



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

LITERATURE REVIEW:

SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES IN BASIC EDUCATION

JANUARY 20, 2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Management Systems International for the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project.

LITERATURE REVIEW: SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES IN BASIC EDUCATION



Management Systems International
Corporate Offices
200 12th Street, South
Arlington, VA 22202 USA
Tel: + 1 703 979 7100



Contracted under AID-OAA-M-13-00017

E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project

Prepared by:
Martin 'George' Taylor
Tim Reilly

DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

CONTENTS

Acronyms and Abbreviations	4
Executive Summary	5
Introduction.....	5
Methodology	5
Findings	5
Introduction.....	8
Audience	8
Methodology	8
Findings.....	9
Definition(s) of Sustainability.....	9
Aid Modalities	10
Scaling Up Pilot Projects	11
Host-Country Ownership	12
Alignment with National Strategies.....	12
Host-Country Leadership.....	12
Broad-Based Political Support.....	13
Visibility	13
Capacity Development.....	14
Turnover	15
Teacher Training	16
Feedback Loops	16
Education Information	17
Policy Dialogue	18
Sustainable Finance	18
Conclusions.....	20
Implications for Ex-Post Evaluation Series	21
Annex A: Bibliography.....	22
Annex B: Document Keyword Search Terms	24
Annex C: Statement of Work.....	25

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DANIDA	Danish International Development Cooperation
DFID	UK Department for International Development
dTS	Development and Training Services
E3	USAID Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
EU	European Union
GES	Ghana Education Service
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HLF-4	High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4)
ICAI	UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PIU	Project Implementation Units
PPL/LER	USAID Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning
QUIPs	Quality Improvements in Primary Schools
TA	Technical Assistance
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

USAID's Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research, in the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL/LER), is undertaking a series of ex-post evaluations (i.e., evaluations that take place several years after projects are completed) on 'sustainable outcomes' of USAID programs. The purpose of this evaluation series is to better understand what factors promote sustainable outcomes in development programs and projects.

This literature review is intended to inform the ex-post evaluation series by examining the existing evidence or gaps related to factors that contribute to the sustainability of outcomes in basic education programming. Specifically, this literature review will identify key factors that have the greatest influence in sustaining basic education programs.

Methodology

This literature review will identify key factors that have the greatest influence in sustaining 'basic education' programs. For the purposes of this literature review, 'basic education' is defined as including:

"All program and policy efforts aimed at improving pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education (delivered in formal or non-formal settings), and in programs promoting learning for out-of school youth and adults. Capacity building for teachers, administrators, counselors and youth workers is included. Basic education includes literacy, numeracy and other basic skills development for learners. The common thread among these elements is that they help learners gain the general skills and basic knowledge needed to function effectively in all aspects of life" (USAID 2009, p. 1).

This review is based upon a keyword search of recent publications as well as a review of selected publications already known and proposed by colleagues. This search included reports, published books, seminar papers, case studies, joint international statements, official guidelines and presentations referring to development aid in general and to specific donor projects and programs (in education and other sectors). This review was not intended to be a comprehensive search of all materials relating to these topics, but is based upon a curated selection of documents that will be most helpful for designing this evaluation.

This review is intended as a practical analysis covering the main findings represented in the literature on sustainable education outcomes, with a focus towards implementation and illustrative examples from past projects and programs.

Findings

Adopting a definition of 'sustainability' as "the continuation of benefits after major assistance from a donor has been completed,"¹ this review has identified five key but broad factors that contribute to the sustainability of education reform.

This review identified **aid modality** as a potential key factor in sustainability; although the modality itself appears less important than the features commonly associated with project versus sector-based aid delivery. To the extent that project-based aid focuses on only part of an education system and does not account for downstream impacts its interventions may have on other parts of the system, there is broad

¹ Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). Promoting Practical Sustainability. Canberra, September 2000.

agreement that this is not sustainable. For this reason, many commentators have recommended that education reform must be approached through a systemic lens and that sector-wide approaches are more likely to be sustainable.

Host-country ownership is essential to the sustainability of education interventions. Education reforms will only be adopted when they align with the interests and priorities of national stakeholders and there are domestic champions to promote them. Ownership must also be broad-based, which is an especially important factor in basic education since while the sector is often driven from above, it is delivered at the community level. Gillies (2010) emphasized the importance of broad-based ownership in the context of survivability. As turnover is high both within government and donor missions, the sustainability of reforms depends on the extent to which ownership is broad-based and reforms can withstand the loss of key stakeholder champions.

Capacity development of host-government officials is important for sustainability but must be context relevant and specific – there is no catch-all solution or approach. It should be based upon and tailored to an analysis of the root causes of low-capacity and should be approached systemically, with an understanding of the incentives that drive public sector behaviors (an especially important consideration in the context of turnover) and the consequences that raising capacity within one part of the education system will have on other parts of the system. One issue highlighted frequently in the literature is that capacity-building is a complex and long-term process.

Sustainable reform requires **feedback loops** - mechanisms that provide information necessary to adapt reform efforts and reinforce continuous improvements. Two types of feedback loops discussed with respect to education reform are: education information and policy dialogue.

- Building capacity within host-governments to collect, analyze and disseminate information about the education systems provides decision-makers with information to tailor their reforms and (especially if dissemination is broad) holds government stakeholders accountable for the success of reform efforts.
- Policy dialogue refers to the discussion among key stakeholders (including ideally, the populace) about the goals and approaches to reform. It provides a forum and basis for these stakeholders to provide feedback to the government and hold it to account. Feedback loops are important to the sustainability of education reform, and donors have a role in promoting their development and maturation.

The continuation or scaling up of education reform often requires funding commitment on the part of host-governments. This is especially true in the area of basic education, where the recurrent costs (i.e., teacher salaries, facilities maintenance, teaching materials, etc.) represent the largest proportion of costs. This suggests that donors must be realistic about the financial implications of their programs and **sustainable financing** must be considered at the outset of education interventions. Alternatively, donors should focus more on interventions which initiate change and continuous improvements in country systems without the need for ongoing subsidies.

In analyzing the factors that contribute to the sustainability of basic education reform, several themes emerge:

- First, many of the factors cited above have been recognized for a considerable time as foundational elements of effective international development. This suggests that the relatively little evidence of the sustainability of basic education programming represents an issue of implementation, rather than a lack of understanding of the pre-requisites themselves.

- Second, context is fundamentally important and should be strongly factored into the design and implementation of basic education programs, and a systems approach to program design and implementation should be adopted.
- Third, sustainability should be addressed at the earliest stage of program design, as they are relevant even at the initial stages of the program.
- Finally, the factors that are related to the sustainability of education programs are closely related to one another and are mutually reinforcing. Enhancing sustainability is an endeavor to establish a virtuous circle within the system to allow it to adapt and self-perpetuate reform without further donor support.

