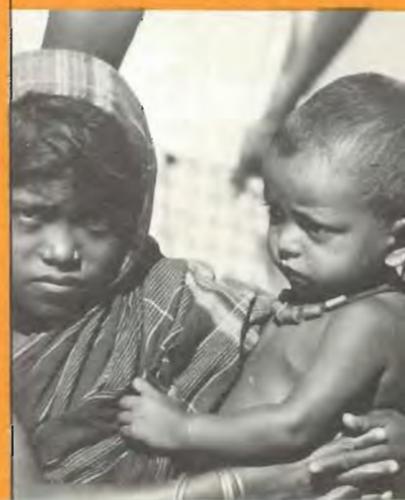


AID Sector Strategy

Education

Agency for
International
Development

Washington, D.C.
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A.I.D. EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	THE SECTOR STRATEGY-----	1
II.	PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION-----	5

I. THE SECTOR STRATEGY*

A.I.D.'s position of strength:

The Evaluation Office of PPC in 1982 completed a series of evaluations of A.I.D.'s major education projects. This retrospective study concluded that U.S. assistance had been singularly effective in helping to expand and improve primary education systems. The work of A.I.D. in Nepal, Brazil, Korea and Jordan -- among other countries -- provides strong evidence that, given a sustained effort and adequate resources, we can successfully assist improvement of basic formal schooling.

*The 1982 Education Sector policy paper, "Basic Education and Technical Training," should be read for a definitive and fully articulated statement of policy.

The "Education Sector" refers to formal schooling, basic education within or outside of a school setting, and vocational and technical skills training. In this strategy, "basic formal schooling" and "primary education" have the same meaning: both referring to the first cycle of formal education, normally 5 years of schooling. "Basic education" refers to the same set of skills, only broadens the setting to include non-formal education and increases the age group to include adolescents and adults.

These experiences, combined with R&D accomplishments in educational technology, have taught us lessons that direct us to our present strategy:

- o A.I.D. can make a major contribution to educational reform even with relatively modest resource commitments, provided that the assistance is carefully targeted and sustained and that the host country has the commitment to carry out the reform.
- o A broad approach supporting comprehensive reform of the schooling system is critical, even if A.I.D. deals directly with only a limited number of components within the system.
- o Isolated, individual projects that are short term and piecemeal are not as effective as a sustained long term program that takes a systems development perspective and continues for at least ten years of continuous assistance.
- o A strong institutional base either within the Ministry of Education or a quasi-governmental institute must be a component of any educational change or improvement.
- o Both long and short term training for key educators are essential to maintain the quality of the improved educational system.
- o The use of innovations such as instructional radio, paraprofessionals, and new methods of instructional design can provide a cost-effective solu-

tion to the problem of expanding the coverage of school systems.

The Strategy in brief:

In response to AID's Education Sector policy, the Education Sector strategy will focus on measures to increase (1) the efficiency with which education resources are used; (2) the quantitative and qualitative outputs of education and training investments; and (3) the effectiveness of the education and training systems in supporting economic and social development objectives.

To this end, each country will assess the status and needs of education, particularly regarding primary school systems and training programs. In selected countries major long-term, high impact primary school education programs will be initiated. Innovative techniques (radio, paraprofessionals, new methods of instructional design) proven effective in pilot studies will be further explored and, where appropriate, be incorporated into educational programs A.I.D. helps support.

Skills training will be pursued which is aimed at increasing the productivity of those employed and at preparing those seeking employment in the wage economy or self-employment.

The participant training program both in and outside the U.S. is to support the A.I.D. primary education and skills training programs as well as components of other development projects.

Where we will do primary education programs:

There are two main criteria for developing an A.I.D. program in primary education: the number of children completing at least four years of primary school and the commitment of the host country to increasing internal efficiency of the school system.*

Countries which have less than two-thirds of the eligible age group completing at least the first four years of primary school can be expected to have a significant nationwide problem with basic numeracy and literacy. A.I.D. agriculture, health, and population programs can expect significantly less than optimal progress in the absence of improvement in the primary school systems of these countries. Analyses conducted in preparation of this strategy paper by S&T/ED rank ordered A.I.D. recipient countries according to crude primary school enrollment data and literacy rates. Primary school enrollment and literacy had a correlation coefficient of 78. The top third countries for primary school enrollment had among the best student survival rates to grade four. Thirteen of the top 17 of these countries for which survival data were available had 749 students or better per thousand surviving to the

* The completion of four years of primary school is considered the minimum schooling required for the permanent acquisition of literacy.

fourth grade. Most of the bottom third countries for primary school enrollment did not have survival data available. Thus it appears that grade-four completion rates, primary school enrollment and literacy rates are each a gross proxy for overall primary school system development and that the coverage and internal efficiency of primary school systems are related, probably subsumed under broader systems development variables.

