USAID Program and Operations
Assessment Report No. 25

More, But Not Yet Better

An Evaluation of USAID's Programs and Policies To Improve Girls' Education

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June 1999

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Acronyms

BEST: the Better Education Strengthening project, a USAID initiative in Guatemala.

EMIS: educational management information system.

FAWE: Forum for African Women Educationists.

GABLE: Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education, a USAID project in Malawi.

GNP: gross national product.

NEU: Nueva Escuela Unitaria.

NGO: nongovernmental organization.

NWFP: Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province.

PASE: French acronym for Guinea's Program of Adjustment for the Education Sector.

PED: Primary Education Development, a USAID program in Pakistan.

PVO: private voluntary organization.

SMC: the Social Mobilization Campaign in Malawi.

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund.

Acknowledgements

THE AUTHORS thank the many people who made this evaluation of girls' education possible. First and foremost, we thank the educators, parents, and students from Guatemala, Guinea, Malawi, Nepal, and Pakistan. These people gave graciously of their time and wisdom. We learned a great deal from them and hope that in some small way this evaluation will help bring about the education and opportunities they seek.

The U.S. and counterpart members of the evaluation teams deserve none of the criticism for this document and all of the credit as well as our many thanks. For their work on Guatemala, we thank Nelly Stromquist, Steven Klees, Shirley Miske, and Yetilú de Baessa and the team she assembled. For the Guinea case study, we acknowledge Amadou Bah. For their work on Malawi, we credit Marcia Bernbaum, Macwenders Chatsika, Evelyn Chinguwo, Kristi Fair, Lawrence Hadje, Richard P. Harber, Ash Hartwell, Shirley Miske, Talaat Moreau, Duncan Nyirenda, Beverly Schwartz, Johnson Sikes, and Joy Wolf. For their contributions to the Nepal case study, we thank Lynn Ilon, Sunita Giri, Basu Dev Kafle, Dibya M. Karmacharya, Shreeram Lamichhane, and Pramila Rajbhandry. We thank Shirley Miske and Shanaz and Ijaz Ahmed for their work on the Pakistan study. We thank Andrea Rugh and Shirley Miske for their work on Egypt. In every country, there were many others—from translators to drivers—who assisted; to them as well, we offer thanks.

USAID supported this effort financially and technically. Advisers from many bureaus and missions defined the questions to be asked and provided invaluable commentary and direction during the studies. Among the many are John Anderson, Gretchen Bloom, Cynthia Chassy, Susie Clay, David Evans, Jim Fremming, Lane Hansen, Rick Harber, Karen Hilliard, Nancy Longworthy, Margaret Lycette, Margaret McLaughlin, Susan Merrill, Jane Nandy, Pat O'Connor, Anna Quandt, Julie Rea, Julia Richards, Donald Sillers, Dan Soules, David Sprague, Emily Vargas–Baron, and Liz Warfield.

Finally, several individuals outside of USAID have given generously of their time and thoughts. Pamela Dudzik, Deanna Handel, Peggy Kong, Bayard Lyons, Lisa Shusterman, Mitsue Uemura, and Laura Williams of the

Academy for Educational Development compiled data, supported field teams, managed communications, and endlessly revised and produced documents. Marcia Bernbaum, Ray Chesterfield, Ash Hartwell, John Hatch, and Fernando Rubio commented carefully on draft reports. Frank Method at UNESCO, Mary Joy Pigozzi at UNICEF, and Beth King, Marlene Lockheed, and Paud Murphy at the World Bank offered background information and orientation.

We hope you find this report worthy of your contributions. Many thanks to each of you.

Summary

DURING THE 1990s the nations of the world formally recognized that no country had emerged from third world status without educating its citizens. They further acknowledged that girls' and women's education is strongly associated with increased economic productivity, smaller family size, improved health and nutritional status, and education of the next generation of children. In its basic education programs and policies, USAID emphasized increasing girls' access to primary education, improving the quality of education given to girls, and strengthening institutions that support primary education for girls. To evaluate these efforts, the Agency's Center for Development Information and Evaluation conducted five field studies (by teams of 2 to 12 U.S. and local investigators over the course of two to six weeks in Guatemala, Guinea, Malawi, Nepal, and Pakistan), a country desk study (Egypt), issue-oriented research on Bolivia and Thailand, and a literature review. Five questions guided the entire project and each country evaluation:

- What are the best ways to get girls into schools?
- How can the quality of girls' education be improved?
- What are the best ways to help girls complete a basic education?
- How are boys affected by efforts to improve girls' education?
- What are the critical features of approaches that lead to sustainable outcomes?

What Are the Best Ways To Get Girls Into Schools?

USAID emphasized increasing the number of schools and changing their characteristics to meet the needs of girls and their families. These approaches supported rapid increases in school enrollments. Two features of the contexts in which these initiatives were implemented contributed to their effectiveness:

Popular demand for girls' education. While not universal or as strong as demand for boys' education, demand for girls' education proved to be widespread. Furthermore, demand and supply seem interactive: as schools became available, more girls enrolled; as more girls enrolled, social norms changed and demand for girls' education continued to grow rapidly.

Political commitment to universal basic education. USAID took a leadership role on the issue of girls' education. International visibility of the issue, donor coordination, and demonstrations of local demand for girls' primary education made girls' schooling become a potent political issue during the 1990s. Host country leaders supported large system-level initiatives and communicated their visions of universal girls' education to citizens. This strengthened community understanding and willingness to participate.

These policy and program actions were shown to be effective:

- Increasing the proportion of host country investments in primary education
- Strengthening institutions responsible for primary education, both public and private
- Increasing the supply of schools near girls
- Designing schools that were acceptable places for girls
- Engaging the community to participate in schools
- Eliminating or minimizing obstacles to girls' participation, such as threats to their security, costs for their schooling, and regulations that excluded them

Despite rapid rises in overall participation rates, many girls are still unable to participate in primary school. Demand is not universal. Communities need more support from nongovernmental organizations for capacity strengthening and mobilization. Where schools are not designed and managed to meet girls' needs, supply-side programs fail to increase girls' participation. For countries faced with economic hardships and a proliferating population, maintaining a positive trend in the proportion of girls going to school will be a challenge in the early decades of the 21st century.

How Can the Quality Of Girls' Education Be Improved?

The evidence from these countries suggests that when the supply of schools expands rapidly, education systems struggle to manage the complexities of recruiting, training, and supervising large numbers of new teachers, as well as the logistics of providing instructional materials, school construction, maintenance, and supplies. As a result, educational quality stagnates or declines, especially in the earliest grades, where the surge in enrollments is highest.

Educators in every country express their concerns about poor quality and its negative effects on girls. High dropout and repetition rates in the early grades substantiate those concerns. In Egypt, where enrollment surges occurred earlier than in other countries studied, girls' enrollment rates, even in urban areas, have declined, apparently in response to the poor quality of schools.

USAID-supported programs have striven to make curricula gender-neutral, to train teachers in gender equity, to address multilingualism, to improve curricula, to institutionalize effective instructional materials, and to standardize achievement testing. Girls' achievement, attendance, and persistence rose in intensive programs such as the *Nueva Escuela Unitaria* (new multigrade schools) in Guatemala, curriculum and testing sites in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, and community schools in Malawi. Even though these models demonstrated the effectiveness of integrating curricula, teaching, and testing, they were not scaled up because

- National and local stakeholders did not share common definitions of educational quality.
- Educational quality is an outcome of complex system operations and difficult to implement on a national scale.
- Educational quality—by any definition—is difficult to measure, monitor, and reward.

USAID worked with other donors in policy dialog to increase the supply of schools. But policy dialog about quality was impeded by the absence of a common vision and by competition among donors to promote their own models of educational quality. Aligning efforts with host country educators was difficult because of the lack of consensus on the precise nature of school quality or how to achieve it. Teachers' unions and teacher training colleges were not engaged in these initiatives and resisted change. Lacking local political support, coordinated donor commitments, dialog with stakeholders at different levels of each society, and policy frameworks to facilitate quality improvements, it is not surprising that governments did not scale up USAID's program inputs to improve the quality of girls' education.

What Are the Best Ways To Help Girls Complete A Basic Education?

Many more girls enroll in primary school than complete it. Failure to complete the cycle of basic education reflects

- Absence of social norms and expectations that girls will complete school
- Families' inability or unwillingness to support a girl's attendance, which may be linked to fears for the girl's safety, concerns about her sexuality, need for her labor, or lack of money to pay her school costs

- Especially in rural areas, lack of schools that offer the entire primary cycle close to girls' homes, and lack of alternatives such as distance education

- Failure to learn and achieve, which may be due to poor instructional quality, student capacity or preparedness for school, lack of time and support for study, or other factors that reduce a child's ability to function

Most education systems in the case-study countries were designed to weed out rather than include most students. High drop-out rates are a predictable outcome. Teachers use repetition to ensure that children learn the required material. Several countries have prohibited repetition in the early grades in order to move from a selective to a more inclusive orientation, but they have not dealt with the underlying issue of low student achievement. Teachers, lacking other strategies to improve student performance, have resisted passing all students. To reduce high failure rates in first grade, Pakistan's Balochistan province instituted a kindergarten year. This strategy has failed to achieve that end, because the kindergarten's curriculum and pedagogy are developmentally inappropriate for young children.

Other school-oriented initiatives to improve girls' completion rates include offering the higher primary grades in appropriate facilities near girls' homes, lowering or eliminating costs, and giving scholarships for primary or secondary education. Fee waivers and scholarships are effective but constitute both direct and opportunity costs for the systems that offer them.

Local efforts, such as community involvement in schools in Malawi and Pakistan, seemed to reduce repetition. Role models, support from traditional and local leaders, school acceptance of married girls, and (most important) control of violence toward and sexual harassment of girls underpinned efforts to improve completion rates. Finally, mothers' roles in their children's education is widely acknowledged but poorly understood. A small study found that the children of women in literacy and empowerment programs in Nepal repeated grades less often than their peers, possibly because their mothers gave them time and support for study.

How Are Boys Affected By Efforts to Improve Girls' Education?

Boys clearly and consistently benefited from initiatives aimed at meeting girls' schooling needs. No tradeoffs, negative effects, or declines in resources for boys were apparent. To the contrary, all evidence suggests that whenever new resources are invested in girls, resources for boys also increase.

Where governments undertook system reforms and initiatives in girls' education, boys' gross enrollment rates increased. In Guinea the gender disparities at the baseline were so extreme—and boys' increased enrollments were

sufficiently high—that the gender disparity index actually increased in favor of boys. This does not mean the initiative failed to improve girls' education; it simply speaks to the benefits boys accrued.

The emphasis on basic education reform as the platform for increasing and improving girls' education increased the proportion of education sector budgets dedicated to primary schools and strengthened the capacity of education ministries to supply primary schooling to all children. Policy dialog about the needs of out-of-school children, the outcomes of primary education, and the power of community participation raised the national visibility of and investment in these issues. The girls' education initiatives benefited all children by training teachers, supplying instructional materials, and expanding the supply of school places and school options, especially in underserved areas where vulnerable girls and boys did not have access to school.

Specific initiatives that targeted girls also benefited boys. Publicity campaigns in the pilot districts in Guinea contributed to boys' as well as girls' enrollments rising faster than in the rest of the country. In Guatemala, boys' participation improved more in schools where girls had scholarships than in control schools.

Although girls are more likely to be excluded from school because of costs, expense also often leads parents to hold out or withdraw their sons from school. In most of the case-study countries, families and communities began insisting on better access and quality for boys as well as girls. In Malawi, tens of thousands of boys now directly benefit from fee waivers that might never have been instituted without the girls' education initiative. NGO support for community schools has generated new models and alternatives for financing and managing primary schools and teachers.

In all these countries, USAID emphasized not only girls but also the other children most vulnerable to exclusion from school: those in remote rural communities, those from poor families, those who don't speak the language of instruction, and those in disenfranchised ethnic groups. Attending to the importance of education for these children attracted political attention and resources where they were needed. Vulnerable children of both sexes, rather than traditionally privileged elites, benefited.

What Are the Critical Features of Approaches That Lead to Sustainable Outcomes?

It is early to assess the sustainability of achievements to date, but the following features appear critical for sustaining systemic changes:

- Top-down *and* bottom-up actions are taken to improve girls' education.

- Policy initiatives institutionalize commitment, investments, and incentives. (Community participation strengthens local

ownership, improves safety for girls, and increases political pressure for girls' education as a desirable social norm.)

- Political and other leaders shape popular visions and expectations of girls' schooling.

USAID's record to date suggests that

- Increasing girls' access and participation can be done effectively, but the job is far from complete. There still are great numbers of girls out of school; population momentum and weak economies threaten future progress. Sustaining the positive trends in girls' primary schooling may depend both on political will in host countries and on continued donor commitment to promoting and investing in universal basic education.

- The challenge to improve the quality of education most girls receive remains unmet, although small-scale programs (most of them run by NGOs) offer promising models grounded in teacher and community participation and control.

1 Background

USAID HAS TAKEN A LEADERSHIP ROLE in promoting girls' education. The Agency's new human capacity strategic objective of improving and expanding basic education specifies women and girls as the first of the underserved groups it wants to reach. Congressional earmarks for basic education within the Agency's Child Survival and Women in Development Programs also contribute to the issue's high profile within the Agency and beyond. In 1997, USAID initiated an evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of its sectoral investments to improve basic education for girls. This report presents the results of that evaluation.

Any evaluation is an assessment at a point or points in time. Enough time has elapsed since our teams visited the case-study countries that changes (some significant) have occurred that would alter our findings. However, we offer here our best understanding of the data analyzed, the information collected, and the phenomena observed. We hope these are useful to assess strategies used so far and to guide future strategies.

The Significance Of Girls' Education

Universal primary education became a high-profile, high-priority international development goal during the past decade, formalized in the Education for All by the Year 2000 resolutions signed at the March 1990 conference in Jomtien, Thailand. The nations of the world acknowledged that no country had emerged from third world status without educating its citizens and that girls' education in particular is strongly associated with increased economic productivity, smaller family size, improved health and nutritional status, and educating the next generation of children. In addition to these pragmatic reasons for concentrating on girls' schooling, most nations now recognize that basic education, literacy, and numeracy are necessities in the modern world and that girls and women have an essential human right to a "basic" education.

Basic education, the opportunity to learn the requisite skills for participation in formal markets and civil society, is operationally

defined in situ, usually in terms of formal years of schooling. Completing the primary education cycle is the typical benchmark of a basic education in poorer countries; primary education cycles range from five to eight years. Basic education in most industrial countries is completion of a secondary, university preparatory, or vocational course. Whatever the target, attaining basic education in formal school settings is currently the prevalent strategy for bringing literacy and numeracy skills to new groups of citizens before they reach adulthood.

Girls, rural residents, children of the severely poor, and certain ethnic minorities are the groups at highest risk of missing out on basic education. The world's largest disadvantaged group is girls. USAID and other donors have made serious efforts during the past decade to effectively and efficiently address their basic learning needs.

USAID Debate About Strategies To Improve Girls' Education

There is active dialog within USAID about the best practices and most appropriate strategies to ensure that all girls, as well as boys, get a good basic education. Perspectives range from those who would invest in basic education systems rather than solve specific problems that exclude some children from school, to those who wish to see USAID concentrate on eliminating the inefficient and inequitable gap between boys' and girls' educational enrollment.

In a spirit of internal reflection and debate, USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation in 1997–98 undertook Focus on Girls: An Evaluation of USAID Programs and Policies in Education. The evaluation examined the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's efforts to increase girls' access to primary education, improve the quality of education girls receive, and strengthen institutions that support primary education for girls.

The evaluation consisted of five field studies (Guatemala, Guinea, Malawi, Nepal, and Pakistan), a country desk study (Egypt), issue-oriented research on Bolivia and Thailand, and an extensive literature review. Field studies were conducted by teams of 2 to 12 U.S. and local investigators over the course of two to six weeks. Data-gathering and analysis techniques included

- Structured interviews with policymakers, program managers, educators, parents, and children
- Analysis of statistical data
- Document reviews
- Semistructured observations of schools and classrooms
- Assessments of girls' basic literacy and numeracy skills after one to three years of basic education

2 Evaluation Framework

THE EVALUATION was designed around five questions that surfaced consistently in interviews with dozens of USAID technical and senior management staff:

- What are the best ways to get girls into schools?
- How can the quality of girls' education be improved?
- What are the best ways to help girls complete a basic education?
- How are boys affected by efforts to improve girls' education?
- What are the critical features of approaches that lead to sustainable outcomes?

Each question reflects many important ideas and phenomena common to most countries struggling to develop or implement girls' education projects. Equally important, these are the questions USAID personnel believe will be of greatest use as they develop Agency strategies for future investment in basic education. This chapter reviews those questions. Subsequent chapters present USAID's models and approaches to improving girls' education; challenges, strategies, and outcomes of USAID's efforts viewed through the lens of the five questions; and conclusions.

Five Questions

What Are the Best Ways To Get Girls Into School?

For many of the world's people, basic education and literacy are still distant goals. Nations have made tremendous strides forward in educating their citizens in the last half-century. Literacy in the developing world jumped from 35 percent in 1950 to 70 percent in 1995 (Fox 1998, 9). But there is great disparity around the world in adult literacy, from industrial nations (which enjoy almost universal literacy) to regions such as Pakistan's rural province of Balochistan (where only 3 percent of women and 8 percent of men were literate in 1990). And where it is difficult for boys to get a basic education, it is typically more difficult for girls.

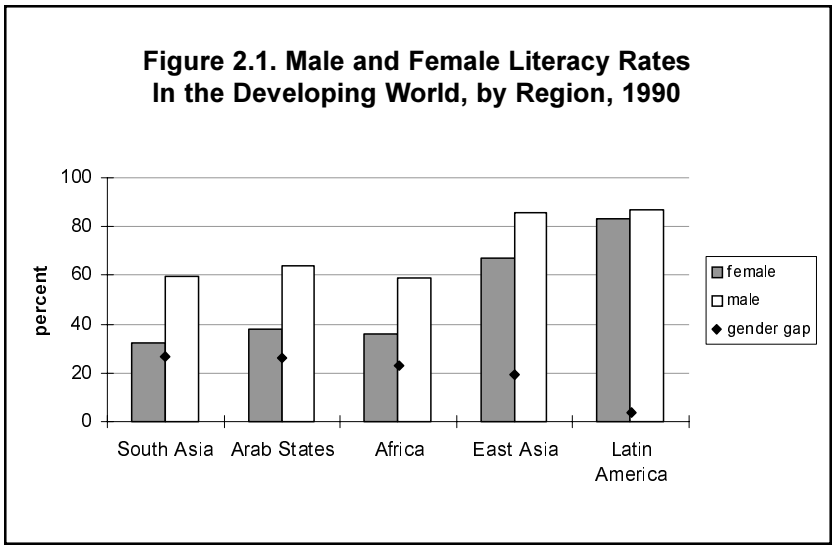


Figure 2.1 illustrates regional literacy rates for women and men over age 15 in 1990, the year of the Jomtien, Thailand, World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs. The figure shows that much of the world's population is not equipped for success in the 21st century and that, although the gender gap is narrowing, many more women than men are illiterate (Sutton 1998).

USAID's principal line of attack on the lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills, which undermines achievement of USAID's development goals, has been to support expanding and strengthening formal education systems to prevent additional generations from reaching adulthood without basic education.

Most education data from developing countries are unreliable. Often they have been collected or handled in ways that render them almost useless to policy and program planners. Nevertheless, whatever the quality and structure of the data, that is where planning and evaluation begin.

Gross enrollment rates are calculated by dividing total enrollment figures by estimates of a nation's total school-age population. Figure 2.2 illustrates gross enrollment rates in developing countries from 1960 through 1990. The plotted lines show the percentage of school-age population enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary (university and vocational) school. The gender gap is stark for primary education. This is especially so in Asia and Africa.

Gross enrollment rates hide a multitude of sins. They reflect system inefficiencies such as grade repeaters, overage and underage children, and children who enroll but never attend. This accounts for reported enrollment rates that exceed 100 percent of the school-age population. The rosters also include errors in school enrollment data. Ghost schools, which don't exist or don't function, have been documented in many countries; their students exist only on paper and are reported to national ministries and international databases so teachers and other staff can continue drawing salaries. Errors in population estimates also undermine enrollment rates; censuses can be decades out of date.

Notwithstanding the data's limitations, the gross enrollment trends shown in figure 2.2 demonstrate that an educational revolution took place during 1960–90. The gains in primary and secondary education rates are remarkable,

particularly when one considers that the world's population nearly doubled during that period.

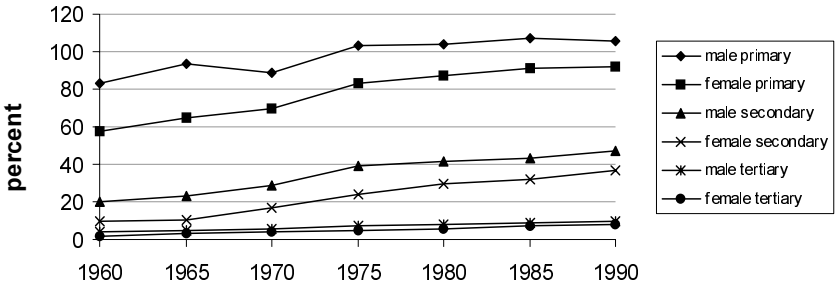
Although total enrollments have risen in every region, the difference in boys' and girls' enrollment rates has narrowed only slightly overall for primary education and virtually not at all for secondary or tertiary education. Gender is the most prevalent risk factor for lack of education in the developing world, except Latin America* and thus is the characteristic that most reliably identifies vulnerable children—those least likely to attend school and gain basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, rural residence is also a strong risk factor in almost every country. Rural residence interacts with gender and ethnicity to define the children most vulnerable to exclusion from a basic education.

The question how to get more girls into school calls attention to a host of issues related to supply of schools, demand for girls' education, and the systems in which supply and demand interact. Is there a nearby school for every girl? Is the school in a building or a shelter? Does the teacher usually show up to teach? Is he or she trained and supervised? Does the teacher abuse the pupils either verbally or physically? Does the teacher allow boys to abuse girls? Are there any supplies and instructional materials in the classroom?

Do families consider the school a culturally appropriate environment for girls? Is it appropriate for girls from different socioeconomic levels, different religions, different ethnic groups, different linguistic groups, different ages, rural areas, urban areas? Is the teacher trustworthy and competent? Are girls safe when they travel to school? Will families allow girls to dedicate time to attend school and study outside of school? Will families support direct, indirect, and opportunity costs for girls' schooling?

If there is not an appropriate school for every girl, why not? Is there political support for universal primary education? Is there political will to improve and in-

Figure 2.2. Gross Enrollment Rates In Developing Countries, 1960–90



*One other highly significant risk factor is civil strife. No programs to address the education losses of children in conflict zones, refugee camps, or migration status are included here, and the issues these children, their communities, and their nations face are not specifically addressed.

Table 2.1. Examples of Commonly Cited Indicators Of School Quality		
Input	**Process**	**Output**
• Teacher–pupil ratios	• Completion of curricular units	• Completion rates
• Pupil–space ratios	• Teacher–pupil interactions	• Achievement scores
• Pupil–textbook ratios	• Teacher attendance	• Promotion rates
• Supplies and distribution	• Student attendance	• Acceptance rates to next cycle
• Teacher qualifications	• Parent participation	• Performance in next cycle
• Special or supplemental programs	• Continuous assessment	• Graduates' income levels
		• Graduates' career choices and success

crease schooling for girls and vulnerable children? Are there sufficient human and material resources to achieve universal primary education? Are investments in the school system concentrated in the secondary and especially the tertiary levels to the detriment of the quantity and quality of primary schools? Are there reliable data about school-age children? Does corruption syphon off resources needed to expand schools for girls?

How Can the Quality of Girls' Education Be Improved?

Everyone has a standard by which to judge the quality of education.* Because there is so rarely an articulated vision of what a quality education would "look" like, and even more rarely a vision shared by various stakeholders, it is difficult to talk about the characteristics of an effective school. For instance, if parents want their children to master a body of agricultural and health information and their children learn only basic reading and writing skills, parents may deem the school poor. At the same time, the government may judge the school to have fulfilled its goals admirably by imparting basic literacy skills.

With the caveat that standards of quality are in the eyes of the beholder, and that discussions and typical measures or indicators of quality underscore the limitations of supply and

*Donors and international researchers have often defined quality in education in terms of *inputs* (such as how well and how appropriately the education system is supplied with teachers, schools, curricula, materials, training, and supervision), *outputs* (that is, student learning reflected in measures of knowledge, skills, and productivity after leaving school, as well as in rates of completion, repetition, or dropout from school), and *processes* (the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the classroom). Active community participation in education has added new dimensions to definitions of quality. The relevance and responsiveness of schools to local political, social, and cultural contexts and values are important elements of a current definition of quality.

demand models for education, the usual measures of quality in education can be classified into three groups: input indicators, process indicators, and output indicators (see table 2.1). Unfortunately, seldom do any developing countries report these at the national level. This dearth of information reflects the lack of consensus about what constitutes school quality, the failure of any measure or set of measures to give a full picture of quality, the invalid and inaccurate nature of data on school quality, and, consequently, the difficulty of comparing quality indicators from different educational systems.

As education management information systems improve, more education ministries are trying to monitor a few indicators of quality. But it is not yet possible to profile school quality in regions or define performance measurements by which the case-study countries can be assessed. Because comparable data are lacking, it is not possible to assess the extent to which school quality has gender-differentiated effects on girls' participation, and learning outcomes cannot be assessed reliably.

However, there is broad consensus in the international education community on two points. First, challenges to quality have accompanied the rapid expansion of primary school systems in many countries. Second, girls and boys in the same classroom do not typically get the same education. Throughout the world, boys consistently receive more (and more *challenging*) instruction from teachers. Curricula typically feature many strong role models for boys but few or weak models for girls. In mixed-sex classrooms, girls often suffer harassment. Resolving these challenges and improving quality may be critical to sustaining gains in girls' enrollments.

In this evaluation, we attempted to ask questions about quality from several perspectives. Some of those questions, from the donors' perspective, include the following: Is the teacher well trained? Are teaching and learning supplies available to all teachers and students? Is the teacher's time and attention distributed equally to all students? Is the classroom an environment where boys and girls feel comfortable exploring ideas and participating actively in the learning process? Is the school building adequate? Are hygiene and other features appropriate for girls? Are the students seated and organized in a way that facilitates their learning and their helping each other learn?

From communities and parents, we sought to determine the following: Is the school safe and secure? Is school a place where the children are learning things useful to them and their community? Do the students demonstrate progress in their education? Do they pass national tests, get positions in secondary schools, get jobs in the formal sector, lead productive lives, rear healthy children, participate in their communities? Does the school accomplish the learning goals valued by the students, the community, and the nation?

What Are the Best Ways To Help Girls Complete A Basic Education?

Once girls are in school, what steps can be taken to keep them there? This question underscores issues of retention, dropout, and completing educational cycles. Gross enrollment rates do not reveal whether children are progressing normally through the sequence of a basic education. Unfortunately, few developing countries maintain data systems on education with the precision required to compute accurately the progression of individual students from grade to grade. Rather, estimates of persistence and completion are derived from statistical techniques, such as *cohort reconstruction*, in which the number of students in a higher grade is compared with the number who entered in the initial year for that cohort; the figures are then adjusted for student repetition along the way.

UNESCO and UNICEF have made some attempts to create internationally comparable data of student persistence through basic education. The basic or primary cycle across countries varies in length from a low of five years to the increasingly common eight years, with six years still being typical. Fifth-grade participation is often used as a standard index for student persistence. In Egypt 80 percent of girls persisted to fifth grade (as of 1996), but only 47 percent in Guatemala (in 1995) and 32 percent in Malawi (in 1994) did so.

Within the national data on basic education persistence and completion rates for every country are subpopulation variations. In general, the groups with lower gross enrollment rates (which, in part, reflect completion rates) also have lower completion rates. Far fewer girls than boys complete school, and if they do complete school, girls are much less likely than boys to enter the next cycle of education.

Rural residents and ethnic minorities also exhibit lower completion rates than their corresponding national populations. One reason is structural; in many countries, village schools consist of one multigrade classroom that ends at third grade. To complete the full basic cycle, rural students must travel long distances. For girls, and often for minorities, travel is not possible.

High repetition rates also hinder girls' ability to eventually graduate because the more years a student spends in school to complete the basic cycle, the greater the expense to her family—and the less convinced they may be of her ability to achieve a reasonable return on their investment. Culturally restrictive norms defining gender roles become increasingly relevant as girls reach puberty, and girls who repeat grades reach puberty in primary school. Repeating students become older students, and girls face more restrictions on mobility and behavior as they reach puberty. Where repetition is prevalent, minority students who do not speak the language of instruction are also likely to advance slowly because they repeat grades while mastering that language. Repetition is costly for school systems and families. Repeating students are more likely to drop out before completing the primary cycle.

