PN-ACC-888

PATHS OF CHANGI

Education Reforms Under Way in Latin America and the Caribbe

Education Policy in Latin America and the Caribbean

TECHNICAL PAPER 1

108

For further information please contact

ABEL Clearinghouse for Basic Education
Academy for Educational Development
1875 Connecticut Avenue NW Suite 900
Washington DC 20009

Tel
202 884 8288
Fax
202 884 8408
E mail
abel@aed org

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

HNICAL PAPERS

ıcatıon Policy ın Latın America and the Carıbbean

evitalization of education a common goal for all the nations of the
ıcas cannot be achieved without the participation of all their citizens
ne contribution of available technical knowledge The Technical Paper
s aims at opening new venues to facilitate broad regional dialogue on
ational policies and develop useful learning on their implementation and
ts It also hopes to provide opportunities for sharing comparative
/ses evaluations and research perspectives for improving public and
ıte educational decisions The LAC Bureau of the United States Agency
ıternational Development expects to contribute with the Technical
ers to the efforts made by several national and international organizations
mitted to the improvement of education throughout the hemisphere

Academy for Educational Development produces the Technical Papers
publication of the Advancing Basic Education and Literacy Project
L 2

/RSD/EHR Room 2239 NS
Agency for International Development
nington DC 20253

L2 Project
demy for Educational Development
5 Connecticut Avenue NW
hington DC 20009

PATHS OF CHANGE

Education Reforms Under Way in Latin America and the Caribbean

Benjamín Álvarez H
Monica Ruiz-Casares

EDITORS

1997

The Advancing Basic Education and Literacy Project is operated by the Academy for Educational Development with subcontractors Creative Associates International Inc Education Development Center Florida State University Harvard Institute for International Development and Research Triangle Institute The ABEL Project is funded by the U S Agency for International Development (USAID)

This document was produced by the Academy for Educational Development with funding and guidance from USAID s Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean The findings conclusions and recommendations expressed in ABEL documents are the authors and do not reflect the opinions of any of the institutions associated with the ABEL Project or the U S Agency for International Development

Material may be reproduced if full credit is given

Project number 936-5832
Contract numbers HNE 5832-C-00-4075-00 (core)
and HNE 5832-Q-4076-00 (requirements)

CONTENTS

Preface — i
Sarah Wright

Introduction — iii

1 Nature and Context of Education Reforms — 1
Benjamin Alvarez H

2 Civil Society and Education Reform The Dominican Experience — 23
Josefina Zaiter

The Perspective of the Reformers — 45
Rocio Hernandez Mella

3 The Dynamics of Education Reform in El Salvador, 1989-1996 — 47
Rafael Guido Bejar

The Perspective of the Reformers — 71
Ana Evelyn Jacir de Lovo

4 Partnership for Computer-Assisted Instruction in Jamaican Schools — 77
Errol Miller

The Perspective of the Reformers — 107
Everald Gowie

5 The Paraguayan Education Reform A Collective Effort — 109
Cynthia Hobbs and Kathryn Rentel

The Perspective of the Reformers — 133
Vicente Sarubbi Zaldivar

6 Implementing Education Reforms A Learning Approach — 139
Benjamin Alvarez H

Appendix - Education Reform in Spain — 163
Monica Ruiz-Casares

PREFACE

The Education and Human Resources Team of USAID's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC/RSD/EHR) has been systematically exploring mechanisms for positively affecting the policy environment for education in key LAC countries both in terms of mobilizing resources and in terms of developing appropriate policies Much evidence shows that developing societies are able to mobilize considerable expertise and financing when strong and broad consensus exist for a compelling policy Experience also show that when the public policy environment is supportive, host country expertise and finance can implement changes in the schools

Literature on how research and analysis enter into policy making is limited in two ways First, it is almost entirely restricted to policy contexts in the United States and other advanced industrial countries Systematic research on the use of technical information by policy makers in developing countries has yet to be undertaken A second drawback to knowledge utilization literature is that it is generally disconnected from work that focuses more indirectly on the social and political factors that shape policy agendas on decision processes

These case studies were conducted in El Salvador, Jamaica, Paraguay, and the Dominican Republic, with the participation of both local reformers and researchers They focused on the process of implementation of educational reform in their respective political and social environments The analyses identify and discuss the applicability of lessons learned by countries of the region that have initiated a strategic transformation of their basic education systems They also analyze different types of reforms and the conditions of successful implementation

The document is organized in the following manner Chapter one provides background information and sets the intellectual framework for the discussion of educational reforms The following four chapters develop the case studies in the countries mentioned above, followed by reflections and comments from people involved in the process as "practitioners" The last chapter is a comparative analysis of the four cases presented in this document, which draws on lessons learned from each case We end here with a sound analysis of the economic, social and political environment in which reforms occur and of the role they play for the future of nations The document on the education reform in Spain was not originally planned as part of this study However, it has been added in an appendix because of similarities in the reform experience as well as the cultural and historical links between Iberoamerican nations

The Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean affairs, Office of Regional Sustainable Development wishes to thank the researchers, responders, and contributors who agreed to participate and so generously provided access to important documents

Sarah Wright
Education and Human Resources Team
Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean
United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

In every country of the Americas, education is one of the most important topics of public debate First, this is because formal education has become more accessible, while the cost of maintaining public education systems has increased due to global cutbacks in state operations But even more important is the fact that developing human abilities seems to be the best way to prepare for the future, particularly in an era of extraordinary economic uncertainty, characterized by the expansion of intensive knowledge-based industry, and broad ambiguities in the social values that are so tightly linked to the identities of the nations

The debate is even more acute and critical in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, which must also try to resolve long-standing and persistent inequalities in the area of human development In fact, paralleling this historically unprecedented growth of learning opportunities is an even greater increase in the gaps between the individuals, organizations, and countries who are connected to the international knowledge-based networks and those who remain at the fringes of this process

The fundamental task for our nations lies in finding ways to reduce the three gaps described below The first gap consists of the increasing disparity between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and the more industrialized societies in terms of the competitiveness of their human resources, the level of education, the number of professionals in knowledge based fields, the mechanisms available for accessing information, and the institutional infrastructure in place to handle knowledge and innovation The second gap is the internal gap in each country between population groups who have access to information and the benefits of scientific and technological advances and those who are marginalized. And the third gap is the one between what we know to be possible and desirable and the actual quality of the learning environments that we provide to our children and young people

Almost all the countries in the region have launched some kind of educational reform aimed at taking them into the next century and providing a fundamental means of narrowing these gaps and responding to the demands of the new global society In addition, as a group, the countries in this hemisphere have decided to commit themselves to a collective learning endeavor aimed at identifying the most appropriate and efficient ways of improving educational opportunities for all inhabitants and building a community of nations who are united by more profound and enduring ties than those that mere business partnerships alone can provide

In order to provide a way for the countries to share their experiences with the implementation of new policies for educational reform in 1996 a series of projects

and discussions was carried out by a relatively small group of Central American, Caribbean, and South American countries who were in the midst of educational reform. These countries were El Salvador the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Paraguay The information was accompanied by data, references, observations, and interviews from other countries such as Colombia, Chile, Brazil, and Nicaragua

This comparative discussion of the brief history of educational reforms during the final decade of this century does not attempt to provide a unique answer or formula for transforming or improving the educational systems on the continent It has more modest goals to try to get beyond the rhetoric that is used to describe most educational reforms in our time, and to initiate a critical examination of what happens in actual practice when a country decides to change its national educational system

During two to three weeks of field work, various national observers in each of the target countries collected basic information on the implementation of educational reform, and then provided a brief description and interpretation of their observations in order to draw the most obvious conclusions, which were then discussed with the people involved in the planning and execution of the educational policies in question This report summarizes the results of these first explorations into the actual process of implementing these educational reforms The goal is to open up a discussion and to identify critical points of analysis for a learning process that has just begun to unfold in the region

The first chapter of this report introduces the topic of educational reform in Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of parallel changes occurring in other regions of the world and the trends in the international community It lists the important questions that need to be answered, as well as some of the conclusions coming out of recent research The next four chapters present the country case studies that are the heart of this document. These chapters describe the diverse social contexts of the educational reforms, the principal actors, the characteristics and processes of interaction, and the lessons that each case has to offer to reformers and observers The chapters include the reactions of some of the people involved in implementing the reform in question. The final section of the document identifies the critical topics that stand out when the different reform processes are compared, and analyzes a number of factors that need to be considered when implementing educational reform. There is also a brief survey of educational reform in Spain.

This project could not have been carried out without the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through its ABEL 2 program (Advancing Basic Education and Literacy) Through an international conference held in December 1994, at which the general outlines of a joint effort were sketched, the Program for Educational Revitalization in the Americas (PERA) was created, with

headquarters at the Inter-American Dialogue, an organization that has been promoting interaction and political dialogue in the Americas for many years These efforts represent a new concept of technical assistance for development, based on the principle of promoting coordinated action by the various actors in each country and solidarity among the countries of the Americas as they pursue their common goals

The ideas that guided this study arose out of innumerable discussions with Sarah Wright, David Evans, Emily Vargas, and Jim Hoxeng of USAID and Francy Hays, David Chapman, Beverly Jones, and John Hatch of the Academy for Educational Development (AED) Donald Winkler of the World Bank, Marcia Bernbaum, and Claudio de Moura Castro, Guiomar de Mello, and Marcelo Cabrol of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) contributed their experience, their thoughtful suggestions, and their network of contacts Ray Chesterfield helped with the methodology and revised the papers several times Francy Hays contributed invaluable conceptual and administrative/logistic assistance, and Karin Lockwood organized the work meetings prepared the basic documents, and helped to prepare the final manuscript The authors would like to thank these people for their support, while still claiming full responsibility for any weaknesses in the study

1

NATURE AND CONTEXT OF EDUCATION REFORMS

Benjamin Alvarez H

Education Reforms at the End of the Century

Although individuals and groups learn in a wide variety of settings, societies have designed specific contexts for learning School, for example, has been the prototypical learning environment during the 20th century There are few institutions in history that have expanded so rapidly, despite the fact that schools have always been the target of criticism. Today, in every corner of the world, almost all children between the ages of 6 and 12 attend some kind of school The prophets of twenty years ago who predicted a school-less society never imagined that, on the contrary, schools would become the focal point for improving the economic and social conditions of entire nations

The worldwide interest in educational reform has various roots The political and economic realignment of the European countries, for example, has been accompanied by an inevitable reorientation and internationalization of their educational systems, especially at the secondary and post-secondary levels This is reflected not only in the multitude of educational exchange programs available in the European countries,[1] but also in the way that each member country of the European Community has reorganized its national education structure

In the Eastern European countries, which are in the middle of a transition from a planned to a market-based economy, educational reforms are aimed at providing workers with transferrable and marketable skills, as well as providing all citizens with the capacity they need to participate in a new democratic and competitive context These changes require openness to ideological pluralism, reductions in state monopolies, and a more democratic administrative approach But, above all, they rely on a reconceptualization of the goals and nature of school-based learning The intellectual skills promoted by the educational systems in these countries are not the skills needed to develop the kind of critical and independent thinking that can address and find solutions to new problems [2]

Although the rapidly growing East Asian economies have developed a diverse and changing set of social and economic policies, all of them have a shared focus on strengthening national human capital through education. This investment has been

surprisingly successful, not only in improving the cognitive skills of Asian youth, but also in promoting economic progress [3] Countries in other regions of the world, such as Africa and Latin America, which are moving in similar directions have been forced to reevaluate the role of their educational systems in the development process

The Americas returning to the classroom

In the United States, the reform movement dates back at least as far as 1983, when *A Nation at Risk. The Imperative for Educational Reform* was published The concern over national education outcomes and the standards that these should be held to has given rise to many school reform programs as well as the establishment of national goals to be achieved in every state of the union

Three main positions can be identified in the current debate on educational reform in the United States Some in the debate maintain that the educational system is in need of extensive reform for two fundamental reasons either because standards have declined and overall quality is not as high as expected, or because the educational system is advancing in tiny incremental steps during a time of exponential changes [4] Others think that the school reform movement is a political attack on public schools that is based on an imaginary crisis [5] Finally, there is a third group who believe that the problem goes beyond the schools and that

> no curricular overhaul, no instructional innovation, no change in school organization no toughening of the standards, no rethinking of teacher training or compensation will succeed if students do not come to school interested in, and committed to, learning In order to understand how this commitment develops, why it has waned over the past three decades and more importantly, how we can reengage students in the business of learning, we need to look not at what goes inside the classroom, but at students lives outside the school s walls [6]

Like other industrialized countries, Canada faces an increasing demand for social welfare programs, including education services, and is therefore working to implement changes in the educational systems of its provinces These changes are aimed at achieving more systematic control of school efficiency, reducing costs, and promoting greater autonomy

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, which have traditionally lagged behind their neighbors Canada and the United States, have made notable progress over the past thirty years in providing educational opportunities to their children and young people Currently, the majority of children in the region have the opportunity to attend primary school Twenty-five years ago, only four out of every ten Chilean children had this kind of opportunity Some countries, like Colombia,

Ecuador, Mexico Trinidad and Tobago, and Nicaragua, have doubled their rate of secondary school attendance in two decades The Dominican Republic has tripled its rate The rate of enrollment in primary and secondary education has increased from 81 percent to 96 percent in Argentina, and from 63 percent to 89 percent in Ecuador during the same time period.

The daily school routine, established for decades has spread with surprising similarity across cultures and countries Paradoxically, however, in the majority of the countries of the Americas, differences between the schools in the areas of resources, quality of what is provided, and learning have become more profound Thus the school experience, while apparently universal, is actually markedly different for different groups of children The school market is significantly segmented and will continue to be so given current trends This disparity is heightened by the fact that, although all children experience some discontinuity between their school and family environment, children from poor sectors indigenous communities, and rural areas have a much harder time adapting when changing from one environment to the other The indicators available on school learning reflect this situation

The strong consensus in all the countries of the hemisphere that the school system is not functioning according to social expectations has led to large-scale reforms This restructuring, however, is motivated by factors external to the school systems [7] Education is indispensable if countries are to join the global economy, as well as being a prerequisite for democracy and an ethical imperative to reduce inequality and poverty in the world

Following a period of disenchantment with the productivity of public schools the nations in the region are once again pinning their hopes on the ability of their education systems to face a very uncertain future The final decade of the century appears to be the decade of the school in the Americas

The International Community and Educational Reforms in Latin America and the Caribbean

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the rebirth of the school has been profoundly influenced by the international community The roots and evolution of the reform movements during the decade of the nineties are inseparable from the activities, priorities, and ideologies adopted by the principal international actors, such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the U S Agency for International Development (USAID), the agencies of the United Nations, and some private foundations There is a globalization of principles and a rapid dissemination of central concepts, as illustrated by the activities that have followed the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 The language of public policy in various countries has assimilated many of the ideas presented at the

conference, and these ideas are being incorporated into major social intervention programs which are often supported by the international agencies

The World Bank is currently the most important source of external financing for educational reform programs in low and middle-income countries [8] Since 1980 the number of loans for education has almost tripled, and the participation of the World Bank has doubled. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the World Bank invested US$174 million in 1990, and more than US$1 13 billion in 1994 [9]

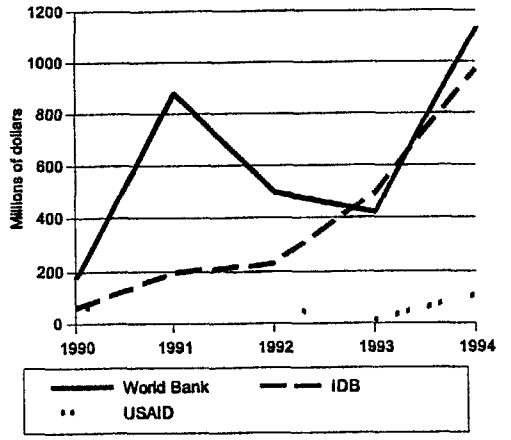
While the international banks have increased their funding of education, the actual breakdown of the loans has varied substantially There seems to be more interest in systematic improvement of primary and secondary education, in contrast to the earlier emphasis on physical infrastructure or isolated components of the system The International Development Bank s lending activity, for example, has gone through different stages During the 1960s and 1970s, IDB concentrated on infrastructure buildings and equipment During the following decade, the bank added books, teacher training, and curriculum development to its investment in infrastructure In the current decade, IDB is emphasizing systematic reforms [10] IDB's investment increased from US$61 4 million in 1990 to US$967 4 million in 1994 The evolution of World Bank, IDB, and USAID financing is shown in Figure 1

Although international support for educational reform programs has increased significantly, this contribution only represents a modest portion of the total amount that the countries are investing in education The average annual total of World Bank loans for education ranges from 1 3 percent of national education spending in Uruguay to 11 8 percent in Paraguay [11]

But what do these new educational interventions supported by the international community consist of? With the goal of obtaining information that would cover more than just the financial aspects, a sample of projects funded by the international banks and USAID in countries of Latin America and the Caribbean during the current decade was selected. The sample included all projects active in March 1996, in other words, all those approved between 1990 and 1996, as well as all those that were in the process of being approved by the respective organization or bank (i e , "in the pipeline) This analysis focused not on the amounts of funds involved, but rather on the types of programs that had been designed and the activities that were planned.[12] Of the 60 projects in the sample, more than half (34) were supported by the World Bank, 16 by the IDB and 10 by USAID Of the total projects, 16 were still in the process of being approved

A first look at the current generation of internationally supported projects represented in this sample suggests that there are extraordinary similarities among them, not only in terms of formal aspects, such as language and organization, but, more specifically, in terms of their conceptual frame of reference, the arguments used

Figure 1 Evolution of External Aid for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean



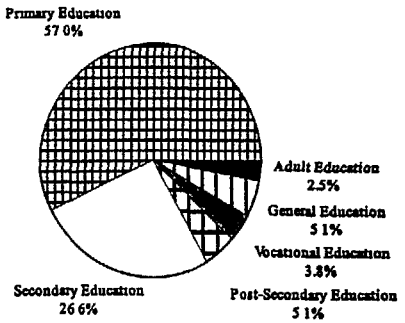
Sources McMeekin, Robert *Coordination of external assistance of education in Latin America and the Caribbean* UNESCO-UNICEF April 1996, and LAC EHRTS Project *Program Overview 1995 Education and Human Resources Development* Working Papers No 10 Education and Human Resources Division Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, U S Agency for International Development Washington, DC Academy for Educational Development 1996

to justify their existence their components, and the dynamic processes they are expected to generate This external support for education has a more pedagogical slant than in the past.[13] A typical project involves various soft elements, such as system management, curriculum development, and teacher training

The majority (57 percent) of the projects that are active or in the preparation stage are aimed at improving primary education When secondary education is added, the total amount allocated for basic education in the budgets of international loans and grants increases to 83 percent (Figure 2) This trend clearly reflects the interest worldwide in guaranteeing an education for all A few countries have received support for areas such as higher education, vocational education, or adult education Argentina, for example, has tried to balance school reform activities with projects aimed at strengthening, diversifying, and expanding its system of higher education

The complete portfolio of projects reviewed has a total value of US$4 73 million Three countries—Mexico, Brazil and Argentina—account for more than half of the loans provided by the banks USAID has concentrated its support on the poorest countries of Central America and the Caribbean and on Bolivia

Figure 2 External Funding and Educational Level of the Projects



Underlying concepts of the reform projects

The objectives of the reforms in practically all the countries in the region include the following *quality* (better outcomes in terms of school learning, productive work, and social attitudes), *efficiency* (better use of existing resources and efforts to locate new funding options), and *equity* (participation by groups with limited representation in the system)

The same concepts are reflected in the documents of lending and donor agencies The vast majority of the programs in the sample include quality as a key component, and nearly a third focus on the issue of increasing access to education and promoting social equity But interest in educational quality and equity is not new to the region On the contrary, the quality of the school system (broadly conceived of as student learning and school characteristics) and social disparities in education have been a topic of debate for decades in Latin America. However for the first time, there is strong conviction and a far reaching strategy

Educational reforms are not immune to the obsession with productive organizations and competitiveness that characterizes the current age Schools are expected to be efficient and to continually adapt to changing needs Concepts such as "strategic planning' , " total quality' , efficiency", "effectiveness", and "clientele' are becoming widely used in the field of education. Efficiency, for example, is a central goal for 75 percent of the major educational intervention programs in the sample

Principal components

Not just the objectives but also the components of educational reforms are similar in developing countries [14] The components of these programs are related to three principal aspects of the school system (Figure 3)

- Improvements to the school as an institution for example, physical infrastructure, management, and community involvement in running the school

- Enhancement of the teaching and learning process for example, curriculum development, preparation of text books and materials and administration of academic achievement tests

- Providing better support services for school management for example, through developing new policies, seeking private sector contributions, and supporting learning through information systems, teacher training, and research and evaluation

What Is Known About the Implementation of the Reforms

The countries in the hemisphere are meeting the demands of a global society with the new educational policies and reform programs described above Considerable financial and human resources from the public and private sectors are being devoted to this effort, and the results of the projects are the subject of a great deal of hopeful interest

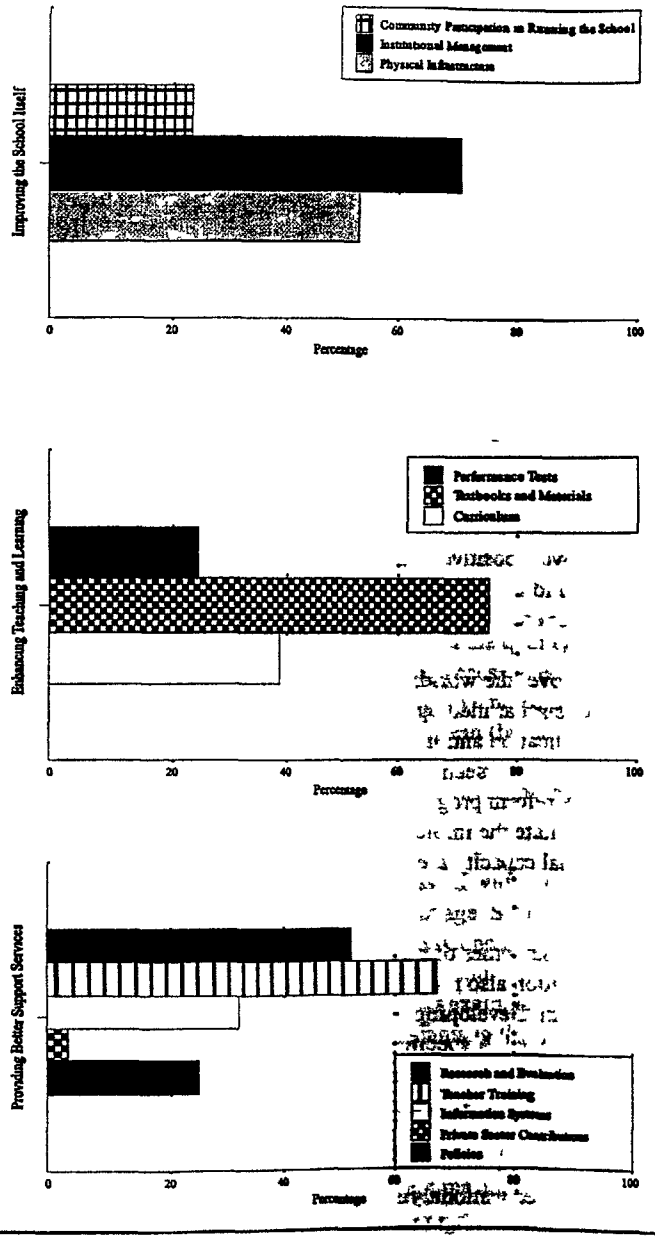
The new educational policies tend to be formulated in optimistic terms, and they are expected to have a positive impact on employment, economic competitiveness, and learning by children and young people However, there is only limited information about how the reforms are being implemented and how successful they are

Although all over the world, educational reform policies are presented within the framework of similar ideologies,[15] very different strategies appear to be used for their practical application and implementation because of the different contexts in which they operate They seem to produce very different results as well According to some analysts, the reform programs have a high rate of failure [16] We do not know which factors facilitate the implementation of reform plans or which national conditions or institutional capacity are required in order for a reform to have a broad impact on society

Although the outcomes of a given educational reform are very important in and of themselves, a nation also requires a permanent capacity to reassess and restructure its education system. Developing this capacity is crucial to making any future changes that are needed. A specific reform could enhance this capacity by training individuals, strengthening institutions, creating networks of exchange, promoting new leadership, and fostering social participation processes

Now is an opportune time to initiate a learning exercise on the implementation and initial results of educational reforms on the American continent The lessons that emerge from this analysis could be very useful for all countries that have already

Figure 3 Components of the Reform Projects



launched or are in the process of initiating reform, as well as for the international community that is promoting these changes

Questions that need to be answered

Although euphoria abounds over the possibilities of the educational reforms, the existing literature on the real effects of the reforms and the key factors for achieving certain effects is not very extensive In this way, there is a very limited empirical base to respond to the most evident questions that are posed, among which include the following

- Why are some educational reforms successful while others fail or are never fully implemented?
- What are the factors that explain or predict or merely influence the effectiveness of an educational reform?
- What are the different strategies utilized in different countries to implement proposed reforms?
- How is the idea of 'success" defined in an educational reform, and how does it evolve?
- To what extent do such reforms contribute to institutional strengthening in a country?