When less than two-thirds of the eligible age group are completing at least the first four years of primary school and there is a country policy commitment to increased internal efficiency, the improvement of primary education is to be given priority for A.I.D. assistance. Every country fulfilling these criteria should have or seriously consider a program in primary education.

The A.I.D. Sector resources within each region should be sharply focused and concentrated to ensure a significant impact on the educational system in target countries. To do so, it may be necessary for each Regional Bureau to focus its Sector resources on two or three of these countries for long-term projects, making a major investment in the Sector.*

This is preferable to a large number of small-scale, short-term efforts. Collaboration with other donors, especially the World Bank, should be pursued to increase the impact of A.I.D.'s assistance to educational development.

Application of the criteria require data interpretation and judgments regarding host country policy. The Regional Bureaus will assist in this process through the regional plans and specific guidance as requested.

Where we will do technical training programs:

A.I.D. recipient countries which have greater than two-thirds of the eligible age group completing the first four years of primary school will often have a different set of problems. These include an increasing number of children completing primary education with the expectation of employment; a shortage of post-primary training systems; and great pressure to find diversified sources of income within the informal sector.*

There are two main criteria for developing an A.I.D. program in vocational education or technical training: a high primary school completion rate among the eligible age group, indicating a significant demand for

* The Africa Regional Bureau and the Science and Technology Bureau have already begun a joint initiative to do this in Africa, in worldwide "Improving the Efficiency of Education" project.

* The "formal sector" refers to the wage economy; "the informal sector" refers to the self-employed.

further skills training; and a shortage of skilled workers indicating an effective demand of the labor market, a high potential for the creation of new employment opportunities, and opportunities for self-employment when skills training is complemented by other essential services.

In countries where these conditions exist, A.I.D. should have or seriously consider a program in vocational education or technical training. The Regional Bureaus will assist in applying these criteria through regional plans and specific guidance as requested.

Non-exclusive categories:

There may be compelling reasons to support primary education programs even where the primary school completion rate is high. Typically, quality has been sacrificed during the period of rapid expansion and the expanded schooling system represents a major recurrent budget and administrative burden. Qualitative improvements in mathematics and science may be needed to prepare school leavers for subsequent skills training and technical assistance may be needed to support administrative reforms and more efficient use of resources.

Similarly, where the host country economy is growing at such a pace that there is a demonstrable shortage of skilled workers and staffing constraints in key development programs, technical training initiatives may be needed even

though there continues to be a need for reform and expansion of the formal schooling system.

Thus the A.I.D. program emphases are not exclusive categories, and the criteria will not always perfectly apply across all countries. Reflection on host country data along with sensitive interpretation of the country's overall development profile are required to make final judgments about the optimal Education Sector program.

Participant training:

A significant portion of participant training program funds come out of the Education account. It is imperative that mission participant training programs support the Education Sector in the following ways:

o Where there is an A.I.D. Education Sector program in either primary education or technical training, the participant training program should include trainees from key positions required to institutionalize changes being introduced by the program.

o Where there is no A.I.D. Education Sector program as such but the possibility of policy dialog with A.I.D. and beneficial change within the Sector exists, general participant training funds should be used for training supportive of this change.

Procedures to follow:

To implement this strategy, every Mission is expected to

conduct a human resources sector survey and/or to maintain an updated sector assessment as base data for Education Sector involvement. Assessments should include the following:

- o Data required to apply the criteria for programs in the Education Sector such as primary school completion rates, host-country education and training policy, and an assessment of the demand for a trained work force;
- o Application of the criteria to host-country conditions; and
- o A proposal for Education Sector activity which follows from the analysis.

Assessments may be conducted for a variety of reasons, for example:

- o CDSS preparation: An assessment for this process would not necessarily be comprehensive and could be conducted by Mission staff and funding.