We have mentioned already many of the supply-side issues that affect persistence and completion, but there are others that become important as girls progress to the higher primary grades: Do local schools continue through the last grade of the basic education cycle? Are there statutes that hinder completion of the cycle such as antirepetition laws, negative pregnancy laws, or prohibitions against overage and underage students being in a certain grade? Do girls receive financial, social, and logistical support to continue their education from the government, school, community, family, and peers? Do schools allow girls to adapt school schedules to their household tasks and the roles they are expected to play as they grow older? Are school environments friendly for older girls? Do girls feel threatened (particularly sexually) in the school environment, on the way to school, or in the community after school?

The meaning that a girl, her parents, the community, and the state place on her progress through the basic education cycle affects demand for girls' schooling. For instance, after repeating, is the girl less likely than her brothers to receive support to continue her education? Is she expected to marry or have children at a young age?* Is there community or peer pressure to stop going to school? Do people view school as a place that is only suitable for pre-teen girls?

How are girls' long-term economic prospects affected by continued schooling? What are the short-, medium-, and long-term costs of their education? Who bears the costs and who reaps the benefits for each additional level of education?

And, finally, does persisting through and completing the basic education cycle reflect learning and mastering basic skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics? Learning achievement is the underlying goal of basic education policies and investments, but it is much more difficult to measure learning achievement than persistence and completion.

Most British postcolonial education systems include an end-of-cycle examination that determines graduation from the basic cycle and, often, entry into the next one. However, these exams often are poorly constructed from the perspective of measuring learning achievement. They seek not to determine whether a certain body of material has been mastered but to exclude the children who will be unable to proceed. Both the construction of the exams and their pass rates may vary from year to year, making them weak measurements of learning. Further, in some systems—such as Egypt's—the exams are administered not at the conclusion of the primary education cycle (five years) but after the eighth year of school, which means students are tested before that time entirely at their teachers' whim.

*Kapakasa (1992) found that girls in Malawi, for example, are expected to start their own households by age 14 or 15.

Reports from small research studies, evaluations of demonstration projects, and compilations of end-of-cycle examinations suggest broad patterns of gender differences in achievement (Kane 1996). As girls approach puberty, their achievement (which in many systems outpaces boys' in the early years) drops off, and boys begin to excel. By secondary school, boys outperform girls in math and science in most countries. Culture- and context-specific variability in gender patterns of achievement are abundant; however, such generalizations should not define expectations, nor should they be a basis for program planning.

Because there are so few data on school achievement, informal, individual assessments of girls' basic literacy and math skills were administered in each field-study site for this evaluation.

How Are Boys Affected By Efforts to Improve Girls' Education?

This question is political in nature. It speaks to the concern in USAID, and in many countries, about the equity and efficiency of affirmative action initiatives. Do students who are not members of the beneficiary group benefit? Or are they neglected when resources are funneled into programs aimed specifically at girls? The debate grapples with unintended consequences of strategies to improve girls' educational participation and other investments in education that must be forgone to target girls.

On the supply side, we may ask questions such as: Are more schools becoming available to all students? Do girl-friendly inputs to schools bring positive benefits for boys and girls both? Are boys and girls both receiving better teaching from newly trained, retrained, or women teachers? Are policy changes helping or hindering boys and girls? Are boys and girls both learning positive ways to interact as a result of girls' education programming? Are schools as institutions becoming more integrated and accepted by local communities? Are parents more involved in their children's education?

On the demand side, we may ask whether girls' education initiatives increase or decrease boys', their families', and communities' support for education in general and boys' education in particular.

What Are the Critical Features Of Approaches That Lead To Sustainable Outcomes?

This evaluation defined sustainability as the continuation of the results or benefits of policy and program initiatives. That definition emphasizes results rather than activities; where results are incompletely achieved, the continuation of processes to achieve results is also interpreted as an indication of sustainability.

Political will, catalyzed and sustained by grass-roots demand, is probably the key to sustaining investments in girls' schooling and sustaining outcomes for girls' education. Girls' education initiatives are predicated on implicit

models of universal primary education systems that, once functioning equitably and efficiently, are expected to generate their own momentum. However, the reality is that current donor funding for broad girls' education initiatives and other basic education efforts directly and indirectly supports recurrent costs, a situation that poses a challenge for sustained programming or investment. Are countries and local communities able or willing to continue these initiatives once donor funding is withdrawn? In other words, will changes in school systems, communities, and classrooms be continued and institutionalized and thus passed on to later generations of pupils?

Examining country programs, one must ask whether initiatives were designed for continuity and local ownership. Did local communities and national institutions create and implement policies and programs? Were policy frameworks developed to support program activities, investments, and positive behaviors in communities? Was political will and consensus built to institutionalize systems and revenue streams for girls' education? Did the government or education ministry actively share strategic planning and responsibility for capital and recurrent costs? Was the project crafted and implemented in such a way as to consistently allow and encourage individuals, communities, and the state to effectively take over production, management, and maintenance requirements?

Were short-term inputs designed to generate longer term sustainable outcomes? For instance, were schools built to minimize future repairs or maintenance? Were learning materials produced in formats that make it possible for communities to regenerate them? Were communities given training, assistance, and resources to manage girls' schools and supervise local teachers? Were policies—for example, disciplinary policies against predatory teachers—effectively enforced?

USAID Context For the Evaluation

The five questions that began this chapter map USAID's construction of its own political and technical challenges as the Agency seeks to satisfy congressional mandates and its own international development commitments to improve girls' education. USAID's corps of education officers has been reduced, and its budgets have not grown. Other wealthier donors and groups of donors carry more weight now in policy dialog with developing countries. Changes in USAID's own internal politics underlie the changing nature of its policies and projects. Shifting resources have had direct consequences for the Agency's education efforts, from the massive school construction projects (funded with economic support funds for Egypt and Pakistan) to the shrinking project in Guatemala (virtually eliminated by budget cuts because of changing international interests in the United States).

3 USAID's Approaches To Girls' Education

GIRLS' EDUCATION is a foundation for each of USAID's first six long-term goals: achieving economic growth; strengthening democracy; building human capacity through education; stabilizing world population; protecting the environment; and reducing suffering and premature death.

Educating girls is the most cost-effective way to achieve an educated population of women over the long term, because the rapid growth of younger populations far outstrips the number of adult women who can be educated in nonformal literacy programs. Concentrating on school-age girls is also a good strategy for achieving the Agency's basic education goals, since girls make up the largest population of children out of school. USAID's principal approaches to improving basic education with an emphasis on girls are as follows:

- Reforming the policy framework for basic education
- Strengthening primary educational institutions
- Expanding the number of schools, removing barriers to girls' school participation, and strengthening demand for schooling girls and other marginalized groups of children
- Improving teaching, curricula, and educational materials—the quality of education for girls

USAID also supports literacy programs for women, although typically the programs are designed with multiple objectives—literacy for microcredit or enabling and encouraging women to vote, for example. Educating their daughters is expected to be a by-product. To assess this strategy to educate females, Nepal's effort to increase women's literacy is included as a case in this study.

USAID Investments In Basic Education With a Focus on Girls

From fiscal year 1990, when USAID began to track these data, through fiscal year 1996, USAID spent almost $200 million on improving girls' education.* This includes adult education and training but not participant training.† Even acknowledging the data's unreliability, if the biases have not changed radically, the trends indicate that the commitment to girls' education has increased steadily. In FY96, USAID committed $192 million to basic education, of which slightly more than one fourth, over $51 million, emphasized improving girls' education ‡ in 22 countries. However, even investments that don't target girls benefit them as a result of basic education improvements.

*The USAID budget office compiled these data from funding codes for education and gender activities. Some activities may not be directly related to girls' schooling. Data may be incomplete; it appears some missions did not report in FY94, and a congressional presentation for that year was never finalized.

†These figures are probably inflated estimates of USAID's investment, based on budget office funding codes for education and gender activities. The coding system allows every dollar to carry as many codes as the reporting officer sees fit to assign; thus, one dollar might be coded for gender, education, population, reproductive health, civil society participation, and income generation.

‡Because of the multicoding that often occurs for a single dollar invested, USAID officers think these data generally overestimate investments in basic education and girls. See previous footnote for an explanation of the coding system that produced these data.

USAID's investments in girls' education include both policy and program initiatives. USAID has used a variety of approaches, including broad economic support packages as a "carrot" for country participation in education sector reforms; budgetary support to governments and private sector entities for short-term transition costs of staff, training, and implementing new programs; and technical assistance to help strengthen national capacities to plan, manage, and sustain reformed education systems.

USAID's Role in The International Community Of Nations and Donors

International Leadership

USAID was one of the first donors to invest in girls' education. The Agency gave the issue visibility in international forums such as the 1990 World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs, in Jomtien, Thailand. The Agency has worked with other donors to ensure that developing countries participated in defining international policies. The consistency of leadership in USAID-assisted countries for girls' enrollment reflects years of international dialog, raising awareness, and fine-tuning the consensus around universal access.

Policy dialog with governments and other donors is the process of developing shared

visions and goals and of adjusting and accommodating goals to changing realities. USAID's effectiveness has been built on its long-term field presence and strong technical staff. These professionals have been able to interact with counterparts in host countries, bringing sectoral expertise to the assessment of problems, needs, and political realities. Where the best technical staff were on the ground, they developed coherent and integrated visions of how to improve girls' education in the country context. They also managed technical resources efficiently.

USAID has also taken the lead in bringing donors together in countries to talk with local policymakers to clarify goals, responsibilities, and investments. Because USAID was among the first to acknowledge girls' education as essential to development, the Agency enjoys a reputation for technical strength in the field. Sadly, given the cuts and changes in USAID technical staff in recent years, the Agency's profile in some countries is a more accurate reflection of its status a decade ago than today.

Advocacy for Girls' Education

USAID has championed girls' education internationally, using research, workshops, conferences, and communications to sensitize, increase awareness, and disseminate information. Because education is such a political issue, a broad base of citizen awareness is important to ensure that leaders invest in it. In addition to its own efforts, USAID has occasionally teamed with advocacy groups. One notable example is USAID's early support, in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation and other funders, for the Forum for African Women Educationists, which has actively promoted a girls' education agenda in Africa. The regional visibility FAWE has provided has made supporting girls' education an attractive political option in most African countries. In addition, the group's visibility has attracted the attention of prominent and capable leaders in commerce, in education, and in women's movements. Finally, several country chapters have been focal points for strategic planning and technical support for improving both the supply and quality of girls' schooling.

USAID has invested in other efforts that have indirectly strengthened advocacy for girls' education. Strengthening the role of private voluntary organizations in designing and delivering development (in addition to relief and emergency) programs has led to their active advocacy around issues that directly affect the success of their grass-roots efforts. Girls' education has surfaced as a priority in this arena.

Finally, USAID's support for women in development policies has also contributed to the international commitment to girls' education. The 1995 Beijing women's conference gave greater emphasis to girls' education than had been the case in earlier women's conferences. And in Africa and South Asia, where girls' participation rates are lowest, an intensified effort by women's groups seems to have followed that mobilization.

Investing in Countries: Analyzing Situations And Contexts Of Girls' Education

Supply and Demand Models For Girls' Education

Most USAID initiatives have been supply-side interventions to increase the number of schools and classrooms that match the needs of girls and their families. USAID's first major girls' education initiative was the Pakistan program, which styled itself a "supply side" initiative. Subsequent programs have been built on supply and demand models, with a significantly greater emphasis on actually supplying education than on generating or stimulating demand for girls' schooling.

Girls' education analysts commonly use a supply and demand framework to organize and think about education systems; to analyze patterns of participation; to interpret enrollment and completion data; and to translate the data into policies and programs. Supply and demand models do some things particularly well. For example, they specify points in the flow of the educational process on which policymakers can focus their attention. Holding systems and learning cycles constant for the purpose of analysis reveals openings in the cycle where change can be introduced. However, essential features of the education process are ignored because of the unnatural "freezing" inherent in the supply and demand model. When the interpersonal and social dynamics of the educational system are excluded from decisions about how to create change, there is a serious danger that changes with the greatest potential impact will not be undertaken.

A supply and demand model defines divisions between the school and the community that do not reflect reality and have led to distortions and inefficiencies in the education process. The economic model discounts and sacrifices interpersonal, local, regional, national, and global politics and dialog and the sociocultural contexts in which schools are embedded. Consequently, inputs that appear so effective in the supply and demand model do not always have the expected outcomes on the ground. For example, it may appear that investing in textbooks is an effective supply-side input in a certain situation. But if the investors are unaware of the situation on the ground, the investment may be misused—producing books without girls in them, on topics familiar only to boys, perhaps, or books sold by school officials rather than distributed free. However, the model is helpful when examining the economics of education, which policymakers must often do. Often, the principal impact countries expect from education is economic. Education professionals are often asked to justify spending on education in these terms. This often requires what amounts to a cost–benefit analysis of education, and a supply and demand model of the education system is helpful in economic modeling and interpreting the education system.

Many of USAID's policy initiatives have been supply-focused, emphasizing increased numbers and better design of schools to include specific features attractive to girls. Many pro-

grams have also been supply-focused: building schools, training teachers, printing textbooks, implementing new approaches to managing gender issues in the classroom. The results of this evaluation suggest that these have been appropriate strategies. In all field-study countries except Guatemala, there was plenty of unmet demand for girls' schooling. The need was for more schools that met the requirements of girls, their families, and communities.

Moving beyond traditional supply and demand models, systems models characterize more recent programs. These designs are "bottom up" as well as "top down." They rely heavily on community participation in girls' education, not just to open schools in remote communities and to help prepare communities for local management of schools, but also as a way to explore, respond to, and mobilize public demand for girls' education.

Expanding the Model: Case Studies, New Questions, And Qualitative Data

Supply and demand models are useful heuristics, particularly when coupled with methods that introduce data and ways of looking at girls' education that complement and strengthen the quantitative understanding offered by quasi-economic models. Some complementary methods use ethnographic, sociological, and psychological techniques to ask new questions that center on social, interactive, historic, or political aspects of the education system; to collect and use both quantitative and qualitative sources of data; and to use comparative case-study methodologies to look in a more historical and contextualized way at education systems and community participation.

As USAID accumulated experience with girls' education initiatives, the drawbacks of a simple supply and demand model became evident. There was significant latent demand (demand that was unexpressed until schools became available) for girls' education in Pakistan; however, effectively supplying girls' schools to rural communities required a more systematic integration of community participation with the education system; supply and demand models were not rich enough to capture on-the-ground cultural, social, and political processes that determined the success or failure of community interventions.

The case studies illustrate the limits of a supply and demand model. The Egypt study in particular demonstrates that families are selective in their demands for education, often limiting girls' participation in school if the quality of the supply is poor. Malawi shows that parent expectations of long-term economic returns can flood an education system, overwhelming supply with a rush of pent-up demand. All suggest that as more children enter the work force (and the marriage market) with the competitive edge of education, demand for education rises, reminding us that, to a much greater extent than with simple consumer goods or commodities, *educational supply and demand are interactive*.

Demand for girls' education is more conditional than demand for boys' education. It depends more on the quality of available schooling. It is widely understood, and qualitative research substantiates, that when school quality is low, families withdraw daughters sooner than sons. Contextual social and economic changes also affect demand for girls' education more than demand for boys' education. Examples throughout Africa have shown that when a subsistence economy is compromised by natural disasters or market changes, girls are pulled out of school and put into domestic production. Conversely, opening economic and social opportunities through democratization can strengthen demand for girls' education, as Malawi's doubling of enrollment proves.

Because girls' education problems are so complex at ground level, USAID has designed its policy and programs on more eclectic models, which are more responsive to the specific problems that underlie low enrollments of girls. In each case-study country, girls' education still lags behind boys'. In some, the gender gap is the norm across the nation; in others, such as Guatemala, Bolivia, and pockets in Africa, girls in major ethnic groups have remained outside the trend toward universal education. Disaggregating enrollment data by district or ethnic group is essential for recognizing where to target girls' education efforts. Additional qualitative analysis is required to design appropriate policies and programs.

Assessing Stage Of Progress and Context

Setting those institutional considerations aside, successful initiatives are built on analysis of the status and context of girls' education in the country and designing policy and program initiatives appropriate for the problems and situations of the moment.

Understanding the status of girls' education usually begins with examining enrollment, completion, repetition, and dropout rates. Once the status is assessed, it is necessary to analyze context and underlying dynamics to understand the nature of the problem and develop a strategy. Table 3.1 presents some features of the status of basic education, context, and dynamics that have figured prominently in USAID experiences evaluated for this study. Although the table gives the appearance of lines between the features of status and of context and dynamics, they are not isolated from one another; in reality they feed back, overlap, and recur.

Moving to Action

Once the status and dynamics of basic education have been assessed, the next step in developing effective girls' education initiatives is to carefully assess host country goals, stakeholder interests, political considerations, and dialog to achieve an explicit consensus on the purpose and objectives for policy and program investments. Some of the questions to explore with counterparts in the process of vision and goal-setting are

Table 3.1. Critical Features of Context and Stage Of Progress Toward Universal Girls' Education

Status	Context and Dynamics
Enrollment Review net enrollment data by trends in enrollment. Disaggregate by • grade • sex • rural–urban • language–ethnic • income • region	**Supply of and Demand for Basic Education for Girls** • Availability of schools • Distance from children's homes • Appropriateness of facilities, curricula, teachers, and materials • Safety • Costs to families
Completion of Basic Education Cycle Review completion data by • grade • sex • rural–urban • language–ethnic • income • region If completion data not available, review • final year enrollments • leaving exams • enrollment in next level	**Supply of, Demand for, And Quality of Girls' Education** • Availability and proximity of upper grades in rural areas • Class size • Teacher–pupil ratios • Quality of instruction • Costs to families • Incentives for completion • Regulatory obstacles to continued enrollment (such as pregnancy, age) • Cultural constraints to school attendance specific to older girls: safety, facilities, gender composition • Links between high repetition and dropout rates
Repetition Review repetition data by • grade • sex • rural–urban • language–ethnic • income • region	**Quality of Girls' Education** • System repetition policies and practices • Quality of instruction (teaching, instructional materials) **For early grades emphasize** • School readiness and children's learning capacity • Language of instruction • Developmentally appropriate curricula (active learning) • Family support (gender differences) • Links between repetition and dropout **For later grades add** • Qualifying exams for next level

- Is the goal of their system *selective* or *inclusive* education?
- Is basic education the top priority?
- What are the learning outcomes for students?
- What other outcomes are important?
- What is a quality education in this country?

The most successful USAID-supported initiatives have been implemented by host country, donor, and technical assistance teams that share a common vision of *universal* basic education as their top priority. The primacy of this goal typically is challenged in two ways. First, elites and other groups in many countries support government investment in university and technical education. The annual per student costs to governments of tertiary education can be hundreds of times higher than the annual per student costs for primary education, and most university students come from wealthier families. Attempts to expand access are seen as threats to quality and, in point of fact, do appear to have adversely affected quality.

The evidence from these case studies points to the conclusion that *demand for girls' education is widespread; it is the supply of schools that is insufficient or not designed to meet girls' school needs*. However, simply increasing the supply of schools without regard to where they were located, what teachers were assigned to them, or how communities related to them did not get all girls into schools. Assessing unmet demand can provide an enlightening information base for design. As USAID began to explore the possibility of a girls' education initiative in Pakistan, local educators responded that families and communities were uninterested and unwilling to send girls to school. Simple research revealed that many girls were already in school but went uncounted because they attended boys' schools (there were no girls' schools near their homes). That information, plus the interest additional parents expressed in educating their daughters if schools were available, transformed the dialog and led to a common vision of a supply-side approach to increasing girls' education in Pakistan's Balochistan and the North-West Frontier Provinces.

Results from all the countries lead to the conclusion that where fewer than 80 percent of school-age girls are enrolled, or where the gap between girls' and boys' gross enrollment rates exceeds 10 percent, there is typically a shortfall in the *supply* of schools and teachers who meet parents' demand specifications for their daughters. Successful initiatives not only supply the schools and teachers that parents desire but also communicate a vision of universal schooling for girls as well as boys. That vision reaches communities and families through multiple channels—interpersonal, political, and mass media. As schools and classrooms become comfortable for girls, social norms begin to change, and demand for girls' schooling is further expanded and strengthened.

One threat to making education universal is poor-quality schools. USAID and other

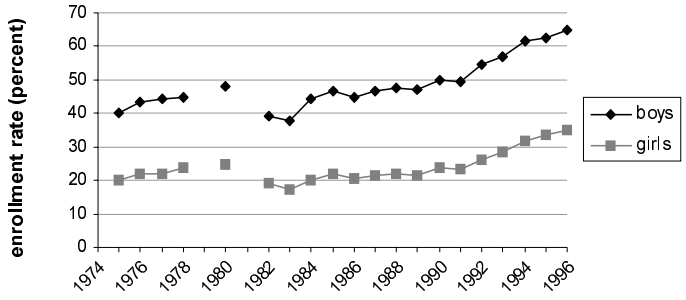
donors have for decades supported research and demonstration projects to improve educational quality. Nevertheless, there is little dialog recorded with host country educators and stakeholders about the critical features of quality. Moreover, little consistency is found in interventions to improve quality, and there is no clear pattern of successful systemwide initiatives. The high repetition and dropout rates and low completion rates in most countries suggest that poor quality is a serious problem that threatens to undermine girls' and boys' participation in schools (Egypt is a clear example), especially in rural areas.

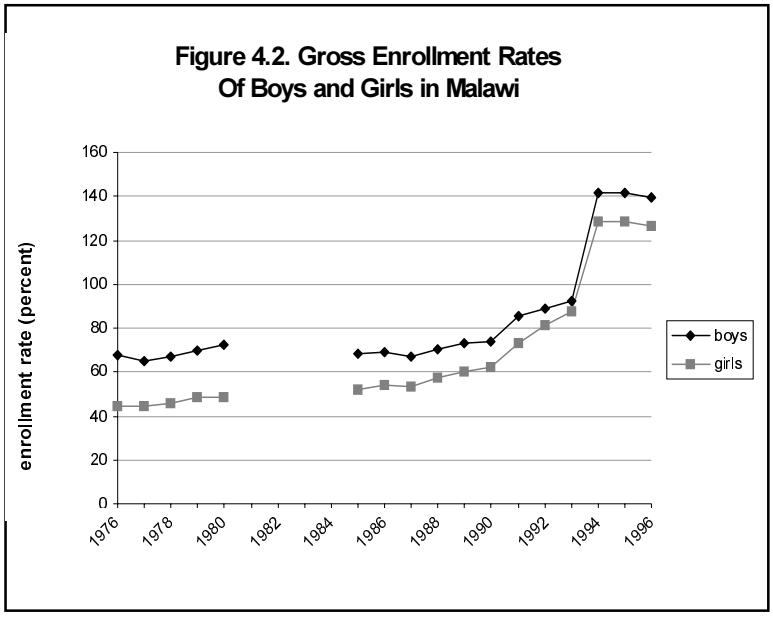
4 Field Studies: Profiles of Four Countries

THIS CHAPTER describes the status of basic education in four of the five field-study countries and USAID's role in developing and supporting girls' education initiatives. Nepal is not presented here because although it suffers from low primary school enrollment, particularly for girls, USAID's program there emphasized women's literacy rather than girls' education. Interested readers can find more descriptive information about all five field studies—quantitative country data and summaries on the background and status of girls' education programs and results—in appendices A–E.

USAID has concentrated much of its basic education investment in countries where low total enrollments and significant group differences in enrollment (such as differences between girls and boys, urban and rural, one tribe and another) have persisted for years. The field-study countries were distinguished by notably low primary school enrollments. At the outset of the USAID education assistance programs, fewer than 60 percent of school-age children were enrolled in primary school in Guinea, Malawi, and Pakistan's Balochistan and North-West Frontier Provinces. The lowest enrollment rates were concentrated in rural areas in all countries. Even in Guatemala, where the national gross enrollment rate for primary education approached 80 percent, fewer than 65 percent of the rural—primarily Mayan—population were enrolled in primary school. Figures 4.1, 4.2,

Figure 4.1. Gross Enrollment Rates Of Boys and Girls in Guinea





and 4.3 show girls' and boys' enrollment rates in Guinea, Malawi, and Pakistan over several decades.

The enrollment patterns reveal low total rates of schooling and notable gaps between girls' and boys' rates of schooling. Embedded in total enrollment statistics are grimmer profiles of girls' enrollment than of boys', although type and severity of problems differ among countries. Primary education in Guinea and the two targeted Pakistani provinces was characterized by very low girls' enrollments—19 percent and 21 percent, respectively—and the disparity between boys and girls was large. In Guinea, twice as many boys as girls succeeded in the competition for scarce school places. In Pakistan, nearly four times as many boys as girls were in school. In Malawi, while boys and girls enrolled at nearly equal rates in first grade, the number and percentage of girls enrolled in subsequent grades declined steeply, with a resulting gender gap in completion rates. Finally, in Guatemala, girls' enrollments lagged behind boys', but the most dramatic disparity was between girls in urban versus rural areas, where most of the population is indigenous. Only 59 percent of rural girls attended school, compared with 78 percent of urban girls. The negative interactive effect on primary school enrollment of rural residence and being female is also evident in Pakistan, where the ratio of boys to girls in school in rural areas is 6 to 1, while in urban areas it is 4 to 1.

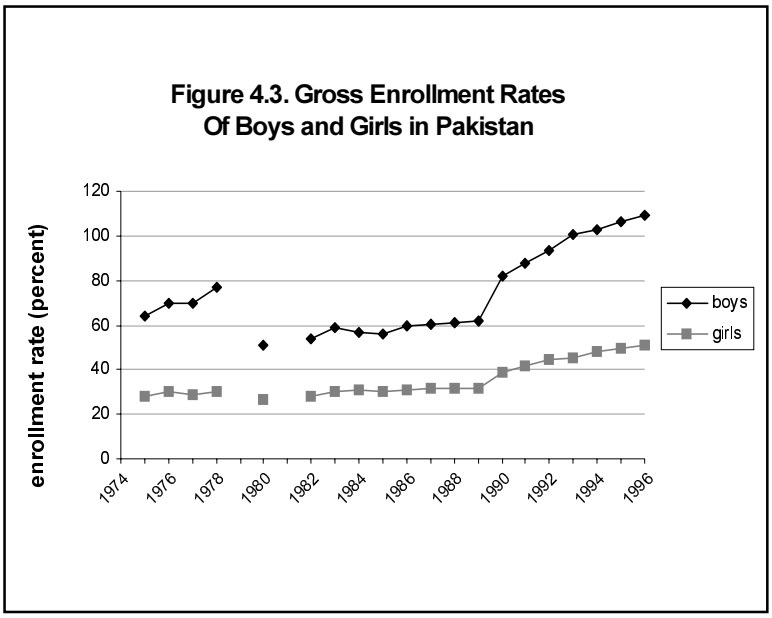


Table 4.1. Girls' Enrollment in Primary School

Country	Primary Problem	Magnitude	Causes Cited
Guatemala	• Low access[a] and persistence of rural girls and boys	In 1990 • 59% rural GGER[b] (versus 78% nationally) • 24% persist to 6th grade • 0.9 average years of schooling for Mayan women (versus 4 years for nonindigenous women)	• Rural areas underserved • Incomplete schools in rural areas • Instruction not responsive to indigenous girls • Costs of schooling • Poor quality of schooling • Lack of bilingual role models
Guinea	• Low access and persistence for girls and boys • Gender gap	In 1989 • 28% TGER[c] • 19% GGER • 37% BGER[d]	• Inadequate supply of schools • Negative attitudes toward educating girls
Malawi	• Low persistence and completion for girls • Moderately low access for girls and boys • Low gender gap	In 1990 • 60% TGER • 54% GGER • 66% BGER	• Inadequate supply of schools • Early pregnancy or marriage • Economic constraints to girls' participation
Pakistan[e]	• Low access and persistence for girls • High gender gap • High repetition and dropout in the earliest grades	In 1989 • 48% TGER • 21% GGER • 75% BGER • 8% rural GGER • 48% rural BGER • 86% girl dropout • 75% boy dropout	• Inadequate supply of girls' schools • Fears for girls' safety • Low demand for girls' education • Poor quality, especially in early grades

[a]"Low access" refers to rates below 60 percent.
[b]GGER is girls' gross enrollments.
[c]TGER is total gross enrollments.
[d]BGER is boys' gross enrollments.
[e]These data are combined unweighted averages for Balochistan and North-West Frontier Province, not national data for Pakistan.