Some individuals who have looked into the analysis of educational reforms feel that the field remains underdeveloped. We do not possess the cumulative knowledge that will allow us to identify the relationships between different policy intervention strategies and the anticipated outcomes, nor do we have instruments that can expand our capacity to monitor and evaluate the reforms, as well as to find effective implementation strategies [17]

These limitations have to be weighed against the need for social investment to show results when resources are scarce These days the metaphor most commonly used when reorienting public policy in many countries is the productive organization [18] The recent emphasis on efficiency in social institutions and programs, and on replicating interventions of proven success ("doing what works"), has stimulated a lot of interest in identifying the ingredients that can ensure successful outcomes for new reform policies and programs

Nevertheless, an educational reform, consisting of a series of goals, priorities, and methods that create the need for a multitude of activities at the central level (the offices of the central government), as well as the peripheral level (the institutions and

schools in different localities), can never be considered a completed model This kind of reform is a phenomenon that exists and evolves in relation to the constantly shifting internal and external environments of the education sector As with human development, it is possible to talk about common patterns, themes, and factors to consider when designing interventions, but these insights are useful only to the extent that they serve to clarify and orient each individual case

What is an educational reform?

Educational reform is a broad term covering general policy changes in the education sector (for example, new laws that restructure the sector and macrosocial programs that bring education in line with national economic goals), strategic policies for improving the management or financing of the education system (decentralization, privatization, new curricula, etc), and interventions aimed at generating an impact at the national or state level These interventions are not always led by the government, reform movements sometimes emerge from experiences and ideas promoted by private organizations

An educational reform, therefore encompasses at least two elements new public (and sometimes private) policies, and actions to put these policies into practice The policies are formulated in response to practical questions, not theoretical concerns, and they require a stable but flexible line of action The plans of action contained in the policies produce change and lead to the development of programs, activities, or interventions The policies become a social reality when they are able to get past the planning stage and to be assimilated and adopted, in other words when they begin to have an impact on daily life

Lessons from research on the implementation of public policies

In contrast to the scarcity of information about educational reform in the region, there is a great deal of literature about the implementation of public policies in general This literature covers many sectors, includes a variety of perspectives, and is rooted in a number of different disciplines In theory, it is possible to identify various approaches ranging along a continuum At one end of the continuum is the view that the formulation and implementation of public policies is logical, automatic and predictable At the other end is the perspective that these processes are part of a paradigm of conflicting interests, in which the political and cultural environment plays a determining role and uncertainty is always present

In the first case, the implementation of public policy is viewed as a process that involves communication, dissemination of innovation,[19] or delivery mechanisms The analysis of policy implementation thus centers around the activities of the individuals responsible for the policies and how they communicate their intentions According to this perspective the fundamental concern is how to structure and present the supply side

In the second case, policy implementation is viewed as a less predictable process that is marked by varying interpretations and negotiations between established powers Building consensus and reinventing[20] supply are essential components According to this concept, policy implementation is analyzed more in terms of contextual dynamics and demand.

The theoretical frames of reference for the analysis of policy implementation have emerged from such disciplines as communications, political science, anthropology, political economy, social psychology, and even biology The field can be described as one made up of different paradigms, which, in turn, have been inspired by metaphors ranging from information systems to efficient business, the living organism,[21] dialogue, and learning [22]

These approaches or analytical models have allowed various research projects to select a wide variety of variables to explain how new social policies are implemented and why their implementation succeeds or fails These variables can be broken down along more or less the following lines

- The policies themselves how they are generated and expressed, how clear their objectives are, how coherent their different components are, their knowledge base, and how appropriate they are [23]

- The heterogeneity of the settings in which the policies are executed, the diverse perceptions of their meaning and the variety of responses from the target groups

- How the policy objectives are communicated and how the innovations they encompass are disseminated.

- The level of antagonism among the policy implementors and any conflicts of interest among those who are affected by the policies

  Leadership, motivation, and social participation

- External pressures

Implications for the analysis of educational reforms

Educational reforms evolve in various ways, through a series of more or less identifiable cycles They have a genesis, sometimes a testing, discussion, and negotiation period, and possibly a period of maturation, consolidation, and institutionalization This dynamic can be influenced by a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors Both common sense and the scant literature available to us suggest that various factors are

associated with the development and success of a reform. The following is an exploratory rather than an exhaustive list of some of these factors

- The country s national capacity for the reform and its particular history (the context)
- The characteristics of the proposed reform (the supply perspective)
- The strategies for implementation
- External pressures (the demand perspective)

National capacity

In many cases the implementation of new national educational policies requires additional financial investment But this is not sufficient, sustained national changes cannot be achieved without a basic social capital Reforms frequently signify profound attitudinal and behavioral changes that need to be assimilated, as well as adjustments of existing structures [24] The social capital necessary for large-scale innovations includes

- *Human competency and motivation* (national experts, leaders for the change trained teachers),

- *Capable institutions* (including the managerial capacity of the ministry of education and the level of development of knowledge-based institutions, such as universities or research centers, as well as community organizations and local schools), and

- *Efficient information networks* (information systems and communication channels among the actors involved in the reform, and between these actors and other sectors of society and public opinion)

Since education is an activity that centers around knowledge and interaction, the human factor is decisive in any revitalization or transformation of the education field. *The capacity and motivation* of the leaders and promoters of the reform, as well as of its ultimate implementers (teachers, communities, and families), are indispensable in determining whether or not the intervention will survive as something more than just a legal mandate

A common theme in the literature available on social change in the productive, scientific, and educational spheres is the importance of *institutional development* within countries, as well as the ability of the individual organizations being discussed to adapt to new demands in the global society [25] *The managerial strategies culture* [26] *and values of institutions as well as their capacity for learning,* are essential in determining whether or not they can achieve an adequate institutional dynamic This

13

institutional learning process presupposes the existence of information networks and an ongoing assessment process These observations are even more relevant to soft' organizations (in contrast to organizations with highly specific aims and methodologies), particularly educational organizations whose purpose is to promote learning and knowledge On the one hand, national capacity affects the implementation of reforms On the other hand, this capacity can be improved through the activities generated by a reform

Countries also have past experiences and a history that can facilitate, delay, or impede the reform process [27] The changes in the political systems of Eastern Europe have been the motivation behind education policy reform, beginning with the elimination of totalitarian features and the implementation of ideological pluralism [28] Educational reform in El Salvador is inseparable from its history of war to the point where consolidating a stable peace is one of the primary objectives of the reform In Paraguay, educational reform is a vehicle for promoting a new democratic society New social policies are not written upon a 'tabula rasa They are formulated and interpreted according to a deeply rooted system of social values, beliefs, and practices The forces of history have created a wide variety of social and educational patterns in the Caribbean, the Southern Cone, and Central America, although the differences are hidden beneath common interests, similar external pressures, and the feeling of belonging to one hemisphere

The characteristics of a proposed reform

The education supply represented by the new policies usually has a technical-ideological component and, in the case of the current reforms, is closely linked to more cosmopolitan trends In practice, reforms differ in terms of the clarity and attainability of their stated goals [29] Clear goals allow negotiations to move forward, which is important since negotiation is an almost unavoidable process when diverse and sometimes opposing interests are focused on a change in practice that involves thousands of actors

When the philosophy and objectives of an educational reform are consistent with overall national policies, macroeconomic policies in particular, it is more likely that other sectors will accept and support the reform

The goals give an idea of the magnitude and complexity of the proposed task, as well as providing guidelines for determining the appropriateness of the methodology and mechanisms to be utilized. Goals are not set in stone, they change and are achieved within a variable time frame The countries of the American hemisphere are currently more aware of the need to establish and refine human development goals This awareness can be seen in the recent efforts by the member countries of the Nariño Accord signed in April, 1994

Implementation strategies

Educational reform is not a new concept in the lexicon of social policy This concept has been used in political discourse since schools began their large-scale expansion Despite abundant documentation on reform projects throughout the region, schools have actually changed little, they continue to be locked into traditional patterns of teaching and management As a social system, schools do not seem to be well equipped to promote and manage the continuous change and innovation which is characteristic of today s productive organizations The context in which education operates has undergone substantial changes that call for more radical adaptation, while the role that education plays determining the overall well-being of nations has taken on unprecedented importance

Writings on the "implementation" of social innovations suggest that there are different cycles in the changes that have been systematically brought about At least three have been identified *mobilization implementation and institutionalization* [30] But these stages overlap and intermix throughout the innovation process

In many of the current reforms, the initial cycle of mobilization has involved some kind of dialogue aimed at producing preliminary agreements within different ministries or major social sectors National consensus-building has been one of the strategies utilized to launch the educational reforms that have been more successful The methodology used to rally the social forces necessary to initiate reform has varied from country to country [31]

The consensus-building stage includes or is followed by negotiations among the principal actors in the educational sphere For example, teachers' unions can become either a source of support or an obstacle to the implementation of the reforms [32] And beyond the unions are the interests of the individual teachers who will ultimately implement these educational reforms [33]

In general implementing reform means carrying out different projects that encompass a variety of components for example, transfer of administrative and technical power, teacher training curriculum development, and textbook production In addition to efficient project management, it is also important to have *administrative continuity and a system of incentives* in order to achieve the anticipated changes in attitudes and behavior at both the central and peripheral levels These incentives are closely linked to a system of values, a shared culture able to engage those who are required to change their daily routine [34]

External pressures

The success of an educational reform is influenced by many often unforeseeable external forces These range from the priorities of international agencies to the

agendas of local political parties, national competition for scarce resources, the activities of foundations and nongovernmental organizations, the public's views on public education, and the availability of private education

A demand for change can arise in turn, from national pressure groups and external agents, such as international organizations who exercise their influence through a variety of channels, including loans, scientific exchanges and international agreements

Although the technical component of a reform is indispensable, there also needs to be a favorable political environment in order for the reform to be implemented successfully Two dimensions— national/political and transnational/technical—are part of all reforms Although tensions between these dimensions are the rule, rather than the exception, educational reforms have to be able to take into account national utopian ideals, the political environment, and the scientific knowledge available The scientific community, especially in countries with an infrastructure and tradition of social research has provided criticism, analysis, and orientation in various countries, such as Chile and Colombia.

And today, more than ever before, members of the business community play a role in channeling the demand for education and providing a source of inspiration for social services

The concept of successful reform

The concept of successful reform varies a great deal according to the perspective of the speaker For some, success means getting the actual operation started, obtaining international credit, or developing projects or components of the reform In such cases, success is measured by variables related to inputs or supply

For others, success involves the enduring presence of the proposed activities beyond the pilot project stage In other words, success is the consolidation and institutionalization of the respective innovation There are some who consider that the most important impact of a reform is the strengthening of local capacity And finally, for others, success is measured by whether or not the objectives of the reform have been achieved These objectives cover a range of levels and aspects such as *student learning changes in the management of the education system* or the impact on other social spheres, such as *labor productivity* or *social participation* It is also not unheard-of for a reform s unintended effects to take on the same importance as those that were expected Frequently tensions arise between the different objectives of an educational reform so that managing the change implies having to work out constant dilemmas

Pathways to change

The work described in this document is part of a large-scale international learning exercise on the implementation of public policies in the education field, including alternative strategies, initial results and the factors that influence the evolution of educational reforms The thematic focus of this first study is basic education and its geographic coverage is small countries of Central America, the Caribbean, and South America, with a specific focus on Jamaica the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Paraguay Additional information from other countries such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Nicaragua was also used Although the reform process continues to move forward in these and other countries of the continent, there are many questions that cannot be fully answered. This makes these initial efforts and analysis even more important

Paraguay, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic are good examples of countries where educational reforms have been promoted by general policy changes in the sector However, in Jamaica the reverse has been true Jamaica's reforms are a response to incremental changes and are guided by projects in areas of strategic policy importance The analytical focus of the four case studies presented reflects the four major strategies of change favored in each of the respective countries the search for a broad national consensus (in the Dominican Republic), parent participation in running schools (El Salvador), establishing consortia with the private sector to promote technology in education (Jamaica), and promoting democratization (Paraguay)

The case of the Dominican Republic illustrates the potential that an organized civil society has to promote social policy change The formation of a social consensus in the country was preceded by the work of several private organizations that encouraged analyses and innovations in education The brief history of the Dominican educational reform also suggests that between the policy formulation and its implementation, there are gaps that cannot be closed without the presence of capable institutions, stable leadership and a constant participation of the protagonists for change through all the stages of the process The critical question is how the society as a whole can participate in a profound change once it has achieved a national consensus on the philosophy and principles supporting that change

The educational reform in El Salvador was built upon two main pillars the accumulated experience of rural communities to manage their own schools and the participation of the formal educational establishment in a national dialogue The consistency and stability of the policy implementation process allowed the educational reform in El Salvador to become a model of change for other social sectors and a powerful means for national integration However, the depth and permanence of its final effects is still open to discussion and analysis

The Jamaican case is different from the others in that although it is a reform with a national scope, it was conceived and implemented by private groups The Jamaican reform focuses on the use of advanced technologies in developing countries, an issue that has not received a great deal of attention by the international lender and donor agencies The interaction of interests between diverse groups of participants in this venture, the inevitable negotiation processes involved, and the role of local leaders make this a unique case which can provide relevant lessons for other cases

No school reform can be implemented without the cooperation of the teachers The experience of the educational democratization program of Paraguay confirms this common sense principle From an original vertical delivery model of the principles and methodology of the reform, Paraguay moved to a participatory model based on the organization of "learning circles' managed by the teachers and the school administrators

Despite the similar principles, components, geographic proximity and similar characteristics of the selected education reforms in this document, each reform follows a unique path that combines forces for change, reactions, failures, and achievements in a different way Yet combined, these divergent but similar pathways to change offer consistent and, we hope, useful lessons to help us understand and reorient this century's waning social policies, which are the foundation upon which our nations have built their dreams of progress for the next millennium

NOTES

[1] Programs like *Socrates Leonardo Da Vinci and Youth for Europe* for example University cooperation programs have also multiplied in Europe See Van Daele Henk. Comparative Education in a Changing Europe *Comparative Education* 28 1 (1992) 91 99

[2] A comparative analysis of academic achievement in science and mathematics by students from socialist countries indicates that these students do better than their counterparts in other western countries at remembering facts but not as well when it comes to applying knowledge to new situations See The World Bank *From Plan to Market World Development Report 1996* New York. Oxford University Press 1996

[3] The World Bank. *The East Asian Miracle Economic Growth and Public Policy* New York Oxford University Press 1993

[4] This is the thesis of the book by Murname J and Levy F *Teaching the New Basic Skills* New York The Free Press 1996

[5] Berliner David C and Biddle Bruce J *The Manufactured Crisis Myths Fraud and the Attack on America s Public Schools* Reading Mass Addison Wesley Publishing Company 1995

[6] Steinberg Lawrence *Beyond the Classroom Why School Reform has Failed and What Parents Need to Do* New York. Simon and Schuster 1996

[7] In Latin America, the document prepared by CEPAL UNESCO in 1992 *Educacion y conocimiento eje de la transformacion productiva con equidad* provides a good illustration of the reasons why educational reforms are often supported.

[8] The World Bank. *Priorities and Strategies for Education A World Bank Review* Washington, DC 1995

[9] McMeekin, Robert. *Coordination of external assistance of education in Latin America and the Caribbean.* Santiago Chile UNESCO UNICEF 1996

[10] Birdsall Nancy 'Revitalization of Education in the Americas Presented at the Conference Building Partnerships for Educational Revitalization in the Americas U S Agency for International Development. Washington, DC December 4-6 1995

[11] McMeekin, 1996 59

[12] The information, collected by Joanna Gajevski is based on reports published by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank on the Internet, and on information about USAID s programs which was provided by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) Given the ongoing process of approval and revision the status of any given project is subject to change

[13] The exception has been USAID whose projects have favored the technical aspects of education for a long time

[14] For example educational reform in Ghana between 1987 and 1994 included the following components administrative restructuring of the system curriculum revision, development of materials and

administrative decentralization. Studies on the initial outcomes have led to a reformulation of the reform strategy

[15] The justification offered for educational reform in El Salvador is a typical case This reform is aimed at meeting four challenges preparing the country to participate in a more global economy eliminating poverty strengthening democracy and consolidating peace The objectives of the reform that has begun to take shape in Ecuador also resemble those of most educational reforms in other parts of Latin America. higher education quality greater equity and more efficient management. The education reforms in Europe are responding to similar challenges decreasing social isolation, strengthening democracy and participating in a new world order Debeauvais Michael Outcasts of the Year 2000 A Challenge to Education in Europe *Comparative Education* 28 1 (1992)

[16] Aguerrondo Ines Educational Reform in Latin America. A Survey of Four Decades *Prospects* 22 3 (1992) Aguerrondo attributes the failure of most educational reforms in Latin America to a failure to identify the processes that either allow the goals of innovation to be achieved or else stand in the way of success This is a problem that is not unique to developing countries Jeanne Allen of the Center for Educational Reform in the United States suggests that the majority of the nation s schools have been untouched by the innumerable reform movements in the country (*The School Reform Handbook* Washington, DC Center for Educational Reform 1995)

[17] Fuller Bruce and Habe Aklilu, eds *Adjusting Educational Policies Conserving Resources while Raising School Quality* World Bank Discussion Papers No 132 Washington, DC 1992

[18] In the United States this trend has been quite marked. See for example Osborne David and Gaebler Ted. *Reinventing Government How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector* New York Plume 1993

[19] There is a line of work on the topic of dissemination of innovations that can serve as a reference for this analysis Everett Rogers *Diffusion of Innovations* published in 1962 (New York Free Press) is the classic work in this area More recently the role of both technical and policy information in public decision making has been emphasized. For example see Webber D 'The Distribution and Use of Policy Knowledge in the Policy Process *Knowledge and Policy International Journal of Knowledge Transfer and Utilization* 4 4 (Winter 1992)

[20] Evidence from case studies suggests that just as policy initiatives typically emerge from groups their implementation is also shaped by a power game between opposing groups See Pressman and Wildavski. *Implementation* Berkeley University of California, 1973

[21] Schulman Paul *Large Scale Policy Making* New York. Elsevier 1980 Schulman adopts a biological perspective to explain why policies fail during the implementation process He argues that if the components of a reform—such as legislation, budgetary appropriations and relationships with users—are not organically related like the organisms in a body then they will tend to be rejected

[22] Much of the current research, instead of approaching the relationship between knowledge and policy according to how technical information is used in decision making processes tends to adopt a broader approach to the issue how policy learning occurs within an organization See Porter Robert. *Knowledge Utilization and the Process of Policy Formation Toward a Framework for Africa* Washington, DC AED 1995

[23] Weiss Carol and Bucuvalas M J *Social Science Research and Decision Making* New York Columbia University Press 1980

[24] Educational policies in Chile reflect a set of criteria that call for radical change The goal is to move from centralized systems to decentralized ones from bureaucratic and administrative regulations to regulation by incentives from comprehensive reform policies to the implementation of differentiated strategies and incremental change and from a normative focus to an emphasis on results

[25] See Porter Michael *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* New York Free Press 1995 Alvarez B and Gomez H *Laying the Foundation The Institutions of Knowledge in Developing Countries* Canada. International Development Research Center 1993 Lockheed, Marlaine E Verspoor Adrian M and others *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries* New York Oxford University Press 1991 117 142

[26] In relation to the institutional culture that opposes the reforms C Filgueira and A. Marrero say the following about Uruguay· the public education bureaucracies are ponderous institutions that are inefficient and wedded to routine they have a culture of immobility and resistance to innovation El Caso Uruguayo In *Educacion equidad y competitividad economica en las Americas Un proyecto del Dialogo Interamericano* J Puryear and J Brunner eds Washington DC Organization of American States 1995

[27] Case studies on educational policy formation in Africa (Evans David, ed. *Education Policy Formation in Africa. A Comparative Study of Five Countries* Technical Paper No 12 Washington, D C U S Agency for International Development, 1994) suggest that clear patterns of educational policy formation exist in the African countries which reflect their historical context and experience as colonies of other countries

[28] Szebenyi Peter Change in the Systems of Public Education in East Central Europe *Comparative Education* 28 1 (1992)

[29] John F Covaleskie suggests that educational reform is held back by a lack of conceptual clarity in its objectives To illustrate this point he cites the ambiguity of the concepts of quality and excellence ('The Educational System and Resistance to Reform The Limits of Policy *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 2 4 (February 1994)) Clearly stated objectives and priorities provide the basis for defining state interventions and promoting broad consensus See De Mello Guiomar *Cidadania e competitividade. Desafios educacionais do terceiro milenio* Sao Paulo Brazil Cortez Editora, 1993

[30] Curry Barbara K. Instituting Enduring Innovations Achieving Continuity of Change in Higher Education. *ERIC Digest* (1993)

[31] In the Dominican Republic entrepreneurs initiated a process that culminated in a "Pacto por la Patria [Accord for the Country] between public and private organizations In El Salvador a participatory assessment of the education system has been carried out with the support of USAID Harvard University the Universidad Centroamericana Jose Simeón Canas and the Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo (FEPADE) [Entrepreneurial Foundation for Education Development] See Reimers Fernando ed. *La Educacion en El Salvador De cara al siglo XXI Desafios y oportunidades* El Salvador· UCA Editores 1995

[32] Haussman, Ricardo Sustaining Reform What Role for Social Policy? In Bradford, Colin Jr ed. *Redefining the State in Latin America* Paris Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1994 Haussman calls attention to the acquired rights of certain groups in Latin American society which can be obstacles to reform Reforms in health and education for example must be prepared to confront unions and professional associations Colombia s incomplete 1991 educational reform is a case in point. See Montenegro Augusto An Incomplete Educational Reform. The Case of Colombia. *Human Capital Development and Operation Policy* Working Paper No 60 Washington, DC The World Bank, August 1995

[33] In Paraguay the Ministry of Education has incorporated a new component into its educational reform Circulos de Aprendizaje [Learning Circles] These are opportunities provided as part of the reform process for teachers to explore debate and adapt the teaching materials they receive to their classroom environment In this way it is hoped to ensure ongoing teacher participation in the reform

[34] Some feel that the education reforms of the past in Latin America have not achieved the expected results because they attempted to bring about rapid change they didn t introduce social development projects and they failed to incorporate pedagogical practices into daily life (Final Report on the seminar Las reformas educativas en las transiciones democraticas [Educational Reforms in Democratic Transitions] Santiago Chile Nov 6-8 1989 sponsored by the Programa Interdisciplinario de Investigacion Educativa [Interdisciplinary Program for Education Research] and the Instituto de Cooperacion Iberoamericana [Institute for Ibero-American Cooperation])

2

CIVIL SOCIETY AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM THE DOMINICAN EXPERIENCE

Josefina Zaiter[1]

Abstract

Educational reform in the Dominican Republic was initiated in the middle of 1990 The next four years involved the hard work of assessing the educational system, as well as formulating and implementing projects and programs involving, notably, curriculum reform, teacher training, and the preparation and country-wide distribution of textbooks During the past two years the process has been almost completely stalled However recent policy decisions make it look like the reform is undergoing a revitalization which, while inconclusive, has been one of the most interesting periods in terms of the leadership being shown by the civil society of the country

This report describes and analyzes the process of educational reform in the Dominican Republic It begins by reviewing the context of the reform. Second, it discusses the role of the main actors who are promoting and facilitating the reform. The report then goes on to describe the national consensus-building process, as well as the social policies that support the educational reform and the programs it encompasses The development and implementation of the new curriculum is discussed as an illustration of the reform process And finally, there is an analysis of the factors that have impeded the progress of the reform during the past two years, and a brief outline of the new government's position on education This case study focuses on the educational reform contained in the Ten-Year Education Plan, with a special emphasis on the national consensus that has been achieved.