The findings from this literature review suggest that in selecting projects for inclusion in the ex-post evaluation series, the evaluation team should consider projects that have explicitly addressed at least several of the factors described (ownership, sustainability of finance, policy dialogue, etc.) above as part of their project design (preferably) and implementation. Additionally, the literature review findings emphasized that projects that have not considered these factors are unlikely to have been sustained and are less likely to have achieved their outcomes, and hence will serve as poor cases for understanding how development actors can initiate and sustain change in host-country systems.

INTRODUCTION

USAID’s Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research, in the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL/LER), is undertaking a series of ex-post evaluations (i.e., evaluations that take place several years after projects are completed) on ‘sustainable outcomes’ of USAID programs. The purpose of this evaluation series is to better understand what factors promote sustainable outcomes in development programs and projects. The series will take a systematic approach to understanding a variety of perspectives, and intended and unanticipated outcomes. Basic education activities will be the focus for an initial round of evaluations and provide the context for site selection and determining which activities and outcomes to focus on as a starting point. The E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project, led by Management Systems International (MSI) along with partners Development & Training Services (dTS) and NORC at the University of Chicago, is supporting the design and implementation of this evaluation series.

This literature review is intended to support the evaluation team by examining the evidence or gaps related to factors that contribute to the sustainability of outcomes in basic education programming. Specifically, this literature review will identify key factors that have the greatest influence in sustaining basic education programs.

Audience

The primary audience for this review is USAID staff involved in the design of this evaluation series, members of an evaluation advisory group, the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project team supporting the evaluation design process, and the evaluation team(s) that will conduct the evaluation series. This literature review will inform future decisions about the scope and parameters of the ex-post evaluation series. It is also anticipated that this literature review will serve as an ongoing resource for the research process over the course of the evaluation series.

METHODOLOGY

This literature review identifies existing research, literature and evidence or evidence gaps on factors that contribute to the sustainability of outcomes in basic education programming. Specifically, this literature review identifies key factors as presented in relevant literature that have the greatest influence in sustaining basic education programs.

For the purposes of this literature review, “basic education” is defined as including:

“All program and policy efforts aimed at improving pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education (delivered in formal or non-formal settings), and in programs promoting learning for out-of school youth and adults. Capacity building for teachers, administrators, counselors, and youth workers is included. Basic education includes literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development for learners. The common thread among these elements is that they help learners gain the general skills and basic knowledge needed to function effectively in all aspects of life” (USAID 2009, p. 1).

This review is based upon a keyword search of recent publications as well as a review of selected publications curated by colleagues. This search included reports, published books, seminar papers, case studies, joint international statements, official guidelines and presentations referring to development aid in general and to specific donor projects and programs (in education and other sectors). This review is

not a comprehensive search of all materials relating to these topics, but is based upon a selection of documents that will be most helpful for designing this evaluation.²

This review covers development assistance provided by a number of Development Partners (DPs), in addition to USAID's. The DPs include multi-laterals, such as the European Union (EU), World Bank (WB), United Nations (UN) organizations – specifically the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Children's Fund. These DPs further include: the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), some bi-lateral agencies and projects such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Danish International Development Cooperation (DANIDA), Germany's Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom (UK). Additionally, papers presented at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan, Korea, 2011 were especially useful.

This review is intended as a practical analysis covering the main findings in the literature on sustainable education outcomes, with a focus towards implementation and illustrative examples from past projects and programs.

Annex A is a bibliography of the literature that was used in this review (in alphabetical order). References to this literature are made throughout in the text.

FINDINGS

The majority of the literature focusing on international development education programs has highlighted one or more of the following factors as important for sustaining the benefits of these programs long-term. These factors include:

- **Aid Modalities:** the manner in which aid was provided (i.e., project-based interventions versus sector wide support).
- **Host-Country Ownership:** The degree to which the host-country 'owned' the intervention.
- **Capacity Development:** The capacity of host-country officials to deliver interventions without donor support.
- **Feedback Loops:** The degree to which 'feedback loops' exist within the country which incentivize and provide information to policymakers to encourage them to sustain and adapt the intervention following the end of donor support.
- **Sustainable Finance:** The capacity and willingness of the host-country government to fund the intervention activities without donor financial support.

Definition(s) of Sustainability

To contextualize the discussion of factors contributing to sustainability of basic education programs, it is necessary to establish a definition of the term 'sustainability.' There is no commonly accepted definition of 'sustainability' within the literature, but several definitions have been influential and are commonly cited. For example, Lawrence (1998) argues in the context of rural schools that sustainability is based on four characteristics: economic viability; harmonization with the history and culture of the community;

² Documents were selected for inclusion in this review on the basis of their relevance to the research questions and the degree to which there existed multiple references supporting a proposition. Greater weight was also given to literature based upon or citing primary research and more recent publication. A list of the key search terms used to identify literature is included as Annex B.

beneficial to the quality of life of the community; and empowering to the students that attend them. This multi-faceted socio-political understanding of sustainability considers both the needs of the community and the students as pre-requisites for a sustainable rural school. Harris (2000) on the other hand, while also adopting a socio-political understanding of the requirements for sustainability, focuses instead on three critical features of sustainability: power, knowledge and institutional structures. “When the existing social institutions are such as to deny many people access to the power and knowledge they need to affect the development process, sustainable development is impossible” (Harris 2000, 3).

The apparent and significant differences between these articulations reflect one of the challenges of adopting a definition of sustainability as it relates to basic education interventions – namely the breadth of the subject matter. Lawrence’s understanding of sustainability is grounded in the context of rural school development, while Harris’ understanding appears at least to be more generally applicable to policy. Both school construction and education policy change are suitable activities which could fall under the general description of basic education. For this reason, this review will adopt the broader understanding of sustainability suggested by the Australian Agency for International Development (2000): “the continuation of benefits after major assistance from a donor has been completed.” As will be seen from this review of the literature, this definition allows for consideration of socio-political factors that contribute to sustainability without the prescriptiveness of other definitions.

Aid Modalities

Much of the literature on the influence of aid modalities on sustainability has focused on the discussion of whether and in what circumstances project aid represents a sustainable approach to aid delivery, and suggests that systems-focused or sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) to aid delivery generate more sustainable outcomes.

Healey and DeStefano (1997) note that historically, and to some extent currently, international development assistance has been characterized by a project orientation, whereby donors would identify an education need in a host-country and design and deliver a program to meet that need in a relatively short and defined time period. However, when programs were delivered in “total isolation from the policy environment,” they failed to be sustainable for two related reasons: first, these interventions assumed that governments were “rational organizations aimed at maximizing both the economic and social welfare of the country,” while “both history and common sense have clearly demonstrated that public sector entities are complexes of competing interest groups operating to maximize their own welfare.”