Table 4.1 displays the major problems with girls' schooling in each country studied and the magnitude of those problems. Similar analyses of local situations were used to direct USAID project development toward specific aspects of the educational system in each country.

In all four countries, low enrollments were attributed—on the supply side—either to limited access to schools, inadequate numbers or location of schools, poor instructional quality, or all three. Education systems, as they strove to offer universal primary education, had failed to respond to the specific challenges and higher demand thresholds that put vulnerable children (such as female, rural, poor) at high risk of exclusion from basic education. Table 4.2 shows the approaches taken to address the problems identified in table 4.1. USAID's strategic objectives did not always target the most obvious problems, sometimes because of local politics, sometimes because of USAID policies or priorities, and sometimes because other donors supported complementary investments.

Table 4.2. USAID Education Sector Support To Government Basic Education Programs

Country	Strategic Objective Of Sector Program	Approaches	Funding Modality And Amount		
			USAID Total	NPA[a]	PA[b]
Guatemala	Institutionalize measures to improve classroom environment; improve efficiency in allocation and use of resources; and increase equity of educational policies and practices.	• Active learning classrooms • Teachers as role models • Scholarships • Policy research • National, community advocacy • Bilingual, ethnic education	$27.5 million, 1989–96		$27.5 million
Guinea	Provide quality primary education to a larger percentage of Guinean children, with emphases on girls and rural children.	• Increased nonsalary expenditures • Institutional strengthening • National, community advocacy • Balanced expanding access with sustaining quality • Girl-friendly regulations	$39.8 million, 1990–96	$29.1 million	$10.7 million
Malawi	Increase access to and quality and efficiency of basic education, especially for girls.	• Improved planning capacity • Community mobilization for girls' education • Gender balance in curricula • Expanded school and teacher supply • Elimination of school fees and uniforms • Girl-friendly regulations	$45.5 million, 1991–98	$35.0 million	$10.5 million
Pakistan	Improve access, equity, and quality of primary education, especially for girls, in Balochistan and North-West Frontier Provinces.	• School construction • Female teacher recruiting/ training • Institution building • Community support for girls' schools • Curricular and instructional materials improved	$280 million,[c] 1989–99		
Egypt	Expand access to education for rural children in grades 1–9 and increase relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of basic education in primary and preparatory stages.	• School construction • Teacher training • Instructional commodities • Community schools (NGOs, new [post-1994] initiative)	$190 million, 1981–94		

[a]Nonproject assistance
[b]Project assistance
[c]This figure was reduced to $78 million, owing to USAID's withdrawal from Pakistan in 1994.

5 What Are the Best Ways to Get Girls Into School?

WITHIN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT of donor and national commitments to girls' education, what impact have USAID policies and programs had on getting girls into school?

Table 5.1. Selected Findings: What Are the Best Ways To Get Girls Into School?

Challenges	Strategies	Examples

Low primary enrollments for girls and boys both	• Implement basic education reforms
	• Strengthen primary education initiatives
		• Increase government investment in primary education
		• Restructure and strengthen public sector initiatives
		  • Collect data through management information systems
		  • Technical assistance to build local capacity
		• Work with the private sector
		  • PVOs and NGOs, to support community participation and diversify private schooling options
		  • Commercial sector, for advocacy and investment
		  • Women's organizations, for leadership, strategic planning, advocacy

High gender gap	• Target vulnerable children	• Emphasize goal of universal basic education
	• Respond to safety concerns	• Locate schools near girls • Staff schools with women teachers • Strengthen community ownership and participation
	• Adopt girl-friendly regulations	• Revise punitive pregnancy policies • Eliminate age limits for enrollment
	• Reduce schooling costs	• Provide scholarships and fee waivers for girls • Reduce associated costs (e.g., uniforms)
	• Increase awareness and advocacy	• Create advocacy groups to unite government, business, NGOs, and religious sectors to mobilize resources • Create publicity campaigns at national and local levels to increase awareness of and raise expectations for girls' education

Challenge: Low Primary Enrollments

Low gross enrollment rates prompted the field-study nations to undertake girls' education initiatives. Rates around 20 percent for the two provinces in Balochistan and Guinea contrast to gross enrollment rates over 95 percent for both girls and boys in countries that have achieved universal basic education. Very low gross enrollment rates indicate that many girls never enter primary school and those who do are concentrated at the early grades. When jurisdictions that have primary enrollment rates below 80 percent do not make increasing the supply of primary education a priority, they are unlikely to significantly expand girls' enrollment rates. In these cases, with much lower enrollment rates, increasing the availability of primary schooling was the indispensable first step to increasing girls' enrollments, since a girl who never enrolls will never be educated.

Primary school enrollments in the case-study countries were constrained by the lack of school places (that is, classroom plus teacher) available to students. Communities lacked schools, classrooms lacked teachers, or classes were so crowded (with more than 100 students per teacher in some Malawian communities) that further enrollment and learning were impossible. To remedy these problems, the primary education institutions in each country needed to be stronger—that is, have adequate resources and be efficient and effective enough that they could provide an adequate supply of good-quality schools.

Strategy: Reform Basic Education Systems To Increase the Supply Of Primary Schools

The greatest constraint to girls' education in the case-study countries was an absolute lack of primary school places for girls. School supply often is most responsive to the population that is easiest to reach and has the greatest political capital—affluent urban fathers and, by extension, their sons. Because

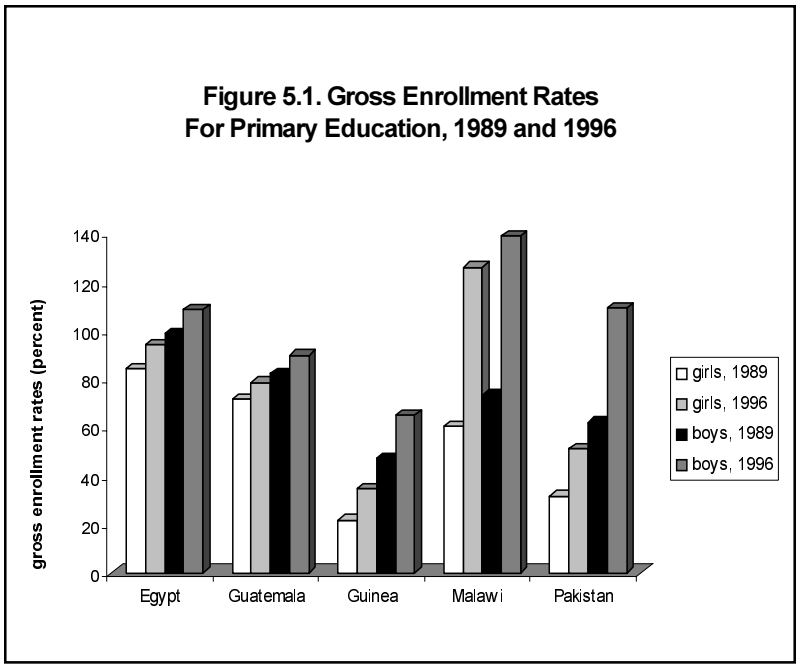


Table 5.2. Education Sector Budgets and Allocations to Primary Education		
Country	**Status at USAID Baseline**	**Status Post-USAID Initiatives**
Guatemala	• Insufficient government resources to education (2% of GNP) • Primary share of education budget: 32% in 1992	• Government education resources still 2% GNP • Primary share of education budget: 61% in 1997
Guinea	• Education share of budget: 15% in 1989 • Primary share of education budget: 34% in 1989	• Education share of budget: 26% in 1997 • Primary share of education budget: 36% in 1997
Malawi	• Education share of budget: 10% in 1992 • Primary share of education budget: 46% in 1992	• Education share of budget: 23% in 1997–98 • Primary share of education budget: 59% in 1996
Pakistan	• Target increases in primary education budgets: 8% in NWFP, 5% in Balochistan	• Achieved 13% increase in NWFP, 9% increase in Balochistan
Egypt	• Education share of budget: 12% in (1990–91)	• Education share of budget: 19% (1995–96)

of this, in settings where access is limited and quality is marginal, boys benefit disproportionately (but not exclusively) from educational investments. Guinea, Malawi, and Pakistan launched major national education reforms aimed at expanding the supply of schools and teachers in primary grades for previously underserved or neglected populations. Central to the education reform programs undertaken by the countries were increased resources for the education sector and, within the sector, a concentration on primary education. Education reform had a unique profile in each country, but there were common elements of building schools and classrooms and of recruiting, training, and certifying primary school teachers—especially women teachers.

Increase Government Investment In Primary Education

USAID brought significant resources for girls' education to the bargaining table. In other countries, the Agency strengthened its bargaining position by coordinating its goals and strategies with those of other donors and emphasizing multidonor as well as bilateral policy dialog.

USAID pioneered one of the first successful donor coordination units in the education sector in Pakistan's North-West Frontier

Province. Donor coordination committees are helping countries specify their interests in foreign aid and helping donors avoid costly duplicative programming. Where donor coordination falters, as it appears to have done in Guatemala and Malawi, policy and program initiatives are at times poorly integrated, resulting in inefficient investments. In Malawi the government met or exceeded most conditions for USAID nonproject assistance—for example, it implemented fee waivers for girls. But the conditions over which the government and other donors had fundamental disagreements—such as age-at-entrance requirements—have been ignored in practice. Furthermore, some of the initiatives—such as fee waivers, which the government extended to boys—became politicized and have led to negative consequences. Some USAID activities have been poorly coordinated with other donor inputs such as support for teacher training. In Guatemala, the government simply did not meet its commitments to provide counterpart staff in a timely fashion, implement curricular reforms, or scale up the Nueva Escuela Unitaria demonstration project. The absence of shared goals and strategies with other donors put USAID in a weak negotiating position.

Restructure and Strengthen Education Systems

To operate more efficiently and meet the challenges of increasing primary schools, ministries of education restructured their institutions and the services they offered (see table 5.3). They established new school construction standards and procedures (Egypt and Pakistan); developed infrastructure cost-sharing schemes with communities (Malawi and Pakistan); altered teacher recruitment policies, hiring norms, and terms of service; and revised teacher training programs.

Better primary school systems benefit girls in low-enrollment countries because girls are concentrated in the earliest grades. In Guinea, increases in girls' enrollments began with the national education reform program that expanded and improved primary education but did not initially target girls. In a further effort to accommodate more girls, Guinea's government recently introduced double-shift schools in urban areas and multigrade schools in rural areas. Malawi adopted, but did not implement, policies to improve and accelerate student flow through the primary cycle. Accelerated student flow frees up student places in the lower grades, reduces classroom crowding, and lowers costs per student by reducing the average number of years children spend in school completing the primary cycle.

To improve management of school expansion, the governments of Guinea and the Pakistan provinces reorganized their central management structures and pursued decentralization policies to devolve authority to district and local entities. In Pakistan, creating provincial primary education directorates ensured that primary schooling received the resources and attention required to expand. The directorates defended resources for primary education against the competing and entrenched interests of higher levels of education in the Education

Table 5.3. Basic Education Sector Strengthening And Reform	
Country	**Strategies Used to Improve the Supply of Schooling for Girls**
Guatemala	• Education management information systems (EMIS) linked to geographic databases showing concentrations of population and locations of schools • Databased strategic planning • Improved personnel management • Sociolinguistic mapping • Community school committees
Guinea	• Reallocation of resources to primary education • Creation of a Ministry of Pre-University Education • Decentralization • School mapping and location of new schools near children • Contributions to school building • Redeployment and retraining of teachers • Double-shift/multigrade classes to increase supply • Finance/budgeting reforms • EMIS and strategic planning
Malawi	• Resources reallocated to primary education • Construction of new schools • Recruitment and deployment of 22,000 new teachers, mainly women • Accelerated student flow through antiretention policies • Strengthened planning and EMIS capacities • Free and compulsory primary schooling
Pakistan	• Reallocation of resources to primary education • Creation of directorates of primary education • EMIS for databased planning and monitoring • School mapping and placement of new schools near children • Decentralization • Construction of new schools • Recruitment and training of community-based women teachers • Accommodation of girls in some areas with flexible hours • NGO partnerships for school creation and management
Egypt	• 7,500 new schools built; 3,500 rehabilitated • Reduced number of textbooks for each grade • School year lengthened from 22–25 weeks to 34 weeks • Primary school divided into two stages (1–3 and 4–5) • Increased management capacities

Ministry. In Guinea, creating a Ministry of Pre-University Education (separate from the Ministry of Education) signaled the government's commitment to expand primary education as well as to provide the leadership, institutions, and manpower to bring it about.

With varying degrees of success, ministries strengthened information, personnel, and financial systems to better plan, manage, and track progress toward reform and expansion. Implicit in better data management is improved transparency, which can spotlight and inhibit the misuse or leakage of resources from the system due to corruption. Data is also necessary to document and analyze gender discrimination.

USAID's strategic contributions to these reforms emphasized improving data on schooling; conducting applied research and needs assessments; reviewing per pupil expenditures; comparing primary, secondary, and tertiary education; maintaining dialog on finance and budgeting in the education sector; and building system capacities to deliver the increased supply of schools that universal basic education requires. Where there were no institutions dedicated to primary education, USAID invested in building them—in Pakistan, for example. Primary education institutions had been weak in all the countries, and USAID invested to strengthen them. Common to most countries were two strategies: education management information systems and technical assistance to build local capacity.

Management Information Systems: Transparency, Efficiency, and Effectiveness

To guide and monitor public resources and resource allocation, stakeholders in education systems need good information, managed in transparent systems, and made regularly and publicly available. Systematic data collection and handling is essential for efficiency. For example, identifying and eliminating ghost schools in Pakistan and other countries has substantially improved efficiency. An educational management information system (EMIS) is one tool for identifying and combating corruption, a significant drain on education resources in every country. Equally important, an EMIS is a necessary foundation for transparency, accountability, and eventually, broadened local ownership of education systems.

When girls' access to school is a problem, it is important to include geographic and mapping data in the educational management information system along with the population and school data, so that teacher recruitment and construction efforts can be concentrated where girls live. This is particularly true in countries that support single-sex school systems. In Egypt and Pakistan the geographic components linked to the school enrollment and census demographic data have been key to improving the supply of schools for girls. These data give communities and local officials a basis for dialog with central decision-makers about where to build schools; the data generated by these systems is an objective standard against which planning decisions can be measured, offering a means to combat illogical siting for political

or profit-taking motives. These information systems permit accurate analyses and monitoring of gender equity or bias in the distribution of schools, teachers, and materials.

The only way to assess progress toward the goal of increased education for girls is to monitor who enrolls. While the education management information systems in these countries are far from perfect, they are great improvements over the data collection, or lack of data collection, that preceded them. Education management information systems have proved to be a timely investment for the future, as education sector systems decentralize; the EMIS data, software, and reporting potential is essential for downsizing central institutions while institutionalizing monitoring and support at the periphery. Some educational management information systems themselves are also decentralizing—in Pakistan, for instance—empowering districts, giving information tools to communities, and stimulating local awareness and interest in schools and their management.

Technical Assistance to Build Local Capacity

As the 1990s began, USAID shifted away from projects that were not integrated into local institutions and local operations, toward systemwide policy change and program implementation by host country institutions. Given the numbers of girls and boys still unschooled, project approaches were not going to satisfy needs. Technical assistance emphasized capacity-building to support implementation of the policy objectives.

Technical assistance teams provided guidance and assistance both to USAID missions and host country counterparts. They were particularly effective where their advisory role complemented strong USAID leadership in policy dialog—for example, in Pakistan. Where technical assistance teams helped governments as well as USAID, the teams generally sustained capacity-building efforts even during tough negotiations between USAID and host governments—such as in Guatemala and with Malawi's Social Mobilization Campaign. By contrast, when contractors' technical guidance responsibilities blur with policy negotiation or enforcement of conditionalities, the confusion of authorities between USAID and its contractors invites host country resistance to policy reforms and poor use of technical advisory capacities.

Work With the Private Sector To Offer Girls Education

In four of the five field-study countries, USAID and governments turned to the private sector as a means of expanding and diversifying the supply of schools for girls. USAID initiatives engaged NGOs to mobilize communities and channel resources to open new schools designed to respond to the needs of girls and their families.

In the two Pakistani provinces, the scarcity of public and private girls' schools severely constrained girls' education. A network was created of urban "home schools"—nonformal schools run in neighborhood homes for girls

unable to attend government schools because of hours, distance, fees, or cultural barriers. Education foundations were established in Balochistan and the North-West Frontier Province to support these schools and to fund grants to "fellowship schools"—private schools for girls in low-income areas, most of them urban. A complicated formula for grants to NGOs supported start-up costs of fellowship schools and then gradually transferred costs to parents and communities.

Community schools for rural girls—staffed by government-trained and -salaried teachers—were developed and supported by several Pakistani NGOs. The NGOs mobilized rural communities to start girls' schools; organized village education committees to find land and buildings and manage new local schools; identified and recruited local women teachers; arranged for "crash" training and preliminary certification for new teachers; and mediated coordination with the government to phase the schools and teachers into the government system over one to three years.

In Malawi and Egypt the international private voluntary organization Save the Children took the lead using USAID resources to develop networks of village-based community schools that emphasize educating girls. In Malawi, student achievement in the Village Based Schools project appears superior to achievement in government schools. Results in Egypt are less convincing; students in village schools go on to higher levels of schooling less frequently than students in government schools. However, in Egypt the village schools may draw a different population than the government schools, and comparative research has not been conducted as it was in Malawi, so it is difficult to render firm judgment on learning outcomes.

NGOs provide increasingly significant numbers of school places and alternative nonformal education programs. The 1990s have seen renewed interest in nonschool system models for ensuring that all children's basic learning needs are met. USAID's support for distance education over more than two decades has paid off in more effective applications—for example, an English-language instruction radio program in the North-West Frontier Province. NGO education programs have created alternatives that appear to be cost-effective options for educating girls in remote households and communities. A cost analysis in Honduras, part of an evaluation of USAID-supported female literacy programs, also found that cost-effectiveness of nonformal education was more pronounced for far-flung rural communities than for urban populations.

In every case-study country, private sector involvement has been critical for several reasons. First, private sector involvement has long offered an education to children who were not being served well by government systems. Second, private initiatives have served as designers and incubators of new models and approaches to educating girls, especially those in hard-to-reach communities. Finally, the private sector has had more demonstrable success than governments in mobilizing community participation in girls' schooling and strengthening community capacity for school management. In an era of decentralization, these com-

Table 5.4. Increasing School Places for Girls		
Country	**Classrooms**	**Teachers**
Guinea	N/A	1992–95 • 2,500 teachers redeployed to primary • 54% increase in primary teaching force • 600 new teachers hired annually
Malawi	• Primary schools built: 200 in 1993	• 22,000 primary teachers recruited • Pupil–teacher ratio: 68:1 in 1992, 58:1 in 1996
Pakistan	• 2,100 girls' schools opened, 1989–94 • 780 village education committee schools for girls operating as of 1997	• 33% increase in female teachers, 1989–96 (25% increase in male teachers) • Relaxed recruitment standards for female teachers in village education committee schools • Rapid primary-teacher certification program
Egypt	• 27,000 primary and 19,000 preparatory classes added, 1987–92 • 7,500 new schools opened and 3,500 old schools rehabilitated, 1991–96	• Improved teacher training

munity-based bottom-up models for increasing school supply are crucial contributions.

Outcome: More Primary School Places For Girls

USAID's support contributed to increasing the number of primary schools and teachers, as table 5.4 shows.

Whether these outcomes reflect real impact—enrollment that would not have occurred without USAID initiatives or support—cannot be determined. The Agency's assistance may have merely increased local capacity to meet demand "more comfortably" rather than having been a critical determinant of investment and educational policy. USAID contributions appeared critical to government policies and investments in Pakistan: without the Agency's intervention it is doubtful that girl-centered initiatives would have been undertaken. The Balochistan government ignored violations of agreements for female-positive gender ratios in new school buildings, demonstrating strong

resistance to shifting investment away from boys. The sheer numbers of schools built are compelling in Egypt. And USAID's and other donors' contributions appear to have been critical to increasing school places for girls in Guinea and Malawi.

Challenge: Gender Gap

In Pakistan, as USAID assistance to improve girls' education began, the girls' gross enrollment rate was 21 percent, compared with 75 percent for boys. In Guinea the comparable rates were 19 percent and 37 percent, respectively.

When the supply of primary schools first increases, girls' and boys' enrollments climb because latent demand for schooling is met in places where no schools were previously available. That happened in Guinea, where the supply of primary schools expanded and girls' enrollments increased before the emphasis on girls was implemented. However, once the "early acceptors" are absorbed, the growth of enrollments slows (as demonstrated in Egypt), and weaker demand for girls' schooling than for boys' results in continued gender disparities.

Gender gaps reflect three phenomena:

- An absolute shortage of schools (insufficient supply)
- Schools whose features are culturally acceptable for boys but not for girls (inappropriate supply)
- "Softer" demand leading to gender-differentiated responses to the same schooling opportunities—that is, lower enrollment for girls because, for example, families rely more on girls' household labor than on boys' and anticipate a lower income return on girls' schooling and are therefore less willing to forgo girls' (than boys') labor while they are in school, or because families believe schools to be unsafe or inappropriate for girls

To accelerate girls' enrollments and close the gender gap, schools must be reformed to fit the shape of demand for girls' schooling. Three years into Guinea's reform program, when the government promised more effective and "girl friendly" schools, the growth rate in girls' enrollments accelerated. In Pakistan, enrollments rose when schools staffed with women teachers opened near girls' homes.

Shaping the supply of schools to meet the needs of girls and their parents appears to have been effective, confirming the finding that there is demand for girls' schooling but that it is more nuanced and, in some areas, not as strong as demand for boys' schooling. The growth in girls' enrollments has outpaced boys' in Guinea, Malawi, and the Pakistan provinces. In Guinea the proportion of girls enrolled in primary school has almost doubled (89 percent growth), reaching a gross enrollment rate of 36 percent. In Malawi the increase has been slightly less dramatic—63 percent—but since the girls' gross enrollment rate was significantly higher to begin with, the slower growth rate is not unexpected. Of the 3.2 million enrollments stimulated by eliminating tuition fees, almost half were girls (1,528,000). In Pakistan, since

Table 5.5. Student Enrollments, 1990–96

	Enrollment		
	Base Year of USAID Intitiative	**Final Year of USAID Implementation**	**Percentage Change**
Guatemala	1988 • 73% girls' gross enrollment rate • 85% boys' gross enrollment rate • 66% indigenous girls dropout by third grade • 13% of cohort reached sixth grade	N/A; demonstration projects, not system-based policies and programs	N/A
Guinea (national)	1989 • 28% total gross enrollment rate • 19% girls' gross enrollment rate • 37% boys' gross enrollment rate • 0.51 gross enrollment rate disparity ratio[a] • 18-point gap	1997 • 51% total gross enrollment rate • 36% girls' gross enrollment rate • 66% boys' gross enrollment rate • 0.54 gross enrollment rate disparity ratio • 30-point gap[b]	82 89 78 5.8
Malawi (national)	1990 • 60% total gross enrollment rate • 54% girls' gross enrollment rate • 66% boys' gross enrollment rate • 0.82 gross enrollment rate disparity ratio • 12-point gap • 772,000 girls enrolled • 36% standard (grade) 8 enrollments are girls	1996 • 94% total gross enrollment rate • 88% girls' gross enrollment rate • 100% boys' gross enrollment rate • 0.88 gross enrollment rate disparity ratio • 12-point gap • 1,528,000 girls enrolled • 39% standard 8 enrollments are girls	73 63 52 7.3 98 8.3
Pakistan (Balochistan and North-West Frontier Province)	1989 • 21% girls' gross enrollment rate • 75% boys' gross enrollment rate • 0.26 gross enrollment rate disparity ratio • 55-point gap • 348,000 girls enrolled • 1,341,000 boys enrolled	1994 • 30% girls' gross enrollment rate • 78% boys' gross enrollment rate[c] • 0.38 gross enrollment rate disparity ratio • 48-point gap (1996) • 778,000 girls enrolled • 1,571,000 boys enrolled	50 4 N/A
Egypt	(1981) • 897,000 girls enrolled	(1991) • 778,000 girls enrolled • 1981–91: rural girls' enrollments increased 60%, urban girls 26% • 1981–91: boys increased 19%	–13[d]

[a]Girls' gross enrollment rate/boys' gross enrollment rate.
[b]Gender gaps and disparity ratios can rise even when girls' enrollments are accelerating faster than boys', if the disparity at baseline is great and boys are also gaining enrollment. In every country, boys' enrollments also increased.
[c]Estimated at 3 percent population growth rate.
[d]The drop in enrollment apparently is related to many changes in the Egyptian society and economy, as well as to poor school quality.

1990, the girls' enrollment rate has nearly tripled in Balochistan and doubled in the North-West Frontier Province.

Strategy: Target Vulnerable Children

Emphasize the Goal of Universal Basic Education

The debate about special investments and strategies to "target" girls is really a debate about commitment to universal primary education. Special efforts typically must be made to encourage and facilitate enrolling vulnerable children, whether they are children who live far from schools (Egypt and Pakistan), work to support their families (Guatemala, Malawi), are members of disadvantaged minorities (Guatemala), or happen to have been born female. The largest group of vulnerable children is girls. Thus the logical first step to bring vulnerable children into school is to meet girls' needs.

Strategy: Respond To Safety Concerns

Parental concerns about girls' safety have been reported for years. From danger on the roadside to abuse at the hands of teachers, the risk of sexual attack and even murder are risks that must be weighed carefully against the value of schooling by girls and their parents. The psychological, social, and economic damage caused by sexual assaults may be lifelong even when physical wounds heal. The prevalence and severity of physical risks to schoolgirls is increasingly public, ranging from gangs coordinating sexual attacks and murders of boarding-school girls in Kenya to teachers who have impregnated young students in Mali and Malawi and were then simply moved to other villages to victimize more girls.

Locate Schools Near Girls

Distance from school may threaten a girl's security. The farther school is from a girl's home and immediate parental supervision, the greater the fear she will be harassed, molested, raped, or abducted en route. Many parents simply refuse to allow their daughters to travel far (*how* far varies by community) to school. In societies where a girl's "purity" is valued, she stands the most to lose in the event she is attacked. Families' fears are legitimate. Mothers in Mali bluntly reported that the ruinous social consequences of sexual assault are too high a cost to pay for sending a girl to school. In Pakistan, proximity has been the key to surging enrollments. USAID support facilitated mapping schools and student populations in Egypt and Pakistan. Still, the lack of later primary and secondary classrooms near the homes of rural girls remains overall a significant barrier to completing primary education and continuing into secondary school.

In addition to the safety benefits, school availability and proximity decreases distances children must travel, with positive effects on direct (transport) and opportunity costs (less

time lost for child labor). Time-budget studies show that girls generally bear a greater burden of household labor than boys do. In the short term, girls' time is more valuable to households, and losing a girl's labor while she is in school costs many households dearly.

Staff Schools With Women Teachers

Recruiting female teachers is an effective way to increase underserved girls' access to school where male teachers harass and exploit girls. Women teachers have an immediate and direct influence on girls' access to school because their presence can allay parents' fears about their daughters' security and reassure them that sympathetic treatment will be the norm.* In these countries, parents continue to express a preference for women teachers for girls. The predilection intensifies as girls mature and face greater risk of sexual harassment and in communities where teachers are posted by central ministries.

In the sex-segregated schools of the Pakistani provinces, *only* women are hired to teach in girls' schools.† However, the need for women teachers in many communities cannot be met because there simply are no educated women to train and qualify as teachers. Security concerns and the circumscribed lives of women in traditional communities conspire to prevent women from commuting to schools or taking up residence in villages where they have no family or spouse. The Balochistan government allowed NGOs to recruit local village women with eight years' education and offered three-month "crash" teacher training courses entitling women to take up teaching posts in their own villages. In Malawi, as in Pakistan, parents' concerns for their daughters' safety in the hands of male teachers kept many girls out of school, so the Village Based Schools project also emphasized recruiting women teachers—as did initiatives in Egypt.

Recruiting women teachers has benefited boys. In Balochistan, parents believe women are more nurturing and better suited than men to teach younger children. Educators also acknowledge that men rely heavily on corporal punishment and that boys are frequently abused, both sexually and with punishments disproportionate to their misbehavior. In most of the new girls' schools, a few young boys are also enrolled by their parents to protect them against male teachers.

Strengthen Community Ownership and Participation

Since most centralized systems suffer from weak supervision, communities are the best monitors and enforcers of teacher accountability. Community involvement in day-to-day

*This is the case, even though some studies have shown that women teachers may not be more responsive to girls' needs. See Tietjen (1991).