The methodology has included analyzing a set of documents and interviewing people involved in the educational reform in general, as well as those responsible for implementing the changes in the curriculum in particular The principal documents published on the national educational reform were consulted, along with articles from the press on the debates sparked by the reform. In addition, sixteen in-depth interviews were carried out, from five different but related perspectives, with officials from the Ministry of Education, members of the business community, representatives of non-governmental organizations, members of teachers associations, and specialists from international organizations

The reform process initiated and moved forward by civil society, began to be more centralized within official bodies and to lose the initial rhythm and impetus it had gained from a variety of social actors Some political obstacles have prevented the reform from gaining legal status at the institutional level, while other technical and institutional factors have stood in the way of complete implementation Despite these problems, this collective learning experience has opened up new horizons for democratic participation in the country The interest shown by the new government, elected when this work was being completed, offers hope for the execution of long-awaited changes

The Context of the Reform

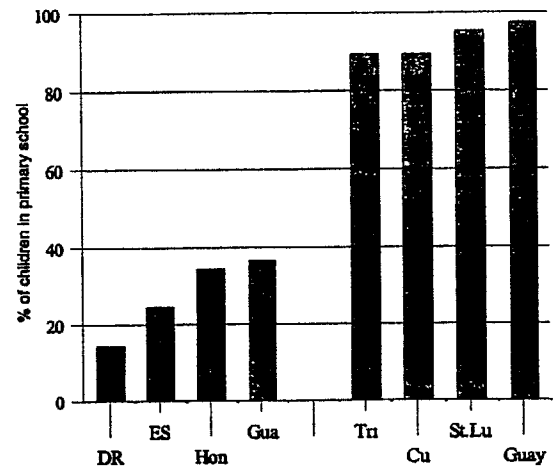
For decades social development in the Dominican Republic has been hampered by highly rigid social structures, an authoritarian tradition and the use of uncompromising, repressive, and exclusive forms of social management The education field is defined by a limited educational supply, centralized decision-making by government institutions at the highest level, and limited public involvement. The low level of investment in education which, at 1 7 percent of GDP, has been among the lowest in Latin America, and the decades-long lack of political interest in education are reflected in educational problems whose critical dimensions can be seen through indicators such as the following [2]

- Illiteracy rates as high as 18 percent, without any programs or activities in place that could reduce this high figure by the end of the decade
- Severely limited coverage by the educational system A reference point is the number of children attending secondary school in the Dominican Republic barely 24 percent of the 15 18-year-old age group
- High indexes of repeat grades 17 percent of children in primary school
- A low rate of primary school completion Figure 1 shows the four Central American and Caribbean countries with the highest indexes of children completing primary school (as a percentage of those who enter school at this level), and the four countries with the lowest indexes The rate of successful completion of primary school in the Dominican Republic is the lowest in the region
- The precarious living and working conditions of the nation's teachers
- A predominance of authoritarian teaching approaches that focus on memorization of content and prevent active participation by students

A lack of connection between the formal education system and the demands of the working world.

The educational reform was formulated during the 1990s to deal with these problems and formally presented in the Ten-Year Education Plan for the Dominican Republic This plan was preceded by an educational reform movement that drew the participation of a number of individuals and organizations from very diverse social sectors For the first time in the country, a process of far-reaching social change was launched under the leadership of the civil society This process led to a general national agreement or consensus

Figure 1 Percentage of Children Completing Primary School



Source United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1994 1990 figures

Consensus-Building and the Educational Reform Principal Agents

The process of building consensus not only helped to revitalize the education field, but also was a notable step toward strengthening democracy in the country In that sense, the current educational reform has led to greater openness and a break with traditional patterns of social policy formulation through the participation of new agents In the words of Cheila Valera

> The first years of the nineties in the Dominican Republic brought about a restructuring of the education field, not only through the involvement of new institutional agents interested in education issues

and the repositioning of traditional agents, but also through changes in the strategies for action used by the traditional actors, efforts to develop channels for articulating traditional and new actors, and the significant leadership for technical, political, and financial cooperation provided by international organizations[3]

However, the consensus that was ultimately achieved was preceded by a period that involved confrontation between different interests, negotiation, and contradiction During the stages of analysis and assessment, as well as the stage of proposal development, consensus achieved optimum levels Close to fifty thousand people from all social strata participated in countless activities, discussions, and efforts to develop alternatives By contrast, during the stage of implementation of the proposed reforms, consensus and participation by the civil society were weaker The reasons for this loss of consensus during the stages of implementation are analyzed below

During the years preceding the reform, critical and alternative positions were developed to support theoretical perspectives and innovative practices,[4] although only recently has there been the opportunity for open national dialogue Some notable examples of the kind of innovative experience that has contributed to the reevaluation of education are the advances in popular education programs,[5] the educational projects carried out by the Escuela Nueva and the Circulo Infantil [the New School and the Children's Circle], the institutions for assessment and support of educational practice (Centro Cultural Poveda [Poveda Cultural Center], Central de Servicios Pedagogicos [Center for Pedagogical Services], etc), the positions and demands of the Dominican Teachers' Association (ADP), and the work carried out by universities to provide advanced training in teaching and related areas

The institutions listed above are agents of progress for Dominican education, they have always had the mission of promoting educational change in the society On the other hand, during the decade of the 1990s, sectors that had traditionally not been linked to or concerned with education, such as the business community, began to show an interest in education while at the same time, international organizations began to make funds available to finance reform projects The simultaneous occurrence of these factors and the presence of these new agents had a profound impact on the characteristics, direction, and implementation of the educational reform

Various national institutions created at the end of the previous decade participated in this process It is important to note their characteristics and role, because they were the ones that allowed the new actors to participate in finding solutions to the problems of Dominican education The most noteworthy were Accion para la Educacion Basica (EDUCA) [Action for Basic Education] and the Plan Educativo, both are linked to business sectors

Educa

Educa is a non-governmental institution established by a group of philanthropists with ties to APEC (Accion Pro Educacion y Cultura) [Action for Education and Culture], a successful non-governmental organization established more than three decades ago which integrates Dominican business sectors in support of educational programs Its founders and directors are principally members of the business community who are interested in advancing the cause of primary education and encouraging community participation in support of schools Although these individuals need to have 'a genuine commitment to comprehensive development of the individual and society,"[6] it is important to acknowledge the economic argument as well In the words of J Malagon, director of APEC and Educa for many years,

> It is essential for members of the private business community to play a significant and leading role in helping to address the educational crisis in the countries of the continent Their economic power as well as their network of relationships, their influence, and their leadership makes these individuals key players in any plan that wishes to be effective More importantly, when changes in political leadership threaten the continuity of goals and plans that call for training the nation human resources deciding to address education needs is not just an act of philanthropy, but also an economically rational approach dictated by the need to optimize performance and increase production and productivity[7]

Educa's activities are directed toward improving the quality of basic education in the country It carries out projects like the one that allows productive enterprises to form partnerships with schools, another that provides educational materials, school supplies and sports equipment to students and schools, and one that promotes the development of private initiatives for Dominican education in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Dominican government. Educa support for basic education in the country includes, more specifically, training for teachers and principals, promotion of new school leadership, improvements to physical plants sports fields, and libraries, the preparation and publication of textbooks, and efforts to integrate schools with families as well as schools with the business community In referring to Educa s activities, Julio Leonardo Valeiron makes the following point

> This set of activities has made Educa an important focal point for the development of new experiences, and the generation and compilation of information, which has subsequently provided a model for different sectors involved with education in our country The emphasis placed on school principals as the key players in educational devel-

opment has allowed them to be seen as having a more important role in the training processes related to educational management. That is another reason why this is considered one of Educa's most important subprograms[8]

Educa has shown remarkable leadership in Dominican education particularly through its multifaceted role in the educational reform, including lobbying for and promoting the Ten-Year Plan, increasing the awareness of education's importance among all social sectors establishing specific programs to develop and promote educational innovations and creating the opportunity for connections to be made between the different spheres of social activity, such as private enterprise, education, health, and research, as well as between Dominican organizations and the international community However its main influence on educational reform has been through the ideas it has generated and the networks it has promoted for exchanging knowledge in the Dominican Republic

Educa began to operate in 1989 Shortly after, it participated, together with the Dominican delegation, in the World Conference on Education for All, held in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand. Subsequently Educa helped to develop the Ten-Year Plan Educa has taken part in different programs connected with the implementation of the reform, in collaboration with the State Ministry of Education, USAID, and the Academy for Educational Development Its professional approaches and experience provide strong support for the plans being implemented under the reform.[9] Finally, Educa has played an outstanding role in channeling financial resources from international organizations, as well as in establishing closer ties between UNDP, Plan Educativo, and the Dominican Teachers' Association

Plan Educativo

In 1986, Plan Educativo emerged as an interinstitutional effort involving the Technological Institute of Santo Domingo (INTEC), the Asociación de Empresas Industriales de Herrera [Industrial Enterprise Association of Herrera], and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Plan Educativo was established as a forum for reflection and debate leading to proposed solutions to national education issues

At the end of 1988, there was a series of open meetings that brought together notable members of the academic business, and professional communities, Education Ministry officials, leaders from the teachers' union, and other interested citizens At the end of a year the focus group adopted the "Decalogo Educativo" [Ten-Point Education Plan],[10] a document that proposes ten goals for improving education in the Dominican Republic This set of mandates was presented at the World Conference on Education for All and incorporated into the government programs presented at the national elections in 1990 by the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) and the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), which was evidence of real progress in building political consensus in Dominican society

Operationalization of National Consensus-Building

The interaction of the above social agents gave rise to a national movement with a very clear focus improving the country's human resources This focus led to an effort to achieve national agreement. The participation of individuals from different sectors of Dominican society allowed significant changes to be made in the traditional design of social policies, created a better opportunity for dialogue, and created conditions that would reinforce the emerging consensus-building process These conditions included

- Recognition of the need for an opportunity for reflection and discussion in order to prepare the way for developing proposals and planning specific activities
- Appreciation and recognition of Dominican experiences in the education field, as well as the higher levels of achievement of Dominican specialists in the education and related fields
- Strengthening of the negotiating capacity of the participants, and the resolve of national institutions and agents
- Creation of more opportunities for international agencies to participate through analysis and discussion of priorities and projects and for civil society to take part in suggesting criteria, conditions, and proposals

Consensus-building is, in effect, a forum for discussion, in which diverse positions and ideas are brought to bear on education issues, a forum for reflection leading to new ideas, and a forum for coordination of joint efforts to analyze and prepare proposals Providing an opportunity for discussion is the first step toward national consensus The consensus-building process can be broadly divided into the stages described in the following sections

Assessment of the Dominican socioeducational situation

The assessment of Dominican education was a democratic exercise for Dominican society that culminated in the Ten-Year Education Plan which was presented to the National Congress in 1992 This assessment described the seriousness and nature of the principal education problems facing Dominican society and, in that sense, served as the basis for the proposed reform in the current decade

As mentioned above, at the beginning of 1990, "it could already be said that education had become one of the most widely debated topics on the national agenda "[11] At the beginning of this process, Educa was working in school communities, while Plan Educativo was convening meetings and discussions on a variety of education-related topics thus allowing various sectors of Dominican society to participate These discussions led to the establishment of working commissions who prepared the analysis and the proposed changes that were subsequently debated in order to obtain national consensus For two years Plan, Educa, and the other participating institutions had the financial support and technical advisory services of members of the business community, universities, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) [12]

Broad sectors of society took part in the assessment, which is related to the reform s status as a social movement, as well as the fact that responsibility for education issues goes beyond the Ministry of Education, i e , the official sector This process also allowed the education debate to be carried out in a broader context concern for the country's overall development Marcos Villamán explains the process as follows

> Education is one the strategic sectors for social development Today more than ever scientific and technological progress are the foundation for economic growth. Scientific development does not occur without education At the same time, [education] is an essential tool for building a democratic culture, as well as promoting civic participation and responsibility, by cultivating the appropriate values and attitudes in educational practice Finally, it is also a basic tool for promoting social integration with equal opportunities for both men and women [13]

This process has helped Dominican society understand that education cannot be isolated from social reality, nor can it be separated from the sociocultural dynamics and processes with which it is in constant interaction

The Ten-Year Plan and the National Education Congress

The Ten-Year Education Plan is the most recently proposed educational reform in the Dominican Republic The plan is important, first, because it emerges from an assessment of the national education situation, and, second, because it is carried out through consensus In fact, its development has centered around national consensus-building, which has provided an opportunity for important Dominican education sectors, as well as churches, unions, popular organizations, political parties, and nongovernmental organizations, to reflect and discuss and arrive at agreements [14] Furthermore, the leadership shown by the business community—especially the

industrial and service sectors—as well as the support of numerous institutions at both the national and the international level, have had a decisive impact on the process of educational change that has been launched.

The purpose and characteristics of the Ten-Year Plan, as an educational reform project have been described as follows

> The Ten-Year Education Plan is simultaneously a way of improving the national education system and an innovative approach to carrying out the planning that such a reform entails The ultimate goal of the Ten-Year Plan is to bring about a profound reform of the education system so that over the next ten years the education system becomes the foundation of national development and improvement of the social and individual attributes of every citizen with the goal of preparing the country to enter the third millennium with greater possibilities to build a more just, unified, and humane society [15]

The initial work on the Ten-Year Plan was done by Educa, Plan Educativo, the Dominican Teachers Association, UNDP and the Ministry of Education Although UNDP had primary financial responsibility, the personal support of then-Minister of Education Dr Nicolas Almanzar was also extremely important. In time, in the words of Juan Tomas Tavares, "the state would have to enthusiastically adopt a project that emerged from the civil society and was strongly supported by the international community

Consensus-building set into motion a process which culminated in the National Education Conference held in Santo Domingo in December 1992 At that conference, the results of the national assessment and the planning and design of the plan were presented There was also a discussion of the main points of the Ten-Year Plan Thus, over a several-day period, a number of representatives of different social sectors and regions in the country expressed their diverse perspectives on the future of education in the Dominican Republic

The Ten-Year Plan identified six key propositions for educational reform in the Dominican Republic ensuring equal access to education for all students in the country, improving the curriculum, along with teaching materials, improving the status and working conditions of teachers, making the education system more efficient, encouraging community participation, and increasing the resources available for education

The Policies Resulting from the Consensus

The consensus led to a variety of policies related to different aspects of Dominican education and its interaction with the society in general

In relation to socioeconomic reality

- Adoption of pedagogical and social welfare measures that target the problem of unequal access to education, with special emphasis on the issues of exclusion from the education system and school leaving
- Promotion of participation by the most neglected and vulnerable communities
- Development of skills and potential through comprehensive training
- Encouragement of educational activities that are careful to acknowledge the sociocultural characteristics of different geographical, sociological, or productive groups

In relation to cultural identity

- Reevaluation, recognition, dissemination, and re-creation of elements from national and popular culture
- Freeing up of the creative and expressive abilities of Dominican men and women, and promotion of their contribution to the development of their own cultural identity
- Formation of involved, creative, and community-oriented individuals who are ready to be active members of a democratic society
- Encouragement of national and local community participation in the design and execution of educational plans and projects
- Promotion of habits conducive to rational management of natural resources and recovery of degraded areas [16]

In relation to science, technology, and the school system

- Curriculum reform.
- Significant improvement in teaching conditions
- Institutional reform as seen through the 'competence and efficiency of the Ministry of Education and its decentralized units'
- Community participation

To achieve these goals, a series of interrelated programs was designed to be the focus of efforts on the part of the Ministry of Education, universities, Educa, UNDP, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), USAID, and the European Community [17] These reform programs include

- Preparing a new curriculum and promoting art education and a lively sociocultural awareness
- Providing training and improvement of professional skills for principals and teachers
- Preparing and publishing textbooks
  Modernizing school management
  Encouraging citizen involvement
- Strengthening school-community ties through parents' associations and school friends programs
  Developing a system for evaluating and administering school performance tests
- Building and repairing schools
  Improving nutrition at school through the school breakfast program

The development and implementation of the new curriculum has been the nucleus of the school reform activities in the country, for this reason it is presented below as an illustration of the consensus-building and reform process (Table 1) To accompany the changes in the curriculum, there is the program to improve teacher training, which is a significant factor in implementation of the reform and achievement of the goals of the Ten-Year Plan In order to improve the professional skills of teachers, some nongovernmental institutions, such as the Poveda Cultural Center, have been carrying out programs aimed at public school teachers since 1985 These programs use seminars and workshops to introduce an educational perspective that inspires teachers to think about their teaching and how it could be changed. Minerva Vincent and Josefina Pimentel note that these programs for educating, training, and updating the skills of teachers have greatly helped to facilitate

> the innovations and the building and rebuilding that have occurred within the framework of the Ten-Year Education Plan Most educators at the basic level, normal teachers with bachelor's degrees from universities and training institutes for educators, who had not held an updated textbook in their hands for many years or read an article about an innovative idea, returned to the classroom to study and thus found themselves with an opportunity to think about their teaching and how to change it.[18]

Currently training programs are being carried out under the direction of the State Education Ministry, universities—with the financial backing of international organizations—and Educa

In conjunction with the changes in the curriculum and teacher training, textbooks and educational materials began to be produced on a massive scale More than six million copies were distributed to children at every school in the country In

addition to the textbooks and workbooks, guidelines were published which listed the knowledge and skills that children were expected to have achieved by the end of certain stages of their schooling Each school received these materials and, in turn, sent information about the process of implementation to regional and central organizations

---

Exhibit 1 The Reform in Progress Curriculum Reform

Curriculum reform provides a notable example of the consensus building process and is one the fundamental components of the current educational reform in the Dominican Republic It is therefore the principal tool for transforming the system improving its quality and encouraging contact among the different protagonists in the education process

The stage known as "curriculum reform in progress" marks the initial stage of educational reform This part of the process involved efforts by teams and commissions to make sure that the educational policies and objectives of the Ten Year Plan were included in teaching for the early basic and secondary levels as well as in the different modalities and fields of knowledge Towards this end proposals in a variety of areas were revised and carried out including ones that focused on the objectives or goals of education content teaching and learning strategies, evaluation approaches the profile of educators and the characteristics and role of educational centers

After the National Education Conference, a unit in charge of curriculum reform was established under the Ministry of Education This unit organized a system of ongoing consultation in order to obtain information on the country s various schools and communities through regional directorates This approach was meant to facilitate broad social participation in the process with the additional collaboration of universities Professionals with different specializations formed themselves into major committees on the different areas of curriculum development: mathematics social studies sciences vocational education Spanish language and literature which was the central axis and link among the different fields There was also a special committee to cover topics that cut across these different fields The groups added specialists in sociology didactics, and psychology and eventually produced a series of guidelines for reforming teaching in all areas and grades of primary school All the country's educational centers began to use the new curriculum in 1994

Curriculum reform as one of the objectives of the Ten Year Plan attempts to provide "a higher quality, more relevant education that more accurately addresses the current and future needs of Dominican society based on the sociocultural conditions of communities and individual and social subjects [19] The reform has basically called for the development of

a new pedagogical perspective along with changes in program content educational practices and learning strategies and the relationships among the protagonists in the education process

The new curriculum as explained in the documents prepared by the working committees is flexible open and participatory The most important conceptual innovations of the curriculum reform relative to earlier curriculum designs have to do with the subjects of the education process the concepts of knowledge and learning and curriculum management In contrast to traditional concepts in which the students tended to be considered passive recipients of information the new curriculum sees students as active subjects of education who are "constantly interacting changing themselves and making changes through their production expression and exchange of knowledge The characteristics of these active subjects differ according to the communities they belong to their cultures and a whole series of other variables Educators students fathers and mothers and the community members who participate in educational activities are all subjects "[20]

With regard to the concepts of knowledge and learning this curriculum design maintains that knowledge is historical and cultural in nature and that it is based on forming cognitive constructs and not just on integrating and reproducing information The curriculum therefore attempts to go beyond teaching and learning strategies—such as repetition and memorization—that assign pupils a passive role and to instead promote strategies that make meaningful learning possible or in other words that place value on the activity points of reference and prior knowledge that students use as the basis for acquiring knowledge

In its development, the new curriculum design is intended to promote genuine participation by the actors involved in the education process It attempts to go beyond management styles in which "a team of experts defined what and how to teach and the actors in the education process implemented it without any mediation "[21] The new curriculum management also defines the role of the State Ministry of Education as the government branch in charge of execution It is clearly in favor of decentralization "The expectation is that curriculum management with these characteristics will help to generate a new institutional culture a new way of doing things that is very different from traditional mechanical and blindly executed routines and practices and which builds on previous experiences as much as possible From this perspective, the management of the curriculum design also helps to ensure that institutional reform already underway within the framework of the Ten-Year Plan supports significant changes in the organization and administration of SEEBAC the regional offices and the education centers [22]

Obstacles and Setbacks in the Implementation of Educational Reform

During the early years, educational reform in the Dominican Republic was notable for rapid expansion and the support it received beyond the walls of educational institutions We have already mentioned how a new relationship between society and education began to take shape However, some participants in and observers of the reform process, such as consultants from international organizations university professors, political party leaders and leaders of the Dominican Teachers' Association,[23] have been united in their criticism of the gradual decrease in reform activities and the way that the initial philosophy of the reform is distorted when it is implemented in actual practice Alejandrina German says the following about the perspectives of the Ten-Year Education Plan

> During its development, the Ten Year Plan has been subject to major distortions of some of its essential features The openness, flexibility, and participation that characterized the proposal and constituted its core identity have been disappearing, replaced by activities that increasingly bureaucratize the formulation, development, and evaluation of the different actions taken as part of the reform There has been a return to the traditional authoritarian practices characteristic of educational management.[24]

Ramón Morrison, a Ministry official, notes that "the efficiency of the current phase (implementation) is to a great extent founded on an appropriate combination of individual and group responsibilities, along with strict follow-up and monitoring to ensure that these responsibilities are fulfilled."[25] The implementation of the curriculum reform program, for example, has been characterized during its latter stages by hierarchical and centralized approaches The central offices of the official agency has dispensed the activities to be implemented to education centers and teachers, without allowing leaving enough room for any initiatives that they themselves might originate

In addition to returning to the bureaucratic mechanisms that have predominated in the past, the reform has also failed to articulate its different components Even more disturbing the reform has no legal backing, since the new education law has not yet been approved.[26] Thus

> it is enough to review the goals of the many ongoing activities under the Ten-Year Education Plan, including modernization of educational management, community participation, professional training for teachers, national testing, construction, maintenance and reconstruction of schools, and curriculum reform. The coordinated initiation of the above activities as a group would serve to raise the quality of education and improve conditions for the actors involved students and teachers This articulation would, in turn, significantly improve the efficacy and efficiency of the implementation of the plan as a whole As a result, we feel that investment in education by the Dominican government as well as international organizations, even if insufficient, would be much more income producing and ultimately more effective if there were genuine articulation among the projects as well as among each of their components[27]

What is the cause of this paralysis however temporary, of the educational reform launched with such enthusiasm and broad national participation? In the opinion of most of the individuals interviewed, three major sets of factors are responsible for the deterioration of the reform during its implementation phase political factors and party politics, the structures and institutional capacity of the responsible organizations, and problems with the availability of international and national financing Cheila Valera explains the problem this way

> The year 1993 marked the beginning of a distinct phase of the educational reform known as the Ten-Year Plan, as shown by the characteristics of the activities that were initiated, as well as the problems that occurred, principally in relation to political factors, financing, and the administration of resources Towards the end of 1994, reports began to appear in the media about the criticisms that were being directed towards the reform by different sectors that had supported educational reform in the beginning These criticisms revolved around two fundamental aspects the fact that the government budgetary allocation had not increased as anticipated in the consensus-based proposal as well as the fact that SEEBAC had reduced, during the implementation phase, the levels of discussion achieved during the previous phase (1990 through 1992)[28]

The impact of political variables

Repeated turnover in the political and technical leadership of the educational reform, including the appointment of a new Education Minister and the departure of the principal international specialist, had the effect of stalling the process and causing activities to become more centralized in the Ministry of Education, to the detriment of participation by the other sectors of Dominican society that had originally pushed these changes forward. There began to be fewer opportunities for civil society to take part in the process

Some offices of the Ministry of Education that were created because of the reform still continue to operate, despite major limitations on their decision-making

power An example is the Comite de Trabajo Diario de la Transformacion Curricular [Daily Work Committee for Curriculum Reform]

Institutional capacity

As reform activities became concentrated in the Ministry of Education the organizational problems the ministry experienced with implementing the reform became apparent The limited technical and managerial capacity of the various offices in charge of implementing the reform kept them from becoming institutionalized within Dominican society Although it is true that ministry technical experts and officials have greater opportunities to carry out post graduate and master s level programs, as well as exchanges with international institutions in the education field, it is also clear that,

> Dominican political society lacks the institutional levels to ensure continuity for the development plans that are being formulated. Formal intersectoral connections are non-existent, and the efforts being made in that direction, along with the expansion of participatory mechanisms, are the result of the initiatives and good will of the present incumbents The situation the education sector is experiencing right now clearly illustrates how unprepared the state is to assume the role of providing the energy and balance needed in the processes being carried out by its constituent offices in any sustained fashion Despite the achievements, there are still many aspects that need to be reformulated and addressed through a committed decision-making process based on a new management culture The organization and execution of technical and administrative procedures need to be handled differently, so that they lead to new improved practices that move away from a management style that is based on patronage and toward leadership styles that are more democratic and decentralized, and that operate according to the premises and rigor of technical, scientific, and professional criteria [29]

Financing

Another obstacle to implementation of the educational reform has been the lack of financial resources It is important to note that for decades the budgetary allocation for education in the Dominican Republic has been insufficient. With regard to the Ten-Year Plan and its budgetary requirements, the goals contained in the plan cannot be achieved without a government commitment that translates into budget appropriations and activities directed towards improving administration of the available resources Until now the progress of the reforms has depended on different international funding agencies, such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development

Bank, the United States Agency for International Development, and the European Community through the Government of Spain

The above factors have had a direct impact on the entire reform process, especially curriculum reform, a complex and long-term endeavor as described by the current Deputy Minister of Education, Melba Baez de Erazo

> Regarding effective implementation, since the first meetings of the Daily Working Committee in which I took part once we had become part of the working team in January 1995, I asked myself which of the tasks that lay before us were possible, which were important, and which could afford to be postponed Our concerns revolved around the strategies for action The implementation of the new curriculum is such a broad undertaking that, in addition to rigorous organization, it also requires an enormous flow of resources and a reasonable time-period for its execution, as is true of any process that aims to change human behavior [30]

Finally, it is obvious that the success of an educational reform depends, among other things, on active participation and commitment on the part of teachers On the one hand, it is important to prepare teachers to work within the new educational framework and use the new teaching materials Sufficient financial and human resources need to be devoted to accomplishing this task On the other hand, the extent to which teachers can participate effectively in training and education programs is limited by the critical living conditions of national teachers Pimentel and Vincent emphasize that,

> True curriculum reform and far-reaching changes in educational quality can only occur in the presence of policies and strategies to increase the social value of the teaching profession, especially by giving teachers a better quality of life, recognition, and appreciation of their place in the culture, job stability, opportunities for continuing education, performance-related salary incentives, and ways to meet the inherent social and economic demands of a dignified life [31]

The New Government

The Dominican Republic held its elections on 16 May 1996, although the new government did not take power until August of that year During the first months of the government of President Leonel Fernandez and the Dominican Liberation Party, the discussion continued on certain sectoral reform projects in fields such as health, education energy, justice, and state reform.