Second, these interventions failed to understand the systemic effects of their interventions – namely that a change in one aspect of the education system would impact and require “transformations” in other areas of the education system. Healey and DeStefano believed that for reform to be sustainable, it had to be delivered through a system-wide approach.

This view that education interventions must be undertaken through a system-wide approach is echoed in Göttelmann-Duret and Bahr (2012, 19), who argue that educational goals, targets, policies and stakeholders must be aligned through ‘integrative mechanisms’ if an approach is going to be coherent and tailored to sustainable education reform. Without such mechanisms, results will be piecemeal and benefits will dissipate prior to taking hold.

Gillies (2010, 152) offers a similar assessment of the role of project aid, but notes that the project delivery are often not the result of the aid modality itself, but of the “nature of system change and reform” to which projects are applied:

“In the context of a coordinated systems approach to development, pilot and field projects can play an invaluable role in providing visible and effective models, creating confidence in solutions, generating deep support, ownership, and capacity at the school level, and providing an input into

national policy dialogue. When projects have a coherent and coordinated mechanism for communications, policy dialogue, and engagement, these efforts can have a deep effect.”

Gillies accepts the need for project aid to be applied as part of a systems approach to education support, but believes within this context, projects can play a useful role.

An alternative approach to aid delivery perceived as a way of overcoming the disadvantages to project-oriented aid delivery referenced above is the adoption of sector-wide approaches (Ratcliffe and Macrae, 1999; Riddell 2012). While there was not a single definition of SWAPs, this approach to delivering aid is generally characterized by host-country leadership defining priorities, greater levels of cooperation amongst donors and host-countries and support delivered through a coherent, sector-wide program of aid delivery aligned to sector policies or strategies (Ratcliffe and Macrae, 1999). It can, but need not always, encompass aid modalities such as direct budget support.

Riddell (2012) echoes the theoretical benefits of sector-wide or systemic approaches to education support and states that sustainable education reform will require donors to think outside of time-bound projects and conceive of support for education on a longer time-frame and with a greater focus on the impacts of reform efforts on the education systems as a whole, “including the institutions, organizational practices and incentives, with sufficient understanding of the political, economic and social context which underpins it and with which it has a critically important interface.” However, Riddell also notes that the application of sector-wide approaches to date have been embryonic and often insincere as donors embrace the verbiage of sector wide support while refusing to accept the risks of greater host-government control and continue to deliver aid to education primarily through projects. In Boak and Ndaruhutse’s 2011 study of the effectiveness of SWAPs, they highlighted some of the same issues and noted that the goal of cross-sector harmonization was largely unfulfilled – ultimately coming to the conclusion that “due to the nature of educational change, it is difficult to attribute any improvements or downward trend in education outcomes to the implementation of SWAPs.”

Scaling Up Pilot Projects

In the context of aid modalities, several commentators have specifically focused on the sustainability challenges associated with pilot projects and attempts to bring these to scale. There is widespread agreement that bringing to scale local projects is a challenging endeavor under any circumstance and that donors have failed to sufficiently plan for this challenge. As Riddell states: “the developing world is replete with examples of unsustainable—and un-sustained—innovative projects together with the research and evaluations which illustrate their effectiveness, but which subsequently, are not brought to scale” (2012, 14).

Both Gillies (2010) and Samoff, et al. (2011) describe the challenge of bringing to scale successful local projects as one of understanding the local conditions that allow for the project to take root in the first instance. It will rarely be successful to attempt to apply the elements of a successful reform in one context to another. In each new context, one will have to identify the enabling factors and obstacles to the reform, including understanding how the reform will fit into existing institutional structures, identifying whether and where political will exists to support the reform and where spoilers will try to derail it, whether there is a recognized awareness of the need for the reform and a constituency to advocate for it and whether there is domestic leadership that will own the reform process and adapt it to local needs. In both Samoff and Gillies’ formulations, wide stakeholder involvement is crucial.

Riddell (2010) also notes that scaling up must take place in the context of a broader discussion of the educational system, as reforms to one part of the education system will necessarily entail consideration of other parts of the system. “For instance, if a new curriculum is piloted and then developed for national implementation, one will need to foresee the changes needed to teacher education—both pre-service and in-service; textbooks; assessment; and one will not be able to shy away from the issues of ownership, local management and co-ordination, communication with the wider stakeholder groups,

etc.” She also notes that this challenge is compounded where donor support is fragmented (i.e., where sector-wide approaches are not applied), as coordination of donor contributions enables the process of scaling up.

To highlight the degree of the challenge, Samoff (2011) notes “there are few documented cases of pilot education reforms in Africa that have been effectively scaled up to become nation-wide programs. Indeed, some very promising initiatives proved difficult or impossible to sustain, even at their small scale, after the departure of their initial leaders or the end of their initial funding.”

Host-Country Ownership

There is broad consensus in the literature that sustainable outcomes require education interventions that are owned by host governments. Ownership is the first of the five Paris Declaration principles and has been revisited at each High Level Forum (HLF) since. Partner countries are to “exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions”³. Indicators of progress include the translation of national strategies into prioritized results-oriented operational programs and the alignment of donor interventions with partners’ Education Strategic Plans and use of country systems.

A review of the literature identifies several key aspects of country ownership that are perceived to be critical for sustainability.

Alignment with National Strategies

A factor highlighted by Gillies (2010) is the importance of alignment of donor interventions to country-led development of sector strategies and plans. In his review of reform efforts in El Salvador, Gillies noted that the development of a framework for donor support and interaction allowed the reform efforts to gain societal consensus and legitimacy, and ultimately contributed to sustainability efforts.

Similarly, in her research on USAID support to education reform in Ghana, Okugawa (2010, p. 135) she found that the Quality Improvements in Primary Schools (QUIPs) project was designed and planned without Ghanaian consultation or agreement and was not integrated into the Ghana Education Sector Plan. For this reason, Ghanaian ministerial stakeholders did not see the program as their responsibility and did not believe it to be sustainable.

Host-Country Leadership

Another factor highlighted by Gillies (2010) is the importance of strong leadership and management of the reform effort. This leadership must be based on key stakeholder buy-in and should be accompanied by strong leadership on the donor side. It must also be institutionalized in the structures and policies of the key institutions, including the ministries of education, as a successful reform effort will likely outlast the tenure of any one minister or aid agency official.

In the context of donor-funded community education initiatives, Nkansa and Chapman (2006, p. 521) also noted the importance of leadership. Among ten variables tested, strong local leadership was the dominant characteristic of sustained community education programs. “Leaders were influential in planning, mobilization and effective utilization of resources. They set the standards for transparency in decision-making and the use of school funds. Furthermore, strong local leaders are vital in delegating responsibility among community members and securing their commitment, thus shaping participation and the skill sets necessary for school improvement activities.”

³ Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, I. Statement of Resolve, HLF, Paris, 2005

Relatedly, both Riddell (2010) and Okugawa (2010) highlight the negative influence that Project Implementation Units (PIU) have on host government ownership, even when embedded within the ministry. As PIU staff are often seconded from the ministry itself, paid supplemental wages and are answerable to project technical assistants instead of mainline ministry staff, they serve to undermine the ministries they displace and reduce levels of local ownership. In a related context, Natsios (2010, p. 38) noted: “If a country’s Ministry of Education were to achieve half of what was required under the Millennium Development Goals, but took the leadership itself to accomplish this more modest objective, it would be of far greater significance than if Western aid agencies or international organizations fully achieved the actual quantitative calculation.”

Broad-Based Political Support

Gillies highlights, and other commentators affirm, that ownership must exist throughout the system if reform efforts are to be sustainable. “The commitment and leadership of each stakeholder group and actor in the system—national ministry officials, regional education officers, school administrators, teachers, and parents—is essential. Deep ownership at all levels of the system reflect the same lessons about emphasizing the process of engagement, and the establishment of structures to reinforce and validate that engagement over time” (2010, p. 144).

Gillies discusses systemic ownership in the context of a concept he refers to as ‘survivability’, which relates to the probability of turnover at high levels of government. In his case study research on education reform, he notes that the sustainability of reforms often depended on the extent to which projects incorporated strategies to survive turnover of key political stakeholders. He notes that while “the nature of a survivable foundation differed by country, but in each case went beyond Ministry support to include other political groups, civil society, municipalities, schools and teachers, as well as parents and communities.”

Nkansa and Chapman (2006, p. 521) identified similar considerations in their research on the sustainability of community education initiatives. In their study, there was a strong correlation between sustainability and the depth of local ownership. They found that where community members not only accepted the interventions but felt they had a role in the interventions and were responsible for their success, interventions were more likely to be sustained. However, where community members felt that external actors (whether donors or national ministries) were solely responsible for the delivery of the interventions, this tended to depress local initiative and ultimately the sustainability of the intervention itself.

Samoff, et al. (2001, p. 19) put it succinctly: “Put sharply, programs without significant local participation cannot be maintained or sustained, however imaginative their conception and however well-funded their initiation. The development landscape is littered with withered vines and rusting hulks—good ideas and promising beginnings that did not survive the departure of their initial leaders and the conclusion of their initial funding.”

Visibility

A further constraint on sustainability and ownership, which needs to be acknowledged, is the requirement to ensure the visibility of a donor’s aid contribution. The promotion of a single donor’s aid compromises both collaboration with others and ownership by the recipient, which in turn will limit the desired sustainable outcomes.

While approaches to visibility have changed over the last 20 years as the prevalence of bilateral aid has reduced and more frequent use of multi-lateral vehicles has become evident, most donors do still expect a degree of visibility in return for their contribution - whether from the inclusion of a logo in a textbooks printed using their funds or from donor logos on the doors of program vehicles. Though from “a technical to a political agenda,” donors have a variety of valid reasons for seeking greater

domestic and recipient country awareness of their aid, it is recognized that excessive demands for visibility can weaken effectiveness and sustainability. “Put briefly, donor agencies may be impelled by the need to respond to political concerns about visibility to favor stand-alone activities for which they are the major funding source in place of possibly more effective joint financing with other donors of host-country owned programs that may be more productive and sustainable” (UNESCO, 2008)

In addition to concerns that the need for visibility increases the potential for donor fragmentation, a paper from the German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (Volmer 2012) questions the value of “undifferentiated visibility” and notes that “the price is that this course of action undermines partner-country ownership.”

Capacity Development

Increasing the capacity of host-government stakeholders to manage and continue educational reform is recognized as one of the most important factors in the sustainability of reform efforts and is a reform effort itself (Gillies 2010, p. 7). However, the process of capacity building is complex and challenging, and the impacts of donor efforts in many cases have been limited.

De Grauwe (2009), on the basis of research conducted by the International Institute of Education Planning at UNESCO, described successful capacity building of educational stakeholders as a complex process for which national ownership and commitment were pre-requisites. It is “a long-term process that occurs through a series of changes, many of which relate to values, attitudes and norms.” In his assessment that capacity building by donors had little impact to date, De Grauwe identified three reasons for the failure of capacity development to contribute to sustainable change.

- First, capacity development is a complex process which has the potential to produce winners and losers and may encounter political resistance. Therefore host-country leadership and the ability of donors to recognize the readiness of host-country actors are crucial.
- Second, while the symptoms of low levels of capacity in various contexts may look similar, the root causes for low capacity may be very different (e.g., the ramifications of low levels of managerial competence in one organizational setting may be similar to another organizational setting where managerial competence is relatively high but managers are relegated to primarily non-managerial tasks).
- Finally, although the root causes of low capacity vary, donors tend to prefer a consistent set of capacity building efforts (e.g., short-term TA and training courses) because these (1) align with their own shorter-term and easily measurable program performance criteria, and (2) are perceived as politically neutral to host-country stakeholders.

De Grauwe notes that the nature of these problems militates against catch-all solutions, but recommends that several capacity building principles can be applied to ensure that sustainable capacity is built within education systems.

- Capacity building should be context relevant and context specific – it should be based upon and tailored to an analysis of the root causes of low capacity and the impact of capacity development on local actors at all levels.
- Capacity building should be based on host-country ownership and leadership, or where these are low, it should identify and invest in local leaders.
- Capacity building should be thought of as a long-term goal in itself.

Göttelmann-Duret and Bahr (2012) likewise emphasize the importance of capacity development programs that are contextually tailored to the ‘needs and working environments of trainees,’ but focus

on the importance of comprehensive approaches to skill development that is long-term and provides continued support to trainees, including through building within nations a core group of specialists and trainers, that can pass on skills within their institutions.

They also emphasize the importance of adapting capacity building to the “underlying cultural values and social norms of public sector reforms’ and prioritize bottom-up approaches to capacity building as more sustainable than top-down approaches. “In the long run, capacity development initiatives that focus on the most crucial system management issues, are consultative in nature, anchored in changes at grassroots level, and implemented in an incremental way, seem to be more effective than comprehensive, top-down institutional sector reforms” (Göttelmann-Duret and Bahr 2012, p. 61).

Turnover

Gilles (2010) argues that one of the most significant threats to the sustainability of education reforms is the relatively high level of turnover amongst senior government officials, which undermines not only capacity development but also government ownership and commitment to reform efforts. However, a similar concern has been raised by others about mid-level civil service staff.

