausible public capacity for managing.
- ✓ Commit to be there for the "long haul," based on appreciating that systemic education reform takes a great deal of time and will require ongoing— though diminishing— support.

**The Three Lenses:
Understanding
USAID's Role**

The three lenses— effective schools, systemic reform, and sustainability— are the analytic points of departure for USAID's basic education support efforts. Each offers a way of thinking about a country's education sector and provides an analytical template to enable USAID to craft assistance programs that will catalyze, leverage, and support national reform efforts. These lenses are complementary, and in some aspects overlapping, so that the implications for USAID are often variations on a theme.

At the core of this strategic framework is a recognition of the centrality and complexity of systemic reform. This means that USAID should develop its ESS program with reference to the goal of effective schooling, the various linkages that bind the education system together, and the principles of sustainability. It does not mean that USAID should develop and manage effective schools, but rather that USAID should support in-country capacity and systems that achieve this objective. Nor does support for systemic reform mean that USAID must be involved in or develop support programs for all components of the education system. Obviously, this is neither possible nor desirable, given both USAID's resource limitations and development philosophy. Instead, this framework should be used to identify the key components, critical linkages, and considerations that should be addressed to effect country-owned and lasting change. There is scope for the small program, as well as the large, as long as their design takes into account the precepts described above.

While the past 10 years of experience in basic education in Africa has taught USAID the importance of systemic reform, it has also taught the imperative of partnership to effect, finance, and sustain an education system that provides effective schooling for its children. It takes communities, NGOs, businesses, governments, and funding agencies working in concert to build a performing education system.

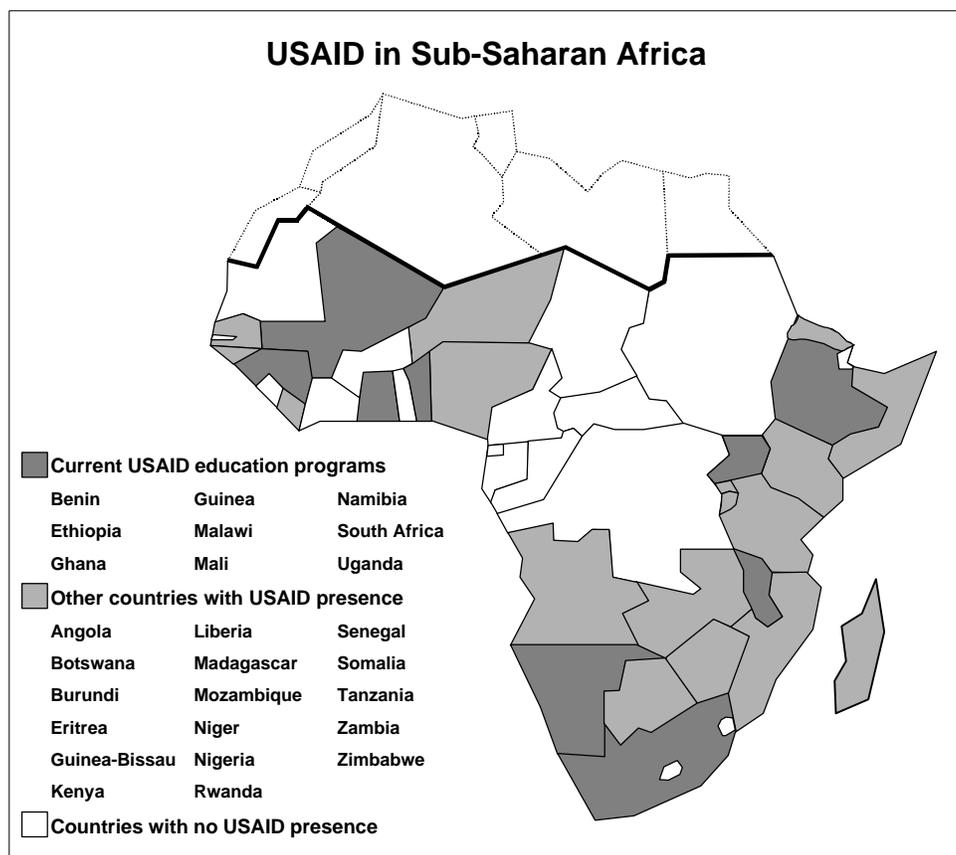
**Country Selection for
USAID Support**

The selection of countries that receive USAID assistance for basic education over the next decade will be based on three factors: the presence a USAID Mission in the country, the magnitude of the problem, and the country's readiness for reform.

Country Presence

Country presence is determined by USAID in consultation with the host country and the U.S. Department of State. Presently USAID has bilateral programs in 25 sub-Saharan African countries with an annual budget of \$970 million, of which \$220 million is for humanitarian assistance (disaster relief). Although the Agency is strongly committed to promoting Africa's sustainable development, the resources available to do this are declining. Budgetary cuts on the order of 25 percent in 1997 mean that USAID will have fewer staff for overseas posts and will have to reduce the number of countries with bilateral programs. Since the ESS

approach requires strong USAID in-country presence, the number of countries with USAID Missions that can support basic education programs will be limited.



The Magnitude of the Problem

Due to rapidly growing populations and weak economic performance, many countries in Africa have been unable to provide primary education to an ever-increasing number of children. The magnitude of a country's need can be crudely defined as the gap between present enrollment rates and 100 percent enrollment of the school-aged population in primary school. To achieve a 100 percent enrollment means that all children enter primary school at grade 1 and continue to the conclusion of the primary cycle.¹⁸ In addition to this straightforward criterion, other indicators of the problem should be examined, such as the proportion of girls having access to and completing primary school; regional differences in opportunity; and rates of repetition, dropout and completion, and learning outcomes.

¹⁸The definition here is equivalent to the *net enrollment rate*, or NER, which is the ratio of students of school-going age enrolled to the population of school-age children. This requires enrollment data by age and grade, which many countries in Africa cannot provide. The alternative, the *gross enrollment rate*, or GER, is simply the ratio of all students enrolled (of any age) to the school-age population. The GER can exceed 100 percent due to the presence of many overage children as a consequence of high rates of repetition.

Countries with USAID presence can be ranked along a continuum by the criterion of need for basic education, with those countries with the greatest need potentially having the highest claim on USAID support. However, this criterion for providing support must be analyzed simultaneously with the third criterion: readiness for reform.

Readiness for Reform

USAID can only effectively support reform that is owned by the country, not imposed by donors. The analysis of a country's *readiness for reform* is critical for determining whether and how USAID should support basic education. This is a challenging analytic task. It is likely that factors external to the education system, the political, economic, social, and governance context, will have more influence on the changes within the education sector than broad policy statements on "education for all" by a ministry of education. Education reform and the capacity to sustain it are relative, not absolute concepts. Nonetheless, within a country, good analysis and indicators can provide insight as to the likelihood that sustainable, systemic reform has a plausible future. Key indicators will include the:

- Scope of public analysis, dialogue, and review of the performance and needs of the education sector;
- Stability of government and education-sector policymakers and their commitment to reform;
- Quality of information and analysis available;
- Range of stakeholders involved in policy review and evaluation;
- Government's level of financial commitment to the sector and specifically to basic education;
- Organizational competence and flexibility in financing and managing schools— e.g., partnerships between public and private sector; and
- Level of collaboration and sharing among major donors.

In the following table, a typology of reform stages is linked to the role that USAID (or other donors) might have. This typology is not a blueprint, but rather a conceptual tool to simplify a very complex, nonlinear real-world situation. The "edges" of any category are permeable, and the placement of a country within a category is temporary and illustrative rather than definitive. The first column outlines the different stages of reform, the characteristics of each stage, examples of countries currently in the stage, and potential new program countries. The second column outlines the appropriate USAID role for supporting systemic reform for each stage.¹⁹ Regardless of the stage, programs should be examined using the three lenses that identify their contribution to *effective schools, systemic reform, and sustainability*.

¹⁹The fact that a given country appears in a specific stage on this table does not mean that support from USAID did not begin when the program was at a different stage. In Malawi, for example, USAID entered in the early 1990s when the country was in the stage of having preliminary conditions in place for reform. Malawi now qualifies as a country with a sector reform in full swing.