The present government has, on various occasions, underscored the importance of education to development, which means that it counts education among its principal tasks An example of this is the Minister of Education's announcement that all primary and secondary school textbooks would be "Dominicanized" to more accurately reflect the national reality It is also significant that the Deputy Minister of Education Luis de Leon, made a recent request for Senate approval of the draft General Education Law which, he maintained, must be in place in order for the necessary changes to occur in the education sector [32]

Although the government has not yet defined a detailed plan of action for the education field, the work being done to prepare various legal instruments on education matters and to keep the discussion on these topics alive indicates the government s willingness to push forward improvements in education in the country In addition, the coordination and consensus building that characterized the initial preparation of the Ten-Year Plan left their mark on Dominican society in a way that will ensure, to a great extent, a high level of continuity in this effort in the future

Conclusions

The educational reform in the Dominican Republic represents a new type of democratic participation in society, based on broad consensus and a unified social response to education issues The fundamental principles of the reform mark advances in terms of socio-pedagogical concepts and openness toward all social sectors in the country *The initial success of the reform was undoubtedly due to its mobilization of civil society to support an agenda of national interest the presence of solid institutional and individual leadership support from international organizations ties with universities and centers of excellence and agreement among local political interests*

The first phase of educational reform, the design stage, was characterized by general euphoria, high levels of participation, and high productivity The second phase, implementation, was severely limited by a number of different factors These factors include

- Local political factors, such as changes in leadership, interruptions in the flow of resources, and abandonment of the initially strong process of social participation This category also includes the lack of an effective government commitment

- Institutional factors the Ministry of Education has not made the necessary changes in structure, operation, and training

- Work-related factors, including inadequate preparation and poor living and working conditions for teachers

- Financial factors basically, the lack of national resources to complement international funds

The Dominican experience provides very important lessons for other countries in the region The national consensus obtained at the outset was not sufficient to achieve the profound changes demanded by a general education reform in a country Without long-term commitments on the part of the government, a substantial improvement in the managerial capacity and research and design components of educational organizations, and the continuing involvement of other social sectors reforms lose momentum quickly due to interruptions and failures Fortunately, the imprint left on society by the consensus-building movement, increased parent participation in running schools, and better training for many Dominican teachers and administrators is a kind of capital that can help significantly in recovering the ground that has been lost

The process of reinitiating educational reform and curriculum reform, according to Rocio Hernandez, will call for joint effort The government must feel a sense of commitment to the reform s proposals At the same time, the national community needs to reclaim its opportunities to participate and to form networks for follow-up and promotion of the implementation of curriculum reform. Fortunately, the new government appears to be committed to continuing the educational reform efforts At the Ibero-American Presidential Summit held in Santiago, Chile, in November 1996 the President of the Dominican Republic said that, ' You do not conquer poverty with money, you conquer it through education and so that is what my government is going to do "

NOTES

[1] This chapter is based on the paper presented by the author in the workshop 'The Implementation of Educational Reforms in Latin America and the Caribbean held in Washington, DC in September 1996 The workshop was organized by the Advancing Basic Education and Literacy Project with funding and guidance from the United States Agency for International Development

[2] Statistics from the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook. Paris 1995

[3] Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) *Constitucion de la ciudadania y campo educativo* Buenos Aires 1995

[4] Perspectives bringing into question the prevailing conservative positions are presented as part of the Hostosiana Reform from the early part of this century See Gonzalez, Raymundo *Proyecto Social Proyecto Educativo* Santo Domingo Buho Centro Cultural Poveda, 1988 Fiallo Billini Jose Antonio and German Alejandrina. Filosofía de la Educacion Dominicana. Santo Domingo Workshop UNDP and the State Ministry of Education, 1994 and the proposals carried out in 1963 during the constitutional government of Professor Juan Bosch (Cf Fiallo Billini J A. and German A 1994 69 70)

[5] Institutions are being developed in the country that have worked on alternative educational practices in the fields of environment, gender human rights and health

[6] Tavares Juan Tomas Los Empresarios y el Plan Decenal de Educacion. Presented at the International Seminar on 'La Concertación de Politicas Educativas en la Argentina y America Latina [Coordination of Educational Policies in Argentina and Latin America] organized by FLACSO and the Fundacion Concretar and held in Buenos Aires 8 10 November 1993 Santo Domingo Educa, 1994 17

[7] Malagon Jacqueline El papel de la educacion en el desarrollo socioeconomico y las responsibilidades del sector privado Presented at the Conference on Education Quality in Latin America (Conferencia sobre Calidad Educativa en America Latina) Guatemala City Guatemala, April 23 25 1996 7 8

[8] Partners for Progress *Action for Basic Education* Santo Domingo Sociedad de las Americas para el Dialogo Interamericano 1996

[9] The Minister of Education who facilitated the implementation of educational reform was an executive director of Educa.

[10] The ten points in the Education Plan have the following objectives 1) Total elimination of illiteracy 2) mandatory preschool education 3) more generalized availability of primary school teaching 4) expansion of technical education 5) more generalized availability of secondary education 6) reorganization of higher education 7) more appreciation of the teaching profession 8) improvement of teacher training 9) more investment in education and 10) implementation of a national campaign to increase awareness

[11] *Op cit* Tavares 1994 12

[12] The close ties between Educa and UNDP were one of the results of the World Conference on Education for All

[13] Personal interview with the author of the study

[14] In the process of coordination and consensus building the following institutions have played an important role Plan Educativo the Poveda Cultural Center the Center for Pedagogical Services the Education Commissions of PLD and PRD Educa, ADP UNDP—Education Section and the State Ministry of Education, Fine Arts and Culture

[15] National Education Conference *Sintesis del Plan Decenal de Educacion* Santo Domingo 1992 7

[16] *Op cit* National Education Conference 1992 92 93

[17] Educa. *Educacion Basica* Santo Domingo undated.

[18] Pimentel Josefina and Vincent, Minerva. *Concepciones Procesos y Estructuras Educativas* (preliminary version) Santo Domingo Programa de Promocion de la Reforma Educativa en America Latina (PREAL) 1996 24

[19] State Ministry of Education, Fine Arts and Culture *Sintesis de los Fundamentos Generales del Diseño Curricular Transformacion Curricular en Marcha* Santo Domingo June 1994

[20] *Ibid*

[21] *Ibid*

[22] *Ibid*

[23] For example Melanio Paredes director of the Dominican Teachers Association, announced to the national press in June 1995 that the implementation of the new curriculum was being threatened and that the activities of the Ministry of Education had reached a virtual standstill

[24] German, Alejandrina. 'Perspectivas del Plan Decenal de Educación. *El Nacional* (5 June 1996) 16

[25] Báez de Erazo Melba. *Presentacion Nueva Fase de la Transformacion Curricular* Santo Domingo Secretaria de Estado de Educación Bellas Artes y Cultos Documento Tecnico 1996

[26] The 2 December 1996 edition of the newspaper *HOY* cites Jesus de la Rosa as saying that approval of the Education Law was mandatory for effective implementation of the Ten Year Plan If the Plan failed, this would mean a loss to the country of IDB funds amounting to US$104 million that were intended for use in the implementation of reform projects in the education sector' 14

[27] *Ibid*

[28] Valera, Cheila *Constitucion de la ciudadania y campo educativo* Buenos Aires FLACSO 1995 94

[29] *Op cit* Pimentel and Vincent, 1996 33 34

[30] *Op cit* Báez de Erazo 1996

[31] *Op cit* Pimentel and Vincent, 1996 39

[32] "Pide Senado apruebe Ley de Educacion. HOY (December 5 1996) 11 See also Confía reformistas apoyaran Ley de Educacion. HOY (December 3 1996) 13

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE REFORMERS

Rocio Hernandez Mella[1]

As emphasized in Josefina Zaiter's study, the process of consensus-building, coordination, and above all responsible and conscious participation by all social actors in the assessment and formulation phases have been fundamental aspects of the educational reform process in the Dominican Republic The business community gave initial impetus to the reform by organizing discussions and evaluating needs in all ten regions of the country over a two-year period. One of the most important decisions was to make the reform a national one and not just a pilot study

However, since 1994, this reform has been losing the momentum it originally gained from the coordination and participation that helped to launch it From my perspective as a reformer and a participant in the initial launching of educational reform, as well as in the tasks involved in laying the groundwork for this reform, the process has been stalled during the last two years for the reasons I discuss in this and the following paragraphs On the one hand, the removal from office of the Minister of Education, who was from the private sector and her replacement by an individual who had no history of participation in the process, caused the ministry itself to divert attention from the work of educational reform, at the expense of the consensus that had been achieved.

Similarly, the new minister ended the close relationship that had existed with the Oficina Tecnica de la Reforma Educativa [Technical Office on Educational Reform] This office was and remains in charge of all technical advisory services necessary for the process, as well as being responsible for working in close cooperation with the ministry to prepare each of the different programs included under the reform. Without this active relationship between the ministry and the Technical Office, the work lost its direction and each program in the reform was left to make whatever progress it could on its own But these activities were isolated and lacked coordination, so that some programs even ending up causing problems for others This was the case with the Sistema de Evaluacion Educativa [Educational Evaluation System], which was in charge of national tests that were prepared with scarcely any acknowledgment of the new curriculum being promoted by the program on Transformación Curricular [Curriculum Reform] A chaotic situation ensued which caused the new curriculum to be less well accepted. The reform also became less participatory as the ministry began to develop instruments which it then ordered teachers to use

What allowed all of this to happen was the fact that the educational reform, which had been initiated and promoted by the civil society, gradually became more centralized until the ministry assumed leadership of the reform, while the civil society became marginalized But the process has been stalled not only by bureaucra-

ization on the part of the ministry, as well as its centralization of activities, but also by the loss or abandonment of the roles that had been adopted by the civil society In fact, we remaining institutions of civil society gave up our roles and stopped trying to make demands and exert pressure from within the structures created as part of the ministry

My guess is that civil society's loss of its role in educational reform is related to our ignorance or lack of awareness of the rights and duties we have as individuals and social groups, including the right and duty to participate and to be the subjects of our own development which, in this case, is taking place in the field of education I would therefore recommend that we undertake a large-scale effort to increase citizen involvement at various levels, to provide training on how to participate, with the development of universal social values (life, dignity, liberty, etc) based on action in the classroom, at home, and through our institutions

Since the last elections a new team has taken over the leadership of the ministry These individuals were participants in the consensus-building process and thus we can hope that they will be able to recover some of the ground that has been lost during these past months

[1] Plan Educativo Coordinator

3

THE DYNAMICS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN EL SALVADOR, 1989-1996

Rafael Guido Bejar[1]

Abstract

In El Salvador, educational reform as a national program was launched in the early part of the 1990s, but it did not take final shape until 1995 The reform was structured through strategic activities and innovative projects that grew out of intensive and extensive discussions held in 1994 and 1995 between different social and state sectors and after the appropriate legal, administrative, and financial instruments for managing it had been designed.

This report analyzes the execution of the educational reform as a social project which, in the judgement of the Ministry of Education (MINED) itself, is the state's most important enterprise " The focus is on the socioeconomic and political dimension, with an effort to increase the participation and consensus established between the Ministry of Education and the social and political actors who are most interested in modernizing education during the decade of the 1990s This relationship will be used as the basis for establishing coherence among the different changes that are occurring within the sphere of education in the country

The field of observation chosen has been the most successful of MINED's reform efforts the program on Educacion con Participacion de la Comunidad (EDUCO) [Education with Community Participation], which was initiated in 1991 EDUCO is defined as "a strategy for expanding educational services in rural areas through the administrative modality of transferring financial resources to communities and allowing them to participate in the administration of educational services and in ensuring that their children receive an education

EDUCO, which began as a pilot study, quickly became the principal component of the government's education strategy, and the program was expanded to cover other areas of the country There were considerable improvements in areas such as access to primary education, above all in the country's rural areas, as well as the links between families and communities and their schools This decentralizing activity became the axis for a new kind of state action in El Salvador a new relationship between the state and civil society

This study has provided the opportunity to identify not only the successes of the first stages of execution of the educational reform, but also the principal factors related to the success of the process, as well as the obstacles and limitations The study is based on an analysis of documents, field visits to the EDUCO program sites, and in-depth interviews with individuals involved in the reform process, as well as independent observers

Socioeconomic and Political Context at the Beginning of the Educational Reform

The historical changes occurring in the world in general and in Salvadoran society in particular are the dynamic context for the processes of this educational reform If this educational reform is able to respond quickly, efficiently, and effectively to the demands of the modern world, then it will become a useful tool for the country s economic, social, and political development

The socioeconomic environment of the educational reform and the government of El Salvador during the period immediately preceding the reform (1989-1994) was very favorable, which explains the relative success of its economic management and public policies At the beginning of the nineties, the most severe effects of the international crisis that defined the greater part of the decade of the eighties had dissipated. International interest rates and the economic growth rates of industrialized countries were evidence of this change

Political expansion in the Central American region had begun with the installation of a democratically elected government in Nicaragua, Panama had entered a reconstruction phase with the help of North American intervention, and the peace process had begun in El Salvador All these events launched an era of expansion in Central America which would slowly but persistently reactivate the regional market

Internally, after the offensive by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the inauguration of the government of President Alfredo Cristiani and the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) in 1989, the country entered a period of relative sociopolitical stability, as the peace process initiated through the Chapultepec Accords began to unfold. The end of the armed conflict had positive economic repercussions raising the expectations of economic agents, leading to a recovery of private and public investment, and freeing up public resources previously dedicated to the war and reallocating them to support social sectors—especially education and health—and agricultural production

Once the war was over and the peace accords were in place,[2] Salvadoran society showed distinct and quite strong evidence of notable changes in many of its most important components These changes could be seen in the behavior of the population, the various economic bases of the society, and the country s political structures

With regard to its sociodemographics, El Salvador has undergone a veritable revolution In the first place, there was a sharp decline in the population growth rate, from 3 percent in 1971 to 2% percent in 1992, also a census year Thus while the 1971 rate was the basis for projecting a population of 8 7 million today El Salvador has 5 8 million inhabitants and a growth rate of 1 83 percent [3] Another cause of the new population structure has been the migrations which have altered the population's territorial distribution, especially in urban areas Forty percent of the population is concentrated in two departments (San Salvador and La Libertad), in the greater metropolitan area around San Salvador Fifty percent of the population is found in four departments, the two already mentioned, and Santa Ana and San Miguel On the other hand, there has been a notable depopulation of some departments, especially the five departments most severely affected by the war which are now home to only 15 6% of the total population

Another important phenomenon is the continuous urbanization process which began during the 1940s and was accelerated by the war during the 1980s as well as the economic crisis in agriculture The urban population has grown by 84 percent during the last twenty years, while the rural population has increased by 18 percent, and if the underlying conditions of these trends remain unchanged, there could be a negative rural growth rate in the coming years

Intensive urbanization has also modified the work structure In the mid-part of the century, agricultural and livestock activity occupied two-thirds of the economically active population (EAP) However, during the period between the 1971 and the 1992 censuses, the EAP involved with agriculture and livestock declined to 36 percent, while the proportion of the EAP employed by industry, business, and construction grew to more than 50 percent In 1992, the majority of the employed non-agricultural work force was in the service sector, and included twice as many women as men These characteristics have become more pronounced and have caused a reorganization of work and the urban labor markets

The current work force has the following basic characteristics it is large, young, increasingly feminine, and lacks formal education [4] The trend in all the markets is to use an informal and temporary work force Women are the largest group in the informal market, and they work under very precarious conditions no social security benefits variable income, high levels of insecurity longer working hours than officially sanctioned, and salaries below the legal minimum In addition, all of the markets have a high index of temporary workers or day laborers Of the individuals employed in both markets (formal and informal), 58 5 percent are not permanent employees This trend is becoming more widespread with the hiring of contract workers in both public and private enterprise

In recent years there has been a notable decline in agricultural exports, especially coffee and cotton Cotton was weakened by a loss of competitiveness in the

international market, and the fact that the war affected cotton-growing areas Meanwhile, nontraditional (industrial) exports to the Central American Region have shown the greatest increase (20 percent), while exports to countries outside the region have grown by a significant figure of 7 percent Despite this growth, during the decade of the eighties exports ceased to be the main source of foreign currency, which instead began to be generated by the income from international transfers both private and governmental The increase in private transfers including money sent home by Salvadorans living outside the country—mainly in the United States—is much greater than the transfers from official loans or donations

As mentioned earlier, during the last 20 years, the Salvadoran economy has moved from being a productive economy to one that is based on trade and service There are various reasons for the relative price decline in the agricultural and livestock sector for example, the decrease in agricultural prices, especially in the international market for export products, the shrinking internal market due to the decrease in real wages, the policy of price controls in the food sector, foreign food assistance, commercial policies that are unfavorable to the agricultural and livestock sector, and inflated exchange rates

Illustration 1 Chronology of Educational Reform in El Salvador

Inauguration of the Government of Alfredo Cristiani and ARENA			Chapultepec Accords		Inauguration of the Government of Armando Calderón Sol and ARENA	
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
	General Education Law Creation of EDUCO	EDUCO pilot project (execution and evaluation) Expansion of EDUCO	National Plan of Action for Education	Assessment HIID/UCA/ FEPADE Establishment of Advisory Group (AG)	Presentation of findings HIID/UCA/ FEPADE AG becomes Dynamics Committee Appointment of National Commission on Education Science and Development	National Consultative Forum on Educational Reform Conference 95 Ten-Year Plan 1995-2005 Report "Transforming education for peace and development in El Salvador"

EDUCO's role in the formulation and execution of educational reform

The socioeconomic transformation of a society, which involves meeting the challenge of joining a trade- and service-based global economy, calls for extensive reforms and adjustments of education Most of the country s political actors have been in agreement that educational reform is a national task of primary importance, it is worth noting that this is the only area of major national agreement to grow out of the Chapultepec Accords It is essential to prepare human resources for the changes demanded by international competition, as well as the challenges of a post-war economy

EDUCO is notable among the programs being carried out to reduce poverty and maintain peace because of its success in promoting community participation and strengthening the principle of educational decentralization, as well as its creation of a participatory model for the 1995 reform In fact, what began as a pilot study, further down the road will serve as a source of inspiration for national educational reform (Illustration 1)

Design and organization of EDUCO

In 1991, MINED began to implement a program funded by the World Bank and UNICEF and aimed at rehabilitating, through institutional reforms, the public sector's capacity to efficiently administer and provide health and education services In the education field, priority was given to preschool and primary level basic education in the rural sector and the program on Education with Community Participation (EDUCO) was created, with the following goals

1 To build a new partnership between the Ministry of Education and the communities
   a) to meet unmet needs, and
   b) to underscore the importance of dividing up the responsibility for basic education among national authorities, non-governmental community organizations, and parents organizations

2 To promote participation by rural communities in the design and administration of educational services

3 To decentralize education programs and simplify administrative procedures, allowing local communities to participate in financing and delivering these services

4 To come up with new methods and improve existing techniques for regular monitoring of teachers in basic education

The program design was based on educational experiences with community participation that took place in the Dominican Republic, Chile, and some rural Salvadoran communities which, when confronted with a lack of educational services more than two decades ago, opted to pay their teachers salaries and cover infrastructure and other costs Other institutions, including the Catholic Church, supported grassroots community programs like Teachers for the People [Profesores Populares] and kept public schools running in communities located in war zones It is estimated that, in 1988, there were approximately one thousand parents' groups contributing more than US$3 million, equivalent to 10 percent of the education budget

EDUCO is a program based on local administration and the idea that providing more effective educational services requires active participation in school activities by parents and communities The schools are headed by a community education association (ACE) that includes parents of the children attending the school as well as teachers The ACEs hire teachers, do follow-up and monitoring of their performance, responsibly administer a bank account that contains funds transferred by MINED to cover teacher salaries and other school maintenance and equipment costs, conduct local campaigns to raise additional funds to supplement the MINED funds for maintenance and equipment, and mobilize the community and parents to provide volunteer services to the school

Educational administration began to change when MINED created the EDUCO Program Coordination Office, which carried out the preliminary tasks of supervision, curriculum design, administration, finance, and communications Table 1 shows the current organizational structure of EDUCO at the national and regional level

At the same time EDUCO made it necessary to modify and update other state institutions such as the Ministry of Finance It also began to provide more opportunities for local and national dialogue among the different social and institutional actors and groups, in other words between the state, the community, and the school, between MINED, national NGOs, and international agencies, between MINED and legal political parties representing the full range of political idealogies, and between the teachers associations, MINED, the schools, and the communities

Implementation of the EDUCO program

Figure 1 shows the steady growth of the EDUCO project and its success in incorporating students, employing teachers using resources, and establishing community ties In five years the project has shown significant growth in each of these areas The project has also had a major impact on the institutional organization of education as discussed below, and on community life by promoting actions for individual development of parents, strengthening activities to improve the community, and facilitating skills that can help to make the project sustainable The EDUCO experience has inspired a new relationship between the state—through the Ministry of Education—civil society, and communities and their most important organizations

Table 1 Organizational Structure of EDUCO

National Level	Regional Level
NATIONAL COORDINATION OF THE EDUCO PROGRAM Standardize activities based on democratization decentralization and expansion of coverage Plan training and follow up of teachers principals supervisors parents in ACE Develop and update data base	REGIONAL COORDINATION OF EDUCO PROGRAM Execute and coordinate work plans
DIRECTORATE FOR SUPERVISION Provide general guidelines for follow up of teachers and support of ACEs	REGIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR SUPERVISION Execute and coordinate work plans
DIRECTORATE FOR ADMINISTRATION Ensure financial sustainability of the program	REGIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR ADMINISTRATION Administer funds and make monthly transfers to ACEs
DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION Provide global guidelines for training and improving skills of teachers	REGIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION Support the execution of programs and follow up

The history of EDUCO's implementation can be broken down into four periods

1 Research and design of the educational strategy
2 Execution and evaluation of the pilot study and preparation of the project s preliminary phase
3 Expansion of the program
4 Recent development.