†Ironically, this requirement is being relaxed to staff girls' schools in far-flung villages where there are no educated women that can be trained as teachers. To fill this gap, the government now allows villages to recruit older men—old enough to be considered responsible and not a danger to children—to teach in girls' schools.

school operations increases parents' confidence in their daughters' safety, demystifies school, and increases parental understanding of and support for girls' academic pursuits.

In Pakistan, where security concerns figure prominently, the Community Support Program has made school operations more transparent. Community-based girls' schools are managed by village education committees composed of parents, grandparents, or guardians of school-age girls. These elders donate land for the school, work with the local teacher, and monitor student progress. In such communities, nothing ordinarily happens to girls in or on the road to school that parents do not know about. In some villages, committee members are in the school daily helping the teacher. They also visit the homes of chronically absent children to meet parents and sort out any problems between girls, school, and home.

In Guatemala, parents' committees were established as part of the experimental *Eduque a la Niña* (Educate the Girl) Program. Outcomes were mixed. Programs usually succeeded when the community organizers were themselves highly motivated and skillful. But in others the community organizers were poorly supervised, were given inadequate in-service training, and considered themselves underpaid. When scholarships were available as incentives, effectiveness soared.

Strategy: Adopt Girl-Friendly Regulations

Reducing the distance to school, employing a qualified local teacher, and giving parents more control over their daughters' schools are strong steps toward increasing girls' educational attainment. However, in some countries, regulations governing school enrollment and attendance restrict girls' access. Many countries prohibit pregnant or married girls from attending school or returning after they deliver their babies. In Guinea (where early marriage is typical) and in many Malawi communities (in which early sexual activity is common), punitive pregnancy policies that forbid girls to resume their schooling after childbirth or require them to enroll in another school prevented girls from continuing or even beginning their studies. These and many other USAID-assisted countries revised their pregnancy policies to allow girls to return to their local schools.

The number of girls directly affected by pregnancy policies is unknown. The policies have real effects on communication, since they are understood as a message from the government about the significance and importance of basic education for girls and women, including those whose primary role and responsibility will be traditional marriage and motherhood. USAID is supporting a new study in Guinea on the outcomes of pregnancy policies.

Regulatory reforms must be assessed carefully for potential effects, preferably through local research. The USAID/Malawi mission made imposing minimum and maximum age limits for enrollment a condition for GABLE II nonproject assistance. The intent was to allow only age-appropriate students in classrooms to alleviate overcrowding and make the daunting task of teaching more feasible for the large group of inexperienced teachers. The measure thus far has failed. It encountered stiff resistance in a newly democratic country determined to give all of its citizens, regardless of age, the opportunity to get a basic education and participate fully in civil society. Ironically, this policy's failure may also be a boon for girls. Girls are more likely than boys to enter school at older ages or to repeat the early grades because of their household responsibilities. And they are more likely to bring young siblings in their care along to school; if younger siblings are not allowed into schools, many girls will have to drop school altogether. In several other countries, girls' education initiatives have sought to *eliminate* age limits.

Strategy: Reduce Schooling Costs

Direct costs of schooling inhibit girls' enrollment more than boys'. Families expect that the return on their investment in a daughter's education will be less than on a son's both because women earn much less money and because the benefits of a girl's education will accrue to her husband's family rather than to her family of origin. The opportunity costs are higher too, since girls' labor in the household typically is needed more in the immediate term than boys'.

To offset the less valuable outcomes and higher costs of girls' schooling, strategies to reduce schooling's direct costs were instituted, including fee waivers for girls in Malawi, scholarships for girls in Guatemala, free books in Balochistan, no uniforms (which cost more for girls than boys) in Malawi and Guinea, and incentives such as free school supplies for girls in low-enrollment districts in Guinea. These initiatives—all of them—benefited boys as well. In Guatemala's case, boys in schools where girls received scholarships did better than boys in control schools. The most successful strategies (such as fee waivers) were so popular that some governments extended them to boys.

The external efficiencies of educating girls also play a role in family decisions about education, although USAID investments can, at best, only indirectly affect the economic environment and girls' long-term income prospects. Families will be willing to shoulder the burden of higher short-term costs when they see a reasonable probability of long-term benefits. In Egypt, enrollments rose in part because it became evident to families in middle- and lower-income brackets that white-collar jobs for women were increasing. A frequent theme of Malawi's Social Mobilization Campaign is that educated girls will more easily find office jobs or other employment. The new calculus in Pakistan is that educated men want literate wives and mothers for their children; thus, an educated girl is more marriageable and can

aim for an educated, wealthier, more urbane husband.

Strategy: Increase Awareness And Advocacy

The strategies so far described shaped school *supply* to increase girls' access and enrollment. Other USAID-supported strategies shaped *demand*. Advocacy groups were created in the public and private sectors, and joint commissions were formed uniting government, business, NGOs, and religious sectors to direct attention to, develop policy for, and mobilize resources to support getting more girls into school.

Publicity campaigns reached policymakers, educators, parents, and communities, increasing awareness of the benefits of and barriers to girls' schooling. Social mobilization campaigns explored and supported local solutions and actions to improve community participation in schools. Education officials, parents and guardians, and leaders at many levels of government discussed girls' education. Many became de facto promoters.

Guatemala pioneered high-profile, public–private partnerships to promote girls' education. A national commission and a private sector foundation took on the subject. Billboards promoted girls' education. Media reported on it. Presentations, publicity, and publications multiplied. Business sector funds were collected to support girls' scholarships—shown to be an effective incentive to improve girls' persistence. Special education projects got support from commercial, religious, and civil society groups. Political advocacy for bilingual and Mayan cultural education also has been a strong grass-roots movement in Guatemala.

Guinea's Ministry of Education established an equity committee to develop a strategy to promote girls' (and rural children's) educational participation. The committee's first program activity, financed by USAID/Guinea, was called the Consciousness-Raising Campaign. An effort to raise awareness among parents, educators, and community leaders about the value and importance of girls' education, the campaign operated both at the national level and in eight districts (selected on the basis of having the lowest overall enrollment of girls within their regions) as a local-level pilot project. Perhaps the most innovative aspect of the Consciousness-Raising Campaign was its use of 16 *education promoters*. The promoters visited families, schools, and mosques to spread the message about girls' education. In the process, they established stronger bonds between communities and their schools.

The Consciousness-Raising Campaign's effects in the eight pilot districts reveal themselves clearly in the data on girls' enrollment, when figures for the 1992–93 school year (one year before the campaign) are compared with those of the 1996–97 school year (one year after the campaign ended). Throughout this period, enrollments of both boys and girls in primary education rose steadily, with the total number of schoolchildren increasing 54 percent nationwide and the

growth in girls' enrollment rates outstripping boys'. The enrollment of girls relative to boys increased slightly nationwide; the gender gap in pilot districts dropped dramatically.

Earlier studies spoke of beliefs common in Guinea that schooling had deleterious moral effects on girls and that girls simply are neither as important nor as intelligent as boys. It appears these beliefs have not simply been silenced or pushed aside, but have been turned upside down by the Consciousness-Raising Campaign.

The Social Mobilization Campaign in Malawi initiated discussion with community leaders, community promoters, and primary education advisers about the problems and opportunities of girls' education. One of the campaign's innovations was "theater for development" troupes that spend a week engaged in participatory research and learning efforts with communities. These culminate in a dramatic performance that captures both the problems and solutions that the community has identified to get girls into schools. New storybooks and calendars feature women role models. The Ministry of Women's Affairs, multisectoral community promoters, and primary education advisers worked actively with the Social Mobilization Campaign, running workshops, training communities, and sustaining the awareness and initiatives developed by the theater-for-development approach.

In the Pakistani province of Balochistan, schools for rural girls were opened by communities working with a local NGO supported by USAID. The Community Support Program, later replicated by other NGOs, raised grass-roots awareness and catalyzed action for girls' education. Tangible resources (such as books for children, training for women teachers, funds to maintain community buildings used for girls' schools, and eventually new school buildings) entered communities and increased the value and cultural acceptability of girls' education. Word of mouth and NGO cooperation have spread grass-roots efforts and the girls' education initiative to remote communities. Women who have never participated in civil society have become active in the new schools, and groups of girls whose families just one year earlier had no plans to enroll them in school are being educated.

Assessing Systemwide Changes to Improve Girls' Access to School

National primary education reform programs are designed to benefit all children. But even when school supply expands to poor and rural areas, the characteristics of the schooling provided do not necessarily respond to the supply-side and demand-side constraints that either weigh more heavily on girls (such as distance to school or the threat of molestation) or are unique to them (pregnancy).

If girl-favorable changes are to be more than cosmetic and are to be sustained, they must be institutionalized and implemented throughout the school system. Table 5.6 summarizes some notable system changes as well as outstanding challenges.

Table 5.6. Examples of System-Level Changes And Initiatives to Expand Girls' Access to School

Country	Gender-Specific Access Strategies	Unmet Needs
Guatemala	• Scholarships for 36,000 girls • Parents' committees • Community promoter programs • National seminar/commission • Publicity campaign • Girl-friendly policies	• Nueva Escuela Unitaria classroom improvement initiatives not institutionalized at the system level • Scholarships with Guatemalan government support not specified for indigenous, rural, poor recipients • Only 5% of Mayan girls receive bilingual education despite national mandate
Guinea	• Nationwide "sensibilization" campaign, 1993–95 • Education promoters in eight districts • Prizes, incentives	• Teacher shortage • Supply–demand tensions
Malawi	• Gender-balanced core curricula • Gender-balanced instructional materials produced • Primary education advisers and teacher training staff trained in gender management • Primary fee waivers • Scholarships for secondary study • Social Mobilization Campaign	• Instructional materials are in few classrooms • Gender-management training has not reached teachers • System is oversubscribed: 38,000 classrooms short; 18,000 teachers with minimal training and supervision
Pakistan	• Community Support Program • Village education committees • Shared vision of girls' basic education • Girls' schools and female teachers in some remote communities	• Severe shortage of girls' schools • Government reluctance to support NGOs in organizing community schools • Gender quotas for construction not respected • Lack of places in later primary grades

Is the cup half full or half empty? It appears to be filling. In Malawi and Guinea, education budgets and the amounts allocated to primary education have increased, as have the number of classrooms and primary school teachers. In the two Pakistani provinces, the number of girls' schools has increased by 70 percent, the proportion of women and certified teachers increased dramatically, and Community Support Program schools now account for 20 percent of girls' enrollment.

System-level changes are far less apparent in Guatemala, but USAID's investments there were of a different nature, concentrated on stimulating multisectoral support and demonstration projects for targeted populations. The government continues to invest too little in education. Changes in instructional methods and curricula (notably the Nueva Escuela Unitaria methodology and bilingual education) that benefit indigenous populations

have yet to be widely replicated or brought to scale. Moreover, the government's scholarship programs cover only about 6 percent of enrolled girls and about 3 percent of all school-age girls.

On the downside, *all of these countries face continued rapid growth of school-age populations for at least two more decades*. None currently has the financial, institutional, or human resources to provide a quality basic education to all of its children. Donors seem reluctant to confront this uncomfortable reality in policy dialog about the education sector. As much as 40 percent of Malawi's recurrent costs for basic education are supported by donors. What will happen to children in school if donors withdraw their support?

USAID's Role: Context, Politics, And Synergies

USAID's actions exposed latent demand for girls' schooling. Further, it demonstrated that increasing the supply of schools and addressing obstacles to girls' participation rapidly increased girls' enrollment. The reality of strong demand for girls' education made supplying school places for girls politically valuable and thus was a strategy welcomed by governments.

The Agency targeted hard-to-reach rural girls and supported important achievements with that group. Gross enrollment rates were and still are much higher in cities, where populations and school densities are greater, increased earning potential for girls is more plausible, families have more cash to spend on direct and indirect costs associated with schooling, and cultural norms for gender-specific behavior generally are less conservative. USAID's studies and the initiatives the Agency supported made rural demand visible and underscored the issues keeping girls out of school in rural communities. Policy dialog, coupled with significant resources and advocacy to raise public awareness, strengthened host-country political will to supply schools for hard-to-reach areas. USAID mission technical teams emphasized institutionalized systemic change and provided the support needed to see that new schools and successful innovations reached broad audiences.

The USAID initiatives to increase girls' enrollments built upon synergies of effective programs embedded in reformed policy frameworks and strengthened primary education systems. Where policy has not yet been translated into system structures and investments that provide frameworks for programs—in Guatemala, for example—neither broad coverage nor sustainability was achieved. The second source of synergistic value added was the engagement of stakeholders at various levels—communities, NGOs, government institutions, the private sector, and international donors. Active engagement at each level reinforced the political will at other levels, sustaining program investments and supporting policy initiatives.

6 How Can the Quality Of Girls' Education Be Improved?

MOST USAID INVESTMENTS in the education sector since the 1960s have included curriculum design, testing, teacher training, or educational management components whose purpose was to improve the quality of education. The 1990 Jomtien, Thailand, conference linked the goals of quality and gender equity. Table 6.1 shows some specific challenges to educational quality and the strategies adopted to respond to them.

Repetition and associated dropout* are tremendous drains on school efficiency. Inefficiency wastes resources that could be devoted to expanding and improving education. Poor schools weaken household demand for education—especially for girls' education. Quality differentials in education undermine equity goals for girls, the poor, minorities, and rural residents. To have maximum effect, girls' education initiatives need to improve the quality of schooling.

Programmatic efforts to improve educational quality are difficult to design, implement, and evaluate for three reasons. First, various stakeholders in any educational system define educational quality differently. Second, in part because of the differing definitions, educational quality is difficult to measure. Finally, educational quality is an outcome of complex system operations. All components of the educational system—curricula, teachers, administration, and assessment—interact uniquely in specific contexts to determine the quality of schooling, however it is defined.

Challenge: Conflicting Definitions of Quality

When primary school enrollments nearly double in one year (as they did when Malawi democratized), when girls' enrollment rates increase by 79 percent in five years (as they did under the Primary Education Development Program in Pakistan's North-West

*The structure of education management information systems and other available data makes it impossible to determine what proportion of dropouts are children who have already repeated. However, repetition, or academic failure, is linked to school withdrawal for many children, and expert interviews in these countries suggest that girls who fail are more likely to be withdrawn by their parents than are boys who fail.

Table 6.1. Selected Findings: How Can the Quality of Girls' Education Be Improved?

Challenges	Strategies	Examples
Stakeholders' conflicting definitions of quality	• Promote policy dialog	• Counterpart steering committee to oversee and coordinate quality efforts across ministry departments and between the ministry and donors • Government investments redirected to quality • Persuasive dialog • Policy dialog in context
	• Engage communities	• Bottom-up approaches
Improving the components of educational quality	• Implement quality-improvement programs	• Improved quantity and quality of textbooks and instructional materials • Improved teacher training and support • Coordinated curriculum and teacher training • Strategic curricular and training approach to language of instruction in multilingual societies
	• Make gender-specific quality-improvement efforts	• Gender-balanced curricula and instructional materials • Teachers trained in gender sensitivity and awareness • Single-sex schools or classes • Quality improvement demonstration projects implemented
Understanding quality in the classroom	• Examine the teaching–learning process	• Classroom instruction evaluated • Students' readiness to learn examined
Assessing outcomes of educational quality	• Test student achievement	• Criterion-referenced testing implemented to assess mastery of skills and specific knowledge • Procedures used to assess basic skills • For monitoring purposes, reporting on achievement measures (in addition to persistence, repetition, and completion rates) both domestically and internationally
Scaling up and sustaining quality improvements	• Develop policy frameworks for quality improvement	• Coordinated goals, strategies, and implementation of policy changes and inputs to improve quality • Top-down and bottom-up initiatives integrated

Frontier Province), class sizes rise, supervision loads rise, levels of teacher training and experience fall, and systems for production and distribution of instructional materials are overtaxed. All stakeholders—parents, children, teachers, administrators, policymakers, and external donors—regard these conditions as unequivocal indicators of lowered quality in education. Guinea attempted to avoid trading quality for quantity of schools, opting for planned growth. In the other countries (except Guatemala, which has expanded the least) rapid

expansion of primary education has taken a toll on quality.

Compounding the access–quality dilemma, universal education brings new students (who are a special challenge even for experienced teachers) into overcrowded classrooms. Educational expansion welcomes more students from poor, illiterate households. They have greater learning–support needs than the more privileged students who previously constituted the majority of school populations.

Despite some shared criteria for educational quality, different stakeholders have different visions of school quality. In Balochistan, for example, four groups of stakeholders held four distinct views on educational quality:

Rural parents considered quality to be school facilities in good repair, writing slates and textbooks in classrooms, and children who are clean and well mannered.

Village education committee members think of it as teachers in the classroom daily, students learning something new every day, and students who are clean, orderly, and quiet except when asked to speak.

National and provincial education professionals measure quality by students' and teachers' achievement of national curriculum objectives for each grade.

International technical advisers and donors look for student-centered, active-learning classrooms and student learning commensurate with ability.

In their definitions of quality, teachers concentrate on the availability of training, instructional materials, classrooms as comfortable workplaces, and their students' learning capacities. Managers address the physical plant, the administrative formalities of school operations, and the stability and formal qualifications of the teaching force. Parents are concerned with their children's success in school, their behavior inside and outside of school, and the implications of school quality for their children's postprimary education and earning potential once they enter the workforce.

Strategy: Promote Policy Dialog To Improve Quality

The diversity of stakeholder visions of quality is in marked contrast to the consistency of vision about school access: enroll girls in school. Where policy dialog was undertaken to improve *access*, it worked. Where policy dialog was undertaken to improve *quality*, it was not as successful.

The stories of partial success occurred in Guinea and Pakistan. In these two cases, policy dialog was conducted over time, multiple donors and significant resources for sector support were at stake, and senior host-country educators agreed with system changes to improve quality. In Guatemala, Malawi, and Pakistan, changes in curricula or classrooms (even when they were successful in demonstration programs, as they were in the North-West

Table 6.2. Policy Initiatives to Improve Quality		
Country	**Policy Initiatives**	**Outcomes**
Malawi (Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education, or GABLE)	• Formation of Gender Action Curriculum Unit • Provision of gender-balanced educational materials	• Gender Action Curriculum Unit positions not official; budget negotiated annually, reduced in 1997 • Gender-balanced materials not widely used • Gender training not reaching most teachers
Guinea	• Increase in nonsalary expenditures • Steering committee for sustained dialog	• Investments not directed to classroom-level quality inputs • Dialog balanced quality standards with expansion
Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province	• Dialog about phonics and testing, based on technical expertise and collegiality • Research on teacher mastery of content	• National adoption of NWFP phonics approach and criterion-referenced tests • Recognition of, but no action on, limited teacher capacities
Guatemala (Better Education Strengthening Project)	• Agreement that effective pilot programs would be scaled up, institutionalized	• No expansion of effective Nueva Escuela Unitaria • Government failed to meet agreed-upon counterpart resource targets

Frontier Province and Nueva Escuela Unitaria in Guatemala) were not scaled up and institutionalized as USAID anticipated. Notably, in all three of those countries, primary education issues were politically charged, donors had diverse goals, and USAID envisioned gender goals differently from its counterparts.

Creating a Counterpart Steering Committee

The Education Reform Support Program in Guinea fostered policy dialog at the national level to improve education in general and girls' education in particular. The program began in the context of sweeping political reforms in that country. The support of USAID and other donors for reform encouraged the creation of a steering committee within the federal education administration to oversee and coordinate efforts across Education Ministry departments and between the ministry and donors. The steering committee has been more prominent at some times than at others but nonetheless has contributed to developing a management culture that values collaborative and information-based planning. Quality improvements at the classroom level have fallen

short of what was hoped for, but Guinea seems to have forestalled the decline in quality that other countries have suffered as a result of snowballing enrollments.

Redirecting Government Investments

A condition for USAID assistance required that Guinea increase the proportion of its education sector budget spent on nonsalary recurrent costs. The strategy for quality improvements runs counter to the often made argument that the key to improving quality is to raise teacher salaries. The logic is that better compensation serves the dual purpose of motivating the current teaching force and attracting better teachers. In point of fact, there is little evidence that raising salaries results in improved teaching, although it is difficult to test the longer term hypothesis that higher wages and professionalism would attract and hold better teachers.

Guinea's government was offered USAID funds to support other recurrent costs for improved quality, such as instructional materials. However, resources in government budgets are fungible; adding resources for recurrent costs allows funds no longer needed for one recurrent expense (including salaries) to be transferred to another. Guinea government officials believe the government did what it had to do to increase the supply of education and maintain quality. USAID's Impact Evaluation for Guinea concluded, however, that requiring investments without an agreement as to the nature of those investments did not improve educational quality.

Persuasive Dialog: Technical Advisers And Opportunity

In Pakistan the Primary Education Development (PED) Program succeeded in increasing girls' access to schooling. That success was led by USAID technical staff who maintained an active dialog with government counterparts at every stage of program design and implementation. It was supported by strong technical advisers who weighed in on program design and implementation. The PED approach relied heavily on program inputs.

Where policy dialog and changes did not relate to school quality, quality did not improve. In Balochistan, USAID and technical advisory staff concentrated more on developing and managing primary education systems than on classroom quality issues.

But in the North-West Frontier Province the technical advisory team grappled with quality. Expansion, replication, and institutionalization outcomes were disappointing, because the province had no good policy framework for institutionalizing and expanding the quality-improvement program and assigned areas to several donors, in effect supporting completing models for quality improvements. However, there seems to have been some successful dialog about the nature of educational quality and how to achieve it by a technical adviser who worked on revising curricular and instructional materials in NWFP. She ran into a major obstacle: the curriculum for all Pakistani schools is defined at the federal level. Thus, it was theoretically impossible to develop and

disseminate instructional materials that used a phonics approach to Urdu instruction, even though it is a phonetically consistent language. She began consulting informally with the leadership of the federal curriculum unit, which was in the process of overhauling the national curriculum. Her efforts were critical in bringing about one of the most significant changes in the new federal curriculum—introducing a phonics approach to teaching in Urdu.

Realpolitik: Policy Dialog in Context

The booming expansion of basic education in Malawi contrasts sharply with minimal changes in Guatemala. Political will was a critical determinate in both cases.

In Malawi, efforts to establish systematic policy dialog about quality were swept away by the political exigencies of democratization. In 1994, President Muluzi announced in his inaugural speech that, as part of his commitment to democracy, primary education would thenceforth be free and compulsory. From May through September 1994 primary enrollments swelled from 1.8 million to 3.2 million. Twenty-two thousand primary teachers—18,000 without qualifications—were hired, nearly doubling the primary teaching force. The Ministry of Education aggressively solicited donor funding to assist with classroom construction, teacher training, textbooks and learning materials, and other support services. The needs were so obvious, talk about quality improvements paled in importance. Besides, increasing access to schools was a highly visible and very popular political strategy.

In Guatemala, the midterm evaluation of the Better Education Strengthening project (BEST) and its 1993 redesign stressed the need for policy dialog as an integral part of the institutionalization process. Midterm evaluators pointed out that BEST had been poorly structured for policy dialog, since it offered uncoordinated activities rather than attention to policy analysis and system reform. In the redesigned BEST, the Girls' Education Program was to have as its major objective the promotion of policy dialog supported by an applied research activity and a new policy analysis unit within the Education Ministry. However, USAID/Guatemala was operating with a sharply reduced budget, which limited its power at the bargaining table. Guatemala imposes one of the world's lowest tax rates; revenues for education were and are very scarce. The new policy analysis unit was not formed, the applied research activity was discontinued, and the *Franja Curricular* (the curriculum guidelines for systemwide change and quality improvement) was not pursued.

Strategy: Engage Communities

Bottom-Up Approaches

Another approach to quality improvements is to build local participation in schools, decentralize school management, and support

diverse grass-roots strategies for educational development. The examples of village education committees, Nueva Escuela Unitaria, Model Schools, and the Basic Village Education programs demonstrate that communities and parents—including illiterate parents—can support teachers, provide cultural resources, share material resources, contribute time, and improve the learning in classrooms.

A shared vision and good policy framework developed and communicated by leaders at multiple levels of an education system can guide communities toward efficient and effective investments in education. However, in communities where most parents are illiterate and have little knowledge of or experience with schooling, capacity building for both management and educational issues is essential. When communities are given training, support, and opportunities for dialog, community control offers the potential for evolving local concepts of quality in education, local efficiencies, and local choices.

Challenge: Improving The (Donor Defined) Components of Educational Quality

USAID and other donors have historically viewed the most essential purpose of formal education as students' acquisition of basic skills and knowledge, the latter defined in some measure by host country educators. Student learning outcomes are measured by achievement tests or attainment of higher levels of schooling. From the perspective of most technical officers, the teaching–learning process that takes place in classrooms is where results occur. It therefore is a critical element of quality improvement activities.

In its technical assistance support, USAID has emphasized improving the three components of education systems that matter in the classroom: curricula, teachers, and examinations. None of these programs addressed the issues of learner capacity or young children's readiness for school.

International experience suggests that for teaching–learning processes to change, and thus for quality to improve, all three corners of the educational-quality triangle need to be addressed concurrently and attuned to a common purpose. Such action requires the forging of a common vision of education's purpose and, thus, the meaning of educational quality. The quality components of these programs did not align quality-improvement efforts toward a vision shared with counterparts and communities; in fairness, a common vision was not evident in these settings, but dialog to achieve a common vision was minimal. Moreover, USAID supported improvements for curricula, teacher training, and testing but did not successfully coordinate these initiatives.

Table 6.3. Quality Improvement Components of Programs		
Country	**General Quality Improvement**	**Gender-Specific Quality Improvement**
Egypt	• Improved process for instructional materials development	N/A
Guinea	• Increased nonsalary expenditures	N/A
Malawi (GABLE)	• Model schools • Basic village education program • Increased expenses for materials	• Gender-balanced curriculum development • Gender-awareness training
Pakistan (NWFP)	• Improved process for developing instructional materials • "Crash" training and certification for teachers • Standardized achievement testing	• Gender-balanced instructional materials
Guatemala (BEST)	• Active teaching–learning process (teacher training) • Bilingual education • Relevant curricula	• Teacher materials advocating for girls' education • Teachers who are role models for indigenous girls

Strategy: Implement Quality-Improvement Programs

Although donor goals for quality are usually couched in terms of student *outcomes*—improved learning, for instance—both host country and donor investments in quality have typically been designed and measured with an emphasis on *inputs* to the educational system designed to improve quality of instruction in the classroom. The case-study countries follow this pattern.

The quality inputs described in the next subsection for the most part were delivered through USAID-sponsored projects—activities linked to but not fully integrated in government education systems. The policy reforms were not there to institutionalize and sustain quality improvements as they were for access initiatives. Even where USAID quality-improvement efforts were effective—for example, the North-West Frontier Province in Pakistan and Nueva Escuela Unitaria in Guatemala—they were not institutionalized in government systems, and demonstration projects were not taken to scale.

Most of the quality-improvement efforts supported in the field studies have concentrated on one or two corners of the educational system triangle—most often curriculum and learning materials, seldom preservice train-

ing, and testing only in the North-West Frontier Province. Where two or more components were addressed, their integration was weak. Table 6.3 displays the quality emphases of the programs.

Guatemala and Pakistan supported fundamental reforms of the teaching–learning process designed to benefit both boys and girls. Guatemala and Malawi specifically promoted gender-neutral curricular materials and girl-positive behaviors among educators. Egypt and Malawi supported NGO model school alternatives that improved learning outcomes. In Guinea, USAID took a more broad-based approach to quality improvement through policy conditionalities. The cornerstones of quality interventions were training teachers, testing (in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province), and developing curricula and instructional materials.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials

USAID support to general quality improvement concentrated on textbook and instructional materials development. International and comparative research has consistently shown that the availability of textbooks to students is one of the strongest predictors of educational attainment. Most educators consider better textbooks and a supply of learning materials as necessary inputs to improving educational quality.

In Egypt, Guatemala, and Pakistan, USAID supported design and production of textbooks and supplementary learning materials. In Egypt and in the Primary Education Development Program in Pakistan, perhaps the most enduring USAID contribution was reforming the process for developing instructional materials. In both countries, textbooks had been designed for many years by academic specialists, with little or no pilot testing of the materials. Both PED and the Egypt Basic Education project supported the creation of instructional materials development units that involve teachers in designing and field-testing new materials prior to their production and distribution. In Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, student achievement improved among children using the materials produced through this process. However, the federally mandated curriculum in Pakistan was and is a significant constraint to developing materials that are developmentally appropriate, supporting preliteracy for the youngest children, facilitating language acquisition for non-Urdu speakers, and promoting active learning for all students.

Wide-scale distribution of instructional materials proved problematic. In Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, provincial textbook boards sell texts to generate revenue. The profits are linked to copyrights owned by board members who therefore do not want to sell texts whose copyrights are held by USAID. Competing donor initiatives further complicated the situation. Distribution of materials created by the Primary Education Development Program was restricted to a set of 300 pilot schools in the province. Dissemination of USAID-designed instructional materials in Balochistan was broader, because the textbook board there had a monopoly and was willing to distribute Agency texts—but only after stocks of older materials were exhausted.