In their evaluation of AusAid’s Fiji Education Sector Program, Pennington, et al. (2010) noted that the project’s capacity building efforts were ultimately undermined by an exodus of the mid-level staff to which capacity building was targeted. “The retirement of a large percentage of senior education managers due to the reduction in the mandatory civil service retirement age from 60 to 55 years has had the largest negative impact on the sustainability of program activities and outcomes. The groups most affected by the retirement policy are the cadre of trainers for the leadership and management courses, the trained head teachers/principals as well as a significant number of senior managers at the central and district levels.”

Dollar and Pritchett (1998) had identified this problem over a decade earlier and noted alignment of incentives for civil service staff was an important factor in sustainability. Where the capacity of governments to pay competitive civil service salaries was low, incentives for quality service provision would likewise be low. In their study on capacity development in Cambodia, Godfrey et al. (2002) found that the most capable civil servants were the most likely to leave the civil service and many cited their experience gained working on reform projects as increasing their skills and marketability. During a period of robust labor market activity, nearly half of those participating in donor projects had left the civil service within six years of the completion of the projects, although that proportion lowered when the external assistance sector deteriorated.

Okugawa (2010) found that even where civil service teachers trained as part of the USAID QUIPs project remained in the public sector, where projects failed to supplement their civil service salaries, these individuals often chose to leave their posts. The most common reason given for their departure was that their participation in the program represented a burden on them, increasing their workload vis-à-vis teachers not involved with the program but providing them with no pecuniary benefit. Okugawa believes this demonstrates a lack of ownership by program participants, and while this may be true, it also acknowledges the economic cost to some program participants. On the other hand, there is widespread agreement amongst development professionals that salary supplementation “threatens sustainability, leads to competition between agencies, pays people to perform their normal jobs (and in dollars rather than the national currency), and cushions the middle class against the consequences of government inaction on revenue collection and salaries” (Godfrey 2002), which emphasizes the need for strategies of financial sustainability (see below).

Teacher Training

One area of specific concern due to its widespread adoption as part of donor-funded education projects is teacher training – “formally organized attempts to provide more knowledge, skills, and dispositions to prospective or experienced teachers” (Tatto 1997).

The literature on approaches to delivering sustainable regimes of teacher training incorporate many of the concepts discussed above and elsewhere in this literature review. Studies conducted during the 1990s concluded that both pre-service and in-service teacher training in many developing countries was of low quality and ineffective because they were not practically focused and were short-term activities delivered primarily through mechanisms such as ad hoc workshops or seminars (Tatto, 1997; Villegas-Reimers and Reimers, 1996; Schulle, 2007).

More recent scholarship has shed light on the attributes of teacher training initiatives that would be more capable of institutionalizing teacher professional development within the education systems. In their research on teacher professional development programs, Ginsburg, et al. (2011) highlighted five factors of effective and sustainable teacher training programs:

- **Comprehensive Approach:** “programs need to adopt an approach that prioritized not only efforts to build the capacity and infrastructure of specific parts of the professional development system, but also the related institutional structures, mechanisms, system, and policies.” Reforms to one part of the system entail changes to other parts of the system and the programs must coordinate and sequence their activities appropriately.
- **Host Government Commitment:** there will be groups whose interest lie in supporting the reform and those who oppose it. It is important to identify these groups and build support within the government for reform efforts.
- **Broad Stakeholder Engagement:** both to ensure that teacher training reforms are not hindered by those affected by them and to ensure that they are adapted to the local conditions in which they will be implemented, a broad array of persons affected by the programs should be involved in their development and implementation.
- **Allow Adequate Time:** while teacher training can be implemented in the short-term, the institutionalization of an effective teacher training regime is a long-term process.
- **Ensure Sufficient Resources:** host-countries often have limited resources and staff to implement teacher training and donors must be prepared to subsidize these limitations. However, this has to be balanced against the need to transition to a sustainable, country-led reform, which may entail significant capacity building within national and sub-national institutions.

The relevance of these factors is affirmed by MacNeil (2004) in his study of school-based teacher in-service programs. MacNeil noted the significant start-up costs to implement teacher training programs, as well as the long-term commitment required by donors to implement them, raises concern about the capacity of host-governments to sustain them financially. However, he recognized that the transfer of coordination of the programs to the national civil service would be a key factor contributing to its ultimate sustainability.

Feedback Loops

Another factor associated with sustainability cited by commentators is the presence of feedback loops. Riddell (2010) describes feedback loops as involving “public information, gaining political support, devising incentives, etc.” that reinforce positive changes and continuous improvement, promoting

stakeholder involvement and ownership.⁴ Two feedback loops cited frequently in the literature are information and policy dialogue.

Education Information

Education information obtained through mechanisms such as Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) have the potential to provide host-country governments with data that would allow them to understand the impact of their reform efforts and engage in effective education sector planning. It also provides to decision-makers and (especially) the public information about educational access and quality that can motivate higher levels of accountability both within government and the populace, and spur continuous and sustainable improvement (Bruns 2011, 21-22).

A study conducted by Powell (2006) notes that significant investments during the 2000s were premised on the assumption by donors that EMIS would allow host-countries to administer their education systems more efficiently and effectively, and the assumption by host governments that EMIS would allow for more targeted resource allocation. An analysis of the management and operation of EMIS in Bangladesh, Ghana, Mozambique and Nigeria demonstrated mixed results – while some data in some countries was used in the policy process, problems with data collection, analysis and utilization were apparent in each of the countries.

Powell's research identified several reasons for the failure of EMIS systems to live up to their promise, including:

- In all countries with the exception of Ghana, which instituted a comprehensive institutional capacity building program, institutional capacity was poor in at least one of the major areas of data collection, utilization or dissemination;
- A failure to understand the context in which data collection and recording would take place, including by failing to adapt data collection instruments to the approaches to record-keeping in community schools;
- Poor linkages between data collection and utilization – “unless managers at the decentralized level can see the utility of data they are collecting, they are not likely to be committed to this process;” and
- The failure in all cases to develop a data dissemination plan that allowed for public or even internal consumption of data.

Riddell (2010) and Healey (1997) also address the development of information systems as part of education reform initiatives. While their assessments are generally more despairing than Powell's, they did agree that while donor investment in the development of EMIS has increased the technical skills of ministry officials, these skills were not appropriately tailored to the needs of host-country stakeholders and for this reason were not sustained.

“[D]onors have repeatedly given priority to skills training to deliver more immediate products such as the plans or the annual school census data over progress in institutional and organizational capacity development, so that insufficient attention has been paid to their use within the ministry: one cannot ‘make’ staff use data unless it serves a purpose. If, or when, the purpose is to ‘supply’ data to donors for ‘their’ accountability rather than for the ministry’s own targeting and resource allocation, then the plans and policy analysis will quickly become more like alien instruments than tools that, embedded in the core

⁴ See also (Gillies 2010) for a more detailed discussion of reinforcing feedback loops.

workings of the ministry, enhance the government's ability to respond better to its own demands for information and its use" (Riddell 2010, 35).