Feasibility studies for project identification and development:

An assessment for this process will be comprehensive, perhaps requiring more time, expertise and funding than the Mission can provide. In such cases, the Regional Bureaus and S&T would be responsive to requests from Missions for cooperation in staffing and funding of studies. Therefore, this strategy assumes that an assessment at some level will be completed by every Mission. Mission activity in fulfillment of this

strategy must follow normal Agency CDSS/ABS preparation and approval procedures.

II. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The content of A.I.D. primary education programs:

Curriculum reform, teacher training, the use of educational technology, and non-formal education methodology may appear as project components as they have in the past. The difference is that A.I.D. will integrate these components more explicitly and completely into the developing country's effort to achieve reform, increased systems efficiency, and impact over the long term on employment and overall national development. This leverage should be sought in small Education Sector programs which are part of larger host country development plans as well as for the few programs in each region which involve greater A.I.D. resources.

The increased emphasis on internal efficiency and new approaches to decentralization, local financing, and the diversified sponsorship of schools will also require components not always present in past A.I.D. projects. Program areas which are likely to have the greatest impact on both the long-term goal of expanded access and on the quality and efficiency of the existing primary system include:

- o Education administration and school supervision;
- o Logistical and management systems;

- o Instructional materials development and production systems;
- o In-service and/or pre-service training for teachers;
- o Educational technology, such as radio to provide instruction, especially in remote areas; and
- o Identification of major efficiency constraints and the development of education research capacity (tests and measurement, tracer studies, costing of alternative strategies, data systems).

Finally, programs are encouraged to include approaches which represent innovations aimed at getting more education for each dollar spent. Education systems using radio (as in Nicaragua, Thailand, Nepal), paraprofessionals (as in the Indonesia and Philippine versions of Project Impact), new methods of instructional design (as in the Liberia Improved Efficiencies of Learning Project and the Korean KEDI Project), and microcomputers for budget projection and management (as in Zimbabwe) are examples of such innovations.

Further, data from U.S. programs suggest that early intervention programs among pre-school children have increased learning in the first primary school years for some children. An educational component added to a maternal-child health or nutrition project for pre-school-aged children may be

an appropriate experimental innovation in some country programs.

A.I.D. skills training programs:

The primary emphases are: (1) training for increased and diversified productivity and employment in the informal sector among the self-employed and those seeking employment in the wage economy, and (2) training for upgrading the skill levels and productivity of employed workers as well as filling the manpower shortages of existing firms or new firms entering the market. This involves non-formal skills training in collaboration with community organizations, PVOs, employers and employer groups, and public and quasi-public specialized training organizations, often emphasizing general skills applicable across a broad base of industries. Programs in all cases should strive for training courses of the briefest feasible duration, greatest applicability to the specific needs of the labor market, and lowest possible per capita cost.

Because technical training programs will often represent approaches fairly new to A.I.D. or to the host country involved, flexibility in program design will be important, so that the program can change emphasis and technique based on initial feedback. Consideration should be given to program components which:

- o Reach adolescents and adults who have not obtained functional

literacy, numeracy, and other essential skills, through:

- basic skills training as part of other community services;

- nonformal "service agency" centers to provide technical support to community education initiatives.

- o Provide continuing opportunities for the adolescent and adult labor force to acquire information and develop new skills, through

- low cost information media such as radio and print;

- adult education programs linked to extension units in relevant sectors (e.g., agriculture, health);

- nonformal in-service and on-the-job training.

- o Provide project and program-specific training and technical support for village-level workers, development project staff and skilled workers in the private sector, through:

- in-service training involving community organizations, project implementation units, and employers;

- basic media capacities either within the implementing organization or as part of a "service agency" serving a group of smaller projects and organizations;

- technical support to project managers and employers in as-

sessing training needs and designing training programs.

S&T and Regional Bureau support:

A.I.D. will continue to support the development and implementation of centrally-supported research and development, developing capacities of U.S. institutions to provide support in crucial areas of development. However, A.I.D. must also strengthen its capacity for providing critical field support, enlarging the education resource base and making effective use of indigenous institutions and networks. The first steps in this effort are likely to be careful reviews of Agency capacity and strategies for providing field support in such areas as:

1. sector assessment and analysis;

2. pilot project experimentation;

3. dissemination of research results and the transference of experimentation for large-scale application in other countries;

4. support for multi-country research or experimentation on regional or other bases;

5. mobilization of technical resources/institutional support in areas currently neglected or inadequately mobilized, such as the economics of education; education administration and management; educational planning and analysis; materials production and logistics; and vocational and technical education.