In Guatemala, materials distribution was largely limited to pilot schools. USAID invested in the production of instructional materials, designed to be so teacher-friendly that expensive training in their use would be unnecessary. Seven thousand packages of *In Favor of Girls*—a set of children's books, a manual, guidelines, and instructions for teachers—were distributed. Teachers were not trained to use the materials. While this approach is attractive because of its low cost (training is far more expensive), similar approaches in other settings have been ineffective. The same outcome was found in Guatemala. Even in demonstration schools in that country, evaluators found that the materials were absent from some classrooms and seldom used in others.

Teacher Training and Support

Malawi and Pakistan provided shortened preservice training and provisional certifications to rapidly increase the supply of teachers, especially women. In Pakistan, the teacher training initiative was referred to as the "crash" program, because it was a crash course to prepare new teachers and train uncertified practicing teachers. The course condensed a 12-month curriculum from the teachers college into 3 months. Training was offered at district headquarters, since most of the newly recruited teachers were rural village women whose families were unwilling to have them travel to the provincial capital and stay there alone for months. Unfortunately, the training at the teachers colleges is widely acknowledged to teach skills and content ineffectively. USAID-supported research revealed that most North-West Frontier Province teachers could not pass the fifth-grade-leaving exams their students take while trying to qualify for secondary school admission. Despite evidence that the teacher training is relatively ineffective, the vested interests of the education establishment precluded major changes in the training curriculum, so the limitations of the training curriculum were perpetuated in the crash course. The emphasis on expanding access and implementing a rapid training course for new recruits won out over improving quality. That would have required prolonged and possibly fruitless policy dialog.

There is no evidence that students of trained teachers achieve more than students of untrained teachers. This is not terribly surprising, given that the curriculum at the training colleges is extremely theoretical and also because many teachers are in the classroom for years before receiving training. International studies suggest that experienced teachers have a very hard time changing or improving their teaching practices, even when they wish to. New teacher recruits in Balochistan were not offered training until they had spent months in the classroom, even though many of them were undereducated. Teacher training initiatives were not integrated with instructional materials development.

The Pakistan program, though, was expected to emphasize quality in its later stages. After USAID withdrew, the program was picked up by other donors, and the Dutch supported a quality improvement initiative in Balochistan that has offered teachers long- and short-term in-service training opportunities. The program

appears quite useful; however, it is not institutionalized in the Directorate of Primary Education, and there is every indication that once Dutch funds cease flowing, the program will end.

In Malawi, other donors support in-service teacher training. The activities, materials, and in-service gender training of the USAID-supported Gender Action Curriculum Unit were not integrated in the training for new teachers. In Malawi, as in many countries, a shortage of trained supervisors and travel funds limits the potential for replicating and following up on training.

Coordinate Curriculum and Teacher Training Inputs

Improvement in the quality of teaching and learning were observed in the smaller, integrated, intensive programs with clear models of an ideal teaching–learning process, hands-on training and supervision, and full integration of training with curriculum and testing.

The Nueva Escuela Unitaria (NEU) system works in Guatemala as a flexible, student-centered approach to basic education. Students in NEU schools, both boys and girls, showed gains in attainment and potentially in achievement. Girls benefited even more than boys. The NEU is a unified model that emphasizes community participation, supports clusters of teachers, addresses all three quality components (curriculum, teacher training, and testing), and directly affects the teaching–learning process by encouraging student participation and active learning in the classroom. This initially costs more than the standard public primary school in Guatemala, but the greater attainment of NEU students has led to overall savings. Although the annual cost per student is higher in NEU schools than in other schools, the cost per NEU *graduate* is estimated to be 15 percent less than in the standard system—where dropout and repetition rates are much higher.

However, the NEU model with its emphasis on active pedagogy was not brought to scale. NEU's goal in 1993 was to expand from 100 to 619 schools, with the Guatemalan government sharing costs. The planned cost-sharing did not materialize, and USAID ultimately was able to expand to only 200 of Guatemala's 16,000 primary schools. One uncharitable interpretation of the failure to scale up or replicate, despite positive evaluation results, emphasized *realpolitik*. NEU was identified with the administration that first sponsored it. The new government looked for a model whose success would be identified as its own, and which would address the political issue of bilingualism. A UNICEF initiative to promote a combined NEU–bilingual approach in classrooms and communities is now expanding, but NEU's strongest ripple effects were outside of the government sector. A large system of religious private schools is implementing the NEU model.

Because of the up-front expense of implementing Nueva Escuela Unitaria, the intervention has been scaled down in content and intensity as it has been adapted more widely. Evaluating and monitoring the degree to which

such inevitable adjustments offer improved cost-effectiveness will require monitoring student learning, repetition, and dropout. This in turn will necessitate stakeholders' discussing the nature of quality education and learning outcomes, the relative value attached to student outcomes, and the political will to invest in quality today in anticipation of greater effectiveness and efficiency tomorrow.

Education In Multilingual Societies

The international literature shows that instruction in a student's mother tongue is the most effective and rapid way for a child to achieve initial literacy. National or metropolitan language literacy follows. But in practice it is complex and expensive to maintain effective systems for instruction in two or more languages. In countries where there are many local languages, some of which have never been written down, the costs of developing, producing, and distributing bilingual materials for all teachers and children are formidable. Consequently, many countries, including the field-study countries (except Guatemala), opt for a single language of instruction.

The politics of bilingual education are nationally specific. In Guinea, democratization created a social demand for a return to the metropolitan language of French rather than teaching in students' mother tongues. By contrast, the processes of democratization in Guatemala have led to an increased demand from indigenous people for instruction in their mother tongues and validation of indigenous cultural heritage. Especially since the peace accords, the Guatemalan government has committed to bilingual education and Mayan culture in the schools, and USAID supported developing bilingual education materials and training for bilingual teachers. In 1995 the Agency implemented in 36 schools on a pilot basis an adaptation of the Nueva Escuela Unitaria model for bilingual education, Nueva Escuela Unitaria–Dirección General de Educación Bilingüe–Niña (usually just called NDN). Another adaptation of Nueva Escuela Unitaria, the Active Bilingual Education, was tried by the Ministry of Education in 60 schools in one department in 1996. NDN and Active Bilingual Education schools experienced implementation problems in their first year, and students did not achieve discernibly more in Active Bilingual Education schools than in comparison schools (Chesterfield and Rubio 1997).

Where bilingualism is not the official practice, hiring local teachers gives children the possibility of some comprehensible interaction with their instructors, at least in remote rural areas where there is likely to be only one indigenous language in a classroom. In many schools in and around urban areas the language environment is *multilingual*, not bilingual, so supportive solutions are complicated. Native speakers of three different languages are in many kindergarten and first-grade classrooms in Balochistan's capital city. Teachers are not trained or given strategic guidance on how to manage and teach such multilingual groups. This is an area starving for strategic investment to improve educational quality.

Multilingual education is a gender issue because in most societies girls are more restricted than boys to the domestic household and thus have less exposure to their country's official language. Thus girls from families that do not speak the official language enter school more linguistically handicapped than boys.

Strategy: Make Gender-Specific Quality-Improvement Efforts

Guatemala, Malawi, and Pakistan all included efforts to improve the quality of primary education for girls by improving gender equity of the curriculum and in classroom management. Interventions included developing gender-neutral curricula in Malawi, Pakistan, and Guatemala and materials and training to raise educators' consciousness about girls' education in Guatemala and Malawi. Malawi supported pilot experiments in gender segregation to improve primary school girls' achievements in math. Both Egypt and Pakistan supported girls-only schools (the local norm).

Gender-Balanced Materials

Analysis of textbooks around the world has shown a consistent gender bias, with women represented far less often than men and usually in highly stereotyped domestic roles (Sutton 1998). A common first effort to make schools friendlier to girls is to incorporate gender balance and awareness into the curriculum and instructional materials. In Balochistan the Primary Education Development Program emphasized creating materials with positive portrayals of women and girls. Fully half of the illustrations in the new materials are of girls and women, some in professional roles such as teachers and doctors.

In Malawi, GABLE established a Gender Appropriate Curriculum unit at the Malawi Institute of Education that made curricula gender-appropriate, developed supplementary gender-appropriate materials for primary schools, developed gender modules for ongoing in-service teacher training, and helped education officials become aware of gender issues in their policies and practices. New curricula have been written for all primary standards and for all of the teacher training college courses. Materials for some standards are in the schools, while others are printed and still en route. Training materials have been produced for Ministry of Education personnel. Reference manuals have been produced for the teacher-training colleges. And a gender-issues case study has been prepared for use at teacher-training colleges.

The Girls' Education Program team in Guatemala produced teacher's guides for Eduque a la Niña instructional materials and sample activities to generate girls' classroom participation. However, the teachers' guide neglected to emphasize strategies to involve girls as active learners by including their interests, needs, and life stories in daily lessons. They also failed to correct for gender inequities in textbooks and integrate self-esteem-

building and other activities with subject matter. A second manual, addressed to the Education Ministry's in-service teacher trainers, does provide several exercises to develop girl-friendly attitudes. However, the colorful and innovative materials are supplementary and not integral to the curriculum. The Guatemala Impact Evaluation reported that Eduque materials were observed in fewer than half of the Eduque classrooms in the 1994 evaluation. Informal reports suggest it is too easy for teachers to set such "add-ons" aside. Insufficient teacher training may have contributed to these disappointing results.

Gender Awareness For Teachers

By November 1997, 235 of 560 primary education advisers and eight district education advisers in Malawi had been trained in gender sensitivity. But few have been able to pass their experience on to teachers, because they lack the funding and transportation to reach the teachers they are expected to train. Malawi's ambitious plan to reform classroom practice has stalled on the threshold of implementation, owing to lack of coordination among teacher training initiatives and lack of operating funds for primary education advisers. In some communities, Social Mobilization Campaign staff collaborate with the advisers to address gender issues on the ground. Unfortunately, integrating the various GABLE initiatives was not built into their design. Thus, to date, there has been no systematic gender awareness initiative in Malawi at the classroom level, and there is no evidence of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the approach.

The gender-appropriate demonstration model in Guatemala did not appear to improve girls' achievement, attainment, or participation. The questions of timing and measurement pose a difficulty. How long does it take for changes in gender stereotyping in the classroom to affect girls? What potential outcomes—cognitive, social, emotional—should be measured, and how? The failure may reflect a weakness of gender sensitivity initiatives: if the design or implementation does not meet the specific needs and interests of the children sitting in each classroom, the effects will be reduced. Culture is dynamic. This kind of intervention requires sophistication and ongoing responsiveness to change if it is to have a significant effect.

Single-Sex Schooling

In Pakistan, single-sex schools were the only schools operating when the Primary Education Development Program began. PED research revealed that where no girls' schools were available, a few girls—usually from the more progressive, educated, or elite families in the community—attended the local boys' schools. It also revealed that a few boys attended girls' schools because their families believed they would get a better education. These findings shattered the illusion that there were two satisfactory single-sex systems in operation and provided the first compelling evidence that demand existed in rural communities for girls' education. Since the gender barrier was shown to be slightly pervious, the North-West Frontier Province decreed that all new schools constructed would be designated

"genderless," thus evading the high costs of supplying two schools to far-flung communities with low enrollments. The cynical view is that genderless schools enable the government to use donor funds for sustained investments in what are, de facto and de jure, boys' schools.

Changing from single-sex to genderless or mixed schools is likely to affect the quality of girls' education adversely. Senior women educators in Pakistan are concerned that the genderless schools initiative will rob girls of the opportunity to get an unbiased education in girls' schools and leave them more vulnerable to sexual harassment and inequitable treatment. The only gender-related change to have reached classrooms so far is gender-balanced illustrations in texts. These of themselves are unlikely to guide male teachers on how to manage mixed classrooms.

In Balochistan, there can be little doubt about the purpose of so-called mixed schools, which are now defined as any school with at least one girl enrolled. This category was created to satisfy the conditions for USAID assistance and the current World Bank loan, both of which require that the majority of new schools opened be for girls. In point of fact, the great majority of schools opened with USAID funds (and now also with World Bank funds) are boys' schools. The mixed schools are not truly coeducational schools; they are boys' schools with one or more girls in them, run in every case by the male administration for boys' schools. Not a single mixed school is run by the girls' school administrators, yet all mixed schools are reported as satisfying the donor requirements for girls' schools.

In Malawi, where public schools are coeducational, GABLE supported separate classes to improve girls' achievements in mathematics. A passing grade in math is a prerequisite for entry into various programs such as teacher training and technical colleges; it is also a requirement for science-based programs at the university level. In Malawi, as in many countries, girls' achievement in math at the postprimary levels lags behind boys'. The increasing use of mathematics as a means of selection thus limits girls' educational and professional opportunities in Malawi (Grant–Lewis and others 1990). In 1993, two secondary schools in Malawi separated girls and boys in some classes, and academic results for both sexes improved.*

Quality Improvement Demonstration Projects

USAID supported small-scale implementations of approaches that emphasized quality. These amounted to demonstration projects. The quality initiatives (e.g., the supplementary materials in Guatemala, gender-awareness training for teachers in Malawi, testing and curriculum change in Pakistan) were implemented in limited areas or on the margins of systems. Several were designed as sub-

*A USAID-supported study commenced under GABLE to investigate whether there were similar improvements when girls and boys were taught math separately in primary school pilot programs. The results to date are inconclusive.

jects of evaluation or operations research in Guatemala, on the assumption that if their effectiveness was proven they would be scaled up and institutionalized. However, even programs whose effectiveness was proven were not scaled up as hoped—such as Guatemala's Nueva Escuela Unitaria and the North-West Frontier Province curriculum and testing initiatives mentioned earlier in this chapter. Still, hundreds of schools and thousands of children benefited from the quality education offered by these as well as NGO initiatives, such as the Village Based Schools funded by Save the Children in Malawi.

USAID missions apparently tried to reach agreements with governments for costsharing and expansion; however, the design of these programs' did not acknowledge the competing claims of teachers' time, system resources, internal politics, or other donors' requirements. The effectiveness of quality interventions, at least as measured in terms meaningful to USAID, is either irrelevant to the host countries or a lower priority than other, usually political, considerations. Perhaps the lack of dialog with and participation by parents and communities is one missing factor needed for successful system change; without bottom-up pressure for investments in quality improvements for schools, governments take the path of least resistance and greatest political (and usually financial) payoff: they increase the supply of schools and teachers, even at the expense of quality.

Challenge: Understanding Quality In the Classroom

Whatever the vision or definition of "quality," the minute-to-minute process of education in the classroom is inevitably its most critical element. But the art or science of teaching is as widely debated as it is widely studied; there is little firm ground, even in their own countries and models, on which donors can stand. The international literature reports that only a few inputs reliably improve student learning: textbooks and supplies in students' hands, time spent by students on learning tasks, classes with fewer than 35 or so children, and, depending on the material and the age of the children being taught, certain patterns of interactions with teachers.

Strategy: Examine the Teaching–Learning Process in Classrooms

Examine Instruction

The emphasis on quality improvements in the past decade has led to modest attempts to examine the teaching–learning process inside classrooms. USAID staff and technical assistance teams for the girls' education initiatives spent time in classrooms. Some of them systematically monitored implementation. All

tried to get a clearer understanding of how well inputs to improve quality were affecting classroom practices. But structured, formal, quantifiable monitoring of classroom processes is difficult and expensive.

Among the cases considered here, only the Guatemala USAID project invested in such studies. The research in Guatemala's "girls' education" classrooms revealed little about changes in instructional style or student response. Inconclusive results are common in studies of quality initiatives, simply because educational quality is an outcome of such complex phenomena that it is almost impossible to predict. Even so, the Nueva Escuela Unitaria program's success in demonstrating that quality improvements and active learning methods especially benefited girls was possible in part because the classroom processes had been monitored and studied, and researchers could describe girls' heightened interest, self-efficacy, and participation in NEU classrooms. New efforts to understand classroom process and quality are under way in Guinea. And Malawi's emphasis on managing gender issues in the classroom and the community would benefit greatly from an effort to monitor its process and outcome indicators.

Examine the Learners

Children's general health and readiness to learn, the language they speak when they enter school, and the support their families provide for education bear tremendously on how much they learn, attain, and achieve. Students who are unprepared for a classroom environment constrain a school system's effectiveness and efficiency. Many school systems in the case-study countries expanded rapidly to reach students who never previously enrolled, who do not speak the language of instruction, are unfamiliar with print materials, and come from impoverished backgrounds. Schools coping with rapid growth of their student bodies need to assess readiness for school and respond with appropriate curricula and learning materials.

In Guatemala the touchstones of the demonstration models were how well educators understood and responded to girls' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Interestingly, the most effective model was the least prescriptive about gender and culture issues and yet the most intent on engaging each child's activities and meeting his or her abilities. Nueva Escuela Unitaria demonstrated that teaching and learning patterns that encouraged student activity allowed girls, even more than boys, to develop their abilities, express themselves, and learn more effectively.

School expansion in Balochistan and Malawi has accelerated, attracting new populations of students from households ill equipped to send very young children off to learn in academic settings. Many of the children come from households where no one can read, and no reading materials are visible in the environment. Such children need preparatory work to help them with the home-to-school transition.

The school systems in these regions do not offer developmentally appropriate school readiness programs. Thus the failure rates in early grades are high, often unacceptably so. In Balochistan, a kindergarten year was added to help the children succeed. However, the kin-

dergarten class is not the readiness, school-preparatory grade it needs to be for the 5-year-olds who enter school in that province. The additional year is simply a downward extension of the teacher-centered first-grade curriculum, which discourages action, initiative, and problem-solving. Consequently, repetition and dropout rates in kindergarten and first grade remain extremely high.

The Nepal case study suggests that investing in mothers' education may significantly improve their children's school performance. Though it observed only a small sample, the study found that children of mothers who participated in literacy or microcredit programs or a program integrating the two were substantially less likely to repeat grades and more likely to report receiving support from their mothers than the children of mothers who participated in no such programs.*

Challenge: Assessing Outcomes Of Educational Quality

In most classrooms, testing is the tail that wags the dog. Concentrating on assessment has two benefits: it speaks directly to teachers' instructional practices, and it reshapes their goals. Attempting to transform instruction without addressing teachers' testing protocols and supervisors' testing requirements is an uphill struggle against incentive structures. In the academic world, tests are the system's lens on quality. When reforms do not address testing, they leave incentive structures unchanged and therefore are likely to fail or not be sustained. Moreover, when there is no reliable assessment measure, it is impossible to gauge whether initiatives have worked.

Classroom assessment and system examination are the quality components that have been most neglected in USAID programs. Examinations, particularly those that select students for higher levels of education, exert an enormous influence over the actual teaching–learning processes within classrooms. High-stakes "leaving" exams are a politically volatile aspect of the educational system, since students' futures depend upon them. Therefore, efforts to change examination systems entail not only complex technical inputs but also careful consideration of the social and political implications of changes.

Strategy: Test Student Achievement

Criterion-Referenced Testing

Among the cases studied here, only the North-West Frontier Province developed and implemented a new examination system using a "criterion referenced" approach—that is, testing for mastery of specified knowledge and

*No information was available about the relative readiness to learn of children (as they entered school) whose mothers participated in literacy and other education or microcredit programs.

skills. This approach contrasts with the far more prevalent system of "norm referenced" testing, in which student scores are compared with one another to determine grades or ranks.

The results of criterion-referenced student achievement testing were a revelation to educators in the North-West Frontier Province. The tests demonstrated that girls' and boys' achievement levels varied at different grade levels and in different subjects but that, overall, girls were achieving as well as boys. Used in the Primary Education Development implementation sites and in comparison communities, the tests were the key to meaningfully evaluating changes in academic achievement and their relationship to changes in the educational system. However, these tests have not replaced the Primary School Leaving Exam, or other high-stakes, end-of-cycle tests, which continue to be based on norm referencing. Such a change would require a sustained dialog with all stakeholders.

The Evaluation Team's Basic Skills Assessment

Because data on student learning and achievement were available for only two programs, the evaluation teams in each country administered short, simple tests of basic numeracy and literacy. The evaluators selected girls randomly and tested them individually in the corner of their classrooms. The test instruments were based on a skills test developed in Pakistan that followed a standard pattern for criterion-referenced tests. The evaluator and the child worked through sequenced tasks of increased difficulty until the child successfully read the word or words or completed the arithmetic task, meeting the criterion for mastering the skill or knowledge.

The schools were not selected randomly and the numbers were small—about 30 students in each country. The evaluation teams were limited in the time and resources they could dedicate to assessing student achievement, but they wanted to have some information directly from students and comparable across countries by which they could judge the effectiveness of the educational endeavor. No claims for reliability or generalizability can or should be made about the results.

In every field-study country, most third-grade girls could read simple sentences and add and subtract single digits. Many third-grade girls could accurately calculate multiple digits. Some students—particularly those whose native tongue was not the language of instruction—demonstrated weak reading comprehension.

These results are encouraging until one reflects on the number of girls who have either dropped out or repeated and thus are not available for testing in third grade. First- and most second-grade students did not command basic literacy and numeracy skills. In many of these countries, girls who enroll in school not only fail to complete a basic education, they get virtually no education if they drop out in the early grades.

Domestic and International Reporting on Achievement

Crude and unreliable indicators of student learning—persistence, completion of school cycles, and achievement measures (examinations)—are reported to international bodies from national educational data sets. Their precision and meaning are shaped and constrained by the adequacy of each country's educational management information system and the specific achievement measures it employs. Guinea and Egypt have relatively accurate educational management information systems, while Malawi's is notoriously weak. Substantial EMIS development efforts in Pakistan have resulted in improved educational data collection, though the movements of the nomadic students in Balochistan continue to challenge the data's accuracy.

The achievement measures used to monitor student learning and to report to international bodies are idiosyncratic. In some countries, teachers constructed the school-leaving exams. In none of these countries can exams at any level in the basic cycle be compared across classrooms or schools, let alone with results in other countries. In most cases, no one but the teacher knows how a test was constructed or how it was administered. Little can be inferred from student performance on such tests.

Rarely are alternative measures of learning and achievement used. The earnings and employment of school graduates offer long-term indicators of educational quality, since improved career performance is an expected effect of better schooling. But measuring these indicators and linking them to education is methodologically challenging. They are usually considered only on a small-sample basis and were not available for this evaluation.

Challenge: Scaling Up And Sustaining Quality Improvements

USAID's record on quality thus far is one of the small-scale successes. The poor quality of primary education and lack of system improvements threatens to undermine the progress made toward universal education of girls.

Strategy: Develop Policy Frameworks To Stimulate And Reward Quality Improvements

Coordinated Inputs To Improve School Quality

The support USAID has provided to quality-improvement efforts has been limited largely to specific inputs into educational sys-

tems. Some of those quality inputs—such as instructional materials in the classroom and time students spend on learning tasks—are necessary but insufficient for improving quality. Education research and evaluation literature suggest that fragmentary educational inputs are seldom effective. For example, the "treatment" of providing some gender-sensitive materials, in and of itself, is unlikely to result in near-term reductions in dropout and repetition rates. Among the initiatives that USAID supported, only smaller scale projects implemented by private voluntary organizations have addressed all three points of the quality triangle: curriculum, teacher training, and testing. Effective program change must integrate improvements in multiple determinants of educational quality—a difficult endeavor in any complex system.

The limited results of USAID-supported quality-improvement efforts come as no surprise. The integrated quality-improvement efforts designed around explicit models of instruction and learning were effective, but they were undertaken on a small scale or a demonstration basis. Despite results showing improved student outcomes of models implemented in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, Guatemala, and Malawi's Village Based Schools, the successful quality improvements were not scaled up.

Integrating Top-Down and Bottom-Up Approaches

Major, sustainable inroads into systemwide educational quality require, at a minimum, coordinated strengthening of teacher training, curriculum, and testing. Perhaps equally important, the primary education system and those who have a stake in schools (from school administrators to business leaders to parents) must share educational goals and a model of quality. Scaling up quality initiatives in these countries proved a formidable task. Governments make changes in curricula and teacher training sluggishly; they are pushed and pulled by national politics, community demand, and teachers' unions—the last of which, as important stakeholders, should be but were not involved in dialog about school quality. Top-down and bottom-up approaches have pitfalls, but, as has been documented in enrollment initiatives, it is reasonable to expect a positive synergy when they proceed in tandem.

7 What Are the Best Ways To Help Girls Complete A Basic Education?

GETTING GIRLS INTO SCHOOL is a necessary step toward the Education for All decree of the 1990 Jomtien conference. The evaluation shows that enrolling most girls is doable where there is political will, community participation, and adequate and appropriate supply of school places. USAID has effectively contributed to all of those in the past decade.

But merely getting girls into school does not educate them. Fostering girls' learning achievement and educational persistence after they enter school is the rest of the story, and it is a complicated issue. Table 7.1 outlines some strategies.

Improving the quality of schooling, a critical step toward keeping girls in school, was addressed in chapter 6. This chapter examines the results of USAID support for other efforts to minimize repetition and dropout.

Challenge: Low Enrollment Rates, Even Lower Completion Rates

High and climbing gross enrollment rates for girls disguise the fact that many of those enrolled are in the earliest primary grades and that many are repeaters. Primary school completion rates can be quite low, even with high gross enrollment rates.

Supporting girls' persistence in school until they complete their primary education requires attention to supply and demand factors, the interactions between them, the systems in which they operate, and the cultural context of decisions about girls' schooling. The same factors that determine girls' initial entry into primary school are replicated in the factors that determine their continuing through and completing the primary cycle: supply and prox-

Table 7.1. Selected Findings: What Are the Best Ways to Help Girls Complete a Basic Education?

Challenges	Strategies	Examples
Low enrollment rates, even lower completion rates	• Change the school culture from selection to inclusion	• Mandate automatic promotion policies • Add kindergarten • Improve dialog with teachers' unions
High repetition and dropout in early grades	• Change the community culture from selection to inclusion	• Mobilize parent and community support for children's learning • Increase mothers' literacy and empowerment
Costs to families for girls' education	• Reduce the direct and indirect costs to families	• Provide fee waivers • Provide scholarships to support girls' attendance in primary school • Reduce additional costs • Provide secondary school scholarships as incentives for primary achievement

Repetition at the end of the primary cycle	• Change cultural perceptions of girls' potential	• Involve communities in changing gender role norms
		• Change expectations of long-term prospects for educated women through
		  • employment opportunities
		  • role models
		  • women's organizations

Early marriage, pregnancy, and assumption of adult gender roles	• Work with traditional leaders • Develop girl-friendly regulations and schools	• Eliminate exclusionary pregnancy and marriage regulations • Design primary schools for adolescent girls • Encourage communities to control violence and sexual harassment

imity of school places, the quality of education offered, the direct and opportunity costs of schooling for girls, and sociocultural attitudes concerning gender roles and girls' safety. Gender roles in most societies become more constraining as girls approach puberty.

Challenge: High Repetition And Dropout In Early Grades

High grade-repetition rates plague underresourced school systems. In such schools, repetition rates for both girls and boys are typically highest in the first year. In Nepal,

42 percent of children enrolled in the first grade in 1992 were repeaters. In Guinea, in 1995, 27 percent of all first graders and 30 percent of first-grade girls were repeaters.

For girls, most notably in the Malawi case, high repetition rates have negative effects on their schooling careers. As described in chapter 5, most families in the case-study countries rely more on girls' than boys' labor in the household, so parents are more sensitive to girls' time lost to ineffective schooling than boys' time. Faced with a child's protracted absence from the home, parents are simply more likely to withdraw a daughter than a son who repeats a grade.

High repetition rates also diminish girls' ability to complete schooling because culturally restrictive norms defining gender roles become increasingly salient as girls reach puberty. Repeating students become older students; older girls face more restrictions on mobility and behavior than younger girls and may be forced to leave school before they complete the primary cycle.

As for dropouts, few of the countries studied have information systems robust enough to offer meaningful estimates. Still, many case studies suggest that girls who repeat are far more likely to leave primary school prior to completing the cycle.

Case studies show that the highest dropout rates for girls occur between kindergarten and first grade or first and second grade. The high repetition rates in early grades point to two problems: *children are not ready for schools,* and *schools are not ready for children.* The curricula in many of these schools are too challenging for young children entering first grade from illiterate households. The pedagogy is typically teacher-centered. Early failure begins for many students a cycle of discouragement and lowered perceptions of academic competence. USAID's policy and program initiatives did not address the problems of school readiness, nor did they emphasize developmentally appropriate curricula and pedagogical practices.