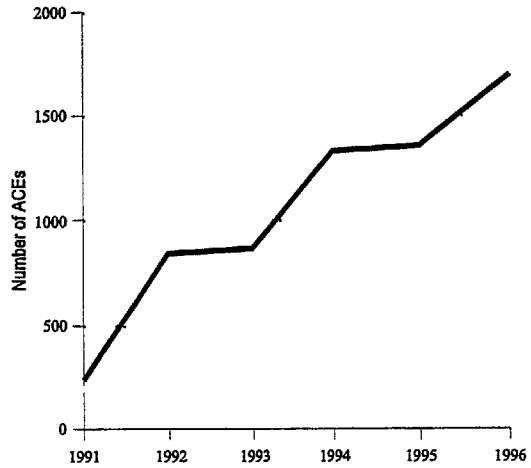
1 Design of the EDUCO education strategy (April 1990 - November 1990)

April 1990 marked the beginning of a research phase aimed at devising a strategy to expand the coverage of basic education, especially in the rural sector, in a country where more than half a million children did not have access to primary school

The research was conducted in the country's 14 departments and looked at census findings on the school population and research on the economic activities of the inhabitants and on the regions most severely affected by the war, regions containing displaced persons, and regions impacted by agrarian reform The principal findings include the following

- The school/community relationship is very important in the regions most severely affected by the war There were extremely poor, locally managed communities that paid their own teachers

Figure 1 Expansion of EDUCO (1991-1996)



Source Ministry of Education

- The teachers hired in this way tended to identify much more with and feel more responsibility toward their schools than those in the traditional system.

- The communities valued the school's role in teaching reading and writing, basic arithmetic and standards of social conduct

- There were some global trends in learning processes memorization, a lot of emphasis on spelling and handwriting, repetition in grades, pedantic language, no reference to local reality, passive learning, excessive content and information, reading based on phonics and syllables lack of playfulness, very traditional classroom setups (rows of pupils), etc

- The parents saw that their connection with the school was limited to specific times, and that their responsibility ended once they had paid their fees However, they felt that another type of relationship was possible

2 Execution and evaluation of the pilot plan and preparation of the first phase of the EDUCO project (November 1990 - June 1991)

A small group of researchers analyzed the results of the above-mentioned study the experience of other countries, and cases of community participation in education in El Salvador The end result was a model for local community management of education This model was officially recognized in November 1990 and called the Educational Services Expansion Project [Proyecto Ampliacion de Servicios Educativos]

The next step was to define all the parts of the model and to determine the changes and resources needed in order for it to work Two fundamental aspects were given careful consideration legal considerations and administrative/institutional concerns In addition, the pilot plan was prepared and the EDUCO program was prepared and negotiated with the World Bank. The main problem was finding the legal means of transferring state funds so that they could be administered by parents Legal research led to the proposal to create the ACEs, which would be in charge of educational services and to provide them with a special set of regulations Towards that end, a legal proceeding was devised that specifies the responsibilities and benefits of both parties Thus the state committed itself to provide funds, training, follow-up, and orientation, while the ACEs would be in charge of local management, hiring teachers, purchasing materials, enrollment, and maintaining infrastructure

The quite small Oficina Coordinadora Nacional [National Coordinating Office] was created, and there were no other special units The project was handled through the existing offices of the Ministry of Education The funds transferred consisted of

- Salaries of teachers hired by the ACEs
- Social Security payments
- Payments for the Social Housing Fund.
- Teacher bonuses
- A monthly fund for materials and other expenditures
- The ACE legal reserve
- The labor reserve
- A fund for the one-time costs of setting up the classroom area when the section was initiated

MINED started the pilot study by creating six community education associations and preparing a small group of trainers from the School for Parents to fill the positions of president, treasurer, and secretary of each ACE Training courses were also organized for the teachers hired by the ACEs, as well as for the educational supervisors in charge of promoting the model in the communities Along general lines, the model consisted of

- Democratic election of the directors of the ACEs There is a general assembly which elects an administrative board consisting of a president, vice-president secretary, treasurer, and three members They are elected for one year and can be reelected.

- Training for three members of each of the six ACEs based on the *Documento de Orientacion para Madres y Padres* [Orientation for Mothers and Fathers]

- Hiring of the teachers selected by the ACEs

- Opening of the classroom area, maintenance of class libraries and work areas within the classroom

- First transfer of funds to the ACEs

- Follow-up on the experience

3 Expansion of the EDUCO Program (July 1991 - September 1992)

EDUCO's expansion began with the implementation of the project financed by the World Bank in the middle of 1991 By October 1992, it is estimated that EDUCO had expanded the coverage for preschool education and the first two grades of basic education to cover 75 municipalities, representing 96 percent of the municipalities initially in need of these services with a total of 867 additional sections The first two grades of basic education were installed in 70 percent of these municipalities, and preschool education was established in 30 percent

During this period, the departments that benefited most were La Libertad (23 percent of the ACEs), Sonsonate (11 percent), Usulutan (11 percent), Ahuachapan (10 percent), and San Miguel (7 percent) At the end of the 1992 school year, EDUCO had served 27 744 students Thirty-one percent of these children were in preschool, which represents a 14 percent increase over 1990, and 69 percent were in the first two grades of basic education, or an increase of 5 percent over 1990

When this period was over the following basic criticisms were made of EDUCO

- Community participation in EDUCO was low and there wasn't any educational process going on outside the classroom Only the ACE members were motivated and trained to work in the program, leaving out the rest of the community and thus running the risk that a change of representatives could mean a loss of continuity for the experience

- The ACE was defining a unique type of organization that might be interfering with or otherwise affecting the system of work adopted in the community

- The Schools for Parents hadn t worked very well

- The teacher s responsibility exceeded the scope of the training provided, and while the support of other professionals was needed, it was not forthcoming

- The teachers' union resented the program which they viewed as a separate system that rivaled the traditional one and threatened their future

- The program had simply been imposed on some communities

4 Recent development (since September 1992)

During these years, EDUCO has refined its operational approaches and put its administrative bodies into final shape It has served 168 672 children, employed 3,871 teachers, established relationships with 1,700 ACEs, and created 5,271 sections from preschool through fifth grade

During all these years EDUCO has demonstrated that it is potentially the most appropriate strategy for providing decentralized education services, as well as being a complete model for rural education Throughout its steady growth, the program has received the support of communities, teachers, and principals, as well as the administrative and financial backing of MINED, which has succeeded in reshaping the attitudes of its technicians and administrators

Dynamics and obstacles

The solutions that EDUCO has found to the problems that face Salvadoran education in general have had a notable impact on the design of the remaining educational reforms that have been proposed. Its successes in terms of increasing school attendance in rural areas as well as reducing absenteeism, repeat grades, and school leaving gives EDUCO authority in the field Table 2 compares EDUCO with the traditional education system and reflects various positive aspects of the program

Despite EDUCO's achievements, however, it has experienced a variety of problems that have been remarked upon by the parents and teachers,[5] as noted below

1 Deficiencies in the quality of the education provided, since the EDUCO teachers have not been trained for this kind of activity The universities still do not teach appropriate methods for this kind of education and the preparatory programs are not up to par, so that teachers end up falling back on teaching methods based on repetition, a passive role for the student and classroom-based learning In addition, the better trained teachers don't work in the rural areas or in the system s lower grades

Table 2 Comparison Between EDUCO and the Traditional Education System

Aspect	EDUCO	Traditional System
Presence of teacher	5 days/week	3 2 days/week
Provision of teaching materials	C124 x section	C300 x section
Teaching hours	18 75 hours/week	10 hours/week
Academic performance Language test Mathematics test	 Same as traditional system Better than traditional system in 1st and 2nd grades	 Same as EDUCO Lower than EDUCO in 1st and 2nd grades
Relationship of teachers/parents	Ongoing support and active work	Non existent or limited to consultations or presentation of report cards
Teacher's attitude	Facilitates educational processes	Depends on state to solve problems
Social impact	Reaches out to the community	Impact limited to school setting only

Source Ministry of Education
*C = Colones

2 The fact that EDUCO teachers don t remain with the program very long affects the quality of the teaching, the student/teacher relationship, and the teacher/community relationship Many of the teachers are just waiting for a place in the traditional public education system, since they prefer the security of an official position to the higher salary offered by EDUCO or they want the corporate advantages of belonging to the teacher' union[6] This factor also accounts for the lack of motivation shown by some teachers, which manifests itself through repeated absences for various reasons, ranging from lack of adequate transportation to bad weather or personal problems

3 Some communities see EDUCO as an excuse for parents to stop working with their children In other communities, there are high levels of apathy and a lack of enthusiastic participation In the cases where the community is really involved, there are still the problems associated with the low education level of community members, low income levels, and a lack of free time Furthermore there isn t much community participation in the process of choosing teachers and any complaints may cause a teacher to quit, which can end up shutting down the EDUCO program.

4 The main problem with EDUCO is that most of the teachers come from outside the communities and thus identify only marginally with community problems In addition, the teachers lose a lot of time just getting to the community and are really not in a position to take part in community life after school hours

5 There are not enough teaching materials, manipulatives, audiovisual aids and actual physical space for moving around freely

6 Unless it can address the social roots of poverty and create rural development programs, EDUCO will face serious obstacles to its success For example, child undernutrition has a negative impact on learning and academic performance In this field, there are still not consistent responses and the whole-nutrition bar' is not yet being provided to all schools and all children

7 There is excessive administrative centralization in the unit that processes the funds allocated to each section of EDUCO the Office on International Cooperation Projects (OPCI), and many of the settlements and cantons do not have easy access to the Agricultural and Livestock Development Bank [Banco de Fomento Agropecuario], which is in charge of distributing the funds Although it has the most branches of any bank in the country, there are still many places where no branch is available

8 The principals, especially in the largest schools, still try to impose their authority over the school and its staff The tradition of respect for the principal of a school is still stronger than that for the teachers in a community

9 There is still not enough training for the ACEs under the direction of the EDUCO teachers in the schools for parents, which means that more duties fall on the teachers shoulders and more funds are needed overall in order to pay for additional materials and time There are problems with the working hours of teachers and parents, and there aren t additional funds available to pay their salaries for this activity

Educational Reform Successive Consensus-Building Efforts

The 1995 Educational Reform is the result of a prolonged consensus-building process among different social and political actors It has required the participation of many different national and international social groups, and an infinite number of grassroots proposals and experiences that validate many of the proposed educational solutions

Consensus on the assessment and the proposed educational solutions

One of the most important steps in designing the reform and obtaining the social consensus that would form the nucleus of this experience took place between September and December 1993, when a research team was formed to look at educational problems in the country In the first half of 1993, the Education Office of the USAID Mission in El Salvador sent out an international request for someone to prepare an assessment of the education sector in El Salvador The research opportunity was awarded to the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID) HIID planned to conduct the study in conjunction with the Education Department of Jose Simeon Cañas Central American University (ED-UCA) and the Business Foundation for Educational Development (FEPADE) [Fundacion Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo] MINED provided technical and logistical support The three institutions were able to attract other key groups in educational reform and they proposed a participatory evaluative approach to facilitate a shared vision of educational issues and public policy options in the sector

Between October and November 1993 the core research group was expanded to become the Advisory Group (GA), which included representatives from universities, research centers, teachers organizations, NGOs, funding agencies, and institutions and programs in the public sector specifically MINED and the Ministry of Planning During these months, the 20-30 members of the GA met weekly to share their observations regarding the work plan, the progress made, and the conclusions and recommendations that the researchers were formulating

Thirty-five people (22 of them Salvadoran nationals) participated in the research, contributing their range of professional experiences and political and ideological views while making periodic—once a week over a three-month period—observations of the progress achieved by the central researchers New reports were produced in the following areas impact of the economy on education, costs and financing of education, basic education, secondary education, university education, technical and vocational education, managerial training for the public and private sector, administration of the education sector, and decentralization of the education sector The final version of the HIID/UCA/FEPADE study on the education sector was published in January 1995, under the title La educacion salvadoreña. De cara al siglo XXI Desafios y oportunidades

The assessment underscored the following acute problems facing the education field in El Salvador

- Access to education
  Inefficiency of the education system.

- Problems with each educational level (preschool, basic secondary, higher, special, adult)
  Institutional problems

Participatory development of the reform strategy and components

Between 1990 and 1992, while promoting this innovative program in the education system, MINED created general standardized instruments for transforming the sector Thus, in 1990, the General Education Law was approved, and in 1992 the first National Plan of Action for Education was created The latter was prepared by MINED with limited non-governmental support and is clearly based on the World Declaration of Education for All set forth at the conference in Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990 One of the objectives was to create and strengthen alliances between the state and civil society in order to meet the basic education needs of the entire population

MINED developed three simultaneous lines of strategic action to prepare the educational reform The first was research, innovation, and experimentation with practical and collaborative educational programs Between 1989 and 1993 MINED carried out a series of detailed research projects on the situation in the country It began the work with projects of limited scope but important in terms of focus on educational experiences outside the system, later, in 1993 in conjunction with international organizations like USAID, work began on the research projects which, after subsequent fine-tuning and updating, have provided the foundation for reaching agreements and defining guidelines for reform

At the same time, MINED presented a proposal to increase coverage for geographically and socially marginalized populations that had not had access to education services in the previous years This was the EDUCO program The two sets of activities are interconnected, mutually reinforcing, and present a broad field of action.

Finally, while promoting this kind of work, MINED also established a series of support networks for the educational activity and began to build sectoral consensus among diverse social actors For example, the research work was the vehicle for pairing international agencies with national research organizations, like UCA, which were far removed from the state EDUCO serves to create closer ties with communities and local actors These provide the bases for the other collaborations and consensus-building that are essential to the success of educational reform

Ongoing Dialogue between the Ministry of Education and Civil Society

Establishment and functions of the Dynamics Committee

The education discussions between MINED and civil and political society were, as mentioned earlier, based on the initial assessment of El Salvador s education situation conducted by HIID ED-UCA, and FEPADE One month after the HIID/UCA/FEPADE team and the GA presented the research findings, in January 1994, the GA decided to promote the final report of the research team. In order to do this, the GA became the Dynamics Committee This committee took on the task of identifying institutions representative of each area and promoting participation by these institutions in the different educational subsectors USAID through FEPADE, provided financial support to the committee, which was made up of the following groups

- Center for Research and Technology (CENITEC) [Centro de Investigacion y Tecnologia]
- 21 June Salvadoran National Teachers Association (ANDES)
- Teachers' Union of El Salvador (SIMES)
- Higher Council of Private Universities in El Salvador (COSUPES) [Consejo Superior de Universidades Privadas de El Salvador]
- Business Foundation for Educational Development (FEPADE) [Fundacion Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo]
- 16 January Foundation (F16)
- Salvadoran Foundation for Economic and Social Development (FUSADES)
- Ministry of Education (MINED)

The Dynamics Committee also received executive and advisory collaboration from the UCA,[7] FUSADES, the USAID mission in El Salvador and the program on international technical advisory services for Strengthening Performance in Basic Education (SABE), administered by the Academy for Educational Development (AED)

The central activities of the Dynamics Committee include disseminating the HIID/UCA/FEPADE study, preparing the project on the National Human Resources Forum, and planning and presenting workshops as well as the National Forum on Educational Reform The Dynamics Committee presented the results of the research to the presidential candidates of the different political parties before the 1994 elections, as well as to representatives of international funding agencies, teachers and students in the educational system, regular and technical personnel in the Ministry of Education, the Commission on Education and Culture, and the Budgetary Commission of the legislative assembly At the same time, each of the component organizations carried out special activities [8]

Another important step for the educational reform was when the President of the Republic appointed the National Commission on Education Science and Development in October 1994 The Commission was made up of twelve people with differing political and ideological positions—although they didn t represent any specific political sector or organization—who were known for their efforts in the education field The function of the commission is to identify problems and formulate recommendations in relation to educational reform in the country

The National Consultative Forum on Educational Reform and Conference 95

One year later between November 1994 and January 1995, the Dynamics Committee organized the most important large-scale event in the process the National Consultative Forum on Educational Reform FEPADE was in charge of administrative coordination and USAID provided financial support for the activity Before the forum, in January 1995 the organizing committee held a series of conferences on past experiences with educational reform in the country These conferences were directed by a member of the national commission while a UCA member presented the lectures on the research and FUSADES gave a synthesis of the main problems in education

Finally, between 24 and 26 January 1995 the National Consultative Forum on Educational Reform was held, with 221 specialists and representatives from 116 national and international organizations (NGOs, governmental organizations unions private enterprise associations etc) In order to encourage dialogue and generate educational proposals the forum's activities revolved around thirteen focal points early education, basic education, secondary education educational administration, non-formal and informal education, professional training, economic and financial issues, higher education, teacher training, education and culture, rural education, educational evaluation, and special education One or two tables were set up for each topic At the end of the forum, each table presented a summary of the work they had done over the three days presenting, in other words, the problems they had identified and their proposed solutions A synthesis of the findings was published subsequently with financing from USAID [9]

At the same time, between January and May 1995, MINED prepared, presented, and systematized the National Education Conference "Conference 95, which consisted of a number of workshops and consultative meetings—educational assessment workshops—in the country's 14 departments A total of 4,000 people participated in these meetings, 2,000 of whom were teachers—both active and retired—700 students, and the remainder parents or representatives of public and private educational institutions in different regions of the country "Conference 95 had three axes quality, coverage, and educational administration The basic purpose was to find out what people were thinking about educational issues and what alternative solutions they proposed to support the process of educational reform. Most of the meetings

were presented on television, as were many interviews with representatives of different productive and state sectors in the country

On 22 June 1995, the report of the National Commission on Education, Science, and Development— "Transformar la educacion para la paz y el desarrollo de El Salvador' —was presented This report is a key document that systematically presents the philosophy and concepts associated with the country s major educational problems, along with guidelines for solving them. This document was, in turn, presented all over the country at numerous meetings and discussions in different public arenas, as well as on Salvadoran television

General Guidelines for Educational Reform in 1995

The first part of the educational reform, which encompasses a five-year period, was founded on earlier experiences with dialogue and successful educational practices such as EDUCO In addition, it reflects the concept of educational process as a long-term social enterprise that involves ongoing dialogue and consensus-building among the different actors in the educational sphere The 1995 educational reform has been an effective process of communication among different population sectors In that sense it has maintained ideological pluralism and multisectoral participation by means of broad discussions with the sectors of civil society that are most interested in education principally, teachers members of the business community, universities, and NGOs

An agreement has been reached to expand the coverage of the educational system, improve the quality of knowledge update and improve the use of knowledge as a tool, convey attitudes and aptitudes for permanent learning, and create a capacity for innovation based on solid scientific and cultural components The proposed new educational reform calls for decentralization less rigid educational administration at both the public and private levels, and a reemphasis on using local communities to ensure effective educational management. There is a focus on strengthening preschool and basic education, and a modern school version of science and technology To obtain this consensus, MINED has been involved in a lengthy process that culminated in the proposed 1995 educational reform.

This comprehensive approach is complemented by the changes MINED has made in addressing administrative and legal matters, updating curricula, creating incentives for national teachers, proposing alternative models of teacher training, recognizing the contributions of teachers, principals, and MINED s technical staff, and providing more administrative autonomy in the schools through increased parental involvement At the same time, it can be said that the bureaucracy has gotten smaller, there is better quality control and teacher training has improved

MINED maintains high levels of administrative and institutional coherence, which is not the case in other state agencies that are taking part in modernization efforts None of these state agencies has had a more direct impact on communities The school setting has provided the opportunity to see how to have a positive impact on community life the efforts have included work on the environment and campaigns to protect children and young people from drugs and delinquency Many NGOs are gradually becoming involved with this kind of work, bringing with them their specialized knowledge and experience

The success of the rapid implementation of the educational reform is due to a combination of various factors developed under the guidance and authority of the current Minister of Education On the one hand, she has been able to take the recognition by different social sectors that a better and more modern education is needed, and to use this as a resource She has obtained international resources and administered them efficiently to investigate the current reality, and she has understood how to combine the contributions of intellectuals with the more pragmatic offerings of members of the business community and other types of economic groups She has also been able to coordinate the earlier efforts with the technical capacity of consultants from international agencies who have evaluated the situation and recommended permanent improvements

The comprehensive perspective of the educational reform has not overlooked the question of how to improve the socioeconomic circumstances of teachers who, together with an open discussion with the teachers' unions and associations, have achieved a positive dialogue in which they can discuss and agree upon complex solutions In that sense, the leadership of the Ministry of Education has been key for coordinating all these factors that make El Salvador's current educational reform a successful experience with modernization of the state

Components of the educational reform

The objective of the 1995 educational reform is to improve the coverage and quality of education so that it can meet new economic, political, social, and cultural demands In this respect, it is self-defined as the fundamental axis of sustainable development in the face of challenges like consolidating peace and democracy eradicating poverty, and improving competitiveness at the international level

The purpose is to educate a new citizen who is more productive in his economic life, more socially committed to his fellow citizens, more participatory and tolerant in his political life and more respectful of human rights, and who is therefore more peaceful in his relations with his fellow citizens more aware of the value of nature, and more integrated into the culture " With this goal in mind, the reform undertakes to overhaul the components methods, and managerial approaches of the system, and to update its legal framework

The Ten-Year Plan for 1995-2005 contains the principal guidelines for educational reform which is built around four basic axes expanding coverage improving teaching quality, modernizing institutional behavior and shaping human ethical and civic values

Various approaches are being used to expand coverage beginning with expanding the EDUCO program through sixth grade in order to ensure that all preschool students reach sixth grade in rural areas Secondly, provision is being made for alternative classrooms, in populations with low indexes of school attendance, to integrate students from different grades in the same classroom with the support of systematic and comprehensive pedagogical processes, as well as teacher training and ongoing evaluation And third, the Fund for Educational Innovation (FIE) has been established to try to identify and test new educational projects

The Ten-Year Plan also pays attention to the idea of *healthy schools* which, in coordination with other state units, try to improve the health education, and nutritional status of preschool and basic education students in rural and marginal urban areas At the same time the School Food Program is being expanded to improve the nutritional status of students and thus improve performance and school attendance and reduce levels of repeat grades and school leaving Finally it attempts to increase the coverage of the educational system through expansion revamping, and maintenance of the school infrastructure network with the participation of other governmental offices while retaining MINED in its role of providing funds

Improving quality means undertaking a series of different pedagogical and administrative measures On the one hand, curriculum reform is initiated in the public and private sector in order to make learning rather than teaching the central element of education The reform affects six levels of the system preschool, basic, secondary, higher (technological and university), science and technology, and adult education The new curriculum encompasses physical education and special education programs, and expands the Schools for Parents program Educational and curriculum evaluation are incorporated as an instrument for maintaining a constant exchange of information in order to keep the reform process active, and a system of teacher education and training is adopted which includes model schools in each educational district and other training centers for teachers

The Ten Year Plan adopts institutional modernization as another of the principal axes of the reform. This modernization includes modifying administrative structures and service delivery, beginning with a redefinition of the Ministry of Education s role in the reform, and its most important activities and powers The administrative reform includes the tasks of decentralization by means of local school administration, the school management councils, and the changes in the way education is administered at the six levels The ultimate goal of all this to reduce bureaucracy and

modernize key systems Finally, the legal reform will serve to update integrate and simplify the framework of standards that is in effect It will regulate the activities of administering, providing, and receiving education as well as the work of teachers and technical and administrative personnel, and participation by the educational community

Conclusions

The educational reform relies on an enormous effort to change not only the thinking of the nation's teachers, but also the perspective of society in general This has been a useful lesson in the ongoing experience of educational reform in El Salvador Different social sectors have worked together on educational reform and they have discussed their needs, shared their views on education issues, provided specific and general solutions for solving these problems, and expressed their enthusiasm about serving as a national instrument to face the challenges of the future and the new global economy Educational reform in El Salvador has, in that sense, been a factor in promoting the cohesion and integration that has paved the way for national unity and consensus

Education has become an important context for building Salvadoran society In this context, the majority of the population has found ways to connect with regard to needs, objectives, and future plans They have come to place their confidence in the participatory methodology used, the administrative approaches being developed, and the authorities and work teams who are guiding the process

The various conferences meetings and studies carried out during the last few years show the political will of the Ministry of Education, and its interest in promoting forms of government that are participatory, democratic and enduring The leadership and commitment of the Minister and most of the MINED officials at the central and departmental level is fundamental to operationalizing the reform and obtaining the resources necessary to achieve this goal It is important to highlight the role of the international organizations which have provided technical and financial assistance, and developed working ties with MINED NGOs have also helped to strengthen this experience, and every day they become more interested in collaborating in and benefitting from the process In other words, consistent and flexible leadership has been a factor in continuity

EDUCO was an experience that emerged from the rural communities in El Salvador and helped make it possible to develop a model for social participation in education, the basis of national educational reform While MINED promoted a consensus-building process within a macro-national sphere EDUCO promoted the mobilization of different actors from the education field on a local scale, and encouraged openness on the part of the state apparatus toward the effective participation of

such actors Active participation by community members in state issues and in organizing their own daily lives, whether limited or not, is a way to increase awareness and expand democratic practice Through local management of the daily affairs of schools, democratic practice expands to include other spheres of social action in the community and to promote participation and tolerance of pluralism in community actors

NOTES

[1] This chapter is based on the paper presented by the author in the workshop 'The Implementation of Educational Reforms in Latin America and the Caribbean held in Washington DC in September 1996 The workshop was organized by the Advancing Basic Education and Literacy Project with funding and guidance from the United States Agency for International Development

[2] On 16 January 1992 the Government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front signed the peace accords in Mexico City

[3] Estimate by the United States Census Institute Center for International Programs 1996 data.