Stages of Reform and USAID's Role

Stage of Reform	USAID's Role in Support of the Reform
<p>NO REFORM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ repressive or chaotic regime ■ no commitment to change ■ no civil society to speak of ■ no short term expectation of improvement in country conditions <p><i>Examples: Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan</i></p>	<p>USAID resources are unlikely to leverage meaningful or sustainable change. Do not invest.</p>
<p>PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS IN PLACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ country may be emerging from major crisis ■ viable government, economic reforms underway ■ leadership within government/ministry of education ■ environment that enables dialogue and deliberation ■ public dissatisfaction with school system, government exploring reform options <p><i>Example: Mozambique</i> <i>Possible new programs over strategy period: Congo (Zaire), Rwanda, Nigeria (if there is transition to democratic governance)</i></p>	<p>Focus on generating demand for education and systemic reform, within and outside of the ministry of education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assist ministries of education and other entities to develop their capacity to analyze information drawing in broader elements of civil society by conducting comprehensive sector analyses ■ Where appropriate, either with the government and/or through international/local NGOs, sponsor pilot projects at community level as means of introducing innovations upon which broader systemic reform programs are later built ■ In some instances (especially if country is coming out of major civil strife), provide transitional assistance (e.g., classroom construction in areas where schools are devastated by war) as long as this assistance will not adversely impact on future system reform efforts <p>Use project assistance.</p>
<p>EARLY REFORM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ government is actively grappling with reform issues and/or formulating policies/strategies ■ environment is conducive to broader stake-holder participation ■ commitment on part of government to provide adequate resources to education, particularly primary education ■ some positive indicators of increasing enrollments, retention, due to increasing public response to more favorable environment <p><i>Examples: Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali</i> <i>Possible new programs: Zambia, Madagascar</i></p>	<p>Use integrated education systems support approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assist in the analysis for articulating and implementing the policy framework ■ May involve USAID support for NGO/community education efforts ■ Work with government to involve broader civil society in both arriving at/implementing reforms included in framework <p>Use project assistance with program support (NPA), conditional on policy and institutional capacity for management and financing.</p>
<p>SECTOR REFORM IN FULL SWING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ solid commitment on part of government to undertake reforms ■ some reforms successfully implemented ■ broad stakeholder involvement in carrying out reforms ■ evidence of results in terms of systems changes, and in terms of increased participation rates or improved performance <p><i>Example of current programs: Guinea, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda</i></p>	<p>Use strategic assistance in support of continuation of reforms that are ongoing or have been initiated by country on its own.</p> <p>Use program assistance (if required), with project assistance to strengthen institutions and relationships.</p>
<p>ADVANCED REFORM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ country is successfully carrying out broad systemic reform with its own funding and is incorporating broad elements of civil society ■ system is providing adequate levels of service and support for ongoing reform ■ higher rates of participation and completion, evidence of improving student performance <p><i>Examples of programs: Botswana, Swaziland, Zimbabwe</i></p>	<p>Use limited, targeted assistance through regional institutions.</p> <p>Phase out USAID direct country assistance to education sector. Support the country's work through regional institutions, networking, and technical exchanges.</p>

Chapter 3. Implications for USAID Operations

Basic Principles

USAID is striving to exemplify in its operations four core values of re-engineering:

- *Customer focus* in basic education means that USAID is concerned that the children within a country are provided with quality opportunity for learning— children are the ultimate “customers.” USAID’s role is not to “deliver” the service but to develop the capacity of those within the country to deliver the service. The government, the ministry of education, field workers, NGOs, education practitioners, and teachers are, in re-engineering jargon, USAID’s *intermediate customers*.
- *Results Orientation* means that USAID is not concerned simply with the provision of inputs such as technical experts, training, and commodities, but with the results of USAID activities on the functioning of the education system, the schools, and ultimately the country’s children.
- *Teamwork* means that USAID works in partnership with key host-country personnel to identify specific results— and activities that will lead to those results— that contribute to systemic education reform. There is a core team, which comprises USAID staff and employees dealing with procurements and contracts, and an extended team, which comprises key host-country personnel and other major donors.
- *Empowerment and accountability* are intended to move responsibility and accountability to the teams that have defined results frameworks and are managing activities contributing to the results. This means that each team managing a basic education strategic objective must define what specific results, within an overall education system reform, they will contribute to, and for which they will take responsibility.

Strategic Planning and Results Frameworks

Each USAID Mission and operating unit is responsible for developing a strategic plan that defines its strategic objectives, the means and resources it will use to accomplish these, and the indicators it will use to assess progress. Results frameworks within a plan indicate how intermediate results will lead to each strategic objective, and how the intermediate results will be measured and monitored. These plans are incorporated within a formal agreement between USAID and the government or other parties, called a strategic objective agreement. Each strategic objective team is held accountable— with its partners— for achieving the results it has defined in the strategic plan and in the strategic objective agreement.

Re-engineering places responsibility on teams for designing and managing results frameworks. However, in its quest to achieve results with accountability, USAID must not usurp the host-country's responsibility, and, in so doing, undercut the institutions it seeks to empower. USAID and other donors need to support host countries to take the lead in the selection, financing, and management of reforms. This form of engagement, while particularly difficult where Missions are held accountable for results, is critical to the effectiveness of the Agency's program and to the ultimate sustainability of the reform process.

The specifics of this supporting role will vary depending on country conditions. In countries where the need for reform is not well established, USAID and other donors may find it strategically useful to support analysis and targeted pilot projects, and to stimulate public policy dialogue that will lead to a sectoral strategy. In countries where the commitment to an articulated reform is in place, USAID should play a facilitative or supporting role in developing institutional and technical capacity.

USAID's support for reforming basic education systems occurs within the broader context of country need and each Mission's overall strategy. Where appropriate, basic education results should link to strategic objectives in other sectors. For example, steps to promote community participation in school governance, changing classroom teaching methodologies to encourage pupil questioning rather than repetition, and promoting a policy dialogue process where ministries of education are accountable to citizens all contribute to USAID's goal of *building sustainable democracies* by increasing the *development of politically active civil society*. Similarly, USAID's support for basic education should, where appropriate, link to the country and Mission's population, health, nutrition, and natural resources objectives through school curricula, instructional materials, and teacher training.

Measuring Results

The *results orientation* that now drives USAID's strategic planning and management ensures that programs are not designed and evaluated simply on the basis of inputs provided. For both accountability and management reasons, the objectives, results, and corresponding indicators of success of USAID's education programs must be defined appropriately. USAID recognizes that it plays a supporting, albeit important, role in a country's education reform. Its objective is to bring about strengthening and improvement of the education system, specifically its institutions and the services it provides, so that these and subsequent improvements will be sustained by the country with decreasing donor assistance. Success is shared with its partners and is owned "in the joint tenancy."

The progress of education reform and the impact of its programs are gauged by improvements in access, equity, quality, efficiency, and

sustainability. Measuring and accounting for education reform is not easy due to the complexity, many dimensions, and dynamic interactions that characterize an education system. No one measure can capture and distill all this. USAID has learned that progress should be measured at both the system and student levels.

Measures of student-level outcomes (enrollment ratios, completion rates, test scores, etc.) that result from the restructuring of the education system and its services should be augmented by measures of system-level changes, because student-level outcomes do not directly measure the extent of system change, improved capacity, or better services. Student-level changes also take a longer time to demonstrate, particularly in the area of quality; thus, measuring them alone can be misleading and have limited diagnostic or “managing-for-results” utility.

What are good measures of education reform? Obviously, there is no absolute set of measures, as national education reforms and USAID support program will vary. But some do appear better than others, either because they impart more significant information or are more understandable.

System-Level Indicators

Among the most significant system-level indicators are those that show the government’s resource allocation to the education sector, and within the sector to basic education:

- Education’s share of national budget;
- Primary education’s share of education budget (for recurrent and capital expenditure); and
- Share of primary recurrent, non-salary expenditure of primary budget.

There are many other measures of system reform, whose utility and relevance will depend on the situation. In the early stages of a reform, measures may focus primarily on system “adjustments,” including reformed policies and processes, such as more school places, greater per pupil expenditure, improved instructional materials, revised curricula, reformed teacher training system, annual statistical report production, transparent budgets, and timely accounting. As the reform progresses, focus may shift to system “outputs,” such as improved student-teacher ratio, more qualified teachers, better student-textbook ratio, and whether a strategy to promote girls’ education has been implemented, all of which are more closely linked to desired student outcome in a long chain of causality (see table, page 43).

As an indicator of effective schools, the use of a fundamental quality and equity level (FQEL) index, which measures the number of schools meeting minimum criteria in services and coverage, is a promising measure still in its infancy (see the description of FQEL in Chapter 4). It is a means of capturing the united elements that go into making an effective school and the idea of “access-with-quality.”

Student-Level Indicators

Foremost among the student-level measures that have proved informative are changes in:

- Primary school gross enrollment ratio (net enrollment if GER approaches 100 percent);
- Gross access ratio in first grade;
- Percentage of entrants completing fourth grade (or alternatively, the final grade in the primary cycle); and
- A gender disparity index calculated for each one (based on gender disaggregated statistics).

Most countries in Africa do not have reliable, valid measures of student learning. The use of national examination scores as the primary measure of student learning is not recommended because they 1) have limited utility as a diagnostic tool to identify system dysfunction; 2) are not valid indicators of learning achievement or of changes in learning levels over time; and 3) are very sensitive to phenomena external to the education system, methodology, and interpretation.²⁰ This does not mean that student competence in core skills should not be charted. USAID should encourage countries to develop viable, competency-based tests that measure mastery of basic skills.