Strategy: Change The School Culture From Selection To Inclusion

Just a decade or so ago, the case-study school systems operated primarily as screens, designed to *filter out,* not *bring in,* most children. Education was designed to discriminate between high achievers and all the rest, excluding the latter. Changing from an elitist culture of selection to a democratic culture of inclusion has been challenging. Although most educators have embraced the goal of universal education, many acknowledge that rejecting an elitist model of education has caused standards to decline perceptibly. For example, when President Muluzi mandated universal primary education, Malawi boasted one of the better education systems in Africa—but mainly for the elites who constituted most of its students. Its graduates demonstrated a level of excellence

of which the nation was justly proud. Today student access has increased by orders of magnitude, but they are offered a very different kind of education from what was available 20 years ago. Now 18,000 underqualified teachers manage overcrowded classrooms with insufficient space, supplies, and instructional materials.

Mandate Automatic Promotion Policies

One policy approach to changing the institutional culture from selection to inclusion is mandating automatic promotion (no failure or repetition) for students in the early years, usually grades 1 to 3. Automatic promotion policies at the primary level are a cosmetic and cost-efficient (in the short term) solution to the problem of high repetition. Egypt is the only country among the case studies that supports automatic promotion in primary schooling. Malawi issued a policy of automatic promotion but it has not been implemented. Balochistan recently mandated automatic promotion from kindergarten through grade 3.

The effectiveness of these policies has not yet been demonstrated. Thus far there appear to be more implementation problems than were foreseen, reportedly because automatic promotion goes against the grain of educators and parents who believe students must master some skills before passing to the next grade. As a result, directives to reduce repetition and support automatic promotion have been largely ignored in most of Malawi and Balochistan.

Inclusion policies have direct consequences for quality and student performance. Schools are bigger, more numerous, more isolated, have larger classes, have more multigrade classes, and are supported by systems struggling to keep up with their own growth. As discussed in chapter 6, the new students are different from previous cohorts; the range of aptitude and school readiness suddenly is much greater. It may well be (although we do not have data to know) that high repetition and failure rates represent not only teacher habits and orientation from earlier days but also low achievement levels in the early grades.

If teachers conscientiously try to instruct all children in their classes, the consequences of automatic promotion policies may be further declines in the quality of education—especially for more competent students. And the quality of education will probably drop more for girls than for boys. Worldwide research confirms that when teachers are stressed and overloaded, even more of their instructional time is dedicated to boys, partly because keeping boys engaged in learning tasks is essential for successful classroom management. Girls are more likely to remain obedient in overcrowded classroom situations, even if they are receiving no instruction, whereas boys demand attention and intervention to remain engaged. In mixed classrooms, even the best teachers tend to shortchange girls.

Add Kindergarten

Schools are not designed and few teachers are trained to prepare children from illiterate households for academic learning. To resolve this problem and reduce repetition and early dropout, the Pakistani province of Balochistan introduced a formal kindergarten year prior to first grade. But, as mentioned in chapter 6, the curriculum for the kindergarten year is simply half of the first-grade curriculum expanded over an additional year. Now children who would have failed first grade fail earlier in kindergarten.

The enduring solution is to implement developmentally appropriate curricula for young children and thus achieve more effective teaching–learning processes in the schools. International studies have shown that preschool programs to promote school readiness among poor and rural children, both boys and girls, are likely to reduce repetition and dropout. It cannot be overemphasized that the movement toward universal education has drawn in children from the least advantaged groups in society, children who just one decade ago would not have attended school and children whose parents do not know how to prepare them for school success. Thus, efforts to promote school readiness may contribute to improving girls' persistence, attainment, and achievement in primary school.

Improve Dialog With Teachers' Unions

USAID did not work with teachers' unions in any of the case-study countries. In each of the countries, teachers' unions are powerful forces politically, economically, and culturally. In several cases, their role with respect to girls' education seems to be to resist change and defend current instructional practice. In Pakistan the unions resisted quality improvements in teacher training. In Malawi and Pakistan they resisted expanding the primary teaching force; once the process was under way they tried to control it.

But teachers' unions, whatever their drawbacks or politics, represent direct access to the corps of teachers in classrooms. As much as governments, they set standards for instructional practice, determine which policies will be effectively implemented and which will not, and operationalize a vision and definition of professionalism and quality in schools and classrooms.

The evaluation can say nothing more about teachers' unions role in girls' education because no USAID mission worked with them. However, anecdotal reports of USAID experiences in Jamaica suggest that a more proactive approach might pay off in greater and more sustainable outcomes.

Strategy: Change the Community Culture From Selection To Inclusion

Mobilize Parent And Community Support For Children's Learning

The social norms in many communities are in transition from low expectation for girls' school participation and achievement (except for daughters of elite families) to a general recognition that all children in the modern world (including girls from poor families) need a basic education to prosper. As community norms shift away from selective schooling toward universal inclusion, a strategy for reducing repetition (and ultimately dropout) is to create better environments of support for children's learning outside of and before entering school. Literature from the United States and around the world shows that parental involvement in education is a powerful determinant of children's schooling success. The higher achievement of girls in the Village Based Schools project in Malawi supports this finding. Early returns from Pakistan suggest that repetition and dropout in village-based schools will be no higher and may be lower than in standard government schools. These results are probably due in part to parental involvement with schools and students and to community norms that support girls' education.

Increase Mothers' Literacy And Empowerment

As mentioned in chapter 6, a small study showed that Nepalese children of mothers who had engaged in women's empowerment and skill-building programs were substantially less likely to repeat grades than children whose mothers had not. It appears that mothers engaged in self-development are more likely than those who are not to encourage their children's schooling.

Challenge: Costs to Families For Girls' Education

When economic growth is slow or lags behind population growth, there is pressure on governments to push the costs of public sector education onto communities. The almost universal attraction of decentralization is evidence of this. However, keeping education costs down is necessary for increasing girls' enrollments, since families are generally more willing to incur costs or forgo income to keep a boy in school. Costs to families—from uniforms to ensuring a child's safety—are often higher for a daughter than a son. If a girl reaches the higher grades, she may have to live away from her family to be near school or her parents may have to arrange for transportation and protection.

Strategy: Reduce the Direct And Indirect Costs To Families

No education is entirely free to families, even when it is fee-free. Parents bear the costs of school supplies, clothing, transportation, and in many cases, textbooks. Parents also contribute directly to the costs of schools through local levies, contributions, and fees. In much of rural Guinea, parents must supply the school benches on which their children sit. Community contributions to schools in Guinea and Malawi may include building materials, labor, and food provided directly to teachers. In Balochistan communities, parents offer buildings or rooms to house new schools for girls, raw materials for teachers to use as instructional tools, time as teacher assistants, and time and management as members of village education committees. Nevertheless, school costs can be prohibitive for poor families, and many initiatives reduce those costs to attract and retain girls in primary school.

Provide Fee Waivers

There is no clearer evidence of the effectiveness of fee waivers than the response to them in Malawi. Girls' enrollments soared, and demand was so high that the waivers were extended to boys. Scholarships for persistence to the secondary level have had an additional impact. Universal fee waivers coupled with elimination of uniforms in Malawi addressed direct costs, perhaps the most significant and immediate barrier to girls' persistence in primary school. Latent demand for schooling was so strong that students flooded schools, causing educational quality to decline. Low educational quality and the high cost to the government of free universal primary education are the new long-term challenges to girls' completing basic education.

Provide Scholarships To Support Girls' Attendance in Schools

In addition to direct costs, the indirect costs of losing girls' contributions to the domestic economy of poor households is considerable. Studies in numerous countries have shown that from an early age, as young as 6 or 7, girls may spend twice the time boys do on child care, cleaning, and preparing food (King and Hill 1993). In light of these findings, the Guatemala BEST project offered scholarships for girls to help families offset direct and opportunity costs for girls to complete school.

The impact of a $4.30-per-month scholarship for girls in rural Guatemala was significant. When remunerated jobs are available, a typical wage in the field is between $1.70 and $3.40 per day. It is not uncommon for rural parents to spend between $5 and $17 on notebooks and school materials at the beginning of the school year (Richards 1996). Evaluations of the scholarship intervention package show gains for the 420 or so girls each year who

received scholarships: their rates of attendance, promotion, and completion were better than control groups and overall national statistics (Chesterfield and Rubio 1996a). Longitudinal follow-up data corroborated these findings: only 2 percent of girls with scholarships did not return to second grade in 1996, compared with 11 percent for girls without scholarships (Chesterfield and Rubio 1996b). Evaluation results indicate that yearly attendance for both girls and boys was higher in schools in which girls received scholarships than in the control schools.

Reduce Additional Costs

Chapter 5 described other strategies to reduce costs of girls' education to families. Eliminating uniforms, allowing girls flexible schedules to accommodate home responsibilities, allowing care of young children on school premises, providing school supplies and textbooks, offering income-generating projects, and school feeding—all can ease parents' financial burdens and be incentives for girls' participation.

Provide Secondary School Scholarships as Incentives For Primary Achievement

In Malawi, scholarships were offered to nonrepeating girls in secondary schools. Secondary education is far more costly to families than primary education, especially following the government's decision to make the primary level fee-free. Under GABLE II, 30 percent of nonproject assistance funds were set aside as a girls' secondary scholarship program. During the 1995–96 school year, 17 percent of secondary school girls (totaling nearly 6,000) took advantage of the scholarship program. In 1996–97, the program was extended to all nonrepeating girls in Distance Education Centers as well as in government secondary schools. In that year, nearly 43,000 girls benefited.

Scholarship programs have increased household demand for girls' education in other countries that were not included in this evaluation, such as Bangladesh. But the relative efficacy and efficiency of such programs is hotly debated. Targeting is required to ensure that the neediest and most capable children benefit; otherwise, such programs become subsidies for the relatively well-off families whose children are likely to be the high achievers in primary school and be selected for secondary schooling. Targeting raises the administrative costs of scholarship programs. The costs, benefits, and values of concentrating public expenditures on an academic elite rather than making basic education universal are the critical issues to weigh against the benefits of scholarship programs.

Weighing the Pros and Cons Of Secondary Scholarships

Educators in many countries believe the possibility of attending secondary school is a strong incentive for primary school students to achieve and persist. Results of scholarship programs, some of which (Bangladesh's is one)

have been studied over many years, indicate that secondary school scholarships improve secondary school performance, just as primary-level scholarships improve primary school performance. Less clear is the degree to which the *possibility* of a scholarship for continuing education motivates girls to achieve in primary school.

It remains debatable whether the payoff for benefiting a few girls is worth the lost opportunity of investing the funds in expanding or improving primary education for many girls. Are secondary scholarships incentives for improved performance in primary schools? If so, for how many girls? If secondary scholarships motivate many girls to achieve more and complete primary school, even girls who have little realistic chance of actually winning a scholarship, then the scholarships are a better investment than if only the few top competitors for the scholarships improve their performance in primary school.

The Malawi case raises other questions about secondary scholarships. Will they lead to a rapid expansion of the secondary system, possibly compromising quality and further overextending tight budgets? Will they undermine cost recovery at the secondary level, where many students come from families who can afford to pay for schooling? Will the government be able to administer the scholarships fairly, promptly, and without corruption so they benefit the poor?

The primary scholarship programs in Guatemala and Malawi had an impact on their recipients' persistence in school. But sustaining scholarship programs ultimately rests on their long-term cost-effectiveness assessed against each educational system's goals as well as the employment opportunities for educated girls. To date, there have been no sound studies comparing the long-term costs and outcomes of scholarship programs with other investments designed to increase girls' educational attainment and achievement. System-level interventions designed to improve the supply of school places or overall educational quality may be more cost-effective than scholarship programs, which necessarily benefit only a few.

Scholarships as Political Capital

Scholarship programs maintain their appeal because they help retain girls in school and they may be a critical intervention for impoverished families with no tradition of sending their daughters to school. They are so attractive that once in place, they are difficult for politicians to terminate and they often generate pressure for expansion. In Malawi, for example, the boundaries of fee waiver and scholarship programs have expanded but never contracted. At the primary level, fee waivers were offered to some girls, then to all girls, then to all children. At the secondary level, scholarships were offered to nonrepeating second-year girls in some schools, to qualifying girls in all schools, and to boys. These offerings are valuable political capital to governments.

Realistically, some form of fee waiver or scholarship will probably be necessary in most countries to induce the poorest girls to stay in school. The issues of scholarships, resource limitations, governments' political

self-interest, and political will provide an unpleasant confrontation with reality: can these countries really afford universal basic education?

Challenge: Repetition at the End Of the Primary Cycle

In Malawi, 18 percent of all grade 8 (the final primary grade) students repeated in 1994. That same year, in Guinea, 22 percent of children in the sixth (and final primary) grade repeated (UNESCO 1997). In Guinea, Malawi, and Pakistan, high-stakes examinations at the end of basic education determine whether children can proceed to higher levels of schooling. High repetition in the final grade of primary school is usually an artifact of the testing and selection system for the next level of education. In Malawi, for example, although the pattern violates regulations, boys (and less often, girls) tend to stay in the last year of primary school, repeating the final grade until they pass the exam and gain admission to secondary school.

Strategy: Change Cultural Perceptions Of Girls' Potential

The relationship between educating girls and their future roles as women has not been the focal point of USAID's girls' education activities. In the education sector, women's gender roles generally have been treated as an immutable backdrop—inviolate icons of local culture and constraints to girls' education that had to be accepted or worked around. Only recently have education and training initiatives addressed beliefs and practices that create cultural, economic, and safety constraints—not only to girls' education but also to women's lives. USAID's Women in Development office rarely intervened in the education sector until the late 1990s when it took over the Girls' and Women's Education project.

Involve Communities in Changing Gender Role Norms

Social mobilization and consciousness-raising programs in Guinea, Malawi, and Pakistan have directly and indirectly changed communities' and educators' perceptions of girls' abilities and potential. In Guinea, studies conducted in the early 1990s showed a widespread belief that girls were less capable than boys of scholastic success. As parents and educators became more involved in girls' education, the girls themselves demonstrated that these beliefs were erroneous. Parents and teachers in Guinea reported that many of the top students were now girls. Once communities support their educational participation, girls have been able to prove their own abilities.

Change Expectations Of Long-Term Prospects For Educated Women

Employment Opportunities

The premise that girls' participation in education is largely determined by the anticipation of increased lifetime earnings or better marriage prospects can neither be proved nor refuted. The success of fee waivers and scholarships shows how salient short-term economic considerations are in decisions to send and keep girls in school, but the influence of long-term prospects is less clear. In Malawi the Social Mobilization Campaign has broadcast the message that schooling leads to white-collar urban jobs with good salaries, although this outcome will not materialize for the vast majority of girls now flooding the school systems. But dashed expectations may not stem the tide of school entrants and graduates. In Latin America, similar expectations seemed to fuel sustained increases in girls' education. Today, girls' enrollment in the region exceeds boys', including enrollments at the higher levels. The trend toward more education in Latin America has continued among women despite the disappointing outcomes for many would-be teachers, accountants, and civil servants.

Data from countries where completion rates are high suggest that many girls complete basic education but do not move to the next level. However, many educators in developing countries argue that the opportunity for higher levels of schooling and the associated increase in earning power is the most important incentive for girls to stay in school. Unsubstantiated by research, this argument can be used to move funds to support secondary and university education away from investment in primary education before it is universally available to children. For the moment, rising primary-school completion rates seem to reflect families' and students' belief in and commitment to girls' successful futures in the modern world.

Role Models

Success in school is only one step toward realizing girls' potential. The employment and leadership prospects available to women fuel girls' and families' visions of success and girls' persistence in school. In Pakistan, increasing the female teaching force and drawing teachers from local communities has improved community perceptions of women's roles. Not only is teaching now a potential job for women and thus a reason for girls to persist in their schooling, but female teachers represent a new wave of active women. Contrarily, no demonstrable outcomes were linked to a similar but much smaller scale effort in Guatemala. The Social Mobilization Campaign in Malawi has publicized through storybooks, calendars, and theater the life stories and images of strong, successful Malawian women, demonstrating to girls that education may open up new life opportunities for them. There are no data showing how these or other role model programs affect girls' plans or behavior, but anecdotal reports are encouraging.

Women's Organizations

Sexual health and safety are serious obstacles to girls' completing primary school. Women's groups can provide visible role mod-

els, serve as mentors, and lead community discussions, public dialog, and action initiatives so that concerns over sexual health and safety do not force girls' education to end at puberty. Women's organizations have participated relatively little in USAID dialog about girls' education, although their political support and guidance in setting priorities have been valuable to developing girls' education initiatives.

In Malawi, women's groups fueled political commitment to girls' education and worked actively with the Agency on designing GABLE I. Their direction to a great extent defined the program's outline. Their lower profile at the policy dialog table during the design of GABLE II may have been part of the reason USAID pursued policy initiatives that did not enjoy local support and were not fully implemented.

In Guatemala, women's groups participated in a national multisectoral consciousness-raising conference, though they were not involved in designing or implementing the demonstration programs. This may have been a political loss for the girls' education initiative, since women's groups might have generated broad-based political pressure to improve indigenous girls' education and might have offered insights and energies to improve program design and implementation. The Forum for African Women Educationists, of which USAID has been a supporter, has given regional visibility to the girls' education issue and its proponents.

Challenge: Early Marriage, Pregnancy, And Assumption of Adult Gender Roles

The onset of puberty raises new challenges to girls' persistence and completion of primary school. Early marriage, pregnancy (or the fear of pregnancy), and the assumption of adult gender role identities make early adolescence a second critical turning point in girls' educational attainment.

Strategy: Work With Traditional Leaders

In many cultures and religions, the transition to physical and cultural adulthood is marked by ceremony, following which young women and men are expected to act in accordance with adult gender roles. Studies in parts of East Africa and southern Africa have identified cases in which educational authorities are uneasy with girls who have experienced so-called initiation ceremonies. There also are reports that the girls themselves find schooling less relevant to their new adult lives (Odaga and Heneveld 1995).

One dimension of Malawi's Social Mobilization Campaign (SMC) involved outreach to adults who supervised initiation ceremonies. Initiators were encouraged to schedule ceremonies so they did not conflict with the school year. The Malawi government had encouraged such a policy for many years prior to the SMC, but the policy had not been widely accepted by those directly involved. In at least one district, SMC promoters succeeded in engaging the initiators in new ways to interpret the meaning of successful womanhood. These initiators, in turn, passed on to their charges that the mark of successful womanhood was not only marriage and sexuality but also educational attainment and achievement.

In the short term, including traditional ritual leaders has made it possible for older girls to attend and succeed in school. Over the long term, the effects may be broader. The ceremonies are the culmination of weeks of instruction in a special "camp"; now that girls' future roles as helpmates and sexual partners for men are complemented in some of the training centers with an emphasis on women's roles as educated members of society, the role expectation of this generation of girls will change. Their expectations for their own daughters will be transformed.

Strategy: Develop Girl-Friendly Regulations And Schools

Eliminate Exclusionary Pregnancy and Marriage Regulations

Throughout Africa, a movement has been afoot during the past decade to change policies that deny young mothers the right to a public education. Promoted by the Forum for African Women Educationists and supported through USAID policy dialog in Guinea and Malawi, countries have revised their policies to allow all young mothers, married or single, the right to return to school after giving birth. Malawi's policy also calls for fathers who are students to be suspended for one year so that boys share the burden of parenthood and the year out of school with the girls they impregnate.

What these policies have accomplished is unclear. In Guinea, the Statistics and Planning Service has begun a study to determine whether young mothers are returning to school as a result of the policy change. However, the study's methodological difficulties and insufficient funding continue to challenge the planning service's efforts. In Malawi, the extent to which the policy has been communicated or the amount of support it has received from educators is unclear. In particular, the punitive measures directed at student fathers appear to

be unpalatable to many educators and are not enforced consistently.

Design Primary Schools For Adolescent Girls

The difficulties in implementing non-restrictive pregnancy policies point to a delicate but critical set of issues that must be addressed for girls to complete their schooling and benefit from it. These are community norms and practices surrounding women's sexuality.

With delayed school entry (which occurs in Guinea and Malawi) and high grade repetition (common to all cases considered here), it is not uncommon for girls to reach puberty while still in elementary school—or certainly by the early secondary school years. In some countries—Egypt and Pakistan, for example—this transition brings with it more stringent requirements for boundary walls, private latrines, and other services to protect young women. The degree and nature of concern varies somewhat within and between countries, but the concern is apparently justified. Girls, especially those from less privileged and less powerful families, are commonly subject to sexual harassment and predation by teachers and fellow students.

Encourage Communities To Control Violence And Sexual Harassment

The reality of sexual threats to girls cannot be denied. No single or universal approach will ensure sexual safety for all women in all communities. There is widespread acknowledgment that communities must be actors in controlling sexual harassment and attacks on schoolgirls.

The Social Mobilization Campaign example in Malawi demonstrates powerfully that even some of the most traditional male leaders in communities will consider and reflect on the best options for their daughters in a changing modern world. Other SMC reports show that active community participation in schools brings with it both rage at and responsibility for teacher behaviors; communities want to discipline exploitative teachers. Governments, because they hire and pay teachers, must assist communities by enforcing regulations and sanctioning predators—be they teachers, students, or others.

USAID has not made sexual exploitation a topic for policy dialog but should consider doing so, since communities report that abusive teachers are often protected by unions and central ministries. Enforcing regulations is critical in this arena where men have been immune to retribution.

Issues of sexuality cross sectoral boundaries, and so could USAID policy dialog and program initiatives. In conjunction with its efforts in reproductive health, the Agency could support education in sexuality and violence for older elementary school children, their families, and their communities.

8 How Are Boys Affected By Efforts to Improve Girls' Education?

BOYS HAVE BENEFITED from the initiatives to improve girls' education. Their enrollments have increased in every country, and they have benefited from initiatives to improve school quality.

Benefits appear to accrue to boys for two main reasons: First, since girls are the largest group of children excluded from school, when systems are geared up to solve the problems that prevent girls from learning in school or exclude them altogether, the solutions have broad applicability and relevance. Boys, especially those who are members of vulnerable groups or who live in remote rural areas, face many of the same problems as girls in meeting their basic learning needs: restricted access, poor quality, lack of nearby schools, and lack of parents' support for and participation in their children's education. Second, investments in girls' education do not transform the reality of gender differentials overnight. Parents and educators in the case countries made sure that new benefits for girls were quickly shared with or matched by benefits for boys (see table 8.1).

Strategy: Strengthen Investment in And Capacity of Primary Education Institutions

Because girls are concentrated in the primary grades in most developing countries, girls' education initiatives *strengthen public and private institutions* that support primary education and *increase primary institutions' budgets.* Increasing investments and strengthening education ministries' capacity to supply primary schooling directly benefits all schoolchildren, not just girls. The enrollment data clearly show that *recruiting and training teachers, supplying instructional materials, and expanding the supply of school places* brought more schools to children of both sexes.

In every country where system reforms and initiatives were undertaken, boys' gross enrollments increased in response to the girls' education initiatives. In some cases the effects

Table 8.1. Selected Findings: How Are Boys Affected By Efforts to Improve Girls' Education?

Challenges	Strategies	Examples
Ensure that girls' education initiatives do not negatively affect boys	Strengthen investment in and capacity of primary education institutions	• Strengthen primary education institutions • Increase government investment in primary education • Expand primary teacher corps and training • Increase supply of instructional materials • Increase number of school places
	Promote community participation in primary education	• Help communities organize publicity campaigns • Decentralize school management to communities
	Reduce schooling costs	• Provide fee waivers and scholarships for girls
	Emphasize the goal of universal basic education	• Address vulnerable children's needs
	Improve overall educational quality	• Improve classroom quality • Incorporate gender-balanced materials into curricula • Train teachers in gender sensitivity and awareness

on boys were positive enough that boys appear to have benefited more than girls. In Guinea and Pakistan, where the gender gaps at the baseline were extreme, investments to strengthen and reform primary education institutions inevitably benefited more boys than girls, although girls' enrollments increased at a higher rate.

Increasing the number of schools and teachers raised enrollments for boys and girls both, even in areas with single-sex schools. In Pakistan's single-sex system, having additional girls' schools led many parents to withdraw their daughters from boys' schools, reducing classroom overcrowding in—and thus improving—the boys' schools. And in new, local girls' schools, parents had an added option for educating their sons. Younger boys enrolled in girls' schools where their parents believed they would get superior teachers and be less subject to abuse.

Strategy: Promote Community Participation In Primary Education

Newly tapped local commitment to education also spills over to boys. The initiatives to mobilize and *organize communities* to support girls' education in Pakistan's

Balochistan province were so effective that parents who participated in the village education committees were prepared to organize for boys' schools as well. And in Guinea, following *publicity and community involvement campaigns* for girls' education, enrollment rates for both sexes rose at a faster rate in pilot districts than in the rest of the country.

In Guinea the publicity and community involvement campaigns in the pilot districts caused boys and girls' enrollments to rise at a faster rate than in the rest of the country. The increased community contributions to the schools benefited all children. In Malawi, NGO support for community schools has generated new models for managing primary schools for both sexes.

Decentralization of school management has required community and parental involvement in primary education. Around the world, parents' activities on behalf of their children's schools are associated with better schools and higher achieving students—regardless of gender.

Strategy: Reduce Schooling Costs

Eliminating fees, reducing indirect costs, and even (at least in the case of Guatemala) *offering scholarships to girls* are all associated with increases in boys' participation. The direct impacts of savings are not hard to interpret. Costs for school are obstacles to educating boys from poor families.

Strategy: Emphasize The Goal Of Universal Basic Education

Policy dialog about the goals of Education for All, universal access, the commitment to meeting universal basic learning needs, the problems of out-of-school children, the results of primary education, and the power of community participation brought these issues into the national consciousness. Families and communities began insisting on better access and quality for both boys and girls.

The goal of each program (except Nepal and Guatemala, which had projects rather than systemwide programs) was universal basic education, not redressing gender inequities as such. There is no evidence anywhere that resources for boys declined; to the contrary, all evidence points to increased resources for boys whenever new resources were invested in girls.

Address Vulnerable Children's Needs

In all the case-study countries, the children most likely to be excluded from basic education are girls, children in poor families, children in remote rural communities, children who don't speak the language of instruction, and children in disenfranchised ethnic groups. To achieve universal basic education, primary

education services must reach all of these vulnerable children. Targeting those broad groups put political attention and resources where they were needed—rather than on the traditionally privileged elites.

Strategy: Improve Overall Educational Quality

Results of evaluation research on the Guatemala initiative that ran three classroom demonstration projects to determine the best approach to educating Mayan girls suggest that *overall classroom quality* is essential to improving girls' achievement and enrollment. The most effective model approach, Nueva Escuela Unitaria, did not emphasize gender, though some of the gender-sensitive and bilingual materials apparently were used. In the Nueva Escuela Unitaria model school, girls improved slightly more than boys, but all of the children responded to and benefited from the transformation of their school into a place of discovery and active learning.

One feature of the Guatemala program was clusters of teachers who shared skills and strategies as they worked to improve their schools. The success of the model has been shared internationally. In Balochistan a new mentoring program is attempting to help teachers improve instruction. Even in that sex-segregated system, the mentoring program supports men as well as women teachers, boys' schools as well as girls'.

When girls' education is a priority, curriculum revisions or the production of new instructional materials prompts efforts to *redress gender imbalances.* Negative effects of gender-biased materials have been well researched; positive effects of improved materials have not. The expected effects of changes in curricula and materials are long term: improved knowledge, self-esteem for girls, and changes in social norms for gender roles. Malawi has begun to *address gender inequities in teaching practices,* which are notoriously hard to achieve; the training has not yet reached enough teachers to permit even an informal assessment of its effects. Guatemala's efforts to design gender-appropriate classrooms were relatively ineffective.

9 Conclusion: Sustaining Impact

THE RESULTS OF THE GIRLS' EDUCATION EVALUATION show, on the one hand, that the world knows how to increase the number of available primary schools and enroll girls in those schools. On the other hand, improving the quality of new and existing schools and keeping girls in those schools until they complete their basic education remains a significant challenge.

If initiatives to give all girls access to a quality basic education succeed, then the concern is not how to sustain the initiatives but how to sustain their impacts. Although the number of girls in schools has increased rapidly in the past decade, many girls are still not in school and many children still do not have access to basic education and a fair opportunity for achievement in the modern world. Initiatives designed with girls in mind are demonstrably effective, but they require political will, effective policies, adequate investment, and dedicated human resources. These are in short supply. None of the public sector systems we examined appeared to have met the challenge of improving the quality of new and existing schools, nor of keeping girls in schools until they complete their basic education.

Whether these programs' impacts can be sustained is uncertain. But the elements of success are clear. Table 9.1 shows the strategies associated with the requisite political will, effective policies, adequate investment, and level of human resources needed to improve educational quality.