[4] More than half of the EAP either has not completed any approved grade (12 percent) or else has only attended primary school (41 percent) Only 7 percent of the employed work force has a bachelor s or higher degree

[5] Opinions expressed during the author s interviews in some school communities

[6] Thus some of the individuals interviewed mentioned the need to develop a system of retirement benefits and permanent membership for EDUCO teachers similar to the system of benefits available to traditional teachers

[7] The Jose Simeon Cañas Central American University a Jesuit institution, was in charge of publishing the *Revista ECA* as a monograph presenting the principal research findings In 1995 UCA published the book *La educacion en El Salvador De cara al siglo XXI Desafios y oportunidades* which contains all of the team s research.

[8] For example CENITEC produced various conferences and publications on educational reform COSUPES organized a workshop with private universities UCA published an issue of *Revista ECA* devoted to the topic of education ANDES organized a workshop on the assessment of national education, and some workshops were held in Santa Ana and San Miguel with the support of UNESCO etc

[9] Record of proceedings National Consultative Forum on Educational Reform El Salvador 1995

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE REFORMERS

Ana Evelyn Jacir de Lovo[1]

The reform promoted by the Ministry of Education (MINED) is a new means of formulating public policies in which there is citizen participation in defining policies that tend to endure over time independent of the shifting focus of whichever administration is in power, and to become state policies The key factors that have determined the success of El Salvador's educational reform experience are as follows

A historical opportunity was seized

The Peace Accords created a new social pact and, along with it, new social expectations and demands for participation and the chance to improve the quality of life for the population The education field did not become overwhelmed by the initiatives of the civil society, but rather assumed leadership over the educational debate that had begun in late 1993 and early 1994

- *There was a strategic vision of the desired future*

From the beginning all the initiatives focused on redefining the role and functions of the state in the education sector and on increasing the importance of centers for learning, updating the curriculum to meet the demand sparked by economic, social, and political changes at the national and international level, and converting schools into places that nurture the formation of human, ethical, and civic values At the highest level, there is always the concern that the strength of the education community be made tangible and clear Activities are founded on the basic principle that the education community should administer educational services at the local level

- *The goal was to convert education policy into state policy*

Since educational reform is known to be a medium- and long-term effort, the goal was to convert education policy into state policy Thus, growing out of the debate about the educational system that had been carried on outside government circles, a broad and efficient process of consultation was formally established The objective and object of educational reform was clearly stated to define key problems and propose strategic solutions for the sector

In order to make these consultations more credible MINED sought the support of independent mediators, such as the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID), and promoted the creation of the Comision Nacional de Ciencia, Educacion y Tecnologia [National Commission on Science, Education, and Technology] The commission was designed and legally appointed by the President of the

Republic It was made up of important individuals in national life who formed a diverse and very influential group that helped to stimulate public opinion, above all in the education field

All these activities provide evidence of the political will to formulate public policies in a participatory and democratic manner, sharing rights and responsibilities and above all ensuring the continuity of education policies

- *A negotiation process was promoted*

At the same time, in relation to specific topics a negotiation process was initiated that involved recognizing and thinking about the strategic interests of teachers' unions and the state The process was interesting because the parties involved kept the negotiation very confidential Very few officials within MINED knew what the status of these negotiations was The teachers unions sometimes exerted pressure by sharing certain topics with the media, but in general both sides worked on the strategic aspects and were very open in expressing their interests and their concerns

- *The consultation had an impact on decision making*

The consultation and negotiation have had clear and tangible short-term results A new regulatory framework has been created, decentralization aimed at putting more power in the hands of schools has been accomplished by establishing school management councils, and a new ranking of teachers has been introduced that has substantially improved salaries

These results make the process more credible and meaningful They allow the different actors to place more trust in each other and to learn that people can work together despite their differences, and even feel richer for the experience

- *The components and activities of the reform are disseminated*

There is an ongoing process of communication, dissemination, monitoring, and evaluation of the reform activities which relies on the participation of the principal actors in the education community At the same time, the opinions of the country s most important political forces, the views of international organizations, and general public opinion are noted and taken into account

In 1994, focus groups were organized to identify problems and analyze the concerns interests, and information needs of the different actors in the education community, mainly school principals, teachers, parents and students This study made it possible to structure the Consulta 95' ["Conference 95] process and the subsequent communication activities

In 1996, the communication efforts were greatly increased in order to give the educational reform project a public face to encourage people to place a higher value on education and, in addition, to ensure that the different social sectors feel a sense of ownership when it comes to educational reform

- *A learning process takes place that is based on these experiences as well as others inside and outside the country*

There are previous experiences that make the expectations here seem reasonable As a result of experiences such as Educacion con Participacion de la Comunidad (EDUCO) [Education with Community Participation], for example, or the Fondos Educativos Distritales (FED) [District Education Funds], more progress can be made toward creating new models for providing services, and, in general, promoting change In this sense educational reform is a learning experience Officials analyze other experiences and keeping in mind their own national realities borrow ideas and learn to adapt solutions and projects to local conditions In general, the initiatives are tested in the field so that they can be expanded later

- *There is technical and political leadership at the highest level*

Technical and political leadership and commitment at the highest level is what has succeeded in involving a lot of mid-level managers principally from the central level, in the educational reform efforts Mid-level managers are the actors who provide the operational capacity needed to implement the new measures

Although the leadership for decision making is clear there is some disagreement over how to implement these initiatives This responsibility is handed over to the mid-level managers

The process is carried out by those individuals who are committed to change those who are not remain outside the process However polemics are avoided, while the institutional leadership is clearly defined.

Although El Salvador is emerging from twelve years of conflict, with the inevitable fears and lack of confidence that such a situation creates, the country's leadership has an overwhelming sense of purpose and an ethic of responsible decision making

The organization of the process is flexible

In order to promote educational reform a team of professionals called the "Reform Group was organized. It was hoped that this group would assume leadership over the implementation of change, however the institutional culture prevented this

initiative from really taking off Despite this, the process moved forward and new units were created to promote the process such as the Gerencia de Modernizacion and the Direccion de Descentralizacion [Administration for Modernization and the Directorate of Decentralization]

- *Innovation is promoted*

Innovation is promoted as an instrument for finding new and better solutions The actions taken to achieve this end have included setting up the Fondo de Innovaciones Educativas [Fund for Educational Innovation], which seeks to create new modalities for providing educational services with the participation of the community and nonprofit organizations in the private sector

Another example is the free textbook policy Although this is an institutional policy, MINED promoted a study that would evaluate the capacity to recover costs

- *There is the capacity to mobilize human and financial resources and political support*

MINED is sponsoring programs to increase coverage and quality At the same time it is revamping the curriculum (content, methods, and media), training teachers producing and distributing textbooks and educational materials, improving infrastructure and equipment at schools, working with schools for parents, and sponsoring, organizing, and promoting the commitment and participation of the education community, encouraging the members to join forces and improve the teaching-learning process and their environment

This means that reform is a complex process whose execution and consolidation calls for focused effort and cooperation among different actors MINED at the central and departmental level, teachers, parents, students, other branches of government, the private sector, and international organizations

The technical and political leadership facilitate the mobilization and creation of operational capacity, as well as the necessary financing In fact, for 1997, the education sector has the largest budgetary allocation of all the sectors Special attention should be paid to the support of multilateral and bilateral organizations These organizations and MINED have succeeded in establishing partnerships based on mutual respect and the sharing of experiences, which provide an opportunity to learn from each other, and to sponsor activities that have similar aims

The reform is an ongoing process and, as such, is faced with significant challenges, such as

- Getting teachers and principals to commit themselves to promote educational reform and ensure that changes occur in the daily life of the classroom To accomplish this it will be necessary to redefine the role of the teacher and to thus reestablish confidence motivation and self-esteem

- Ensuring that administrative decentralization aimed at putting power in the hands of schools becomes a responsible and democratic practice aimed at creating opportunities for students and the community The establishment of school management councils alters the existing power structure in the education sector, and thus at least at first, can create some insecurity and resistance to change Because of this, it is important to avoid simply accompanying the education community in this reconciliation and harmonization of interests,' there also needs to be a system of correct incentives that reward efficiency and good performance

- Making sure that the reform is financially and institutionally sustainable This requires the central and departmental administrations to redefine their roles and functions, to increase their efficiency and efficacy, and to create a new, more participatory institutional culture that is oriented toward providing services to internal and external clients A more empowered institutional structure is necessary as well, in other words, a structure that delegates more responsibilities and authority

- Identifying, promoting, and preserving the leadership to promote and mobilize support for educational reform

Maintaining and strengthening these key factors will allow the educational reform not only to have an impact on the education of Salvadorans, but also to provide opportunities for development and consolidation of democracy in the country The success of educational reform depends on all of us

---

[1] Former Director of Modernization, Ministry of Education (MINED)

4

PARTNERSHIP FOR COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION IN JAMAICAN SCHOOLS

Errol Miller[1]

Abstract

This case study is about introducing computer-assisted instruction (CAI) in primary and secondary schools in Jamaica. The management of the educational system is school-based and, since 1989, the Government has imposed a policy of partnership with the private sector and communities in providing and reforming education in the 1990s This case represents bottom-up educational reform as both the Government and the international agencies rendering development assistance have placed low priority on computer-assisted instruction in primary and secondary schools At the same time, the success of the efforts of schools, their communities, and the private sector in implementing this reform on their own initiative has made it impossible for the Government and the international agencies to ignore the energy and the excitement that has been generated.

The first part of the study provides background for analyzing the reform effort in Jamaica and outlines the conceptual framework within which the case can be analyzed. The second part discusses the development and characteristics of the reform as well as the experience of each of the main actors in the implementation process The third section interprets the case within the framework of different theoretical perspectives Finally, the strengths, weaknesses and lessons learned from the reform effort are presented, along with recommendations and concluding comments The information for this case study was collected through interviews conducted with key representatives and actors of the reform, group sessions held with teachers and students, visits to educational institutions, and the review of documents related to the reform

All the available evidence points to charismatic leadership as the main force of the conception and implementation of the reforms at the level of the schools, communities, and other groups involved. Yet, the evolution and implementation of the reform are facing challenges including the training of teachers to fully use the potential of computer-assisted instruction in their classes, resolving logistical and technical problems related to the use of the computer labs, holding in constructive tension the varying vested interests and alliances among the actors and stakeholders

in the reform, and creating a more active role for the Ministry of Education without its assumption of a regulatory role that could dampen enthusiasm and kill initiative

This case of education reform is best explained in terms of the theoretical perspective of competing and cooperating vested interests and the trade-offs negotiated among them It is also explained in terms of comparative adjustments as schools and their supports attempt to modernize Jamaican education through the most widely accepted symbol of modernization, the computer

Purpose

This case study examines educational reform in Jamaica with particular reference to the introduction of computers to support and improve instruction and learning in primary and secondary schools within the context of the policy of partnership in education This is a case of bottom-up educational reform. Instead of a centrally planned reform directed by the Ministry of Education, it is a result of initiatives taken outside the formal policy mechanism

This process, initiated in the 1990s, constitutes the most dynamic initiative in Jamaican education in the last twenty years Given the formative stage of the reform, this study focuses on the dynamics of the relationships and the processes that generated the reform, rather than on products, achievements, and outcomes, although these will not be overlooked. Hopefully, this study itself will contribute to the reform as it further evolves in the Jamaican education system

Methodology

The methodology used in this study involved the following four elements First, interviews were conducted with representatives from the Ministry of Education (Ministry), the Jamaica Computer Society (JCS) and its Jamaica Computer Society Education Foundation (JCSEF), the Jamaica Teachers' Association the business community, the HEART Trust, school communities, and principals, teachers, and students of particular schools Second, focus group discussions were held with teachers and students Third, educational institutions were visited and instruction observed The institutions included two secondary schools, five primary schools, and a teacher training college In addition, participants of a summer teacher training workshop of the JCSEF were interviewed.

Fourth documents related to different aspects of the reform were examined, including the Ministry s Draft Five-Year Development Plan for Education (1990-1995), Ministry Project documents, documents related to donor agencies support of the information technology reform, JCSEF Working Documents and minutes of Business Partners Meetings and Think Tank and Education Technology 20/20 Meetings [2]

Conceptual Framework

Educational reform can be approached from several different perspectives First, it can be seen as a rational/technical exercise by experts who are seeking permanent solutions to persistent problems The nemesis of this perspective is political considerations that compromise technical purity Second, as a political trade-off between competing groups in society, education reform is the periodic renegotiation of the values guiding policy and practice in education The shortcomings of this perspective are technical limitations and logical inconsistencies Third, a reform can be conceived as comparative adjustments or a periodic synchronization of schools with homes, workplaces, and communities or with other school systems of societies with which they compete The frustration of this perspective is the elusiveness of the diversity that needs to be synchronized within these different contexts Fourth a reform can be seen as a set of radical departures from tradition and the past and as a paradigm shift in the basis of its provision and processes The challenge of this approach is the tendency to promise much more change than can be or is actually delivered.

Education reform on the whole tends to be top-down This is particularly the case where it is approached and practiced as a rational/technical exercise driven by experts or as a political or radical exercise directed by conventional or radical politicians Nevertheless, education reform can be bottom-up especially in instances where it can be explained as a set of comparative adjustments However, the direction of reform, top-down or bottom-up, is not determined by its explanatory paradigm, but rather by the particular context in which it occurs

Context

Several contextual factors need to be appreciated in any description and discussion of introducing computers into primary and secondary schools in the 1990s in Jamaica The five most pertinent factors follow

The governance of the Jamaican education system

The governance of the Jamaican school system is predicated on two concepts (1) school-based management that allows schools to run their own affairs and (2) a centralized Ministry of Education responsible for educational policy, planning and development, and delivery to schools of services related to employing and paying teachers, financing the schools operations maintaining school plans, and providing nutritional and other support

School-based management has existed in Jamaica at the secondary level for more than one hundred years, modeled after the English public school system where

each school had its own board of governors In the early 1950s, the newly created Ministry decided to extend this form of governance to the primary schools In this system each school is run by a board that is legally empowered to hire and fire teachers, select and discipline students, manage its own finances, and control the use of its premises This measure of autonomy means that to get school compliance the Ministry must persuade boards, principals, and teachers through participatory mechanisms

The principal is both a member of the school board and its chief executive officer and, as such, exercises considerable influence over operations at the school level The quality of a school depends largely on the leadership of the principal The broad-based composition of the board also ensures that the school is accountable to community interests, as well as to the Ministry In turn, this relationship generates substantial community support for schools over and beyond government subvention

Within the last twenty years, the Ministry has established five regional offices to facilitate the delivery of administrative and plant maintenance services to schools While this has been mistakenly referred to as decentralization it is really a decongestion of Ministry services, since no further transfer of power has taken place relative to the schools themselves Indeed, decentralization and school-based decision-making are not new to the Jamaican education system. Rather, they have been structural features of the system for some time

Educational developments in the post-independence period

One could argue that in the independence period, beginning in the 1950s, education and the school systems were mobilized to serve the cause of representative democracy Elected with a mandate to democratize all the avenues of upward social mobility and to remove discrimination in an effort to address the needs of the previously disadvantaged, the newly empowered representative government embraced education and schooling as the most obvious means of demonstrating its commitment to this mandate The government's strategies for achieving equity and equality of opportunity included expanding the provision of education at all levels of the system, increasing access to education through legislative means, restructuring the curriculum to promote Jamacian and Caribbean identity and solidarity and improving the quality of education through upgraded and expanded teacher training, new mechanisms of assessment, and research capacity building

Favorable economic circumstances in Jamaica during the postwar period up to the mid-1970s facilitated implementing these strategies The independence era is therefore, marked by the unusual coincidence of social demand, political will and economic means The resulting achievements are truly impressive by any standards To summarize, they include a significant increase in enrollment at all levels of the

system, the provision in the public system for children with special disabilities gender equity at the early childhood, primary, and secondary levels, the establishment of colleges and universities serving a variety of needs more culturally appropriate curricula expanded teacher training capacity, successful nonformal program in adult literacy and vocational training, and a more integrated Ministry of Education Indeed, together the mobilization of considerable financial investments, State support, and popular participation took the education system through both a paradigm shift and a quantum leap

Given these remarkable achievements, the intriguing question is why at the end of this period, the late 1980s was there so little celebration and so much dissatisfaction with the state of education? Despite the apparent contradiction, there are a number of factors that offer at least a partial explanation These can be summarized briefly as the persistence of barriers of ethnicity, race, and class regarding equity and equality of opportunity, excessive financial borrowing because of declining economic growth leading to setbacks and painful, but necessary, adjustments, and a related and negative impact of structural adjustment policies on the affordability of education, on the gains made thus far, and on the perception of the Government vis-a-vis its commitment and capability In addition expansion of the system to achieve universal primary and mass secondary education has led to new problems such as the practice of promoting illiterate students from the primary to the secondary level Clearly, this raises concerns about the quality and effectiveness of the education being offered and the threat of declining standards

The developmental imperatives of the 1990s

The developmental imperatives of the 1990s however, go far beyond disaffection with the outcomes of the reforms of the independence era They relate to fundamental global changes that have overtaken Jamaica despite the gains of national building reforms Essentially, the school system, mobilized in the post-independence period to serve the cause of representative democracy, has been summoned in the 1990s to serve the cause of economic competitiveness in an increasing global marketplace This shift has several main features

The collapse of the ideological polarities that have shaped the world for nearly one hundred years has left in its wake a unipolar world dominated by capitalism and market forces The burden of resolving all social ethical, and economic problems, both among and within the countries of the world, has been put on the shoulders of market forces, despite the market s known ethical weakness and previous failure to resolve these problems in the last century Wealth is not so much the result of excess capital or cheap labor but of technology and the quality of the work force In the information society that is emerging it is science and technology on the one hand and human resource development on the other that are the critical factors of com-

parative advantage and, as such, must become endogenous enterprises within countries hoping to compete in the global marketplace

Like many other populations around the world, the Jamaican population is maturing This demographic shift implies that increasing attention must be paid to the education of adults, while continuing to provide for education and training of children The bulge in the age structure of the population (in this case, the generation currently aged twenty-five to thirty) has stretched countries beyond their limits in providing gainful employment Aggravated by the downsizing of government and a similar contraction in the private sector, the result is a significant increase in at-risk youth in the generation that follows the bulge If not addressed, at-risk youth and their antisocial behavior could become enduring modern society features that threaten other advances

Another imperative development is pedagogy in schools, which is generally perceived as outdated in its capacity to address contemporary, ethical, and behavioral issues and as obsolete to the technology used in instruction The implications of this issue for teachers are significant While information technology may force some redefinition of the roles and relationships of teachers, the contemporary social milieu is challenging their management capability As a critically important factor in the quality of education delivered, teachers must have the assurance, support, and level of renumeration that will enhance their performance and secure their dedication

Together these development imperatives have led to strong grassroots demands for educational reform and have assured strong participation in the reforms implemented to address the fundamental changes overtaking all societies including Jamaica

Reliance of External Assistance

The resulting decline in public expenditure and the government's increasing reliance on external funding for development projects have had a negative influence on government planning outside of specific projects For example, the Ministry s draft of the National Plan of Education 1990-1995 was never officially ratified by the Cabinet or the Parliament and, therefore, never went beyond the status of a draft Rather than attempting a comprehensive education reform strategy, the Ministry has adopted a project-driven approach to educational development and reform that is largely dependent upon external funding

Currently, the Ministry is implementing two major projects that are externally funded the Primary Education Improvement Project financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, and the ROSE Project funded by the World Bank Of relevance to this case is that neither project addresses the issue of computer-assisted instruction Indeed, as expressed by Lockheed and Verspoor, donor agencies appear to view reform strategies of developing countries that involve CAI as blind alleys [3] While recognizing empirical studies that establish the efficacy of CAI, the argument is that developing countries will not be able to both afford and sustain the costs involved in effectively using CAI in classrooms and that other less costly and equally effective technologies (such as good textbooks and teachers' guides) are available While the Ministry acknowledges the effectiveness of CAI it does not see embarking on reforms involving CAI as feasible given its current restricted fiscal and financial situation

Partnership as policy

Faced with these fiscal constraints the new government elected in 1989 decided to promote private sector partnership in education as a means of mobilizing additional resources for both operating and capitalizing the education system. What follows are some examples of the programs and projects implemented in this context

First, the Ministry introduced the adopt-a-school program in which businesses were invited to provide support and assistance to a school or group of schools within its location or based on some criteria related to the company's mission Then in 1992 the Ministry, with assistance from the U S Agency for International Development, launched the School Community Outreach Program for Education (SCOPE) This project, designed to enhance and strengthen school community partnership, had among its objectives reducing vandalism of school buildings, improving fund-raising capabilities of schools, strengthening parent-teacher associations, improving effectiveness of school board members, and expanding community support for schools The mechanism used to achieve these objectives was providing training for principals, school board members, PTA (Parent Teachers Associations) executives, alumni student associations, and community members

In 1992 the Ministry also established the National Council on Education as a mechanism to promote participation and partnership in education policy making by including in its composition representatives from all the stakeholder groups in education, including the government and opposition party Then, in an effort to mobilize more resources for the operation of schools, the Ministry introduced cost sharing at the secondary level and expanded its scope at the tertiary level in 1994 Projects such as these are linked by the common thread of invited partnership in the financing and support of public education Thus, expanded financial support was the operative concern in the partnership initiatives that were implemented by the Ministry in the opening years of the 1990s

The Reform

First efforts of schools

Prior to 1990, about 10 of the 143 public secondary schools in Jamaica, acting on their own initiative, had established computer laboratories of some sort to support instruction These schools were among the most affluent and had strong support from their communities The computer labs were used mainly to teach computer sciences for the Cambridge General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level examinations and to support the teaching of business subjects where computers skills were deemed important Approximately another 30 schools had one to four donated computers of varied types although these were used mainly for administrative purposes

The intervention of the Jamaica Computer Society

In 1989, JCS,[4] a private nonprofit professional society, became concerned about the inadequate number of students graduating from the Jamaican school system prepared to fill the growing demand for computer professionals, such as programmers, system analysts, and engineers The JCS concluded that intervention at the secondary level would be most effective in addressing these economically motivated concerns Accordingly meetings were convened with secondary teachers of computer science to identify the existing constraints and to formulate an intervention strategy

The main constraints identified were inadequate preservice and in-service training for teachers of computer science (who were most often math or business teachers), limited equipment for teaching and hands-on experience and the absence of computer science as a subject in the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), which was being phased in to replace the Cambridge-based exam Based on these discussions, the JCS decided to adopt a four prong strategy to address the identified constraints

First, it would establish the JCSEF, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to support secondary schools in teaching computer science by training teachers and providing adequately equipped computer labs Second, JCSEF would approach the CXC with a proposal to establish computer science as a subject and to offer technical assistance in its creation through the voluntary expertise of JCS members Third, JCSEF would implement in-service training for teachers of computer science in secondary schools and approach the teachers colleges about establishing appropriate preservice training for teachers interested in teaching computer science And fourth, JCSEF would promote and provide secondary schools with adequately equipped computer labs and invite the public and private sectors to become partners in these endeavors