The World Bank (2002) expressed similar concerns and noted that the donor practice of funding one-off surveys and similar types of data collection to meet the information needs of their own projects or sectors of work did little to increase the institutional capacity of host-government institutions to manage their own data collection, analysis and dissemination needs.

Policy Dialogue

There is widespread acceptance in the literature that increasing public dialogue about public service reform efforts and progress improves the sustainability of these efforts. Specifically, the inclusion of reform champions and specifically the broader populace in a discussion about the goals of education reform and progress towards those goals allows these stakeholders to provide feedback to government and hold them accountable for the success of education reform.

Corrales (1997) posits that "rational ignorance and information shortcuts make citizens susceptible to veto groups, which mount effective and emotional public relation campaigns that serve as information shortcuts." However, if proponents of reform can use publicly available information to inform the citizenry about the issues, they can mobilize citizen support for reform. Healey and DeStefano (1997) agree on this point and believe that improved policy information and dialogue represents an effective way to mobilize the diffuse interests in favor of education reform against vested opponents.

At least one recent assessment confirms this view. The UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact Evaluation of DFID's Support for Health and Education in India (2012) assessed that recent education and health programs in Bihar, India were likely to be sustainable. Key factors in this assessment were the track record of reforms to date, increases in domestic spending and public commitments given at the national and state level. The assessment noted that their assessment was based on feedback from interviewees and the observation that citizens were demanding the continuation of reforms in a manner that had not previously occurred.

Sustainable Finance

Without significant financial commitments by either donors or host-governments, the benefits of many education interventions will not be sustained beyond the life of the project. This suggests that sustainable financing must be considered at the outset of education interventions, or alternatively, that donors need to focus more on interventions which initiate change and continuous improvements in country systems without the need for ongoing subsidies.

The 2002 World Bank report *Development Effectiveness and Scaling Up: Lessons and Challenges from Case Studies* noted that the primary factor hindering the scaling up of successful interventions in many beneficiary countries was a lack of adequate financing. The challenge of financing was compounded by the policies of many donors that prohibited funding of recurrent costs, including salaries, maintenance costs, material costs, etc., despite the fact that in the education sector specifically, recurrent costs represented by far the largest proportion of costs (up to 90% in some cases) of spending within the sector. Without donor contribution to covering these costs, it was not possible in many cases for beneficiary countries to continue or scale up donor interventions - irrespective of how effective they might appear to be. The report gave the example of donor interventions in Madagascar:

"Madagascar is another dramatic example: donors have helped to build so many schools that by 1999, the country had a stock of 2,919 primary schools that were closed, for lack of teachers and budgets to pay them. Yet fewer than 30 percent of primary-age children currently attain the full five years of primary schooling. Teachers were so scarce that donors conditioned construction of new schools on the availability of

teachers for their project schools. Because donors continued to fund school construction, the government reassigned teachers from publicly funded schools to donor project areas. The result was a huge burden on the system, as donors in effect competed for new teacher recruits, and the teacher shortage problem was simply shifted around” (World Bank 2002, p. 11).

The report recommended that the successful handover and scaling up of donor interventions would only be possible with a more comprehensive approach to financing on the part of donors that included support to recurrent costs.

A recent report by the UK Independent Commission on Aid Effectiveness, *DFID’s Education Programmes in Nigeria* (2012b), found that the lack of comprehensive approaches to funding remains an issue. In finding that DFID’s interventions in health and education in Nigeria were unlikely to achieve sustainable results, the Commission identified the main reason to be a lack of commitment on the part of the sub-national governments of Nigeria to fund continued improvements following the project. This was despite the fact that the project had identified, as part of the design, the insufficiency and unpredictability of governments and the presence of large funding gaps in both the national and state education plans. The report notes that “too little attention was devoted to securing the necessary commitments from the States to fund and implement the required improvements” (ICAI 2012b, pp.10-11).

The ICAI evaluation of DFID’s education interventions in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania came to similar conclusions. The evaluation expressed concerns about the sustainability of national education budgets and noted that as interventions expanded into harder to reach areas, the unit costs of interventions were likely to increase (challenging notions of economies of scale). Coupled with increasing numbers of school-aged children and budget constraints, “the quality of education may not be maintained even at its current inadequate level”. The report recommended that donors “give more attention to whole-sector financing issues and prioritization if education plans are not to become chronically underfunded” (ICAI 2012c, pp.19-20).

Gilles (2010, p. 22-23) expounds on the funding sustainability challenges for donor education interventions. He maintains that the dominant approach to security the financial sustainability of interventions – the stage transfer of funding responsibility from donor to host-country – has been ineffective for two reasons. First, the capacity of the host-country to fund expanded services rests on the wrong assumption that either government revenues have increased or that money should and would be redistributed from other government expenditures. Second, it failed to recognize that the cost structure of donor-funded projects is fundamentally different than the cost structures that apply to governments. For instance, while projects can hire staff on a short-term basis, government departments must commit to hiring permanent employees. Gillies notes that the maneuverability of host-country governments was simultaneously constrained by the remedies of fiscal constraint often recommended by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

As a result of these factors, the track record of financial sustainability of donor-funded projects is poor and Gillies proposes that if outcomes are to be sustained, donors must be more realistic about the financial implications of their programs and should focus to a greater extent on initiating change rather than initiating projects that cannot be continued without ongoing subsidies.

Samoff, et al. (2003, page 11-19), in their discussion of scaling up donor projects, focus on the need for better, more realistic and earlier assessments of the financial commitments required to sustain intervention activities in the longer term. As it has proved and will continue to prove difficult, if not impossible, for host-countries to absorb the costs of externally funded aid projects, donors must accept a responsibility for continuing funding, but on a selective basis. Samoff recommends that donors “should view pilot projects as venture capital investments in which all are expected to succeed but in practice only 10-20% (or even fewer) are likely to do so and to be funded for the next level of support.”

The relationship between financial sustainability and ownership has been specifically addressed with respect to education programs. In his research on a DANIDA funded basic education program delivered by local CSO in Northern Uganda, Akyeampong (2004) acknowledged that the program – which worked with communities to build and staff their own schools – had achieved remarkable levels of buy-in and commitment from community members. It also was successful in providing access to basic education for primary age student and was able to mainstream many of these students into the formal education system.