Challenge: Limited Resources

All of the case-study countries are poor. None has a long history of commitment to universal primary education. All have recently reoriented from selective to inclusive education policies. How can they sustain their investments in girls' basic education? Will they persist in their determination to achieve universal basic education? What is the future of donor support?

Table 9.1. Selected Findings: Sustaining Impact		
Challenge	**Strategies**	**Examples**
Limited resources	Increase bottom-up participation	• Engage civil society, NGOs, women's groups, and communities in dialog and action to improve girls' education
	Increase engagement at the top	• Increase dialog and coordination between donors and governments
	Work toward a shared vision	• Promote a clear vision of access, persistence, and completion • Translate vision into a concrete policy framework
	Improve the quality of education	• Develop shared goals and visions of quality • Increase investment in applied education research • Adopt policies and programs that allow "space" for innovation • Promote policy dialog between donors, national governments, and communities • Create and environment where multiple small-scale initiatives can offer quality educational services

Strategy: Mobilize Grass-Roots Participation

The popularity of education initiatives, the reality of growing cohorts of young people in economies that are not growing, and the competition for international markets are contextual pressures for continued investments in basic education. Intensifying these pressures are the proliferation of community participation initiatives and the leadership profile of international and local NGOs on basic education issues; these trends are generating a bottom-up demand for basic education in countries that have not achieved full enrollments. Contributions of NGOs and communities have transformed basic education, making the demand for girls' education visible, helping demonstrate how obstacles to girls' participation can be successfully addressed, and generating a groundswell of support for basic education.

The longer girls' education initiatives are sustained, the more likely it is that the expectation of education as a fundamental necessity and right for girls and boys will become ingrained. These expectations are demands that politicians ignore at their peril, as the Malawi case demonstrated. Over the longer term, the Egypt experience indicates that social and economic change coupled with poor quality can undermine participation.

Community involvement in an era of decentralization has begun to deliver local investments of time, ingenuity, skills, and money to complement national public sector investments. All of these factors augur well for governments' attempts to sustain their investments. This evaluation also discovered in the case-study countries potential sources of political, technical, and financial support that USAID has not yet tapped. Women's groups, teachers' unions, and host country partners from other sectors might be important sponsors for sustaining the successes of girls' education initiatives.

Strategy: Engage Leadership

Donor inputs may be critical to sustaining outcomes such as increased enrollments in Malawi. Clearly, the challenge for Malawi (where political will seems strong but the realities of an agricultural economy and a growing population present enormous challenges) is different from the challenge for Guatemala (which enjoys much greater wealth but a less evident public commitment and tax revenue for achieving universal quality education as soon as possible). The effectiveness of donor coordination in working with countries to sustain or expand the growth of girls' enrollments will be determined in part by the capabilities and strategies of the parties seated at the table. To retain leadership in this field, USAID needs to field more technically qualified education officers. They, along with other donors, can have a tremendous effect on the future of education in the poorest of these countries.

On the international stage, USAID initiatives had the greatest impact where dialog with the government was continuous throughout program implementation, where goals were shared, and where donor coordination of investments was an operational reality. Pakistan offers an example of USAID leadership in donor coordination that had significant benefits for the country and the program. When the Agency withdrew from the country in 1994, other donors who knew USAID's initiatives intimately because of ongoing coordination and shared initiatives stepped in to share the tab. By contrast, in Malawi, more than a third of the education sector budget is supplied by donors, yet the donors have not worked together effectively to support the government.

Strategy: Work With a Vision

A hallmark of the successful initiatives was a clear vision—shared by donors, governments, NGOs, communities, teachers, and parents—of enrolling every girl in primary school. Where that vision was shared and continuously elucidated from the top of society down to the classroom, it became a social norm. The power of girls' education in the modern world became clear to people all the way down to the level of communities. Policy and program initiatives for girls' education found ready acceptance. Communities mobilized rapidly to educate their children.

But the vision of girls' access to education is still incomplete. National goals of primary education must be expanded and speci-

fied to *include persistence and completion.* In many communities, an array of traditions such as initiations, early marriages, and gender-linked responsibilities remain barriers to completion.

A vision is powerful, but it doesn't open school doors. Vision must be translated into a *strong policy framework* for basic education. Elements of such a framework may be well-trained teachers, strong educational institutions, adequate education budgets, compulsory primary education for girls and boys, and information monitoring for transparent, data-based planning and implementation.

Strategy: Improve the Quality of Education

Egypt is a sobering object lesson. The gains from years of basic education initiatives have begun to erode. *More* education for girls is not sustainable, unless the education is also *better* than what is available to most girls today. The failure of educational quality could undermine the enrollment gains made by girls.

These case studies suggest that *there are not shared goals or visions of educational quality within these countries.* Sustaining the improvements made recently for girls' education may depend on the ability of leaders, donors, and communities to engage in dialog and reach consensus on educational quality. This may require more *investment in applied research.* It certainly will require policies and programs that allow *space for innovation.*

If women's organizations, teachers' unions, and other civil society groups supported the growth of basic education, the political pressure for universal education would be even greater. Policy dialog about educational quality is a process whose time has come.

USAID could apply the considerable institutional wisdom gained in policy dialog about increasing educational participation to the *challenge* of improving the quality of education. Each donor's tendency to interact independently with central educational officials about quality issues—perhaps because each donor has a slightly different vision of quality and how to achieve it—undermines the potential for systemwide improvements in these countries. Multiple models, small-scale initiatives, public–private partnerships offer great potential. But balances between effectiveness and efficiency and between coordination and independence have yet to be achieved in these systems. Replication and scaling up of good-quality school initiatives remains elusive.

USAID emphasizes strengthening democratic dialog in its development support. Dialog about the meaning and quality of education affords an opportunity to include local communities in national policy processes. Women's groups, teachers' unions, and other elements of civil society can be invited to the table. USAID can sustain its leadership role in donor coordination by focusing on the cost-effectiveness of donor investments for quality. If such efforts succeed, girls and boys will sustain the educational gains they have made during the past decade.

Appendix A: Guatemala Field Study

The Context, Status, And Dynamics Of Girls' Education

GUATEMALA is no longer classified as a low-income country by the World Bank, yet it is one of the least educated in Latin America. Many Guatemalan families live in extreme poverty. Conservative estimates indicate that 43 percent of all women and 28 percent of all men over age 15 are illiterate (SEGEPLAN 1996). Sixty-five percent of the population lives in impoverished rural areas. In urban areas, 78 percent of girls enroll in primary school; in rural areas, this percentage falls to 59 (SEGEPLAN 1996, 41). In rural areas, girls constitute 46 percent of first-grade enrollments and 41 percent of sixth-grade enrollments (Guatemalan Ministry of Education 1996). Girls' lower initial enrollments and lower retention than boys are linked to domestic work, traditional gender roles, agricultural labor, and poverty.

Educational supply lags substantially behind demand, further diminishing enrollments. Although Guatemala has a large number of one-classroom schools (*escuelas unitarias*), 95 percent of which are in rural areas, an estimated 800,000 children—two thirds of them girls—do not have access to primary schooling (Nuñez 1997). A 1992 study estimated a deficit of about 20,000 classrooms. In addition to limited coverage, Guatemala's public education system anguishes from inefficiency. Current repetition and dropout rates absorb 23–25 percent of the Education Ministry's budget.

In a socioeconomic environment characterized by great inequalities, the educational system also reflects such differentiation. Private schools that cater to wealthier social classes in urban areas often are excellent. In contrast, public schools (especially those in rural areas) tend to be ill-equipped, with high dropout and repetition rates. Poorly paid and inadequately trained teachers and a high turnover rate contribute to poor learning environments that tend to be insensitive to students' ethnicity and gender.

This appendix synthesizes the forthcoming USAID Impact Evaluation *Improving Girls' Education in Guatemala*, by Nelly P. Stromquist, Steven Klees, and Shirley J. Miske.

Education in the public sector is politicized. The Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous People states that the government will "promote the use of all indigenous languages in the educational system so as to enable children to read and write in their own language or in the language more commonly spoken in their community, and will promote in particular bilingual and intercultural education and such models as the Mayan schools and other indigenous educational experiences" (*Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples* 1995, 7). The same agreement mandates augmenting scholarship programs and removing cultural and gender stereotypes from school textbooks (*Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples* 1995, 12).

USAID's Basic Education Strengthening (BEST) Project

USAID authorized the Basic Education Strengthening project (BEST) on 7 July 1989 to provide $30 million in development assistance grant funds over six years. The Guatemalan government agreed to provide support equivalent to $31 million in counterpart funds for project activities. BEST's overall goal was "to improve the productivity, quality of life, and democratic participation of the Guatemalan people." The project's purpose was "to improve the efficiency, coverage, and administration of basic education services in Guatemala" (USAID 1993, 5; Creative Associates 1992a, 9). Its basic strategy called for a mix of activities that sought to "balance broad systemic improvements with specific classroom support, and institutionalization of project activities into existing organizational units" (Creative Associates 1992a, 11).

BEST strove to improve education for the most disadvantaged students, but its greater concern was the national school-age population. The Girls' Education Program was a component of the BEST project from 1991 through 1997. Its target audience was indigenous girls whose basic education participation and achievements lagged behind the rest of the population.

Outcomes And Lessons Learned

BEST and the Girls' Education Program gave national visibility to the pressing issue of basic education for girls and the need for girls to attain complete primary education. The programs promoted a strong interest in the need for girls' education among some leading businesses, universities, religious groups, and other private sector groups. The programs also conducted and evaluated an experimental pilot project that produced substantive evidence of the effect that scholarships for girls have on girls' attendance and retention in school. They stimulated Education Ministry interest in girls' education and encouraged the ministry to offer a scholarship program for girls in basic education. The programs produced more gen-

der-friendly classroom and teacher materials. They emphasized indigenous languages as a means to support student self-esteem and spotlighted women in professional positions as models of achievement.

When the Girls' Education Program began, it encountered resistance almost everywhere within BEST and within the Education Ministry (Creative Associates 1992b). Gender issues were perceived as extra work, not as integrated improvements. The private sector contributed advocacy and management capacity to the initiative, but the Girls' Education Program did not effect substantial systemwide operational change in the Education Ministry regarding gender. Integration and institutionalization of Girls' Education Program gender-sensitive curricula and teacher training into the Education Ministry's plans were weak. Important civil-society voices—particularly those of women's and Mayan groups—were weak in the effort to promote girls' education.

Lessons learned included the importance of community-based participation in the girls' education initiatives; emphasis on systemwide, sustainable outcomes; and the value of outsourcing administration and management to the private sector. The government and donor were not of one mind about systemic sectoral reforms. Thus, BEST and the Girls' Education Program together emphasized well-run pilot projects and building a multisectoral constituency that increased awareness of girls' education but lacked broad community participation. These design features made sustainable changes in the public sector system of education unlikely from the outset.

Guatemala, Basic Data

A. General Country Data	Year		Year		Source
Average annual population growth rate (%)	1980–96	2.9	1996–2010	2.3	1
Rural population (% of total population)	1980	63	1996	61	1
Density (population per square km)	1980	—	1996	100	1
GNP per capita (US$)	1980	—	1996	1,470	1[a]
B. Social Indicators					
Total fertility (rate per woman)	1980	6.2	1996	4.6	1
Crude birth (rate per 1,000 population)	1980	43	1996	35	1
Infant mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)	1980	81	1996	41	1
Life expectancy at birth (years)	1980	58	1996	66	1
Female labor force (% of total)	1980	22	1996	27	1
C. Education Data					
1. Gross enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	71	1995	84	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	18	1995	25	1
Tertiary (% of relevant age group)	1980	8	1995	8	1
Primary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)	1970	62/51	1993	89/78	2
Secondary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
Tertiary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
2. Net enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	58	1995	—	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	13	1995	—	1
Net primary enrollment ratio (M/F) (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
3. Efficiency data					
Student/teacher ratio (primary)	1980	—	1995	34:1	1[b]
Dropout rates (% per year)					
Primary					
Secondary					
Repetition rates					
Primary (as a % of total enrollment, M/F)	1990	—	1994	—	3
Secondary					
Percentage of cohort reaching grade 4 (M/F)	1980	—	1991	—	1
Average years of schooling (M/F)	1980	—	1992	—	1
Adult illiteracy rates (M/F) (% of people 15 and above)	1980	—	1995	38/51	1
4. Expenditure data					
Public expenditure on education (% of GNP)	1980	—	1995	1.7	1[b]
Expenditure per student					
Primary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	4.9	1994	6.2	1
Secondary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1995	5.0	1[b]
Tertiary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1995	33.0	1[b]

Sources: [1] The World Bank (1998), World Development Indicators.
[2] The World Bank (1997), World Development indicators.
[3] UNESCO, Division of Statistics, 1997.

Notes: [a] Calculated using the World Bank Atlas method.
[b] Data are from UNESCO's *World Education Report 1998.*

Appendix B: Guinea Field Study

The Context, Status, And Dynamics Of Girls' Education

DESPITE GUINEA'S abundant mineral resources, the country's indicators of economic and human resource development dwell among the world's lowest. Guinea is a diverse country, with 16 ethnic groups. Most of the population is Muslim. More than half are under age 15. Three fourths are engaged in agriculture. Guinea's government has taken numerous bold steps to improve living conditions for all of its citizens, emphasizing macroeconomic reforms while maximizing public investments in human resource development and poverty-reduction measures (World Bank 1995b).

The economic and social status of Guinean women varies to some extent across ethnic groups and regions. Early marriage of girls and high bride price deter girls' schooling in some regions, while high male migration for labor creates heavier workloads for women but brings more resources for families and communities in others. Literacy among women 15 or older is estimated at only 22 percent, compared with 50 percent for men (World Bank 1995b).

Over the past 10 years, education in Guinea has changed in size, content, and its institutional role across Guinean communities. Effects of specific actions on girls' education can be understood only within the complex context of social and educational change in Guinea. In addition to improving access, and in part to improve internal efficiency, the Ministry of Pre-University Education has undertaken efforts to improve quality in primary education.

The Program of Adjustment for the Education Sector

In 1990, USAID joined other donors to support the government's education system reform, the Program of Adjustment for the Education Sector (known by its French acro-

This appendix synthesizes the forthcoming USAID Impact Evaluation *Promoting Primary Education for Girls in Guinea,* by Margaret Sutton and Amadou Bah.

nym PASE). A total of $39.8 million in nonproject assistance funds was designated for debt repayment. The conditionalities that preceded disbursements capture the intent of USAID's support to PASE. The conditions specified target levels of funding to education as a percentage of government budget, to primary education as a percentage of education budget, and to nonsalary expenditures as a percentage of primary recurrent budget. Support from both USAID and the International Development Association for PASE also included conditions related to increasing educational quality and equity. The quality improvements were in large part assumed to derive from increases in nonsalary recurrent expenditure. Conditions related to equity stipulated studies, creating an action plan and maintaining girls' proportion of primary enrollments of at least 33 percent.

In this context of reform, an Equity Committee was established in 1992 to advocate girls' and women's activities. USAID also was a major supporter of the social mobilization campaign to strengthen community demand for and participation in girls' education.

Outcomes And Lessons Learned

Goals for increasing public resources devoted to education and greater placement of educational resources on primary education were set, and met, as conditions of USAID and World Bank support to PASE. However, the USAID midterm evaluation noted a lack of meaningful effect on quality and equity from the satisfaction of these conditions.

In the 1996–97 school year, total gross primary education rate was 50.5 percent (Statistics and Planning Service 1997*), a substantial increase from the 1989 rate of 28 percent. Nationwide, the gross primary education rate for boys in 1996–97 stood at 66 percent, compared with 36 percent for girls. Rates ranged from a low of 24 percent for girls in High and Middle Guinea to a high of 86 percent for boys in Conakry.

Internal efficiency remains low, with excessive dropout and repetition levels. One cohort analysis estimated that only 51 percent of boys and 46 percent of girls entering first grade would ultimately reach sixth grade, the final primary grade. Of these, only 10 percent of boys and less than 9 percent of girls would do so without repeating a grade. Repetition rates average 30 percent across primary grades for both boys and girls. Dropout rates in primary school average 5 percent per year for boys and 11 percent for girls.

Increased fiscal resources have been leveraged by policy changes affecting teacher deployment and community contributions to schooling. During 1992–95, more than 2,500 educational administrators and secondary school teachers were reassigned to teaching at the primary level (UNESCO 1997). Community contributions to schooling, long a feature of Guinean education, have been harnessed through specific programs and projects resulting in a high level of classroom construction and communities' assumption of such recurrent costs as teacher food allowances, student materials, and school building maintenance.

*Unless otherwise noted, all data is from Statistics and Planning Service 1997.

Guinea, Basic Data

A. General Country Data	Year		Year		Source
Average annual population growth rate (%)	1980–96	2.6	1996–2010	2.6	1
Rural population (% of total population)	1980	81	1996	70	1
Density (population per square km)	1980	—	1996	30	1
GNP per capita (US$)	1980	—	1996	560	1[a]
B. Social Indicators					
Total fertility (rate per woman)	1980	6.1	1996	5.7	1
Crude birth (rate per 1,000 population)	1980	46	1996	43	1
Infant mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)	1980	185	1996	122	1
Life expectancy at birth (years)	1980	40	1996	46	1
Female labor force (% of total)	1980	47	1996	47	1
C. Education Data					
1. Gross enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	36	1995	48	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	17	1995	12	1
Tertiary (% of relevant age group)	1980	5	1995	—	1
Primary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)	1970	45/21	1993	61/30	2
Secondary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
Tertiary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
2. Net enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	37	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
Net primary enrollment ratio (M/F)					
(% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
3. Efficiency data					
Student/teacher ratio (primary)	1980	—	1995	49:1	1[b]
Dropout rates (% per year)					
Primary					
Secondary					
Repetition rates					
Primary (as a % of total enrollment, M/F)	1991	19.84	1994	23.95	3
Secondary					
Percentage of cohort reaching grade 4 (M/F)	1980	—	1991	80/73	1
Average years of schooling (M/F)	1980	—	1992	4/2	1
Adult illiteracy rates (M/F)					
(% of people 15 and above)	1980	—	1995	50/78	1
4. Expenditure data					
Public expenditure on education (% of GNP)	1980	—	1995	—	1[b]
Expenditure per student					
Primary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1994	10.4	1
Secondary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1995	38	1[b]
Tertiary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1995	498.0	1[b]

Sources: [1] The World Bank (1998), World Development Indicators.
[2] The World Bank (1997), World Development indicators.
[3] UNESCO, Division of Statistics, 1997.

Notes: [a] Calculated using the World Bank Atlas method.
[b] Data are from UNESCO's *World Education Report 1998.*

Appendix C: Malawi Field Study

The Context, Status, And Dynamics Of Girls' Education

MALAWI is one of the world's poorest countries. Its population growth is expected to outpace its economic growth for several years to come. 87 percent of its population lives in rural areas. Smallholders are the backbone of the economy. The country has one of the highest reported HIV infection rates in the world, including about 30 percent in urban areas.

When USAID began its preparatory work for the Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) program in 1990, primary enrollments totaled 1.4 million, or 60 percent of the school-age population. Secondary enrollments were 4 percent of the secondary school-age population, among the lowest in the world. A quality education was available, but only to a small elite. Only 1 percent of the eligible population made it to a university. In 1994, with the beginning of multiparty democratic rule, Malawi entered a period of great change in social, economic, cultural, and interpersonal relations; these changes were reflected in the education system in general and USAID involvement in education programming in particular.

USAID's Girls' Attainment In Basic Literacy And Education (GABLE) Project

The USAID GABLE project was a broad, systemic effort to address efficiency and school quality in the Malawian primary education system that emphasized girls' participation in schooling. In 1991, USAID and the Malawi government entered into an agreement for a five-year, $20 million program to increase girls' attainment (defined as access, persistence, and completion) in primary education with the ultimate goal of reducing fertility. The original design provided $14 million in nonproject assistance (NPA) to the Malawi government, in the form of three cash grant disbursements, and $6 million in project assistance for activities and technical assistance. Important features of GABLE I were a fee waiver program for

This appendix synthesizes the USAID Impact Evaluation *Promoting Primary Education for Girls in Malawi*, by Marcia Bernbaum, Kristi Fair, Shirley Miske, Talaat Moreau, Duncan Nyirenda, Johnson Sikes, Joy Wolf, Richard B. Harber Jr., Ash Hartwell, and Beverly Schwartz.

nonrepeating primary girls to attract and keep girls in school and the Social Mobilization Campaign to encourage parents and community leaders to send girls to school.

GABLE II, approved in 1996, extended the project two years to 1998 and provided an additional $25.5 million, consisting of an additional $4.5 million in project funds and an additional $21 million in NPA—bringing the total to $45.5 million. GABLE II was designed to increase the long-term financial base for education; improve the quality, availability, and effectiveness of primary education; improve the relevance of primary education for girls; continue support for the Social Mobilization Campaign; and, as an incentive to complete primary school, begin a secondary scholarship program for girls.

Outcomes And Lessons Learned

Between 1990–91, when GABLE began, and 1995–96, girls' enrollments at the primary level almost doubled (from 772,000 in 1990–91 to 1,528,000 in 1995–96). Girls as an overall proportion of enrollments, rose from 45 percent to 47 percent. Girls' enrollments were 36 percent of standard (grade) 8 enrollments in 1990–91, and 39 percent in 1995–96, suggesting improved persistence. Reducing schooling costs for girls (fee waivers and elimination of uniforms), social marketing, and community mobilization appear to have contributed to the sharp increase.

GABLE budget support and conditionalities, along with other donor contributions, have fueled increased funding for education. The government has increased the proportion of budget directed to education from 10 percent in 1991–92 to 23 percent in 1997–98. Attitudes about girls' education are generally positive. The SMC has been very effective. It has promoted attitude and behavioral change regarding the importance of sending girls to school among chiefs, initiation counselors, teachers, parents and students; fostered the development of a cadre of community researchers and the next generation of activists committed to girls' education; and introduced diverse women role models for primary girls.

USAID was challenged by significant changes in the local political context, turnover in its own staff, uneven policy dialog, unanticipated adverse consequences of successful initiatives, and lack of midcourse adjustments to these changes. Quality provision of school services has not kept pace with community demand stimulated in part by SMC's demand-creating initiatives. This incongruity could threaten the sustainability of girls' increased access to schooling and of community participation. Between the 1993–94 and 1994–95 school years, when school fees were eliminated for primary students, primary enrollments in Malawi shot from 1.8 million students to 3.2 million, adversely affecting quality and efficiency of basic education. The flood of students has overwhelmed facilities and necessitated recruiting and posting inexperienced teachers with minimal training. The supply of instructional materials for students and teachers is inconsistent. The cost of effective universal primary education is beyond the Malawi government's means; about 40 percent of current costs are donor supported.

Malawi, Basic Data

A. General Country Data	Year		Year		Source
Average annual population growth rate (%)	1980–96	3.1	1996–2010	2.3	1
Rural population (% of total population)	1980	91	1996	86	1
Density (population per square km)	1980	—	1996	110	1
GNP per capita (US$)	1980	—	1996	180	1[a]
B. Social Indicators					
Total fertility (rate per woman)	1980	7.6	1996	6.5	1
Crude birth (rate per 1,000 population)	1980	57	1996	46	1
Infant mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)	1980	169	1996	133	1
Life expectancy at birth (years)	1980	44	1996	43	1
Female labor force (% of total)	1980	51	1996	49	1
C. Education Data					
1. Gross enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	60	1995	135	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	3	1995	98	1
Tertiary (% of relevant age group)	1980	1	1995	2	1
Primary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)	1970	—	1993	84/77	2
Secondary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
Tertiary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
2. Net enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	43	1995	100	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	66	1
Net primary enrollment ratio (M/F)					
(% of relevant age group)	1980	48/38	1995	100/100	1
3. Efficiency data					
Student/teacher ratio (primary)	1980	—	1995	62:1	1[b]
Dropout rates (% per year)					
Primary					
Secondary					
Repetition rates					
Primary (as a % of total enrollment, M/F)	1990	19	1994	17.94	3
Secondary					
Percentage of cohort reaching grade 4 (M/F)	1980	62/55	1991	73/68	1
Average years of schooling (M/F)	1980	—	1992	6/5	1
Adult illiteracy rates (M/F)					
(% of people 15 and above)	1980	—	1995	28/58	1
4. Expenditure data					
Public expenditure on education (% of GNP)	1980	3.4	1995	—	1[b]
Expenditure per student					
Primary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	7.5	1994	9.6	1
Secondary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1995	145.0	1[b]
Tertiary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	1,136.7	1995	979.0	1[b]

Sources: [1] The World Bank (1998), World Development Indicators.
[2] The World Bank (1997), World Development indicators.
[3] UNESCO, Division of Statistics, 1997.

Notes: [a] Calculated using the World Bank Atlas method.
[b] Data are from UNESCO's *World Education Report 1998.*

Appendix D: Nepal Field Study

The Context, Status, And Dynamics Of Girls' Education

NEPAL is one of the world's poorest countries, and 90 percent of its population lives in rural areas. The country has more than 50 ethnic groups, many with their own languages, traditions, and customs. Although equal educational opportunities are extended constitutionally to all women in Nepal, a combination of factors enduring in many households, such as the tradition of early marriage, a high need for labor, and limited value placed on educating girls, have conspired to limit girls' levels of educational attainment.

In 1981 the literacy rate for the total population was 24 percent—35 percent for males and only 11.5 percent for females. The situation was much worse in rural areas, where rates for males were 33 percent and 9 percent for females. Over the next 10 years, as literacy activities escalated, literacy rates in Nepal increased to 40 percent. While female literacy doubled during this period, it remained dismally low at 25 percent and only 22 percent for adult women. For low-caste women, the literacy rate is still estimated at a mere 3 percent. Gender disparities in Nepal's literacy rate continue to be the highest in the world.

Since the 1950s the government has made efforts to improve the education system. In 1975 primary education was made free, and in 1987 universal access to primary education was established as a goal to be achieved by 2000. Nonformal education (NFE) efforts, initiated in 1951 by the government, increased dramatically between 1970 and 1980 when international and local NGOs began working in the NFE sector.

Between 1965 and 1970, the proportion of primary-school-age children who were enrolled in primary schools increased from 27 to 32 percent. Between 1990 and 1995, enrollment of primary-school-age children increased from 64 to 72 percent. Primary school enrollment of girls during these years jumped from 31 to 61 percent. With the large number of underage and overage children enrolled in primary schools, in fact, the gross enrollment rate in Nepal's primary schools is now estimated

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This appendix synthesizes the USAID Impact Evaluation *Promoting Education for Girls in Nepal,* by Sharon Benoliel, Lynn Ilon, Margaret Sutton, Dibya M. Karmacharya, Shreeram Lamichhane, Pramila Rajbhandry, Basu Der Kafle, and Sunita Giri.

to exceed 130 percent for boys and to have reached 95 percent for girls. Yet, in 1991, rural primary school attendance among girls was only 18.3, 29.9, and 4 percent for girls age 6–9, 10–14, and 15–19, respectively.

USAID's Women's Empowerment Program

Over the last three years, USAID/Nepal has advanced its efforts in women's empowerment and is the only mission that has established this goal as a strategic objective. Between 1994 and 1997, USAID/Nepal funded the $6.3 million Basic Education Support: Female Literacy project. And beginning in fiscal year 1997 the various activities USAID has been supporting in basic literacy, legal rights, and microenterprises for women have been consolidated in a new three-year, $10 million Women's Empowerment project funded by USAID/Nepal and the Global Bureau.

The basic literacy, legal literacy, and economic participation activities conducted through the Women's Empowerment Program have been aimed at increasing women's literacy, improving the legal environment for women, and fostering women's economic participation in the market economy. The hypothesis underlying the program is that participation in these activities increases women's empowerment; improves their capacity to be effective change agents in their households and communities; and therefore enhances the well-being of their children, families, and communities. Eight international partner organizations have been implementing one or more of these programs through Nepalese NGOs in 28 districts of the country.

Outcomes And Lessons Learned

This evaluation assessed the extent to which USAID's women's empowerment and literacy activities contribute to increasing and improving girls' and boys' education. With USAID/Nepal's assistance, the adult literacy rate increased from 22 percent in 1991 to an estimated 25 percent in 1995 and 28 percent in 1996 (USAID/Nepal 1997).* The beneficiaries of literacy and microcredit programs are creating in the long term a range of new roles for Nepalese women and therefore new role models for Nepalese girls and boys.

Personal development among illiterate women appears to change their attitudes and behavior toward their own children's education. Whether earning an income or learning to read, increased knowledge and skills among women leads to higher levels of maternal support, both material and behavioral, for their children's education. However, for that support to benefit girls and boys, it appears that increases in income are not enough. Traditional

*This represents data generated as a result of USAID's literacy programs only.

beliefs about the role of women, and therefore the proper upbringing of girls, change most directly when mothers are stimulated to think about the larger world, through the acquisition of literacy and the forms of group discussion that take place in programs aimed at acquiring knowledge and literacy skills.