While use of the same indicators across all USAID's education programs would facilitate Agency data compilation and meta-analysis, it may sacrifice meaningful measurement of progress within individual countries. Missions, in developing monitoring indicators and reporting based on their results frameworks, will focus primarily on the results for which they and their partners are held accountable. Yet they should not limit their analysis and reporting to these indicators since they cannot capture all the important dimensions of the education reform or of USAID's support strategy. The best measures of progress will result from a close collaboration with the host country in setting benchmarks and indicators so that its goals and its reform agenda define success.

Performance

The current emphasis on getting and measuring "results" has both informed and complicated the issue of "performance" for USAID and its partners. USAID's goals are expressed, and its performance measured, through the strategy and results framework, which should be negotiated in consultation with the host-country and implementing agents (e.g., contractors and grantees). In recent years, USAID has employed two mechanisms to reinforce the linkages between the national educa-

²⁰In countries in which the education system is not highly developed and/or is undergoing radical reform, test scores are likely to decline as more vulnerable populations are reached by primary schooling, the teaching service restructured, or non-traditional schools (e.g., community schools) included. If student performance becomes the sole measure of success for which education systems, countries, or assistance programs are held accountable, the probability of bias against access and equity will increase. (Timar, 1994)

Education Reform Results Framework and Illustrative Indicators*

Level of Impact	System Level		Student Level
	Reforms/Adjustments (System Inputs)	Results (System Outputs)	Impacts (Student Outcomes)
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ classrooms built ■ teachers recruited ■ community schools legalized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ school places available ■ community schools operating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ GER/NER ■ GAR/NAR
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ curriculum developed ■ books/materials developed ■ teacher training revised ■ system to assess student skills developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ teacher:student ratio ■ book:student ratio ■ qualified teachers ■ FQEL schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ completion rate ■ transition rate ■ student skill/achievement levels
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ national policy/strategy developed ■ national equity working group established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ equity programs implemented ■ female teachers recruited ■ disadvantaged populations, areas, or schools resourced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ all student outcomes disaggregated by gender, urban/rural, ethnic group, etc. ■ disparity indices
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ procurement/delivery system established ■ data collection planning system instituted ■ administrative structure reorganized ■ teacher terms of service established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ timely delivery of material/services ■ statistical/analytic reports ■ decentralized management ■ teacher attendance ■ unit cost (per student) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ attendance rate ■ repetition rate ■ drop-out rate ■ cycle time ■ cycle cost
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ budget/accounting system established ■ financing plan to meet growth expectations developed ■ privatization/cost recovery scheme developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ shares of budget to education, primary education, etc. ■ share of recurrent and development budget from external sources 	N/A

*This table depicts a “framework” for organizing the reforms, results, and impacts associated with education reform according to the **type** of impact (access, quality, etc.) and the **level** of impact (system or student). The indicators shown here are illustrative only, by no means comprehensive, and represent concepts rather than specific measures. Not all significant or even highest-order impacts are expressed in student terms, as in the case of “sustainability.” Placement of indicators according to type of impact can be arbitrary, as some categories are overlapping and complementary, as in the case of “quality” and “efficiency.” “Equity” cuts across all categories and student outcomes (and, in some cases, system outputs) and should be disaggregated appropriately. System-level indicators can be further classified according to “arena” for action, e.g., policy, institutional, school, and community, as discussed on page 23. For an expanded typology of education reform measures and impacts, see *Basic Education in Africa: USAID’s Approach to Education Reform in the 1990s*, page 54.

tion reform of the host-country and USAID's ESS program, on one hand, and between USAID's program and its contractors' activities, on the other. These are respectively "performance conditionality" and "performance contracting."

Performance Conditionality

A distinguishing characteristic of the NPA modality has been the use of performance conditions on which USAID has based the serial (or "tranching") disbursement of budgetary support to the host-government. Performance conditionality refers to a set of performance standards and benchmarks, negotiated with a country, that reflect its progress in and commitment to reforming its national education system. These conditions may fall into four broad categories— financial, institutional, programmatic, and management— based on country policy objectives. The conditions are intended to identify essential elements of the reform effort without which the overall program cannot succeed. The two underlying precepts are that the host-country is responsible for implementing the reform; and consequently the host-country is accountable for progress or lack thereof. The idea is that if the sequential performance conditions are not met, USAID may withhold its funding until they are or may terminate its NPA program altogether.

Much has been learned about the application and effectiveness of performance conditions, ranging from their content to their management.²¹ Foremost is the lesson that they must be agreed upon by the host-country and reflect its policy agenda and program, which— in turn— must enjoy the backing of the sector's stakeholders. Unfortunately, there is ample indication that if performance conditions are imposed by donors to coerce change or enforce compliance, it is unlikely that the desired reforms will occur or be sustained. Performance conditions are not a substitute for or even a stimulus to host-country initiative and willingness to reform. In fact, rather than an avowedly blunt instrument to leverage policy change, it appears that performance conditionality may be suited to other roles, to the benefit of both countries and funding agencies. Used in conjunction with either non-project and project assistance, performance conditions may be used to:

- Make the reform objectives and needed actions transparent and accessible by clearly articulating benchmarks and performance criteria;
- Serve as a map, or aide-mémoire, for the country and donors about the essential elements and action of the reform;
- Ensure regular host-country—donor and donor—donor dialogue about goals and progress;
- Keep the reform initiative on the front-burner because of time-bounded results or actions;
- Provide a means of monitoring and gauging progress; and

²¹See *Basic Education in Africa: USAID's Approach to Sustainable Reform in the 1990s*, pp. 87-100, for a detailed discussion.

- Bolster ministry of education budget negotiations with the ministry of finance, to remind it of publicly-endorsed resource priorities and agreements with external partners.

Both the literature and USAID's own experience in using conditionality in support of education reform points to the importance of local dialogue and reform advocacy in realizing the substance expressed in the performance conditions.

Performance Contracting

Performance-based contracting has been introduced as a means of managing and assessing USAID contractor performance or efficacy in supporting change within a country. Its intent is to ensure that USAID contract assistance results in tangible impacts within the country rather than in a list of inputs delivered by the contractor (such as computers, person-months of technical assistance, etc.).

Recent attempts to use performance-based contracting to implement ESS programs have had mixed results. In at least two instances, Missions have interpreted the performance-based contracting guidelines to hold contractors responsible for delivering results that are rightfully the responsibility of the host country (such as managing and providing for teacher training). The risk is that the country is disempowered as the contractor moves to assume implementation and financing responsibilities in order to fulfill the performance contract.

Central to USAID's education support approach is that reform must be led, executed, and financed by the country. The USAID contractor's role is to *assist* host countries to develop strategy and put in place the mechanisms to deliver the services that will produce the desired results of greater educational opportunities for the country's primary school-aged children. It is *not* the contractor's responsibility to carry out the reform program. Missions implementing ESS programs are cautioned when using performance-based contracting to ensure that the contract document accurately expresses the type of results expected from the contractor. These results must be within the contractor's capability and not undermine the country's responsibility. For example, holding a contractor accountable for a changed education finance policy is unreasonable, but holding it accountable for helping the government develop an analysis of the resource needs, financing options, and a policy-review plan is feasible. When used, performance contracting agreements must be explicit in showing how contractors will support, rather than take responsibility for, effective schools and systemic reform. The challenge is twofold: finding the balance between helping and doing, and finding a way to express and measure this facilitative role that will not force the contractor to assume country duties.

Donor Coordination

External funding and donor agency input are critically important for many countries in Africa in mounting and realizing systemic reform. USAID is seldom alone in supporting a reform process and, typically, is not even the largest external donor. Even for well-favored recipients of external funding, such as Uganda, Ghana, and Guinea, seldom do external funds exceed 15 to 20 percent of recurrent operating expenses. Funds that are provided, however, should be strategically targeted in support of the essential elements needed for the reform to work. Consequently, coordination and cooperation among the donors is critical if external reform support efforts are to be effective. USAID has collaborated with numerous bilateral and multilateral donors on the development, management, and assessment of ESS efforts in Africa.

Effective coordination, however, is not easy, and experience to date has been mixed. In some countries, genuine efforts have been made by donors to coordinate their programs; in others, attempts at coordination have been inadequate or nonexistent. In all cases, donor coordination is complicated by the varying philosophies, agendas, modalities, and bureaucratic procedures (e.g., disbursement mechanisms, technical assistance recruitment, and reporting practices) of the different donors and funding agencies. Delays on the part of some donor programs can have deleterious effects on the activities of others. The wide disparity in the resources the donors have in their education portfolios tends to establish a hierarchy of influence that may serve to marginalize some organizations and undermine coordination. While “comparative advantage” should certainly inform a donor’s support program, donors have often pursued their particular interests without reference to the country’s reform priorities, to the detriment of all. The use of the Sector Investment Program (SIP) approach to support sectoral reform efforts appears promising as a means of facilitating donor coordination and increasing the coherence and complementarity of donor assistance.