However, Akyeampong noted that the program had failed thus far to gain acceptance from formal government institutions in a manner that would allow it to be funded outside of donor efforts. Once donor funding stopped, the program would cease to exist. “In effect the programme was simply supplementing the formal system, thus doing little to encourage local governments to become more responsible for improving and maintaining the quality of their own system... The key therefore, is finding productive ways of engaging with local government authority by adopting strategies that boost their institutional capacity and sensitize them into adapting their operations to meet the needs of poor communities in society.”

These findings echo those by Okugawa (2010) on the sustainability of the USAID QUIPs program. The QUIPs program was managed by a program office which had full control over funding and program issues, although ostensibly attempts were made to keep the Ghana Education Service aware of program activities. As a result, GES officials did not believe that the state would take over the program after its completion and their lack of ownership in the management of the program left them fundamentally ill-equipped to do so.

“As a GES budget officer explained: ‘GES never [knew] how much USAID spent on the project. Then, when the project ends, GES is expected to take over, but how? Where are the funds? We don’t even know how much the expenses were. How can we continue what they started? QUIPs is GES’s – that is what USAID says. But I would say - no. Nothing [was] left after the ending of the intervention; QUIPs is nil’” (133).

CONCLUSIONS

In analyzing the factors that contribute to the sustainability of basic education reform, several themes emerge. The first is that many of the factors that contribute to sustainability have been recognized for a considerable time as foundational elements of effective international development. Ownership, alignment, harmonization (discussed here in the context of aid modalities), managing for results (discussed here in the context of education information) and mutual accountability (discussed here in the context of policy dialogue) were the key principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005). This suggests that the relatively little evidence of the sustainability of basic education programming represents an issue of implementation rather than a lack of understanding of the pre-requisites themselves.

Second, context is of fundamental importance and should be strongly factored into the design and implementation of basic education programs, and that a systems approach to program design and implementation should be adopted. In order to both effectively and sustainably deliver basic education programs, donors and program implementers should develop better understandings of:

- The potential impact that their interventions will have on other aspects of the education system
- The groups whose interests are served by reform and the groups whose interest lie in hindering reform efforts

- The factors that will either contribute or hinder the success of their programs and the implications for attempts to scale up interventions
- The capacity building and information needs of local actors, as understood by the actors themselves

Only by understanding the context will program implementers be able to design approaches to program delivery that will contribute to program effectiveness in the short-term and sustainability in the longer-term.

Third, sustainability should be addressed at the earliest stage of program design, as it is relevant even at the initial stages of the program. Building host-country ownership, ensuring alignment with education sector plans, addressing issues of financial sustainability, identifying ways to stimulate positive and reinforcing feedback loops and identifying the root causes of low capacity are all endeavors that can and should be addressed either in the design or first months of program implementation, and then continue throughout. If addressed only during the latter stages of the program cycle, it is unlikely that sufficient progress can be made to build sustainability where it has otherwise been ignored.

Finally, the factors that are related to the sustainability of education programs are closely related to one another and are mutually reinforcing. Establishing host-country ownership of programs is a key factor in successful capacity building, which itself can generate political buy-in and enhance government ownership. Likewise, targeted capacity building that is responsive to the needs of key government stakeholders can help establish feedback loops that both reveal further areas for capacity development and establish greater ownership of the program across a broader spectrum of stakeholders. Enhancing sustainability is an endeavor to establish a virtuous circle within the system to allow it to adapt and self-perpetuate reform without further donor support.

Implications for Ex-Post Evaluation Series

The findings from this literature review suggest that in selecting projects for inclusion in the ex-post evaluation series, the evaluation team should consider projects that have explicitly addressed at least several of the factors described (ownership, sustainability of finance, policy dialogue, etc.) above as part of their project design (preferably) and implementation. Additionally, the literature review findings emphasized that projects that have not considered these factors are unlikely to have been sustained and are less likely to have achieved their outcomes, and hence will serve as poor cases for understanding how development actors can initiate and sustain change in host-country systems.

ANNEX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY

Akyeampong, A. K. (2004). Aid for self help effort? A sustainable alternative route to basic education in Northern Ghana. *Journal of International Co-operation in Education*, 7.1, 41-52.

Australian Agency for International Development (2000). Promoting Practical Sustainability. Canberra

Boak, E., & Ndaruhutse, S. (2011). The impact of sector-wide approaches: where from, where now and where to?. Berkshire: CfBT Education Trust.

Bruns, B., Filmer D. & Patrinos, H.A. (2011) *Making Schools Work: New Evidence on Accountability Reforms*. Washington DC: World Bank.

De Grauwe, A. (2009). *Without Capacity There is No Development*, International Institute for Education Planning. Paris: UNESCO.

Declaration, P. (2005, February). Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability. In *High level forum on joint progress toward enhanced aid effectiveness: Harmonization, alignment and results. 2nd High level forum on aid effectiveness. Paris, France*

Dollar, D & Pritchett, L. (1998). *Assessing aid - what works, what doesn't, and why. World Bank policy research report*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

Gillies, J. (2010). *The Power of Persistence, Education System Reform and Aid Effectiveness, Case-studies in Long-Term Education Reform*, Washington, D.C., EQUIP2 (USAID)

Godfrey, M., et al (2002). Technical assistance and capacity development in an aid-dependent economy: The experience of Cambodia. *World Development* 30.3: 355-373

Gottelmann-Duret, G., & Bahr, K. (2012). Strengthening of education systems.

Harris, J. M. (2000). Introduction: an Assessment of Sustainable Development. In Harris, J.M. (Ed.), *Rethinking Sustainability: Power, Knowledge and Institutions*, 1–10. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.

Healey, F. H., & DeStefano, J. (1997). Education reform support: A framework for scaling up school reform. Policy Paper Series (Research Triangle Park, NC: Research Triangle Institute, 1997).

Independent Commission for Aid Impact (2012). Report 11: Evaluation of DFID's Support for Health and Education in India. Report 11. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/derec/50360866.pdf>

Independent Commission for Aid Impact (2012b). Report 16: Evaluation of DFID's Education Programmes in Nigeria. Report 16. Available at: <http://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/ICAI-Nigeria-Education-report.pdf>

Independent Commission for Aid Impact (2012c). Report 10: Evaluation of DFID's Education Programmes in Three East African Countries . Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/countries/rwanda/50360183.pdf>

Lawrence, B.K. (1998). The Importance of Sustainability for Rural Schools. *Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Rural Education Association*. Buffalo, NY, October 14–17.

MacNeil, D. J. (2004). School and cluster-based teacher professional development: bringing teacher learning to the schools. US Agency for International Development: Washington, DC.

Natsios, A. (2011). The Clash of the Counter-bureaucracy and Development. Center for Global Development.