Through contributions solicited from some members of the JCS the JCSEF was launched in 1990 The Foundation s first efforts were directed towards implementing in-service training for secondary school teachers of computer science The Foundation also had almost instant success with CXC, which accepted its proposal to establish and develop technical assistance for computer studies at both the General Proficiency and Technical Proficiency levels Similar success was also experienced with the teacher training colleges several of which now offer computer studies as a subject that trainees can specialize in

What proved to be a more difficult proposition was providing computer labs to secondary schools because neither the JCS nor the JCSEF had the resources to place more than a few computers in schools that already possessed some computer capacity Additionally, the private sector offered little support at that time for this effort, and the Ministry of Education had not established any priority in this area

Notwithstanding these difficulties the JCSEF did find receptive responses from two sources First, the HEART Trust,[5] a statutory corporation reporting to the Ministry of Education, concluded that it could support the mission of the JCSEF as part of its mandate to promote vocational training for young people Second, the JCSEF found support from a very influential chief executive officer (CEO) of one the largest insurance companies in Jamaica. Having had positive experience with the company's involvement in a project to develop videos to support the teaching of mathematics in secondary schools, this CEO was convinced of the potential the JCSEF had of making a dramatic impact on secondary education She volunteered to become the chairman of the Business Partners, a group that the JCSEF welcomed as its ally in supporting and providing funds for introducing computers into schools

The point of departure, however, was that both HEART and the Business Partners had wider interests than just providing computer labs to train secondary school students specialising in computers studies to become computer professionals HEART and the Business Partners were also interested in the potential of computers to improve learning efficiency in schools as well as increasing students familiarity with computers as an indispensable tool of work and production

After nearly a decade of experience providing vocational training to school graduates and young adults, HEART has found that while they were successful in providing high-quality specific vocational training, the general education of many secondary school graduates left much to be desired. In fact, the feedback from employers noted general weaknesses, particularly in English and mathematics, which detracted from or limited the effectiveness of the trainees, despite their mastery of specific vocational skills The Business Partners shared HEART's observations and concerns

Therefore, HEART and the Business Partners indicated to the JCSEF that they wanted the use of the computer labs to be expanded to include CAI that strengthened students basic English and mathematics skills As a result the mission of the JCSEF was revised to include improving the quality of learning in secondary education by applying computer technology Thus, the Jamaica 2000 Project was launched as the means of accomplishing this mission

The Jamaica 2000 Project

In May 1992, the Jamaica 2000 Project was launched as a public/private partnership between the Government, represented by the HEART Trust, the private sector represented by the Business Partners and the secondary school communities With its mission to improve the quality of secondary education, particularly in English and mathematics, by using CAI, the Project set as a target the placement of at least one fully equipped fifteen station lab in each of Jamaica s 143 secondary schools, 7 community colleges, and 10 teacher training colleges by the year 2000

Through the Project, the JCSEF would assist the schools in installing the lab and providing in-service training for the teachers using the facility A formula for sharing the cost of establishing the labs was worked out the computer room would be provided by the schools and the cost of the equipment would be split, with HEART covering 40 percent, the Business Partners matching this 40 percent, and the school community contributing 20 percent

In the first two years of implementation the JCSEF stuck closely to the Project's mandate to improve learning efficiency in English and mathematics However, several schools and colleges found this limitation highly restrictive and advocated for wider use of computers to maximize their potential The rapid development of multimedia and Internet capabilities also supported the advocacy of those who wished wider application of the technology to learning needs

In the summer of 1995, the JCSEF responded again by expanding the Project s goal to encompass the entire range of the secondary school curriculum As a result, using CAI to enhance learning in all subject areas has been added by some principals and teachers in schools where labs have been established. These principals and teachers are not only knowledgeable about CAI, but also eager to maximize the potential of information technology at their disposal Accordingly, workshops for developing appropriate strategies towards achieving such an objective were offered to teachers

The extension to primary education

In 1994 the Business Partners invited a group of business people, principals of schools and colleges representatives of the National Council on Education, academics from the University of the West Indies, and members of the JCSEF and the Ministry of Education to compose a Think Tank to explore using educational technology to reengineer the education system The group first met at a three-day seminar in May 1994 with CAI specialists from the United States, Israel, and Singapore to discuss the ways these countries have successfully used information technology to improve their education systems

Following this initial exercise and other meetings, the Think Tank concluded that, while the Jamaica 2000 Project had made substantial progress in introducing CAI in public secondary and tertiary institutions, fundamental changes were needed at the primary level for the long-term improvement of learning Even though the country enjoyed universal primary education and low dropout and high primary schooling completion rates, 30 percent of twelve-year-olds were functionally illiterate and many students had very poor mathematics skills The Think Tank recognized that the challenge of basic education in Jamaica was to qualitatively improve learning efficiency and school attendance and that education technology used to reengineer primary education could be the key to improved quality

Finding that the small primary schools in rural communities and in depressed urban communities needed the most urgent attention the Think Tank decided to use mobile units and fixed labs to address these needs The group agreed that a program should be implemented to reengineer all 790 primary schools in Jamaica by the year 2020 The program, Education Technology 2020, involved approaching the business community and the international donor agencies for assistance in implementing pilot projects

Under the dynamic leadership of the Chairman of the Business Partners and with support from the JCSEF assistance was obtained from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to introduce computer technology and CAI into twenty primary schools in four different rural clusters Implementing this project began in September 1995 Thus, the objectives and content of the reform had again been redefined in the process of implementation

A subsequent phase in the reform involved teachers and students using productivity tools to write, publish solve problems, and create databases for others, multimedia for research and enrichment and network capabilities to research and share information This objective and related content are emerging among the more proficient users of the computer labs in the schools and is given full expression in the Information Development Project funded by the World Bank

Progress to date in quantitative terms

As of May 1996, the JCSEF had placed computer labs into 71 of the 160 public secondary and tertiary institutions in Jamaica A Ministry of Education survey in

April 1996 shows that 84 of the 143 secondary schools had computer labs and all 17 tertiary institutions had labs, although the lab in one college was only partially equipped Hence, with four years still to go there are only 59 institutions that still need to be equipped in order to achieve the target of introducing CAI into all secondary and tertiary institutions in Jamaica by the year 2000

The survey's finding that 101 secondary and tertiary institutions possessed computer labs in April 1996 proves that 30 institutions acquired labs without the assistance of the JCSEF and the Jamaica 2000 Project In addition, since 10 institutions acquired labs prior to the creation of the Jamaica 2000 Project, then at least 20 institutions have acquired labs on their own during its existence Thus approximately 30 percent of the secondary and tertiary institutions with computer labs, and using CAI in the delivery of instruction, are outside of the JCSEF initiative This highlights the reality that the JCSEF is providing leadership and coordination in the reform but is not the sole source of its implementation

Eighteen of the remaining 59 schools have already raised their contribution and are projected to receive their labs in the coming school year Equipping the last 41 schools with computer labs over the next three years appears feasible, given the rate at which schools have acquired and been equipped with labs since 1991 Therefore the confidence of the leadership of the JCSEF in stating that the target will be met does not appear to be either overly optimistic or misplaced.

As of May 1996, fifteen of the twenty-one labs had been installed in public primary schools included in the IDB project The remaining six schools are expected to receive their labs in the coming school year The Ministry survey of April 1996 revealed that seventeen public primary schools had computer labs This indicates that two public primary schools had acquired labs outside of the framework of the JCSEF/IDB initiative

The JCSEF and the Implementation of the Reform

The JCSEF is governed by a seventeen-member Board of Directors comprised of representatives of the Jamaica Computer Society the private sector the Ministry of Education HEART, and the Jamaica Teachers' Association While the composition of the Board is broad and inclusive of both the private and public sectors, the membership is heavily skewed in favor of the Computer Society and the private sector in that only three of the seventeen members are from the Ministry, HEART, and the Teachers Association

The day-to-day affairs of the Foundation are carried out by a secretariat, comprising a full-time executive director, an administrative assistant, and a part-time public relations officer The policy of the Foundation has been to contract services

related to operations including the installation of computer labs, the initial orientation and in-service training of teachers when labs are installed in schools, and the maintenance of the computer labs

The activities currently carried out by the secretariat in implementing the reform include managing the three projects in process (the Jamaica 2000, IDB and World Bank Projects), supporting the marketing and fund-raising efforts of the Business Partners, managing funds raised from the private sector, schools, and HEART, reporting periodically to the contributors and to the Board of the Foundation procuring and distributing computer equipment, implementing an annual Exposition on CAI, and offering annual summer workshops for teachers

Over the five years of its existence, the Foundation has attracted an overall investment in support of the reform of over U S $5,000,000, has placed computer labs into seventy-one secondary and tertiary institutions, and has trained more than five hundred teachers in CAI

In understanding the early successes of the Foundation in implementing the reform, it has to be acknowledged that these accomplishments have been a result of the charismatic energy of the members of the secretariat and the Business Partners, rather than of the adequacy of organizational structures and staffing Indeed, the current responsibilities of the secretariat are outside what could be reasonably expected of a staff of two full-time members and one part-time member The structural constraint creating this situation is that while attracting funding support for the purchase of computers and for training has been possible obtaining funding for core administrative support has been much more difficult

The importance of charismatic energy in accounting for some of the early success in implementing the reform is also underscored by the noticeable decline in the fund-raising activities by the Foundation within the private sector since April 1996, when the chairman of the Business Partners retired as the CEO Therefore, from the perspective of its central administration at the Foundation, the reform is still at the stage where it is charismatic leadership of paid staff and volunteers that is assuring its success more than organizational arrangements, systematic programs, and adequate staffing levels In other words, the transition to the latter is still to be made

In addition the scope of the reform has been enlarged far beyond the original vision upon which the Foundation was established From its starting point of seeking to enhance the development of the computer professions the reform has become a national exercise to transform instruction and learning outcomes in the school system This transformation over the last five years has been the source of tension

and concern within the JCS, where some would prefer the more modest and manageable goals that were first enunciated

The essence of the unease in this endeavor is that, on the one hand, computer professionals are collaborating with persons outside their profession who often possess little technical knowledge and, on the other hand, they are operating in pedagogical areas within the school system that are not within their competence Faced with this existential situation, some would rather retreat to more familiar territory related to their profession The majority, however, are enamored with the prospect of breaking new ground and of making a national contribution in an area that commands significant public and popular attention—that of improving the quality of learning and of modernizing the education system

Another feature to note is that in the absence of state authority driving the reform, vested interest is the glue that keeps the partners collaborating The interest of the JCS is advancing the computer profession HEART is not only pursuing its main mission of promoting vocational training, but is also seeking to ensure that it enrolls better prepared graduates into its programs The Ministry is supportive of activities to advance education that do not demand budget support at the present time The Business Partners are interested in employees with a higher level of general education The schools are keen to modernize and acquire resources that will enhance their efficiency and efficacy and raise their prestige in the communities in which they operate Teachers are interested in training and resources (even with very limited ones) that will improve their effectiveness in circumstances in which there is considerable public pressure to perform The international banks that lend to the Jamaican Government are interested in developing their loan portfolio for the future, and, therefore, are engaged in enlightened business development at the pre-feasibility stage of project cycle management.

While the vested interests of these partners and collaborators are clear, other interests are not as obvious These include the interest of hardware and software suppliers in creating markets for their products in the long term and in securing supply contracts in the shorter term. These interests are embedded in the JCS itself and reflected in the Foundation. And although not dishonorable in and of themselves, these interests are potential sources of suspicion in deliberations related to the conduct of the business of the Foundation, and, therefore in the administration of the reform

In any enterprise driven by vested interest, at least partial satisfaction of the interests of all collaborators and partners is essential if the enterprise is to be sustained. Further there is the challenge of balancing interests in the decision-making processes Either adroit leadership from parties without any known or suspected vested interest the willingness of parties to compromise, or some combination of

both is critical if coherent and coordinated actions are to be sustained While the Foundation has been able to overcome most challenges, the work of the Board has not been without tensions and fallout including the resignation of at least one Board member

Although the private sector has enjoyed high visibility for its participation and financial contribution to the reform, public sector and school community support has been just as substantial and more reliable To date, HEART has contributed approximately JM$60 million (just under U S $2 million) to the reform. Since school communities bear the total cost of the physical accommodation plus 20 percent of the cost of the equipment, their contribution is at least equal to that of the other partners While the HEART contribution is included in its annual budget, the contribution of the private sector is ad hoc and less than timely resulting in delays in the delivery of lab equipment to schools Given the time available and manageable number of schools that still need to be equipped with computer labs, it would be possible for the Business Partners to devise a marketing strategy for the private sector in an effort to ensure obtaining pledged contributions to the end of the decade

Overall, initial steps are being taken at the Foundation level to transition from the stage where implementation is largely the result of charismatic leadership to a more systematic organizational framework and a more programmatic approach to the various aspects of the reforms

The Ministry of Education and the Implementation of the Reform

The posture of the Ministry of Education with respect to the reform has been one of benign support Policy makers and officials of the Ministry have publicly endorsed the reform and the work of the JCSEF, the Business Partners, and the schools Indirectly, the Ministry has supported the reform through HEART, which could not have been such a substantial partner had the Ministry not consented. Officially, however, the Ministry is not a partner, and the reform is not rooted in its policy, projects or programs, although the Ministry maintains good fraternal relations with the partners implementing the reforms and is informed of the objectives, content, and progress being made

While Ministry personnel are generally in favor of the reform, some concerns exist

- The Ministry's responsibilities are being increased without its knowledge or consent. To house the computer labs, several schools have constructed or added to buildings without informing the Ministry, whose responsibility it is to maintain school plants including these new additions

- The national curriculum could be undermined by some of the software packages being used in CAI in terms of content as well as the lack of uniformity engendered by the plurality of software package used by schools

- The market-driven approach to educational policymaking could become the norm

- The Ministry of Education is not playing a regulatory role to ensure at least minimum standards

These are muted concerns expressed by a only a few given the Ministry's stated policy of promoting and supporting partnership in education and the fiscal and financial circumstances of the Ministry, which constrains capital development from the public purse To decline developmental assistance that the Ministry is unable to provide and that is in an area where partnership was originally invited would totally destroy the Ministry s credibility Therefore the Ministry has taken the safer role of supporting the initiatives led by a professional body and supported by the private sector and school communities The center of policymaking has accepted a marginal role in this reform as it follows the leadership of the people

Schools and the Implementation of the Reform

The information on implementing the reform at the school level was collected from several schools in three clusters in different sections of the island (1) St Mary s College a high school in Above Rocks, a rural community close to Kingston (2) the Bethlehem Moravian college and three of the five primary schools at St Elizabeth's in the southwest and (3) the Oracabessa Foundation, the Oracabessa Secondary school and two of the four primary schools in the northeast For this summary, the first cluster will be discussed in greatest detail

Above Rocks

Above Rocks is a community in the hills of St Catherine, about an hour from Kingston Like most small farming communities in Jamaica, the people are by no means wealthy, education is prized as a means of escaping the trap of persistent poverty, and the church is a mainstay of community life The Catholic church runs the only secondary school in the area, St Mary's College, the primary school, and a vocational training center

The chairman of the Board, the priest of the St Mary's Church has been working assiduously to improve and expand the school, which has 770 students and thirty teachers Early in 1992, the chairman was successful in securing a donation of

twenty used IBM and Apple computers from benefactors in Minneapolis, Minnesota Subsequently, funds were raised to construct a large lab In November the executive director of the JCSEF met the chairman, learned of the school's computer project, and saw the lab which was then under construction Both leaders realized the common ground for cooperation between the school and the JCSEF, and in January 1995, a thirty-station model lab pilot project with educational software, including math and English as its basis was launched

Initially, the program had four separate elements (1) Students in grades ten and eleven were prepared for computer studies in the GCE/CXC examinations (2) For those students who needed it, Auto-Skills, the reading and math program supplied by the Foundation, was used to promote the upgrading of these basic skills (3) Teachers could also sign up for one class per week in the lab to review software in their subject area Teachers were to preview software programs select relevant elements, and then bring their students to the lab to use these materials (4) After-school courses were offered for a fee to teachers and interested members of the community

After two years, the model was reviewed and the following conclusions were reached The CXC program was successful—students were obtaining reasonably good results in the external examinations and demand among the student body for computer studies was strong The evening program was successful, with ten to twenty persons enrolled per session (including St Mary's teachers, teachers from the neighboring educational institutions, policemen from the local station some shop-keepers in the district, and school dropouts) The Auto-Skills reading program was found to be too teacher intensive and not teacher friendly After about three weeks, the program became increasingly boring to both teacher and students, since much of its content could not be related to real-life circumstances of the students The program was discontinued

For the 1995-1996 academic year the school adopted a new approach in CAI of using computers with all students of grades seven to nine as a tool for productive, creative research, communication, and problem-solving purposes Instruction in the first year centered around teaching the students word processing, desktop publishing, and research skills related to using encyclopedias and search engines During the year students were required to develop a creative writing portfolio of five projects From all accounts, the response of the students to this new model has been tremendous There was high attendance no disciplinary problems, completion of the portfolio by the vast majority of students, and great pride in the finished printed product. In addition, over the course of the year the quantity of student ' writing increased and the quality improved as they gained confidence

Based on this experience the second-year course would center specifically around the computer as a problem-solving tool Students would be taught some

statistical and charting concepts and techniques, and the portfolio would focus on using their techniques to develop a product The print and radio advertising program would be used to promote the product by applying the multimedia skills capabilities of the labs and the skills learned in the previous year In this new model, the remaining hours of instruction would be used for grade ten and eleven students specializing in computer studies for CXC As such, there would now be no integration between computers and the rest of the curriculum This lack of integration is highlighted by the creative writing portfolio being developed without English teachers as an exercise solely related to using computers

Those teachers who used the computer lab to teach their subject have thus been virtually excluded because of the intensity of lab use required by this model And since one-third of the teachers have attended the evening classes to the advanced level, they constitute a developed resource in CAI in the school that is not being used by the new model Given the success of the new model one could argue that additional computer facilities should be put in place to tap this potential Another observation is the need for the lab capacity and the class size to be more in sync For example, at Saint Mary s a lab size of thirty stations is inadequate for classes that run as large as fifty students This lack of stations has often led teachers and students who have raised expectations of the facilities and their potential to be frustrated.

Notwithstanding these observations, through a process of trial and error, St Mary s College has worked out for itself an eminently rational approach to using their computer resources Indeed, the local effort at Above Rocks did not slavishly follow the prescription of the JCSEF in using Auto-Skills as the basis of CAI and as the means of improving English and mathematics competence Having tried the Auto-Skills and having found it wanting, they have devised their own program for achieving the broad objectives of CAI and English and mathematics competence

A mutually supportive relationship has evolved between St Mary s and its neighboring institutions For example, some teachers of the two primary schools and the vocational training center took advantage of the opportunities of the evening classes, and teachers have made use of the trainings now that the IDB Project is being implemented in the Above Rocks cluster Further graduates of the St Mary's College Computer Studies CXC course are now the lab assistants in the primary schools and at the vocational training center

St Mary s also provided technical assistance for installing the labs in the primary schools and subsequently offered some training to the teachers who had not had previous exposure to computers Students entering St. Mary's from these primary schools in another two to three years will have already been exposed to some of the CAI now being offered at the secondary school This will require St Mary's to rethink its current model A dynamic and interactive relationship, which will require

constant adjustment and change, is being established among the educational institutions in Above Rocks

St Elizabeth

In the parish of St Elizabeth, implementing the reform is led locally by Bethlehem Moravian College, which became part of the Jamaica 2000 Project in 1993 The original understanding was that the college would be supported in its program of training secondary school teachers in computer studies and the JCSEF would have access to the lab for the in-service training of teachers in the summer There was no requirement for the college to undertake any outreach activities in support of the Project, yet through the efforts of the principal and some teachers, the Project has extended to five primary schools and six secondary schools in the area

At the college, the lab is being used to train teachers of computer studies to teach computer literacy skills to other college students and to offer evening courses in computer applications to members of the community During the summer the lab is used by the JSCEF for teacher in-service training The college has offered in-service training to teachers of six secondary schools and leadership and training in implementing the IDB Project in the primary schools In addition, to link national strategies with realities in the field, the college principal participated in the Think Tank

The three primary schools visited in this cluster included the Red Bank School, Seaview School, and the Bethlehem All Age School At Red Bank, the school board, SCOPE, and the PTA succeeded in raising sufficient funds to construct a new facility for the lab In November 1995, a six-station lab was installed in the new facility and is being used for remedial math and reading instruction, computer applications classes for older students, evening access for district secondary school and college students, and evening remedial instruction classes for dropout students Beyond the enthusiasm of the students and teachers, the benefit of the program is evident by exam papers that teachers now produce on computers, the annual reports prepared and sent to parents, and the income generated for reinvestment through market services provided to the community in desk top publishing

For its computer lab, Seaview School constructed an extension of an existing building This addition was possible by fund-raising and free labor from school and community members There was however, a delay in the start of the Project because of the length of time to secure contributions from the community One reason for this lack of contributions may be that the relative economic prosperity of the farming community has meant that its members have not had to rely on education for their well-being and advancement in society Accordingly, they do not value education as much as their less well-off peers and were not as willing to contribute Despite the

delay the computer lab was installed and, beginning in September 1996, programs similar to those at Red Bank were used

At Bethlehem All Age School, the library was converted into a resource center to house the computer lab Funds raised and free labor made the renovation and 20 percent contribution to the equipment possible In the summer of 1995 a ten-station lab was installed and two teachers who were trained at Bethlehem Moravian College were assigned to the lab and CAI Initially, the lab was used for remedial math and reading instruction, but later was available to older students for research In addition, the scope was planned to be expanded by including teacher training in computer applications and evening classes for community members Some motivated teachers have independently pursued summer training at the college and are using their acquired skills to produce printed papers and report cards for their students

Implementing the reform is not wholly without tension among the various actors For example, the JCSEF, in keeping with the remedial education mandate on which the contributions from the Business Partners and HEART were predicated, insisted on schools using the Auto-Skills software supplied with the labs Finding that over the longer term the software was stultifying, the Bethlehem Moravian College encouraged the schools to go beyond the remedial use of computers and develop their own instructional programs After a while the Foundation heeded the recommendations of the college and was less prescriptive in its requirements of schools What this and other problems encountered highlight is that the Foundation, in seeking to implement a reform without State authority, is at times called upon to trespass on territory it does not and cannot control On the other hand, schools and colleges can interpret and determine broader interests, and implement actions that are consistent with their views

Oracabessa

Oracabessa was once a famous seaport town in Jamaica The Oracabessa Foundation, established as a vehicle to enhance human resource development and community education, has among its projects, the upgrading of school facilities Thus, a partnership with JCSEF was established The first venture was installing a computer lab at the Oracabessa Secondary School The next step was extending its support by installing labs in the five primary schools

In September 1993, the Oracabessa Secondary School received a fifteen-station lab In addition to remedial math and reading instruction, the lab was used by students enrolled in business classes to learn computer studies While the remedial classes have produced largely positive results, the Oracabessa experience highlights some factors that can materially affect implementing the reform For example, the school has 1,171 students and operates on a double shift system, which can present

logistical problems in scheduling lab use instruction, and support Likewise Oracabessa is an example of the organizational problems imposed on schools where lab size is much smaller than class size

The Jack River Primary School was included in the JCSEF/IDB Project in 1995 Located two miles outside Oracabessa this small rural school enrolls just over 150 students In the summer of 1995, the principal and some teachers attended the JCSEF workshop in Montego Bay Following this the principal assumed leadership of the reform at her school, reorganizing the timetable, and integrating CAI in the instructional program of the school Improvements in student performance have been dramatic—the percentage of functionally literate students leaving school increased from 50 to 80 The transformation and psychological impact of the Project on the school and community cannot be overestimated.

This description of the experience of schools in implementing the reform is selective in nature and can only hope to do justice to the rich and relevant detailed account provided in the more lengthy publication of the Jamaican Case Study However, the main features and relevant experiences of individual schools have been highlighted.

Interpreting the Case Theoretical Perspectives

As was previously pointed out, educational reform can be interpreted from at least four different theoretical perspectives Indeed, aspects of this case study relate to each theoretical perspective The question then becomes which of these theoretical perspectives best accounts for and explains this case?