In those countries where donors have acted in concert to support the education reform, their coordination has taken place in multiple and diverse ways. With the participation of the host-country, they have 1) collaborated on joint assistance strategy development (Ghana, Malawi²²); 2) shared performance conditions (Guinea, Uganda, Mali); 3) developed complementary assistance programs (Guinea, Benin); and 4) conducted joint analyses, appraisals, reviews, and evaluations (Ghana, Uganda). Regular and frequent meetings, often on a monthly basis, have served to keep the various players informed of the status of different donor activities. USAID experience suggests that these meetings are best chaired and presided over by the host-country so that discussions and decisions are transparent and congruent with the host-country’s program.

²²For example, in Malawi the government and donors jointly developed a results framework for the education sector that expressed shared objectives and indicators to measure progress.

Donor coordination and collaboration must take place on an international level as well. The 1990s provide several examples of fruitful collaboration. Among them are: the Education for All conference and the workshops preceding it, which allowed countries and donors to reach a shared vision and set common objectives that galvanized action; the formation of the ADEA, which provides the forum for countries and donors to explore the mechanics of education development; and the Special Program of Assistance for Africa (SPA) and its working groups, which investigate the dimensions and modalities of donor assistance.

Modalities

How does USAID go about supporting education development and reform in Africa? The major building blocks of its assistance are project and non-project assistance. USAID has used these two modalities, separately but more often in combination, for financing basic ESS.²³

Project Assistance (PA)

PA funds have traditionally been managed by USAID. PA generally works through procurement contracts and grants and consists of technical assistance, commodity procurement, and training designed to help countries build the capacity to better manage additional resources and implement technical aspects of reforms. PA can include the direct funding of government efforts to implement reform-related activities and need not be managed by USAID or its contractors. (Host-country contracts, though less common than in the past, are still used.)

Within an educational support approach, PA can be used effectively to assist and enhance country capacity to better plan, manage, and respond to reform. Depending on a country's needs and where it is situated on the reform continuum, PA can be used to:

- Catalyze reform initiatives by helping government recognize and diagnose problems (e.g., sector assessments and policy analysis);
- Support national strategy development, with targeted assistance to facilitate policy dialogue and support for consultation processes;
- Inform the reform effort, through special research activities, studies, or analysis (e.g., barriers to girls education, demand for education), or demonstration/experimentation activities;
- Support policy champions and advocates by providing specialized training and/or study tours; and
- Strengthen institutions, with technical expertise, to help develop systems and procedures, introduce new methods and tools, and impart technical and analytic skills.

²³The 1988 *Africa Basic Education Action Plan* suggested that one modality would serve exclusively, depending on country performance and need. Experience has shown, however, that a balance between PA and NPA is most effective, provided that this mixture takes into consideration the country's policy environment and institutional capacity. In any case, since 1992 no USAID program has used NPA alone to support basic education.

PA is an essential element of USAID's tool kit for supporting education development. What distinguishes it from previous usage is that now it is used to support systemic education reform. PA should be crafted so that it helps the country better define its goals, policy framework, and strategy, and help the education system's institutions put in place operations, procedures, and processes for the ongoing and routine delivery of educational services to support national reform objectives.



USAID Education Programs Have Been Most Successful When PA Is:

- ✓ Strategic, in that it aims to support the provision of services central to the educational reform, such as planning, budgeting/accounting, teacher training, and curriculum;
- ✓ Focused on strengthening institutional capacity to create better functioning systems that deliver better services (e.g., curriculum, budgeting and accounting, personnel, procurement) and operate more efficiently; and
- ✓ Supportive, in that it provides for elements— such as special studies, workshops, and technical assistance— that are not conventionally or routinely covered by the education budget.

PA should avoid *substitution effects*, in which project inputs compensate for or push off-budget personnel, items, activities, or services that should rightfully be the responsibility of the country. PA should not be considered a means of providing funding for routine, recurrent expenses of the country. Project personnel should not assume duties or tasks of an institution's personnel, but define their role as helping counterparts conceptualize or organize tasks to be done and provide technical guidance as needed. Decisions to fund pilot or demonstration projects with PA should be based on a realistic analysis of host-country ability and willingness to fund future expansion and include a plan for transition to government funding.

Non-Project Assistance (NPA)

NPA works through a variety of mechanisms to provide support to the government budget.²⁴ It is based on negotiated conditionalities relating to national sector policy objectives and the capacity of financial and institutional requirements to manage the reform. When used appropriately, NPA assists countries to make difficult financial and political decisions and thus builds a country's capability to shift budgetary allocations and manage the finances required for the basic education reform. For over a decade, the Africa Bureau has used NPA to support reform in education and other sectors with notable success.

²⁴See *Basic Education in Africa: USAID's Approach to Sustainable Reform in the 1990s*, pp. 79-82 for a description and review of the various modalities used to provide NPA, including cash payments to the government budget, financing commodity imports, debt servicing, special accounts, and PL480 funds.

NPA used in combination with PA can be a key modality for ensuring that the reform process is managed by the government and not external actors. Given the severe budgetary constraints faced by most African governments supported by USAID, and the requirements of basic education reform that call for innovative, often risky, approaches and shifts in financing (for example, increasing the primary school budget, putting resources into developing and distributing instructional materials, or improving teachers' terms of service), NPA provides a critical means of putting this responsibility where it belongs— with the host-country government. The NPA modality is a key element of SIPs used by donors to support sectoral reform.

USAID's use of NPA in support of basic education programs has become increasingly successful as the lessons learned in the initial years have guided more effective program design and implementation. Important modifications have been made to ensure that NPA is targeted at achievable and mutually agreed upon conditionalities and results.²⁵ NPA in Africa, when implemented in the context of political and institutional integrity, directed at a policy reform process defined and owned by the host country, and integrated with PA, has a central role among our development tools.

An essential foundation or precondition for any successful education reform support effort is an appropriate macroeconomic framework, so that the total resource envelope available for public expenditure grows.



USAID Programs that Employ an NPA Modality Have Been Most Successful When There Is/Are:

- ✓ Basic capacity and structure within the ministry of education to deliver education service (as opposed to a country whose government has collapsed, e.g., Somalia);
- ✓ Adequate host country management and accounting systems in place;
- ✓ Commitment from the country to support the reforms, so that it is prepared to provide adequate public financing for the education sector reform; and
- ✓ Mutually agreed upon performance conditions between the government and donors that reflect the country education policy framework and strategy.

When one or more of these conditions is absent, the use of NPA should be postponed, and PA can be used to create the requisite conditions.

²⁵This can include adopting new policies on textbook procurement, school management, and community involvement.

Most of USAID's basic education programs in Africa have involved the use of NPA to help governments overcome the transition costs associated with reform. NPA is a modality, but it is not the core of the education support approach, and the viability of ESS does not necessarily depend on its presence. USAID support may be provided through PA alone, depending on how the project is structured and if the resources are available— from the country or other donors— to cover the transition costs. For example, PA may be crafted to support far-reaching education reform by concentrating on key areas in the education system (such as planning and finance, which often set the stage for and pace of reform), and assisting the country to articulate policy, develop strategy, conceptualize services that operationalize policy, and develop systems to deliver them. In Guinea, USAID's current ESS effort relies exclusively on PA to assist the government to refine policy and strengthen institutional capacity in planning/finance, instructional quality, and girls' education.

The financing provided through NPA and PA should represent a declining and eventually insignificant proportion of sectoral resources. Ultimately, the costs associated with a reformed, effective basic education system will be provided from a country's own resources. The role that USAID and other donors play is at the transition stage— when the country has determined that it will place priority on using public resources for the reform and expansion of basic education. There are two key functions that USAID and other external donors provide: the additional financing needed at the outset of the reform process, and the technical assistance that builds country capacity to design and manage the reform.

These modalities do not promise a quick fix: the transition period is typically estimated to be on the order of 10 years to establish reformed institutional structures, practices, and system results. It is also assumed that 1) the political environment will continually move toward more democratic processes, public transparency/accountability, and participation in policy issues; and 2) the economy will grow so that it can increasingly support the expansion and improvement of education, and specifically basic education.

Staffing

USAID has reached a critical point in staffing. After years of steady attrition, the Agency in 1996 removed a number of experienced education officers during a reduction in force. The ESS approach, however, requires officers who are well-grounded in education systems and education reform and who can interact with and influence policymakers. The following staffing guidelines take this uncertain future into consideration:

***Guideline #1:
Managing Support is
Staff Intensive***

When NPA was initially used by the Africa Bureau in the late 1980s, it was assumed to be less management-intensive than PA. Experience has shown, however, that well-managed NPA requires staff resources. This factor should be considered by USAID Missions when designing programs.