At least three lessons may be drawn from the Nepal evaluation:

- Developing mothers' knowledge and skills appears to lead to reduced grade repetition among their children and may translate into higher levels of educational attainment for those children, resulting in private and social efficiencies.
- Programs appeared to have greater effects in isolated, traditional, and rural areas.
- Increasing mothers' literacy and raising their consciousness rather than increasing their earnings appears to translate into more education for their daughters.

Nepal, Basic Data

A. General Country Data	Year		Year		Source
Average annual population growth rate (%)	1980–96	2.6	1996–2010	2.3	1
Rural population (% of total population)	1980	93	1996	89	1
Density (population per square km)	1980	—	1996	150	1
GNP per capita (US$)	1980	—	1996	210	1[a]
B. Social Indicators					
Total fertility (rate per woman)	1980	6.1	1996	5.0	1
Crude birth (rate per 1,000 population)	1980	43	1996	37	1
Infant mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)	1980	132	1996	85	1
Life expectancy at birth (years)	1980	48	1996	57	1
Female labor force (% of total)	1980	39	1996	40	1
C. Education Data					
1. Gross enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	86	1995	110	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	22	1995	38	1
Tertiary (% of relevant age group)	1980	3	1995	5	1
Primary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)	1970	44/8	1993	129/87	2
Secondary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
Tertiary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
2. Net enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
Net primary enrollment ratio (M/F)					
(% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
3. Efficiency data					
Student/teacher ratio (primary)	1980	—	1995	39:1	1[b]
Dropout rates (% per year)					
Primary					
Secondary					
Repetition rates					
Primary (as a % of total enrollment, M/F)	1990	—	1994	—	3
Secondary					
Percentage of cohort reaching grade 4 (M/F)	1980	—	1991	—	1
Average years of schooling (M/F)	1980	—	1992	—	1
Adult illiteracy rates (M/F)					
(% of people 15 and above)	1980	—	1995	59/86	1
4. Expenditure data					
Public expenditure on education (% of GNP)	1980	1.8	1995	2.9	1[b]
Expenditure per student					
Primary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	14.6	1994	8.4	1
Secondary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1995	11.9	1[b]
Tertiary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	271.9	1995	156	1[b]

Sources: [1] The World Bank (1998), World Development Indicators.
[2] The World Bank (1997), World Development indicators.
[3] UNESCO, Division of Statistics, 1997.

Notes: [a] Calculated using the World Bank Atlas method.
[b] Data are from UNESCO's *World Education Report 1998.*

Appendix E: Pakistan Field Study

The Context, Status, And Dynamics Of Girls' Education

According to the 1981 population census of the Islamic nation of Pakistan,* only 1.8 percent of rural women were literate in Balochistan and 3.8 percent in the North-West Frontier Province. Rural women are confined to family compounds and local villages, and segregation of the sexes is used as a tool to reinforce male domination and marginalize women. At the project's inception, public schools in both provinces were single sex and run by separate male and female administrations.

Pakistan's population is growing rapidly—almost 3 percent a year—a challenge for its education system when gross national product per capita is roughly $480 (as of 1996). In 1988–89, only 2.4 percent of the GNP went to education, compared with the 4 percent UNESCO recommended for developing countries. Most schools in rural areas of Balochistan and many schools in the rural areas of the North-West Frontier Province were shelterless.

In Balochistan, in 1989, there were six boys' schools for every girls' school. Only 14 percent of girls were enrolled in school, compared with 70 percent of boys. In rural areas, only 4 percent of girls were in school, while almost 30 percent of boys were enrolled. Of the rural girls enrolled, 93 percent failed to complete their primary education. The situation in the North-West Frontier Province, where there were only twice as many boys' schools as girls', was not as extreme; 28 percent of girls and almost 80 percent of boys were enrolled in school, 14 percent and 66 percent respectively in rural areas. Seventy-eight percent of rural girls dropped out before completion in the North-West Frontier Province. The need for a Primary Education Development Program with an emphasis on girls was manifest.

*This was the last census. Population growth rates subsequently hovered around 3 percent. Denominators for education participation rates are extrapolations from 1981 census data, thus participation rates are rough estimates.

This appendix synthesizes the USAID Impact Evaluation *Promoting Primary Education for Girls in Pakistan*, by Sharon Benoliel, Chloe O'Gara, and Shirley Miske.

Educators did not recognize that there was such a strong demand for girls' schooling, nor that the supply of schools was a critical constraint. There were simply not enough schools and women teachers for rural girls. Poor management of primary education was a fundamental problem in both provinces. Problems included corruption, poor-quality construction and maintenance of schools, teacher absenteeism, lack of accountability, favoritism in personnel selection and resource allocation, selective enforcement of rules, and poor morale and work ethic of the civil service, especially primary teachers.

USAID's Primary Education Development Project

In 1989, USAID/Pakistan authorized $280 million in grant funds to support Primary Education Development (PED) through a 10-year program of balance-of-payments support to Pakistan. PED's goals were to lay the groundwork for sustained economic and social development by encouraging policy reforms in education, to help Balochistan and the North-West Frontier Province build institutional capacity, and thus to improve access to, and equity and quality of, primary education, particularly for rural girls.

As the program began, USAID and UNICEF funded a human resources survey and additional community-based research. The studies revealed that more than half of rural couples with children wanted to send their daughters to school but lacked a nearby girls' school. Although senior educators were convinced that rural communities rejected the concept of girls' education, the research revealed that about 3 percent of families so wanted to educate their daughters that they enrolled their daughters in boys' schools when no girls' school was available. However, most withdrew their daughters from these schools at around third grade—before puberty—when cultural prohibitions against mixed-sex seating becomes pronounced. Few rural families invested in private schooling for girls, although many did for boys. Almost half of all boys educated in the North-West Frontier Province attend private schools.

Only 40 percent of staff and 30 percent of education resources were dedicated to primary education, although primary schools served 70 percent of students in 1989. All education resources were managed by the directors of education and schools. These centers were staffed by professionals whose expertise and interest were usually in secondary and higher education. Primary education teachers had low pay and low status.

The Primary Education Development Program adopted a strategy of *creating* and *strengthening* institutions rather than *reforming* them. The reasoning was that new primary institutions would protect primary education resources more effectively than would existing institutions with vested interests in secondary schools and colleges. With this objective, directorates of primary education were created to 1) upgrade the management and financial

resources for primary education, 2) center attention on primary-level problems, 3) support innovation and initiatives, and 4) attract competent teachers by raising the economic and social value of primary school educators.

In Balochistan, PED established a unique community-based system of girls' schools implemented by a newly established NGO. Working in several villages, community education promoters identified prospective female teachers and formed village education committees that included parents, grandparents, or guardians of school-age girls. Each committee donated land and a building for a new school, supported the local teachers in their new role, and monitored students' progress. Signed agreements committed the government to training and paying new teachers and building a permanent school within three years. PED and UNICEF also cofinanced the establishment of 90 community schools in the North-West Frontier Province.

Outcomes And Lessons Learned

From the Primary Education Development Program's inception until 1996, girls' enrollments more than tripled in Balochistan and more than doubled in the North-West Frontier Province. Primary education expenditures increased 18 percent in the North-West Frontier Province and 10 percent in Balochistan. This well exceeded the initial targets of 8 and 5 percent, respectively. After USAID withdrew in 1994, the PED program continued with the support of other donors and USAID pipeline funds. Boys' enrollments during the same period rose almost 27 percent in Balochistan and 14 percent in the North-West Frontier Province.

Under PED, more than 2,100 new girls' schools were opened in the two provinces—a 70 percent increase in less than five years. Despite this impressive increase, gender differentials in proximity and access to schools persist. Because about 80 percent of PED grant funds were dedicated to construction, one condition of their disbursement was that the ratio of girls' schools to boys' built was at least 3 to 2. But the provincial governments did not meet that condition. As PED ended, only 16 percent of new school construction in Balochistan was for girls, and only 40 percent in the North-West Frontier Province. More than two thirds of school-age girls are still not in school. Given the limited options for girls, many of those who *are* enrolled face crowded classrooms. Pupil–teacher ratios in girls' schools are substantially higher (44 to 1) than in boys' schools (23 to 1).

Policy discussions about school quality were minimal. Program initiatives were hampered by the absence of a shared vision of what quality education should look like and who was responsible for making it happen. Nonetheless, there were some notable programmatic achievements. Among them:

- A phonetic approach to teaching Urdu, the national language, incorporated in the national curriculum

- Improved instructional materials in both provinces
- Achievement testing in the North-West Frontier Province

Under the evaluation team's direction, short competency tests were administered to a small sample of girls in both provinces. Girls in the second grade demonstrated basic numeracy skills. Girls in the third grade demonstrated rote reading skills in Urdu. Achievement test results in the North-West Frontier Province show that, on average, students do not achieve competency on more than half the material in the fifth-grade curriculum. PED research at the teacher training colleges showed that teachers' mastery of the content barely exceeded that of the students. The national curriculum, which both provinces follow, is challenging by the standards of many countries and is perhaps age-inappropriate for the students in the first few years, particularly since for many entering students Urdu is not the first language.

The endurance of gains made under PED faces several threats, including fast-growing populations, scarce financial resources, the continued poor quality of girls' classroom experiences, the plethora of communities still needing NGOs' assistance to organize parent education committees, and the lack of role models and opportunities for educated girls.

Pakistan, Basic Data

A. General Country Data	Year		Year		Source
Average annual population growth rate (%)	1980–96	3.0	1996–2010	2.5	1
Rural population (% of total population)	1980	75	1996	65	1
Density (population per square km)	1980	—	1996	170	1
GNP per capita (US$)	1970	—	1996	480	1[a]
B. Social Indicators					
Total fertility (rate per woman)	1980	7.0	1996	5.1	1
Crude birth (rate per 1,000 population)	1980	47	1996	37	1
Infant mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)	1980	124	1996	88	1
Life expectancy at birth (years)	1980	55	1996	63	1
Female labor force (% of total)	1980	23	1996	27	1
C. Education Data					
1. Gross enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	39	1996	74	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	14	1996	26	1
Tertiary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1996	3	1
Primary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)	1970	57/22	1993	80/49	2
Secondary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
Tertiary (M/F)(% of relevant age group)					
2. Net enrollment rate					
Primary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
Secondary (% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
Net primary enrollment ratio (M/F)					
(% of relevant age group)	1980	—	1995	—	1
3. Efficiency data					
Student/teacher ratio (primary)	1980	—	1995	—	1[b]
Dropout rates (% per year)					
Primary					
Secondary					
Repetition rates					
Primary (as a % of total enrollment, M/F)	1991	—	1994	—	3
Secondary					
Percentage of cohort reaching grade 4 (M/F)	1980	—	1991	—	1
Average years of schooling (M/F)	1980	—	1992	—	1
Adult illiteracy rates (M/F)					
(% of people 15 and above)	1980	—	1995	50/76	1
4. Expenditure data					
Public expenditure on education (% of GNP)	1980	2.0	1995	—	1[b]
Expenditure per student					
Primary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	8.7	1994	—	1
Secondary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	—	1995	—	1[b]
Tertiary (% of GNP per capita)	1980	235.6	1995	—	1[b]

Sources: [1] The World Bank (1998), World Development Indicators.
[2] The World Bank (1997), World Development indicators.
[3] UNESCO, Division of Statistics, 1997.

Notes: [a] Calculated using the World Bank Atlas method.
[b] Data are from UNESCO's *World Education Report 1998.*

Appendix F: USAID Total Obligations In Girls' Education

USAID Total Obligations in Girls' Education
Calculated by the USAID Budget Office
(in $000)

Country/Region	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Angola	-	-	-	-	-	-	263
Benin	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,072
Ethiopia	-	-	-	-	2,160	1,200	3,372
Ghana	-	4,501	2,500	6,320	-	-	2,616
Guinea	2,090	2,200	2,050	1,710	-	3,600	-
Lesotho	1,260	3,891	1,130	3,200	-	-	-
Malawi	-	-	-	-	-	6,945	4,320
Mali	-	-	-	-	-	3,055	3,432
Namibia	8,800	-	-	-	-	1,095	815
South Africa	-	-	5,025	6,050	6,888	-	-
Uganda	-	-	6,794	6,500	1,150	7,464	5,160
Africa Regional	3	-	-	1	-	-	1,724
Bureau Total	12,153	10,592	17,499	23,781	10,198	23,359	24,774

Country/Region	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Afghanistan	595	1,595	2,800	2,613	-	-	-
Cambodia	-	-	-	-	-	3,275	1,030
Egypt	-	-	-	-	-	4,053	12,750
India	-	-	-	-	-	-	324
Indonesia	1,000	1,000	-	-	-	-	-
Morocco	-	-	-	-	-	500	2,996
Pakistan	-	7,800	-	-	-	-	-
Philippines	-	-	-	-	-	464	-
ANE Regional	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ANE Bureau	1,595	10,395	2,800	2,613	-	8,292	17,100

Country/Region	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Belize	-	-	53	-	-	-	-
Bolivia	-	-	586	-	-	26	60
Dominican Republic	-	-	-	-	-	368	-
Ecuador	-	12	11	-	-	-	-
El Salvador	-	-	-	-	-	3,426	1,430
Guatemala	-	-	-	-	-	694	583
Haiti	757	738	-	-	-	-	-
Honduras	-	-	-	600	805	416	752
Jamaica	335	555	332	725	541	-	-
Nicaragua	-	-	-	-	-	481	1,376
Peru	-	-	456	-	-	-	30
LAC Regional	117	331	28	178	-	-	-
LAC Bureau	1,209	1,636	1,466	1,503	1,346	5,411	4,231

Country/Region	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Global Bureau	-	2,013	59	131	-	8,300	3,601
PPC	40	-	15	-	-	-	-
BHR	-	-	-	-	-	645	669

Country/Region	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Armenia	-	-	-	-	-	-	754
Azerbaijan	-	-	-	-	-	300	315
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	350	248
Lithuania	-	-	-	-	-	242	164
Europe and NIS Regional							

Figure F.1. Africa

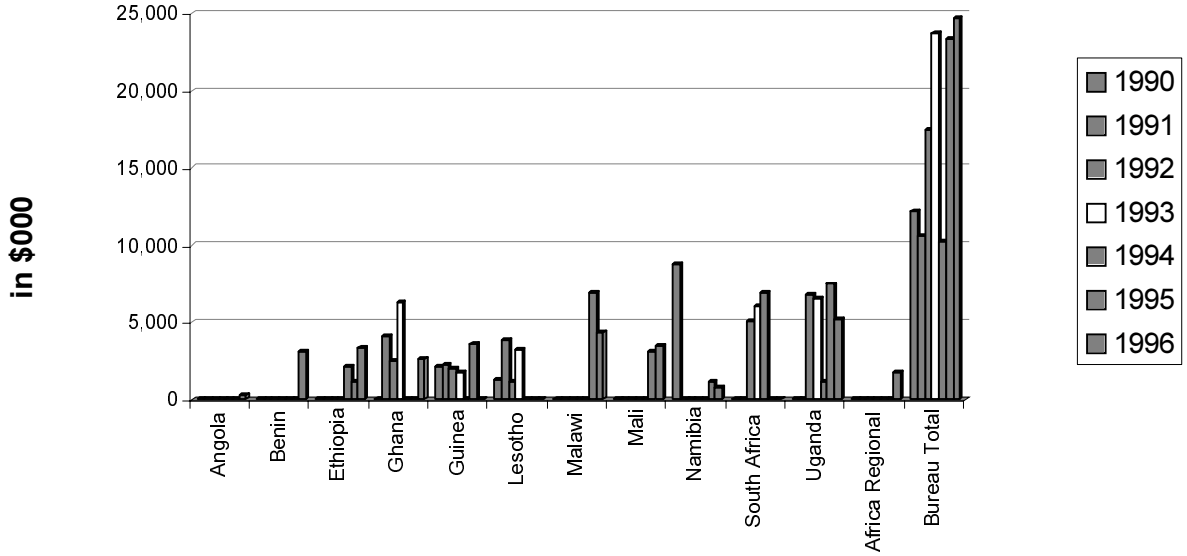


Figure F.2. Asia–Near East

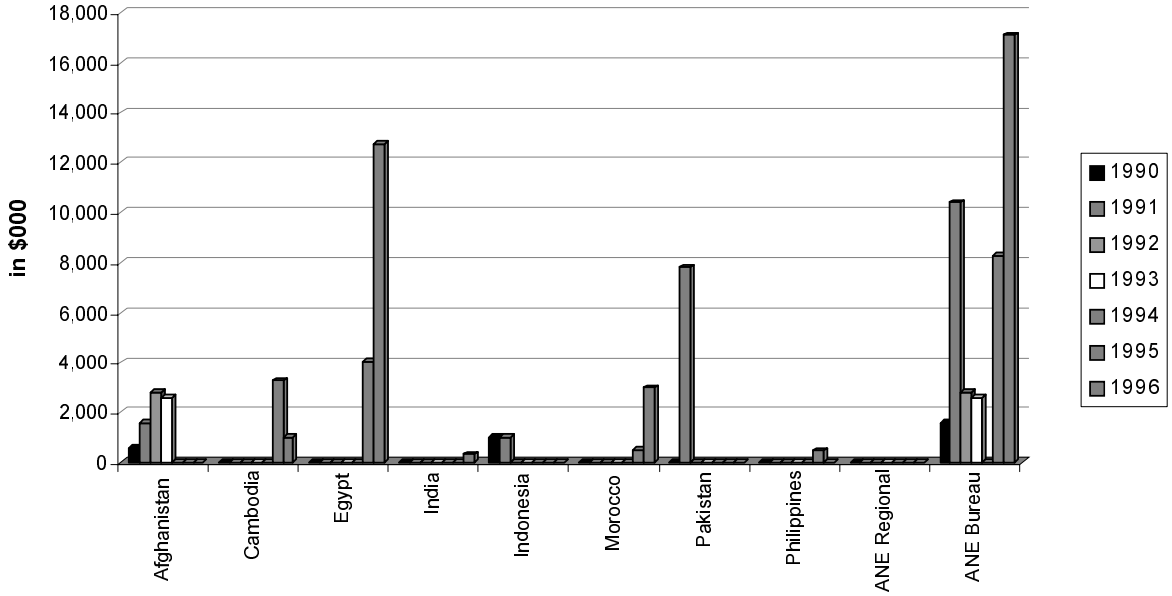


Figure F.3. Latin America And the Caribbean

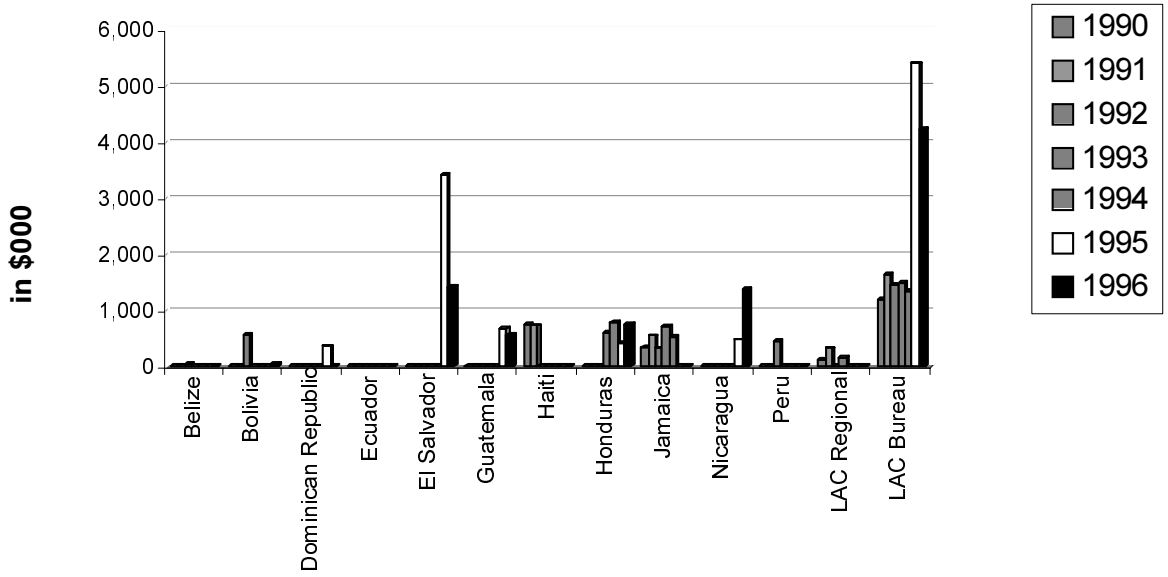


Figure F.4. Global Bureau, Policy And Program Coordination Bureau, And Bureau for Humanitarian Response

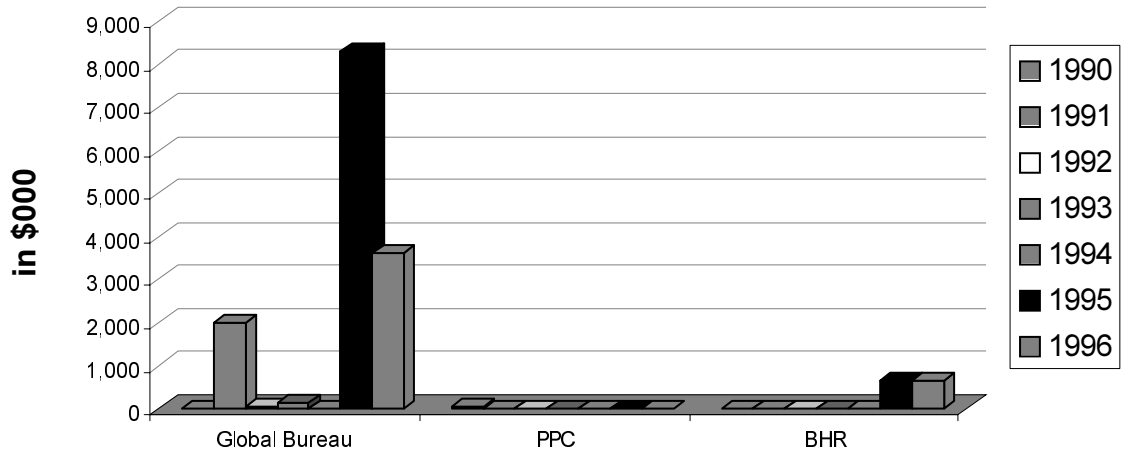


Figure F.5. Europe and the New Independent States

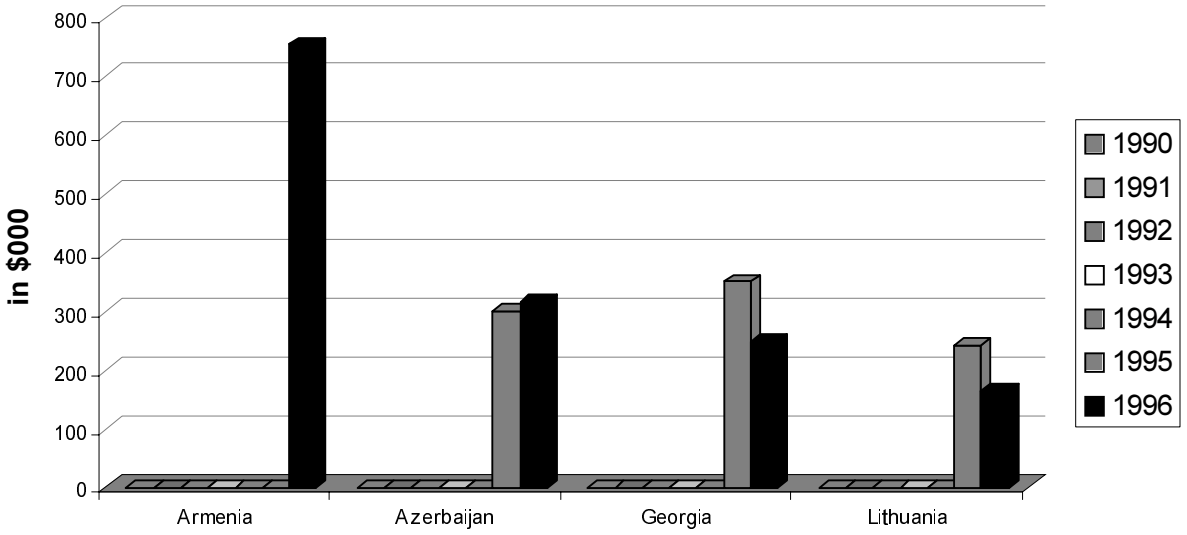
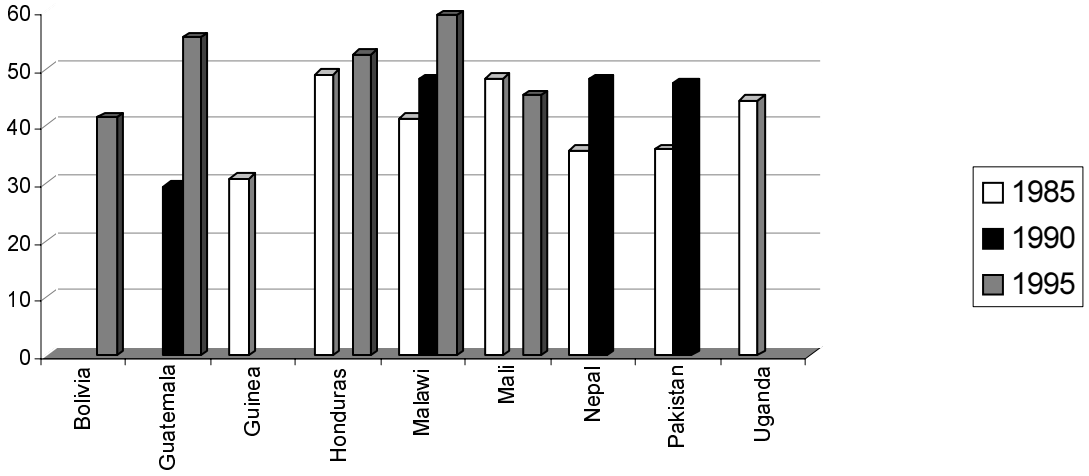


Figure F.6. Primary Education As a Percentage Of Total Education Sector Budgets



Glossary

Basic education: the opportunity to learn the requisite skills for participation in formal markets and civil society, often operationally defined by formal years of schooling.

Cohort reconstruction: a statistical technique used to derive estimates of persistence and completion in basic education, in which a comparison of the number of students in a higher grade is made with the number who entered in the initial year for that cohort.

Community schools: schools that benefit from the community's participation in both management of the school and the students' learning experience.

Distance education: planned learning that normally occurs in a different place from teaching and as a result requires special techniques of course design, special instructional techniques, special methods of communication, by electronic and other techniques, as well as special organization and administrative arrangement.

Gender balance: even distribution of male and female examples and role models. For example, gender-balanced textbooks use girls and women as often (or close to as often) as boys and men and include women in professional positions such as doctors and lawyers.

Gender equity: in a classroom, impartial instruction and treatment of all students, unbiased by sex-linked discrimination.

Gender gap: refers to the difference between boys' and girls' rates of enrollment, literacy, achievement, completion, retention, or other rates. The gap is perhaps most conveniently expressed as the percentage-point difference between boys' and girls' rates, such as when 80 percent of school-age boys in a given region are enrolled in school and only 60 percent of the girls are, the gender gap is 20 percentage points. A related concept is gender disparity. When 60 percent of a region's school-age girls are enrolled in schools and 80 percent of the region's boys are, the gender disparity is said to be 0.75 (because the girls' gross enrollment rate is 75 percent of the boys' gross enrollment rate).

Generalizability: the extent to which findings can be assumed to apply in similar situations.

Ghost schools: schools that do not exist or do not function. Such schools, their classes, and their students are reported to national ministries and international databases so teachers and other staff can continue to draw salaries.

Latent demand: demand that is unexpressed until supply becomes available.

Microcredit: a small-loan (or rotating-fund) program.

Nueva Escuela Unitaria: loosely translated as new multigrade school, a system in Guatemala that USAID modeled after the Escuela Nueva in Colombia. The NEU school model emphasizes community participation; supports clusters of teachers; addresses the three quality components of teacher training, curriculum, and testing; and directly affects the teaching–learning process by encouraging student participation and active learning in the classroom.

Nonformal education: Organized instruction and learning that takes place outside of the formal classroom.

Participant training: the USAID practice of bringing people from one country to another to train them.

Persistence: how long, through number of grades or years, students persist in school.

Policy dialog: the process of governments and donors exchanging information, ideas, and plans for policy actions and options that affect a country's progress toward development.

Village Based Schools: a community schools project in Malawi run by Save the Children.

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