- Okugawa, Yukiko (2010). International assistance to educational development: a case study of the basic education section in Ghana. Doctoral thesis, University of Sussex. Available at: <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/2516/>
- Pennington, B., Ireland, N. & Narsey, W. (2010). Fiji Education Sector Program, AidWorks Number: INF528, Independent Completion Report,.
- Porta, E., & Arcia, G. (2011) Improving Information Systems for Planning and Policy Dialogue: The SABER EMIS Assessment Tool. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Powell, M. (2006). Rethinking education management information systems: Lessons from and options for less developed countries (Vol. 6). M. Trucano (Ed.). InfoDev.
- Ratcliffe, M., & Macrae, M. (1999). Sector Wide Approaches to Education: A Strategic Analysis. Education Research Paper. Department for International Development Education Department, 94 Victoria Street, London SW1E 5JL United Kingdom.
- Reimers, F., & Villegas-Reimers, E. (1996). Where are the 60 million teachers? the missing voice in educational reforms around the world. *Prospects*, 26(3), 469-492.
- Riddell, A. (2012). The effectiveness of foreign aid to education: What can be learned? (No. 2012/75). WIDER Working Paper.
- Samoff, J., Sebatane, E. M., & Dembélé, M. (2001, October). Scaling up by focusing down: Creating space to expand education reform. In ADEA Biennial Meeting, Tanzania.
- Schwille, J., Dembélé, M., & Schubert, J. (2007). Global Perspectives on Teacher Learning: Improving Policy and Practice. International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) UNESCO.
- Tatto, M. T. (1997). Limits and constraints to effective teacher education. *International Handbook of Education and Development: Preparing Schools, Students and Nations for the Twenty-First Century*, 213-230.
- United Nations Economic and Social Council (2008). Towards a strengthened framework for aid effectiveness. *Background Study for the Development Cooperation Forum*
- United States Agency for International Development (2009). Clarification of basic education earmark. Washington DC: USAID. Retrieved from: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACN909.pdf
- Vollmer, F. (2012). Increasing the visibility and effectiveness of development cooperation: how to reconcile two competing objectives?.
- World Bank (2002). Development Effectiveness and Scaling Up: Lessons and Challenges from Case Studies. *World Bank Board Report DC20020018*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

ANNEX B: DOCUMENT KEYWORD SEARCH TERMS

The following search terms were used by the reviewer in conducting searches for materials used in this review:

- Access To Education
- Basic Education
- Capacity Development
- Education Quality
- Education Reform
- Education Sector
- Improved Literacy
- Learning Outcomes
- Scaling-Up
- Sustainability
- Sustainable
- Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Outcomes
- Teacher Training

ANNEX C: STATEMENT OF WORK

Literature Review for the Sustainable Outcomes Ex-Post Evaluation Series on Basic Education

Task Description

This Statement of Work (SOW) outlines the requirements for a review of literature addressing the evidence or evidence gaps on the factors that contribute to the sustainability of outcomes in basic education programming. This literature review will inform a series of ex-post evaluations on sustainable outcomes in the basic education sector currently being designed.

1. Background

USAID's Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research, in the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (PPL/LER), is undertaking a series of ex-post evaluations of USAID programs concerning "sustainable outcomes." This purpose of the evaluation series is to better understand what USAID and its implementing partners can do to promote sustainable outcomes. The series will take a systemic approach to understand a variety of perspectives and intended and unanticipated outcomes. Basic education activities will be the evaluand for an initial round of evaluations under the sustainable outcomes rubric, and provide the context for site selection and determining which activities and outcomes to focus on as a starting point. The E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project, led by Management Systems International (MSI) along with team members Development & Training Services (dTS) and NORC at the University of Chicago, is supporting the design and implementation of this evaluation series.

This evaluation is taking place in the context of a paradigm shift in the donor community that is placing greater emphasis on the sustainability of development outcomes in all contexts, but particularly in fast-moving and dynamic contexts such as those found in conflict-affected and post-conflict areas. This shift is represented by the White House's Fact Sheet "Fact Sheet: U.S. Global Development Policy" (September 22, 2010) and USAID Policy Paper "Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development" (April 2014).

2. Objective of the Literature Review

The objective of the literature review is to identify existing research, literature and evidence or evidence gaps on factors that contribute to the sustainability of outcomes in basic education programming. Specifically, the literature review should identify those key factors that have the greatest influence in sustaining basic education programs.

For the purposes of this literature review, "basic education" is defined as including "all program and policy efforts aimed at improving pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education (delivered in formal or non-formal settings), and in programs promoting learning for out-of school youth and adults. Capacity building for teachers, administrators, counselors, and youth workers is included. Basic education includes literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development for learners. The common thread among these elements is that they help learners gain the general skills and basic knowledge needed to function effectively in all aspects of life."

The scope of this review is broad, and it is not anticipated that it will be based upon a comprehensive search of all materials relating to the topic. This literature review should instead be based upon a

curated selection of documents that will be most helpful for understanding the most prominent factors for sustainability of basic education programs and for designing this evaluation.

3. Data Sources

The review will draw on a range of documents, including academic articles, working papers, discussion papers, book chapters and books, case studies and relevant grey literature.

The reviewer should document all search criteria/terms and databases used to identify relevant literature so that the review can be duplicated.

4. Audience, and Intended Use

The primary audience for this task will be PPL/LER staff involved in the design of this evaluation series, members of a Methods Working Group, to be identified, the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project team supporting the evaluation design process, and the eventual evaluation team(s) that conduct the evaluation series.

The literature review will inform future decisions about the scope and parameters of the ex-post evaluation series. It is also anticipated that the literature review will serve as an ongoing resource for the research process over the course of the evaluation series. It could be used multiple times, adapting to different analytical routes.

5. Deliverables

The following deliverables are anticipated under this task, pending further discussion with USAID:

Deliverable	Estimated Due Date
Literature Review Methods Summary outlining the selection criteria for inclusion of relevant literature, including the search criteria/terms and databases that will be used to conduct the literature review.	o/a November 14, 2014
Draft Literature Review Submission	o/a December 5, 2015

The Draft and Final Literature Review should include the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Methodology
- Findings
- Conclusions
- Bibliography

The Final Literature Review should not exceed 20 pages (excluding footnotes).

Unless an exception is made by USAID in writing, all documents and deliverables under this SOW are expected to be kept internal to USAID and the Project team working on the Sustainable Outcomes series.

6. Team Composition

The literature review will be conducted by one subject matter expert, although support from research assistants may also be appropriate. Additional home office support, oversight, and expertise will be provided by the MSI team.

Subject Matter Expert

The subject matter expert will have extensive experience in (a) developing and implementing basic education programs in developing countries and/or (b) conducting academic research on basic education as delivered in developing countries and specifically with support from international donors. The expert should also have experience evaluating or researching issues of sustainability of basic education initiatives in these contexts. The expert should hold at least a master's degree with at least 10 years of experience in the area of international assistance to education in developing countries.