***Guideline #2: Mission
Staff Need Experience
and Requisite Skills***

Individuals responsible for managing ESS programs in Missions must have a keen understanding of the overall education system (including basic education). Moreover, they must be able to 1) understand the country's political, social, and economic context; 2) effectively interact with other donors; and 3) confer with the ministry of education and other high-level officials on reform needs. If qualified direct hire education officers are not available, then African Missions and USAID/Washington must ensure that individuals with the appropriate qualifications (qualified direct hire generalists, foreign service/third country nationals, personal service contractors, or institutional contract staff) are in place in field Missions and invested with the requisite authority to manage the ESS program.

***Guideline #3: USAID
Personnel Must be
Versed in the Strategic
Framework***

When the Development Fund for Africa was created in the late 1980s, the Africa Bureau leadership committed itself to providing its personnel with the appropriate training and orientation to design sector reform programs and implement new modalities such as program assistance. In 1989 and 1990, arrangements were made through the Development Studies Program to carry out a series of one-week seminars throughout Africa on the use of NPA.

Today, the environment for sector reform is less hospitable. In addition, a number of the original cadre of individuals trained in NPA and sector reform have left USAID or moved to other bureaus. As new personnel join the Africa Bureau (new to the Agency or from other Bureaus), they must be trained in the use of new approaches and modalities. The dearth of education staff requires that experts in USAID/Washington assist USAID personnel in host countries to design, implement, and evaluate ESS programs. It is also necessary to have the capability in place from within the Africa Bureau to provide ongoing staff development to field personnel responsible for managing ESS.

***Guideline #4: USAID
Staff Continuity
is Critical***

In implementing basic education programs, staff continuity on both the host country and USAID sides is critical. USAID lacks control over staff changeover among its host country counterparts, but it does have control over its own staffing. In a number of countries where USAID has successful education programs in place, qualified foreign service nationals or third country nationals provide both the technical skills and the institutional memory.

Chapter 4: Challenges and Evolving Issues

Education reform in Africa is a work in progress. In a number of countries where USAID is supporting basic education, national education reforms are in early stages or just getting off the ground. It takes time to implement reforms and see their ultimate impacts at the school level. Enrollments that were very low in several countries where USAID has provided assistance have improved but remain at unacceptably low levels. Much work remains to improve quality, efficiency, and equity of basic education services. Countries and donors face a number of challenges over the next decade if progress to date is to be sustained and basic education systems in the region are to expand and improve. Also, as experience in support for comprehensive reform is gained, and as new perspectives on development emerge, there are a number of evolving issues that we are just beginning to address.

Challenges

- Countries' ability to meet the basic education challenge
- Political pressures for post primary education
- Ethnic conflict/civil strife
- Difficulties of comprehensive system reform

Countries' Ability to Meet the Basic Education Challenge

This paper has argued that Africans must ultimately bear the responsibility for ensuring quality basic education for their own children. While USAID and other external donor and funding agencies can provide critical, essential support, this challenge must be addressed by policy, resources, and leadership from within. This is a hard message, and appears to exclude a number of countries where current political and economic crises make systemic progress on human resource development impossible.

Even in those countries that have achieved a measure of political stability, the financing needed to sustain reform and expansion is daunting. Not only is the redistribution of resources within the education budget necessary, but greater resources for the sector are required, at minimum, to keep pace with population growth. Governments are often reluctant or hard-pressed to reduce other sector expenditures to the extent needed to expand and improve basic education.²⁶ Expanding access to quality basic education requires steady, strong growth in GDP.

²⁶Public finance literature often points to the trade-off between education and defense sectors. Most often, though, the defense budget remains intact and the competition for resources remains within the social sectors.

The good news is that the economies of many African countries are growing faster than they have in decades. In a number of countries where USAID is supporting basic education (especially Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi, Benin, Guinea, Mali, and Ghana), GDP growth rates are exceeding population growth by a good margin. With the passage of the Trade and Investment Bill for Africa, and the increasing climate of liberal economic policies, there is cause for cautious optimism.

More mixed is the news on population growth rates. While there are promising declines in the 1990s in average annual population growth in several countries (Malawi, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Benin, Ghana, and South Africa), population growth rates have increased in Guinea, Mali, Uganda, and Namibia (World Bank, 1996). Even though population growth is declining in a number of countries, it will be years before there is lower demand for additional primary school places. In the meantime, countries face the triple challenge of increasing student spaces just to keep up with population growth while seeking to improve the effectiveness of schools and increase overall enrollment levels.

Political Pressures for Post-Primary Education

Since colonial days, resource allocation patterns in education have traditionally favored the more affluent and politically powerful segments of society, with the result that the poorer and rural populations are consistently underserved by the education system. Even though the proportion of expenditure on higher education has fallen relative to primary education in sub-Saharan Africa, the share of public spending on tertiary education (19 percent of education budgets) is higher in Africa than any other region (World Bank, 1995). Efforts to reduce or eliminate subsidies for secondary and tertiary levels of education have met with strenuous resistance from elite groups that wield significant political power. In some countries, reform efforts carried out with support from the World Bank and/or USAID have stalled as governments are held hostage to clientele interests. As countries pursue the rehabilitation and expansion of basic education, the per-student expenditure level and proportion of public expenditure on primary education will have to increase, and the corresponding pressure from the beneficiaries of higher education will become more acute.

Progress in increasing student flow through primary schools is beginning to produce strains on the secondary level in a number of countries where USAID is working. In Malawi, for example, dramatic increases in primary enrollments, a consequence of basic education reforms supported by donors, are resulting in a large number of primary students moving up to the secondary level. The government of Malawi is now beginning to face a difficult trade-off between continuing to devote significant resources to primary education, where there is still tremendous need, and deploying resources to expand access to secondary schooling in response to demand pressures.

Ethnic Conflict/Civil Strife

Since USAID prepared its Action Plan in 1988, ethnic conflict has erupted in a number of African countries. In northern Uganda and in Ghana, primary schools were destroyed, teachers fled, communities were displaced, and students were kidnapped and forced to fight. Government funds for education were diverted to meet the challenge. In countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Burundi, education reform must wait until civil conflict is quieted. Yet children in refugee camps require schooling just as much as children living in normal conditions.

Countries coming out of conflict, while in need of broader system reforms, urgently need to take visible steps to restore order and resume normalcy. Designed and implemented appropriately, immediate action at the primary level by governments (rebuilding destroyed schools, deploying teachers into areas from which they fled during the period of conflict, dispatching textbooks to affected areas, launching community-based programs in regions affected by conflict, and developing regional capacity) can play an important healing role in building bridges between ethnic rivals and establishing stability. Assisting countries coming out of crisis in education would be a new role and would require a different strategy for USAID. While this paper has touched on the role the Agency can play in supporting basic education for countries emerging from crisis (see *Readiness for Reform*, page 36), more strategic thinking is needed to provide guidance in this difficult area. The Africa Bureau has set up a multisectoral task force, which is building on the work done for the Greater Horn of Africa Initiative, to address this challenge.

The Difficulties of Comprehensive System Reform

Systemic reform takes time. It requires taking on an entrenched and outdated education system and significantly changing its course. Education takes place in a highly politicized environment where many political, social, cultural, and economic elements must be factored in to even the most seemingly insignificant reform. Finally, people's mindsets (both countries and donors) do not change overnight. Going from a traditional project to a systemic approach requires changing philosophies and values, not the least of which is, on the part of donors, empowering host countries to take the lead in developing and implementing reforms. Even more challenging is changing government practice within countries where there is a need to have bureaucracies devolve authority, and simultaneously empower communities, schools, NGOs, and local authorities to take responsibility for initiating reforms.

Evolving Issues

- The Access-Quality Nexus
- Establishing Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels
- Educating Girls
- The Role of NGOs in Partnership with Government
- Private and Public Financing
- Community Schools
- Decentralization
- Readiness for Learning: Child Health and Welfare
- The Role of Regional Institutions

In the past few years, a number of issues have emerged from experience and research that present new challenges and opportunities. This framework does not provide specific guidance for acting on these issues, but advocates that USAID, governments, and other donors address them through country and regional level analysis and dialogue.

The Access-Quality Nexus

In many countries where USAID currently supports basic education (e.g., Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, and Mali), the majority of the school-aged children are not in school. USAID's future investment in basic education in Africa will likely include countries whose enrollment ratios will be just as low. It is imperative to these countries' future development that more children have access to basic education. But increased access without concomitant improvement in educational quality is unlikely to result in the attainment of national literacy and numeracy goals, and it can be counterproductive. Packing children into overcrowded classrooms with untrained teachers and no materials squanders scarce education resources and can erode parental confidence in schooling.

Improving education quality while expanding school places will result in more children attaining adequate skill levels, fewer students dropping out and/or repeating one or more grades, more resources for future expansion, and greater household demand for education. While quality is a key component of educational efficiency, the issue of access cannot be put on hold. Expansion and improved quality must take place simultaneously. Informed expansion of the education system with teachers adequately trained, reasonable class sizes, available materials, and sufficient facilities is fundamental to an education system's effectiveness.

***Establishing
Fundamental Quality
and Equity Levels***

How can one plan for simultaneously expanding access and school quality? One tool, pioneered by USAID in Benin and now featured in its Guinea, Ghana, Ethiopia, and Uganda programs, is the Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels (FQEL) framework. FQEL refers to a set of characteristics of a school and its classrooms that must be in place for the affordable provision of effective instruction and learning to take place. FQEL criteria— a combination of features (e.g., roofed classrooms), inputs (e.g., materials), standards (e.g., teacher qualification) and procedures (e.g., quarterly inspections)— are identified as the minimum necessary conditions for the school to support the acquisition of basic skills by the majority of its students (including the traditionally disadvantaged, such as girls and rural children).

By developing a set of descriptive characteristics for the school, the FQEL framework provides a school-level definition of national (and regional) targets for the allocation of education resources. Plans for expansion can then be based on the cost norms associated with the FQEL school, and be used as a brake on overly-ambitious expansion plans that will exceed both the technical capacity and financial resources of the education system to provide minimum level quality schooling to the greatest number of school-aged children. Moreover, by requiring that quality be defined at the school level and articulated in measurable indicators, the FQEL framework strengthens the link between national level policies and efforts at improving education support service (e.g., teacher training, curriculum, and planning) and what is actually being provided to schools and students. Finally, in addition to considering equity concerns within the schools (e.g., providing latrines for girls), it may also be used to determine which geographic areas should be accorded priority, in order to rectify disparities such as neglected rural communities or areas where girls' educational participation is disproportionately low.

In addition to its efficacy as a planning tool, the process of developing the set of FQEL criteria and indicators can also be beneficial because it:

- Involves parents, the community, and school personnel in the consultative process of defining FQEL criteria;
- Provides decisionmakers and consumers (i.e., parents) with objective criteria for gauging progress and accountability; and
- Promotes a realistic assessment of budget parameters. Overly-ambitious criteria (e.g., computers), although desirable, will be quickly seen to exceed available resources. Defining minimum levels, with respect to resources, can inform the optimal balance to be struck between expansion and quality. FQEL criteria are not static and will change over time, as budgets expand or contract and as expansion goals are met.

Educating Girls

Evidence is emerging indicating that when girls' education concerns are woven into the reform effort and incorporated into the education system, increases in their access, attainment, and persistence are more probable than when girls' education activities are compartmentalized or added as an afterthought to the ongoing business of educational development. Those countries where USAID has made girls a focus and a primary client of its ESS programs— by helping the government define policy and programs with girls in mind, using performance conditions to leverage policy and programmatic change in their favor, and providing project and technical assistance to help identify barriers and plan interventions— have enjoyed the greatest impact.

USAID has learned that:

- Efforts to improve girls' educational participation should not be separated from the reform of basic education, which in many countries is essential to laying the groundwork for the equitable and efficient distribution of resources aimed at neglected populations such as female and rural primary school-aged children;
- Girls' education should not be done “at the margin.” Basic education reform should be defined around the needs of the majority of children, most of whom have been traditionally excluded from schooling. Foremost among these groups are girls and rural children, who do not match the profile of the “average” target student (urban, affluent, male) of most education systems. Using girls to inform a revised student profile that better represents the school-aged child and integrating treatment of the problems that affect their educational participation throughout the system reform effort— in school placement, teacher recruitment, curriculum development, textbooks design, and teacher training— can have sustainable and far-reaching impact and serve to benefit all children;
- The critical role for donors is to “enable” host countries to provide and improve education opportunities for girls, not to undertake to do it themselves. While donor-funded incentive programs or pilot projects may be more manageable, their future and sustainability may be limited if they do not fit within the policy or resource framework of the country. Because issues surrounding girls' education are so culturally-embedded, a national consensus on a strategy to address the problem is essential to long-term success.

The Role of NGOs in Partnership with Government

When the Africa Bureau began working in education sector reform, USAID Missions worked almost exclusively with governments. The notable exception was South Africa where USAID used grants to NGOs providing innovative educational services to the disadvantaged population.

Experience has shown that much can be gained from working with U.S. and local NGOs in developing processes and methods that are effective. USAID is currently supporting U.S. and local NGOs in Benin, Malawi, Mali, South Africa, and Ethiopia that are working at the community level to bolster participation in and improve the quality of primary schools.

A variety of innovative programs, financed by USAID and other donors, bears close examination (see the following section on community schools). In these efforts, it is important that there are bridges between central and regional governments and NGOs, and that there is an appropriate balance of financing between the central government and communities and parents. Also, it should not be assumed that small-scale, targeted programs of NGOs— often built through close attention to building relationships and trust— can be expanded or replicated on a large scale simply with increased funding.

A policy that recognizes and builds on the strengths of the various actors and minimizes their weaknesses in formulating and implementing basic education reform is one outcome that can emerge from an informed public sector analysis and dialogue. One useful way to analyze the potential roles that government, NGOs, and the private sector can play is illustrated in the table below.

Roles of Government, NGOs, and the Private Sector*

ACTOR	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>PUBLIC SECTOR/STATE Motivation: National development Policy Choices: Equity—Excellence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ set policy through public dialogue ■ commit public resources—large scale ■ support equity ■ ensure public review of programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ large, inefficient bureaucracy ■ insensitive to local needs ■ civil servants lack personal commitment to reform
<p>NGO/PVO Motivation: Altruism, service Policy Choices: Special interests vs. Public interests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ innovative approaches ■ personal commitment and style ■ “client” oriented ■ diversity and competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ cannot go to scale ■ selective targeting ■ not necessarily sustainable ■ fragmented
<p>PRIVATE/CORPORATE SECTOR Motivation: Profit, public image Policy Choices: Level of investment vs. public image</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ management capacity ■ response to market needs ■ effective training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ markets can exacerbate inequalities ■ short term commitment to projects ■ cannot commit resources to scale

*Derived from Taylor, 1996.

Private and Public Financing

Faced with burgeoning school-aged populations and the growing demand for and expectation of public education, many African governments will be hard-pressed to provide education without assistance, even if basic education received the bulk of public education resources. Private sector and parental resources will have to augment, to some extent, the public financing of basic education. Indeed, in most sub-Saharan African countries, households already make significant contributions to finance their children's schooling. Even tuition-free primary education is accompanied by hidden direct and indirect costs. In some countries (such as Uganda and Ethiopia), parents routinely pay to supplement teacher salaries and provide operating budgets for the schools.

While both efficiency and equity rationales argue that the private cost be lightest for basic education, the reality is that in most countries parents and communities will have to contribute to the cost of schooling their children. No set formulas exist for balancing parental, community, and governmental contributions. The key is to find the optimal mix of funding sources that provides the greatest number of children access to quality basic education with the lightest burden on households. In addition to economic factors, human circumstances enter into the equation. While high costs deter parents from enrolling their children in school, excessive public subsidies or declarations of cost-free education contribute to unrealistic expectations. These vestiges of earlier days when the few lucky students did enjoy a free ride may actually deter parental willingness to underwrite any school-related expenses. Disparities in household income and demand for education also complicate community willingness to participate in financing schemes.

Decisions about financing policy should not be made in haste or without adequate analysis and dialogue. A presidential declaration of free primary schooling for four children per household and the prohibition of community contributions to schools has temporarily thrown Uganda's education reform into controversy. Essential elements to determining the optimal mix are knowing the true cost of education, projecting budgetary resources and requirements, and having a good idea of the household finance structure and the demand elasticity for basic education.

Community Schools

Communities often contribute to financing the costs of education by building and maintaining local schools, with public resources paying teachers' salaries and sometimes supplying books and materials. There are, however, other models of schooling in Africa in which communities assume full responsibility for financing and managing schools, recruiting and paying teachers, and procuring school materials. USAID has experimented with the support of different community school models (in Mali, Malawi, and Guinea). Generally, communities establish a school in their village with the assistance of an NGO. They receive a small grant to help them leverage resources to construct and equip the

school, and parents pay monthly fees to cover the locally-recruited teachers' salaries and school operating expenses. The community elects a school management committee that plans and manages the school budget, operations, schedule, and calendar. It appears in many respects that the development and recurrent expenses of these community schools are less than those of conventional public schools, and some preliminary data suggests that the community school students are mastering basic skills better and more quickly.

However, many issues remain open, such as long-term effectiveness, acceptability, and sustainability. Initial guidance arising from experience suggests that for community schools to be viable as part of a national education system 1) the ministry of education should provide the policy space necessary for these schools to develop; 2) they should be integrated into the education system from their initiation; 3) they should receive the equivalent level of support provided to other public schools; 4) the core instructional objectives should be compatible with the prevailing system to allow transfer of students and progression to higher grade levels; and 5) long-term financing implications should be realistically assessed in order to determine the true cost to the community and the government. Finally, equity considerations must come into play so that the poorest communities are not asked to fund the costs of schooling for its children through a community school scheme while a more endowed urban community receives publicly-funded schooling.

Decentralization

Decentralization has, in recent years, taken on a special aura. Many see it as a solution to the problems of education systems. Recent reviews of experiences with decentralization in Africa and elsewhere have shown that effective decentralization takes time, is complex, and requires significant efforts at the outset to achieve understanding and consensus from all participating parties (national and municipal governments, NGOs, teachers and teachers unions, parents, community groups, and civil society). Even so, the ultimate impact of effective decentralization may be to promote a country's political agenda rather than to increase effectiveness of instructional systems.

Decentralization is an important part of the reform agenda of a number of countries where USAID is supporting basic education. In some countries, it is an element of the reform that USAID has consciously chosen to support. In others, it is a reality that USAID must take into consideration in supporting its portion of the sector reform effort. Whatever USAID's role, it is very important to examine the decentralization process closely and how decentralization is to take place. Where possible, USAID should assist countries to determine how best to design and accomplish the decentralization process in such a way that it takes into consideration the views of the various stakeholders (including government officials, NGOs, private sector, communities, and parents) that will be responsible for implementing it and secures their allegiance.

**Readiness for Learning:
Child Health, Work,
and Welfare**

There is increasing evidence linking children's health, nutritional status, work, and the quality of home life to school participation and performance. There are many countries and regions where up to one-third of the children suffer from intestinal infestation and/or malnutrition, and where heavy work demands are placed on children, particularly girls. These conditions, especially during the critical development years of ages 0 to 5, can prevent children from attending school or undermine their capacity to learn while in school. A systematic approach to expanding and improving primary education should consider the ramifications of child health, work, and well-being within the schools and communities. Strategies to address them will require coordinated action by the different social sector institutions, such as ministries of health, social affairs, and education, to ensure the development of complementary interventions.

Addressing health, work, and learning readiness through school-based programs can:

- Increase demand for participation in primary schooling by making schooling more relevant and accessible;
- Enhance school attendance and the ability to learn;
- Favor the disadvantaged, the girl-child, and the poor, since primary school coverage is wider than any health or welfare system; and
- Be feasible and cost-effective. Experience shows that teachers see their participation as natural and positive, as long as interventions are simple, familiar, and low-cost.

There are school-based programs to deliver health interventions with multiple donor support in Ghana, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Botswana, and new programs are now being designed in Guinea and Malawi. The community school program in Egypt has addressed children's work outside school through scheduling and curriculum. These programs include one or more of the following components:

- *Health services*, whereby teachers provide simple health interventions, supplemented by visiting medical teams;
- *School environmental improvement*, whereby the community, in partnership with teachers and students, seeks to improve the quality of water, latrines, and school cleanliness so that the school compound conveys a message of good health and sanitation practice;
- *Life skills training*, whereby the curriculum and school activities reflect children's life experiences; knowledge of hygiene, cleanliness, and nutrition; and the risks of HIV and sexually transmitted disease; and

- *School scheduling and curriculum*, where adjustments are made, in consultation with the community and parents, to the daily class schedule, school day, and terms, to accommodate the work demands on children. Also, teachers integrate students' home and work experience within the curriculum, making learning responsive to local needs, and building on local knowledge and practice.

The Role of Regional Institutions

Donor support to countries is conditioned by policy, research, and experience from regional neighbors, from the larger community of donors, and from international institutions. Through international and regional fora, country political and educational leaders review priorities for educational policies, discuss key issues involving the implementation of reforms, and negotiate a shared understanding about the nature of partnerships. Increasingly, reforms within Africa are less informed by experience and wisdom from Britain, France, and the United States than from successful reforms and innovation within African and other developing countries. This trend will increase as South Africa takes a more active role in the region.

The ADEA, a network that strives to promote structural informality, has become the key institution for coordinating thinking about policy between and among African education leaders and donors and is an important resource for capacity-building. It uses the following mechanisms:

- Biennial conferences to enhance policy dialogue between ministers and funding partners;
- Technical working groups for capacity-building;
- A small secretariat to ensure information exchange and coordination;
- A forum for ministers to strengthen south-south dialogue; and
- An international steering committee to guide the ADEA's program. (Ten ministers of education serve on the 20-member steering committee.)

USAID has been a key supporting member of the ADEA, and will continue contributing both financial and technical resources.

With USAID's budgetary and staff reductions, there is increasing pressure to use a regional rather than a country programming strategy to support development in Africa. However, support for regional institutions cannot substitute for USAID's work within countries as a strategy for expanding and improving basic education opportunity for the children of Africa. It is within each country that the transformations necessary to provide an ever-increasing number of children with quality basic education will take place.

Although USAID's focus will remain at the country level, international and regional institutions and activities do play an important role in three respects:

- They contribute to mutually agreed upon policies, priorities, and modalities of partnerships. The articulation and consultation between policymakers and donors on key issues, such as the importance of basic education and the education of girls, is strongly influenced by the activities of international and regional institutions.

- They provide for donor collaboration and agreements, so that donor interventions and investments at the country level are guided by regional cooperative understandings.

- They encourage the emergence of African leadership and the development of regional institutional capacity, through the sharing of experience and talent. This is particularly evident in the ADEA working groups.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Improving basic education in Africa is critical to the continent's long-term development and well-being. This strategic framework describes an approach by which USAID can support that improvement effectively and sustainably. It provides guidance for the inception, implementation, and evaluation of basic education programs by focusing on three essential questions: *Does the program contribute to effective schools? Does the program promote systemic reform efforts? and Are the reforms sustainable?*

There are major challenges that must be faced. There are still very large numbers of children out of school, major problems of ineffective schools, and weak institutional support for reform. As education systems expand to meet objectives of full participation, internal financing often is unable to keep pace, reducing the amount spent on each pupil. USAID and other sources of external financing are under increased pressure to demonstrate results, while resources to do this are shrinking. The central challenge is to support country capacity and initiatives to develop realistic and creative ways to better mobilize internal resources and local capacity to provide quality basic education to their children. This is a role that USAID, in a spirit of partnership rather than the donor-recipient relationship, hopes to play in the coming decade.



This strategic framework is not written in stone. Incorporating lessons of the past, it will continue to evolve, reflecting new experience, research, and consultations. It is distributed as guidance based on current understanding and as an invitation to those working for and with USAID to contribute to its further development.

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Annex A: USAID Support for Basic Education in Africa, 1997

COUNTRY	CONTEXT AND USAID SUPPORT	RESULTS FRAMEWORK
<p>Benin (1991- 1999) \$20 million PA \$56 million NPA</p>	<p>Benin was a French colony until its independence in 1960. Following independence, Benin's government underwent a period of frequent changes. Between 1973 and 1989, a single-party Marxist-Leninist government ruled the country. The regime experienced major economic and financial difficulties between 1975 and 1982. Adjustment efforts began in 1983, but were insufficient given the magnitude of the problem. A structural adjustment program supported by the IMF and the World Bank began in mid-1989. In 1990, the government held the National Conference to draft a new constitution outlining a democratic government.</p> <p>USAID began supporting primary education reform in 1991 as the government began following up on the nationwide review of the education system. The Mission's central strategy incorporates NPA and targeted technical assistance through the Children Learning and Equity Foundation (CLEF), complemented by the Benin Primary Education NGO Project (PENGOP). PENGOP aims to develop the institutional and technical capacity of local NGOs to enable them to provide quality services to APEs and other grassroots organizations involved in the education sector in the areas of organizational development, financial management, adult literacy, and action-research in primary education.</p>	<p>Strategic Objective (SO): Assist the Government of Benin in ensuring that an increasing number of school-aged children receive, on a more equitable basis, an education that adequately prepares them to assume a productive role in their society</p> <p>Intermediate Results (IR) IR1: Primary education is more effectively enabling students to be successful in their post-primary school careers IR2: Increase equity: Access to primary education for girls and children from disadvantaged areas broadened</p>
<p>Ethiopia (1995- 2001) \$30 million PA \$50 million NPA</p>	<p>Between 1974 and 1994, a number of forces challenged the socialist government's authority. In June 1994, new elections were held and a constitution was approved. The constitution created 11 self-governing, ethnic-based regions and stipulated a very limited role for the central government. In 1991, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) entered upon a path of post-war economic reconstruction, supported by a unique multi-donor \$657 million recovery program. Ethiopia agreed to implement a structural adjustment program, which facilitated the nation's successful application for debt rescheduling in 1992. Since then, the TGE has made progress in stabilizing the economy. The progress has also been the effect of other forces, including a good 1992-93 harvest and a quick recovery of industrial output due to easing of foreign exchange constraints.</p> <p>The Basic Education Overhaul Program (BESO) aims to improve the quality and equity of primary education in an expanding and decentralizing system. Through BESO, USAID will support the government to define institutional responsibilities for various aspects of education reform and to move toward school-based management.</p>	<p>SO: Quality and equity of primary education improved in an expanded system</p> <p>IR1: Improved quality and equity of primary school environment IR2: Increased pedagogical effectiveness of content and quality of educational materials IR3: Improved performance and equity of teacher training graduates IR4: Improved decentralized management and administration of primary education IR5: Increased, more rational and efficient sectoral financing</p>
<p>Ghana (1991-1996) \$3 million PA \$32 million NPA</p> <p>Ghana (1996-2001) \$15.4 million PA \$12 million NPA</p>	<p>Ghana experienced political turmoil in 1970s, when the state appropriated investments and the country was near bankruptcy. In the early 1980s, a new government with populist vision and political will began to implement macro-level reforms. A major reform in the education sector initiated in 1986/87. With assistance from the World Bank and other donors, the government increased its allocation to education, restructured the formal education system, and shifted resources from higher education to basic and secondary.</p> <p>In close collaboration with the World Bank, USAID initiated the Primary Education Reform Program (PREP) in Ghana in 1991. The objective of PREP is to strengthen the policy and institutional frameworks required to assure a quality, accessible, equitable, and financially sustainable Ghanaian primary education system.</p>	<p>SO: Increased effectiveness of the primary education system</p> <p>IR1: Reorganize personnel management and performance system IR2: Improve student instruction and assessment IR3: Increase district and community authority and accountability</p>
<p>Guinea (1990-1996) \$10.7 million PA \$29.1 million NPA</p> <p>(1998-1999) \$15 million PA</p>	<p>The Republic of Guinea came into being in 1958, when it asserted its independence from the French colonial government under the leadership of Sekou Toure. Guinea then established close ties with the Eastern Bloc and modeled its economy on a Marxist model, with central planning and collectivization of agriculture. Following Toure's death and the successful military coup in 1984 that overthrew the Marxist regime, Guinea has undergone radical changes. In all sectors, the government has been actively restructuring the socialist-oriented institutions of the First Republic to develop and sustain a market economy. In implementing a structural adjustment program of the IMF, the government adopted policies aimed at freeing the economy from pervasive state control, improving efficiency in public administration and enterprise, and setting up a framework conducive to a market-oriented economic system.</p> <p>In 1989, in an effort to rebuild its education system, the government approved a National Education Policy framework and strategy (PASE). USAID and the World</p>	<p>SO: Quality primary education provided to a larger percentage of Guinean children, with emphasis on girls and rural children</p> <p>IR1: Improved sectoral strategic planning, management, and decision-making IR2: Improved instruction in primary schools IR3: Development and implementation of equity-enhancing programs</p>

USAID's Strategic Framework for Basic Education in Africa

COUNTRY	CONTEXT AND USAID SUPPORT	RESULTS FRAMEWORK
<p>Guinea (cont.)</p>	<p>Bank collaborated in the design and implementation of program assistance to PASE. The purpose of PASE is to achieve a level of staff and organizational performance within the Ministry of Education that promotes a continuously improving quality of schooling to an increasing percentage of primary school-aged students; and to ensure equitable access to girls and rural children through support of the implementation of the National Education Policy of the government. Since 1994, the GOG, USAID, and other donors have continued with the second phase of education reform efforts under PASE II, under which priority has been placed on education quality.</p>	
<p>Malawi (1991-1998) \$10.5 million PA \$35 million NPA</p>	<p>Malawi gained independence in July 1964, and was kept under authoritarian control of a life president, Dr. Banda, until the early 1990s. Following escalating domestic and political unrest and strong pressure from the international community, Malawi took steps to open its political system and improve its human rights record. In 1993-94, the country moved quickly to become a nascent multiparty democracy. The government's main focus now is to consolidate political and economic democracy.</p> <p>Because during the 1980s only 9 percent of all females in Malawi had more than four years of schooling, USAID urged the government to emphasize increasing girls' enrollment. The Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) aims to reduce repetition and dropout rates by improving the quality of basic education.</p>	<p>SO: Increased access to and quality and efficiency of basic education, especially for girls</p> <p>IR1: Budget allocations for education sector and primary education increased</p> <p>IR2: Availability of resources (e.g., classrooms, teachers, learning materials) increased</p> <p>IR3: Classroom teaching improved</p> <p>IR4: Social Mobilization Campaign undertaken nationwide</p>
<p>Mali (1989-99) \$38 million PA \$3 million NPA</p>	<p>Mali is currently experiencing the growth of myriad nascent political parties and democratic associations representing a broad spectrum of ideologies and interests. All are working together under the democratically elected President Konare, who is maintaining a relatively stable environment. Despite devaluation of the CFA franc, severe droughts, and inadequate economic policies, in 1994, Mali satisfied the conditions of its structural adjustment program with the IMF and World Bank.</p> <p>USAID's Basic Education Expansion Program (BEEP) focuses on increasing enrollment, especially girls' enrollment, while improving quality. The project aims to improve the quality, equity, and efficiency of Mali's basic education.</p>	<p>SO: Improved social and economic behaviors among youth</p> <p>IR1: Health sector</p> <p>IR2: Better educated young women and men with skills relevant to the market economy in targeted geographic areas</p>
<p>Namibia (1991-2001) \$18.3 million PA \$16 million NPA</p>	<p>Namibia made a formal transition to independence in April 1989. GDP growth rates throughout the 1980s ranged from stagnant to negative. Until independence in 1990, apartheid policies shaped the educational system. Formal education was inequitable and discriminatory; it was neither compulsory nor freely accessible for the black population. Namibia's assessment of the education sector resulted in a mandate to reform the school system, particularly primary education.</p> <p>USAID's support for the reform of Namibia's formal education system aims to help correct an imbalance in resources reaching white schools and black schools. The most significant achievement of the initial Basic Education Reform Program (BERP) was the progress made toward completing the curriculum revision. The recently launched Basic Education Support (BES) project will assist further to build the ministry's capacity for curriculum design and development in primary grades, teaching and learning materials production, and continuous assessment and testing.</p>	<p>SO: Improved delivery of quality primary education to Namibian learners in grades 1-4 in the most disadvantaged schools</p> <p>IR1: Improved quality of primary school teachers in the target and selected schools</p> <p>IR2: New, improved lower primary curriculum developed</p> <p>IR3: New monitoring and evaluation systems in place and operational</p>
<p>Uganda (1992- 2002) \$25 million PA \$83 million NPA</p>	<p>Ten years of political tyranny and economic collapse in the 1970s led to anarchy in the early 1980s and a total breakdown of social order in Uganda. In 1986, a resistance government came to power and created an agenda of national unity and economic rehabilitation that respects diversity. The national rethinking of political structure resulted in 1996 in widespread presidential and parliamentary elections. Education rose to the top of the agenda for social reconstruction, and a three-year broad consultative process led to a white paper supported by both USAID and the World Bank.</p> <p>USAID and the World Bank have worked together with the government to define long-term support for an overall program of education sector reform that places priority on the rehabilitation of basic education. Accordingly, the Support for Uganda Primary Education Reform (SUPER) program is improving the management of the education system by supporting the government's efforts to decentralize resources and improve accountability at the district and school levels. It aims to improve students' mastery of literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills; improve school administration, management, and accountability; and reduce inequities in persistence among different groups of children.</p>	<p>SO: Improved quality and efficiency of primary education</p> <p>IR1: Increased number of students using relevant educational materials</p> <p>IR2: Increased number of effective teachers and school managers</p> <p>IR3: Increased girls' persistence</p>

COUNTRY	CONTEXT AND USAID SUPPORT	RESULTS FRAMEWORK
<p>South Africa (1986-1998) \$50 million PA (ESAT)</p> <p>(1992-2000) \$40 million PA (SABER)</p>	<p>Following a lengthy and insidious regime of apartheid, in April 1994, multiparty, non-racial elections resulted in Nelson Mandela's election as president and the creation of a Government of National Unity, composed of ministers from the three major parties. This landmark occasion brought an end to apartheid rule. One of apartheid's devastating legacies has been its impact on the education system. The new government, in collaboration with the donor community, is committed to reforms that will increase the majority population's access to quality education. South Africa allocated close to \$8 billion for education in 1993-1994.</p> <p>Because of the injunction against working directly with the former South African government, until May 1994, USAID worked only with NGOs to formulate policy and to develop and test models for the future unitary education system. Currently, USAID has two basic education projects, but no NPA programs, in South Africa. Educational Support and Training Project (ESAT) aims to support indigenous, non-governmental initiatives that test improved models for basic education for disadvantaged South Africans. South African Basic Education Reconstruction Project (SABER) aims to support increased development and use of innovative educational models and policy systems that improve the quality of primary education for historically disadvantaged South Africans.</p>	<p>SO: Transformed education system based on equity of access and quality</p> <p>IR1: Policies for transformation development, disseminated and enacted in the areas of ABET further and higher education IR2: Transformation of key targeted systems in basic, further, and higher education IR3: Strengthened human and organizational capacity in departments of education, education institutions, and selected individuals</p>

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