The Radical Explanation

Although the use of computers and CAI in schools represent a radical departure from the past situating the explanation of the Jamaica case in the radical paradigm would be difficult Certainly, those implementing the change are not part of a wider all-inclusive movement with the stated intention of fundamentally transforming the Jamaican society or the education system If this were the end result, it would be an unintended outcome The goals and objectives of the reform are more modest, seeking to work within the existing social parameters Thus, educational reform as a radical break with the past has very limited explanatory power

The Technical Rational Explanation

One of the main driving forces for forming the partnership through which computers were put into schools, as well as one of the main ends to which CAI was directed, was improving learning efficiency and in particular, remedying learning deficits in

literacy and numeracy The level of learning efficiency possible in any mass system of education in part depends upon the state of knowledge about learning and the technology used to effect it Computers and CAI used by teachers to support class teaching allow for structured individual attention to the multilevel needs of students, which teachers could never appropriately address with the previous technology at their disposal Furthermore by increasing time on task for individual students and providing immediate feedback, computers and CAI represent a substantial technical advance in promoting learning

From this perspective, the main challenges and operations of the reform are rational logistical determinations related to (1) selecting or developing the most appropriate software packages to address the learning needs of children in the various subject areas (2) synchronizing lab size and class size, (3) establishing the number of labs appropriate in relationship to the varying enrollments of schools (4) training teachers to ensure maximum use of the learning packages and computer facilities, (5) scheduling the use of the facilities so that students across the different grades and subject areas receive optimal benefit from the technology, and (6) providing effective maintenance of hardware and software to keep the labs functioning

Explained within this rational technical framework, the Jamaican case of using CAI would be nothing but the replication of similar cases of reform implemented in other countries and settings Accordingly, the strengths and weaknesses of the reform would be judged in relation to the resolution of the various technical and logistical matters listed above However, the reform has not developed in a rational manner with attention to logistical contingencies and technical details Indeed, demand for the reform has outstripped the supply of technical and logistical answers Following strictly technical requirements (as outlined by Lockheed and Verspoor in setting out the World Bank's policy position), the Jamaican case should not have taken place But it has, and therefore an explanation other than the rational technical one must be found without overlooking the technical issues inherent in implementing the reforms

The Comparative Adjustment Explanation

The comparative perspective begins to offer some satisfying explanation for implementing reforms in the Jamaican school system. From this perspective, the computer, above all other technological devices, has become the symbol of modernity and, therefore of progress In the emerging global marketplace comparative advantage is seen to rest with information technology Small countries such as Jamaica, with open economies that are perennially vulnerable to external influences have no choice but to modernize and to keep pace with the development in information technology

Two additional factors are critical to understanding the Jamaica case from a comparative perspective First, the Jamaican school system has never been related

solely to the Jamaican economy, but has always accepted the imperative to prepare its products to compete in the international marketplace of job opportunities Without modernizing its school system, the Jamaican society would lose or seriously jeopardize the channel of mobility through migration

A related second factor is that Jamaican students have always had to access tertiary education opportunities in other metropolitan countries This is because, while its primary and secondary school systems are broad based, only 6 percent of the eighteen- to twenty-four-year-old age cohort can be accommodated by the indigenous tertiary education capacity As many students access tertiary education opportunities in North America, as do those in Jamaica Without information technology exposure and skills, Jamaican students could possibly be undermining their competitiveness in gaining access to these tertiary education opportunities abroad.

Particular groups within the Jamaican society concluded that the modernization of the country's education system by incorporating computer technology was mandatory in securing the future of the society The alternative was further descent into poverty and obscurity In this comparative context, the various technical requirements for ensuring the feasibility of the reform were not seen by proponents of the reform as disqualifying prerequisites but rather as practical obstacles that would need to be overcome along the way

While the comparative explanation adequately addresses the modernizing imperative that is so obvious in the communities and schools in which the reform has been implemented, as well as the continuing strong demand even in light of known technical and logistical weaknesses, it does not give an equally satisfying explanation for the development of the partnerships That is the comparative explanation can readily account for the reform being driven more by charismatic energy and missionary zeal than by sound organizational and logistical arrangements but it cannot as readily account for the partnerships having made the reform possible

The Political Trade-Off Explanation

The Jamaican case can be explained in terms of political trade-off Limited by its fiscal constraints and debt-service obligations, the Jamaican State traded policy space for development assistance first to international lending and donor agencies and more recently to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and communities inside the country This gesture has been encoded as partnership in policy language, and those moving into the yielded policy space are seeking to advance vested interests of different kinds In the absence of State authority the various groups have had to form alliances and coalitions that invariably negotiate and renegotiate compromises and accommodation between the various interests In doing so they are constructing the values creating the social demand, and shaping the political

will by which they will seek to mobilize the State in support of their interests in the future

It is within this framework that one must seek to understand the collective and cooperative actions of the Jamaica Computer Society, the private sector, HEART the government schools, communities, suppliers of computer hardware and software and international banks As groups with their different interests joined the alliance and coalition, the scope of the reform has broadened and the content, re-defined. This interactive element has been the dynamic of the reform process that has constructed the reform beyond the intention of any single group The interaction of these various interests has given the reform its bottom up character and its attractiveness

From this perspective, the extent to which the reform succeeds depends upon the continued satisfaction of the various interests that engages their continued support At the same time, the open and voluntary process is creating widespread ownership at different levels and subsequent commitment for continued involvement The strength of the political trade-off explanation is the formation and operation of the partnership, not the modernization that is manifest in the schools and communities Indeed, the most comprehensive explanation combines the comparative and the political trade-off explanations

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Lessons Learned

Strengths

A major strength of the reform has been the role of leadership at its various stages of formulation and implementation, including conceptualizing the initiative, renegotiating its objectives and content as new groups bought into the venture, mobilizing public sector funds, private sector resources, and community support, mobilizing school communities, and devising innovative and creative solutions to challenges faced at different levels of implementation From the process, a leadership network that stretches from the national to the school level has emerged.

A second strength is the broad-based ownership of the reform at the different levels of both its structure and implementation. The Jamaica Computer Society HEART, the Business Partners and the school communities can each stake strong claims and feel a deep sense of ownership of the reform Likewise, one can sense the pride, excitement and energy that is associated with the reform at all levels of implementation but particularly in the primary schools

The strength of the reform is also evident by the strong demand for inclusion from almost all schools This reform has definitely captured the imagination of schools communities, teachers, and students In addition, the speed with which

issues are resolved and decisions made with respect to the interests and concerns of the partners is significant The loosely organized partnership predicated on the pragmatic criterion of what works in the schools, has fostered both flexibility and responsiveness

Weaknesses

The main weaknesses of the reform are organizational and logistical For example, 30 percent of the schools with computer facilities have independently embarked upon the reform and are not integrated into the activities and exercises sponsored by the JCSEF In addition, the project implementation capacity of the JCSEF is grossly inadequate compared to the demands and imperatives of the situation (such as the rapid pace of the reform and its redefinition as partners join the partnership) Likewise, delivery of technical support to the schools is yet to be reliably systematized. One effect is that some teachers trying to use this new tool are tempted either to not invest in the new learning required or to lapse into old ways if reliable use of the facilities is not assured.

The provisions of computer labs and instruction are still grossly inadequate for the goals that have been set Teachers and students who have participated in fund-raising activities and who have high expectations are often disappointed. Fifteen-station labs in large schools do not have the capacity to allow access to all students or teachers

In addition, although teachers are being offered some orientation and training in using technology and a few are receiving more comprehensive training the current provisions are very inadequate compared to the needs The money that is contributed goes mainly to providing hardware and software Also, while the use of pre-packaged software is understandable, developing software from the wealth of teaching and learning experience generated in the Jamaican and Caribbean setting is still a far way off

Lessons learned

First, leadership is essential to educational reform Imaginative, bold, and committed leadership at all levels is underscored in this case as the most critical ingredient of fundamental change in the education system Second, in the paradigm of partnership, the private sector, professional bodies, communities, and schools all have different priorities and agendas from those set out in the policy prescriptions and priorities of governments and international donors Governments and the international donors invite partnership with these groups with the expectation that they will help bear the cost of educational development and operations From the perspective of the international donor, conditionalities will be much harder to apply to these groups than to

governments In this case, the international community yielded to the agenda of the private sector, professional bodies, communities and schools, not the other way around At the same time in a decentralized system where autonomy is practiced and partnership is the policy, the opportunity for expressing and implementing the people s vision of themselves is greater

The organizational, logistical, and technical problems faced by Third World countries in using information technology in their school systems to expand access and improve quality are probably better worked out in impulsive application than by long-term central planning If factors such as appropriate software packages and reliable technical support systems were treated as pre-qualifying prerequisites in a centrally planned scenario the reform may not yet have been implemented Furthermore, it would take enormous perspicacity and foresight to anticipate and configure the systems that are most appropriate prior to implementation The school experience is necessary, and the impulsive character of the reform in the context of limited resources has turned the early stages of the implementation process into a pilot-testing phase

The study has also shown the structural constraint resulting from the expanded scope of the project and the corresponding difficulty to raise funds for core administrative support In the case of the JCSEF, this situation has led to a new arrangement in implementing the project, which involves a modest expansion of the executive staff and a redistribution of responsibilities

In the absence of Government authority and policy direction, the vested interests of the partners are brought to the forefront At the same time, the partners are forced to negotiate the mutual satisfaction of interests, while ownership of the process is broadened because of the high level of participation and deep involvement in decision-making of the various actors and stakeholders

Where professional bodies, the private sector and communities take the lead in reform, in this case not only is the State made almost invisible, but also its role and financial contribution is grossly underestimated The substantial contribution of HEART has only been possible because the Ministry of Education, under whose portfolio HEART falls, has permitted it If the benign posture of the Ministry of Education is projected in a negative light by the partners, the Ministry may not be able to maintain its enlightened restraint in the reform process

Placing high value on education by communities is more advantageous for schooling than having greater resources Clearly, a high value on education combined with wealth can offer significant support to schooling However a high value on education combined with poor circumstances could produce greater support for schooling than wealth and combined with a low value of education Emphasis on

community possession of resources is misplaced if it is not backed by a high value on education

Recommendations

Issues that have been recognised and for which plans and strategies are already being developed will not be addressed For example through the Information Development Project sponsored by the World Bank, attempts will be made to experiment with other configurations for using computers in schools outside the labs Also, provisions have been made for elements of evaluation and research to be added to the enterprise Further, steps are being taken to develop a more reliable and effective technical support delivery system

Rather suggestions include those concerning areas that may need to be addressed in the near future First, the reform must at some time be integrated into the general policy matrix of the Ministry of Education. For example the ROSE Project (funded by the World Bank) does not include any reference to computer-assisted instruction although its goals of promoting cooperative learning, multilevel teaching, integration across subject areas and self-direction by students are entirely consistent with those promoted by CAI The same can be said of the IDB project to improve primary education Any extension of these projects, which are due before the year 2000, cannot ignore the reform taking place through the Jamaica 2000 Project The suggestion here is that the National Council of Education be a channel through which this integration could begin

Second, the JCSEF needs to establish operational linkages with those schools and colleges that obtained their computer capacity independently, so that they are included in programs of training, technical support and all other operational matters related to implementing the reform The JCSEF would also benefit from strengthening the representation of educators on the Foundation s board and operational committees and from establishing ongoing relationships and links with the various associations of school and college principals

To strengthen its capacity to support implementing the reform, the JCSEF needs to expand its core administrative functions It should also consider altering its marketing strategy for obtaining private sector support to one that is more programmatic systematic, and consistent with its projected targets In addition, it would benefit the JCSEF to establish a broad-based consultative group mandated to advise it on the technical issues related the reforms such as the relationship between lab size and class size, teacher training strategies and software development approaches To report developments and future events, the JCSEF should also consider publishing a newsletter each term featuring schools communities, and donors

The Ministry of Education needs to become an active partner in the reform and play a substantive role possibly in an area such as teacher training (in-service and preservice), since sustainability of the reform will be highly dependent on the scope and the comprehensiveness of the teacher training Fora should be created outside of the training to allow principals and teachers from different schools and clusters to share information on their experiences and innovations

Concluding Comments

One of the remarkable features of the Jamaican case is the emergence of an NGO, the JCSEF, as an actor in education policy at the national level in the short space of six years and with a staff of only three persons Apart from the charisma of the persons involved and the vision of the Computer Society in establishing the Foundation, it would appear that timing was of the essence A new Government in 1989 had enunciated a policy of partnership The technology itself had become more affordable and more easily adapted to the learning processes in schools Secondary schools under public pressure, as a result of poor performance in external examinations, were actively seeking ways to improve their effectiveness and efficiency A statutory body was concerned about the quality of general education of school graduates entering its vocational programs An influential CEO in the private sector had recently completed a successful project in secondary education using modern media and was available for recruitment in this new venture These circumstances all concatenated to produce the reform

The question is how readily can the Jamaican experience be replicated without these attendant circumstances? The answer may well be that they do not need to be replicated, since each case will arise from its own imperatives and happenstance, even if the outcomes are similar

A second observation is the excitement, pride enterprise, and energy that surrounds the introduction of CAI in small rural primary schools and the quick transformation that has taken place in some cannot be ignored as a potential of this reform to reduce the migration from small rural schools to large urban schools Overcrowded urban schools with a multitude of problems and rural schools with ample space and low enrollment are current features of Jamaican education Indeed, as more resources are invested in relieving and solving the problems of urban schools and communities, they increasingly become magnets attracting people and students from rural communities This further aggravates the urban problems and often nullifies the most recent measures to alleviate the conditions

Modernizing small rural schools has the potential of contributing to resolving some of the problems of large urban schools and of helping rural youths recognize the prospect of making progress while remaining in their communities While this

prospect is still speculative, it is a latent potential of the reform that merits the closest monitoring and speedy generalization of its application, should its feasibility be established.

NOTES

[1] This document is a summary of a case study conducted and written by Dr Errol Miller the results of which were presented at the workshop The Implementation of Educational Reforms in Latin America and the Caribbean held in Washington, DC in September 1996 The workshop was organized by the Advancing Basic Education and Literacy Project with funding and guidance from the United States Agency for International Development

[2] In addition, the researcher has been a member of the Think Tank on Education Technology in Schools and was project director for the In Service Teacher Education Component of the Reform of Secondary Education (ROSE) Project Both experiences provided an opportunity to gain personal insight and knowledge of the reform The fieldwork was conducted during two months in the summer of 1996

[3] Lockheed, Marlaine E Verspoor Adrian M and others *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries* New York Oxford University Press 1991

[4] JCS was created in 1974 to promote the professional competence ethics and social responsibility in all areas concerned with applying computers to commercial scientific and administration in Jamaica. The JCS is modeled on the British Computer Society of which it is an affiliate Membership is open to computer professionals and affiliates in the industry The society is managed by annually elected officers who offer their services on a voluntary basis The day to-day affairs of JCS are carried out by a full time manager and staff of three

[5] The mission of the HEART Trust is to promote and provide vocational training to school graduates and young adults It is supported by a payroll deduction tax paid by all businesses over a particular size as specified by the law upon which the Trust is established.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE REFORMERS

Everald Gowie[1]

The Jamaica Educational Technology Reform Program was developed within a philosophical context that recognizes everyone can learn and, given the opportunity, will develop intellectually, acquire skills to earn one s way, and respect oneself and others It recognizes that each can add value, thereby enhancing the quality of life of the individual and society The Program is promoting opportunities for intellectual, social, and democratic development of children and youth. Opening new opportunities involves the following

- enunciating a vision and long-term goals,
- forging new linkages and recognizing new synergies
- motivating individuals and communities into action,
- improving the process as it evolves

By making technology a part of the learning process, teachers become natural users of new products and innovations They also get involved in a cycle of information processing, analysis evaluation, and action— a continuous process of educational improvement

Organizationally the reform is a partnership a network embracing all who support its philosophy and goals These parties include the following

- Nongovernment institutions that manage and promote various aspects of the program,
- The private sector to invest resources and assist in determining outcomes from the process,
- The public sector, Ministry of Education and Culture, National Training Agency
- The Round Table Think Tank on Education, originators of the technology-in-primary-schools program, representing the education community
- The school community as the primary beneficiary of the process,

  Students seeking advanced knowledge and eager to apply it to the attainment of a better quality life for all

As a result of the reform, schools are moving away from just establishing computer labs towards making technology the basis of improved education from preschool to vocational levels The main strategy of the program has been to link the use of technology to the development of the local communities to increase the asset base Computers are helping the communities because they are used to assess resources with an active project and research approach The World Bank is helping to do this by providing technical support The reform also implies a reorganization of school resources, space, time, and teachers This dynamic involves teachers as facilitators and makes students responsible for their own learning Teachers are involved in continuous training by using thematic approaches with a variety of computer software

One of the problems that a reform of this nature faces occurs when a project is incorporated into the routine of the Ministry of Education Certainly, as ministries and funding institutions get involved in the program, bureaucratic controls increase, thus limiting the capacity of local communities to manage projects on their own Another challenge for this type of reform is getting the business community involved. Business interests are closely associated to particular socioeconomic contexts A viable strategy is to identify particular business leaders with imagination, interests, and skills to convince and influence others

[1] Director of Computer Programs Jamaica Computer Society

5

THE PARAGUAYAN EDUCATION REFORM A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

Cynthia Hobbs and Kathryn Rentel

Abstract

The education reform of the 1990s is breaking new ground in Paraguay It is transforming the education system, the attitudes of educators, and the way teaching and learning are perceived. What began as yet another reform effort in Paraguay has evolved into a more participatory approach to learning at all levels, in line with government efforts for democratization The reform process started with changes at the ministerial level both in administrative structure and attitude Ministry personnel and interested stakeholders developed a common strategy to work together on education issues A look at the larger process of educating students allowed the Ministry of Education (MEC) to begin to learn from its own experience, to listen to those involved, especially the teachers, and to respond to concerns and problems As a result, teachers have been given a voice This is paramount as they take on new roles As the reform reaches out to them at the local level, teachers are taking ownership for reform implementation Their enthusiasm and increased willingness to get involved are driving forces in putting the plan into action

This paper offers an overview of the political and historical context that defines Paraguay today, outlines the major concerns of the education system and summarizes the key elements of the new reform As teachers have attempted to implement this reform, concerns have been raised with MEC officials Therefore, this paper summarizes these concerns in the voices of the teachers themselves and looks at MEC s response in the ongoing process to adapt and improve the reform As teachers become more actively involved, the reform becomes more of a reality and a mechanism for promoting the democratization of Paraguayan society

The study relies on qualitative methodology The data were collected through focus group interviews and individual interviews for a total of 221 teacher participants The participants were a representative group in terms of rural, small urban, and large urban are complete school incomplete schools, single grade and multigrade classrooms The interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to generate the categories of teachers' concerns about the reform implementation The study also

relied on supplemental data provided by interviews with Ministry officials and school administrators, participant observation of teacher training workshops and archival research of curriculum and reform documents

General Country Profile

Paraguay is a subtropical country of 4 1 million inhabitants who live primarily in the verdant southeastern half of the country's 400 000 square kilometers (about the size of California in the United States) In the 1995 United Nations Human Development Index Paraguay ranks as a middle development country trailed in Latin America by Peru, Guyana, Guatemala Bolivia, Nicaragua El Salvador and Honduras Paraguay is one of the poorest nations on the South American continent Historically, it has been predominantly agrarian, with cotton and soy being the main export products agriculture still plays a major role in the economy Per capita income is about U S $1 410 annually

Urban areas claim 52 percent of the population, over 60 percent of this urban population lives on less than 1 percent of the land. Social services are concentrated in urban centers Only about 60 percent of the population has access to healthcare and sanitation services, while only 35 percent has access to potable water [1]

Paraguayan society is unique in Latin America in the racial homogeneity of its population A total of 95 percent of Paraguayans are of *mestizo* Guarani Indian and Spanish heritage Some 41 percent of the Paraguayans speak only Guarani, 48 percent consider themselves bilingual (Guarani and Spanish), and 6 percent are Spanish monolingual [2] Though Guarani was named an official language in the new Constitution of 1992 and now shares equal language status with Spanish, the languages are used differently Guarani is still spoken informally at home, and on the street and in the marketplace It has a strong oral tradition and is only recently being promoted as a written language Spanish is used by government officials, in business negotiations, and in schools as the language of instruction Thus Spanish has required a hegemonic status, although both languages are recognized equally Paraguay also has about 50,000 people who are indigenous Indians from 17 groups different than the Guarani and approximately 190,000 foreign-born residents and citizens

In 1989, a coup put an end to Alfredo Stroessner's 34-year dictatorship Since then, Paraguay has sought to democratize its society The transition to democracy has not been easy Clear inroads have been made to diminish the military's direct role in governance, although civilian-dominated democracy remains tentative Yet, there is institutional support via opposition party domination in Congress and popular will to curtail the military and to prevent a return to *golpista* politics Clearly, the *apertura* or opening, of Paraguayan society is real, and there is a level of freedom of expression heretofore unknown [3]

The Education Framework

Paraguay spends less money on education than any country in the region From 1955 to the present, the state has allocated at most only about 13 percent of its budget to education, this figure translates to less than 2 percent of the gross national product Education in Paraguay has always been funded by a combination of public and private efforts and has been largely supplemented with international aid. All public and many private schools receive a government subsidy However, the majority (99 percent in 1991)[4] of the government's education budget is used to pay teachers' and administrators' salaries To supplement the government subsidy local communities donate land for the school and parents are responsible for other instructional costs, such as curriculum materials textbooks, exams fees, registration fees, school supplies uniforms, transportation food, and the maintenance and improvement of the school s physical plant Parents or communities often also provide a supplemental salary to hire more teachers or to augment salaries to cover teachers living expenses [5]

Paraguay has an overall combined enrollment rate of 59 percent and historically has claimed a high literacy rate (91 percent in 1995) [6] However the high literacy rates have been controversial as no standard method has been used to report literacy levels, and data collection has lacked consistency and accuracy In other respects Paraguay s education system is not unlike that of many developing nations heavily concentrated in the capital, unequally distributed between urban and rural areas, andof poor quality throughout the country [7] Poor attendance and high repetition and dropout rates are prevalent, especially at the primary level [8] Although repetition clearly declined steadily from 28 percent in 1972 to 11 percent in 1985 to 8 percent in 1993,[9] the repetition rates continue to be above average in grades one to three and in rural areas [10] Low retention and high repetition in early primary grades, coupled with the disjuncture between Spanish instruction and Guarani-speaking students, would suggest lower literacy rates than those officially reported [11]

Education continues to be affected by poor quality and low efficiency[12] and characterized by significant social and geographic stratification The more well-off send their children to private schools or to the top public schools in the capital The less well-off are relegated to an impoverished public system Rural schools are poorly staffed and poorly equipped, many are incomplete extending only to the third grade The most recent Annual of Educational Statistics for 1993 shows that a third of the nation's schools are incomplete and are overwhelmingly concentrated (88 percent) in rural areas At the secondary level, 93 percent of enrollment was in urban areas in 1981, by 1993, urban areas still accounted for 87 percent of secondary enrollment Thus, access to the secondary levelfavors students in urban areas and most specifically, Asuncion This favoritism is due to the sheer lack of schools as well as the costs of schooling

Students repeat a grade or leave school at either the primary or secondary level in rural areas for several reasons [13] Two of the most frequently cited are lack of family resources and the need to work. Other important reasons include irrelevance of the curriculum lack of schools, lack of proceeding grade levels, poor health relocation, and long distances from the school Corvalan indicates that the disjuncture between Guarani speakers and education conducted in Spanish is a severe problem contributing to repetition and lack of retention [14]

University education is underfunded and exclusive even with the growing number of new private, for-profit universities that have been inaugurated.[15] About a third of the nation s teachers were noncertified in 1993, and 91 percent of those teachers were employed in rural areas In addition to the shortage of certified teachers Reimers indicates that teachers continue to be trained uniformly based on a model emphasizing theory, not practice, which creates teachers who lack a sufficient pedagogical repertoire [16] Rivarola argues further that the uniform preservice training teachers receive is geared to prepare students to enter the urban work force or continue in higher levels of education both conditions that do not pertain to most rural students [17]

The 1990s Education Reform[18]

After the 1989 coup, the new government targeted education as one of the first institutions for reform, following that of the electoral system and the Congress The practices involved in generating the reform have represented an unprecedented process of regime-citizen collaboration The Ministry of Education, a standing advisory committee called the *Consejo Asesor* and a number of subcommittees and consultants have collaborated to draft and oversee the reform Because education is an institution that intersects society from the highest Ministerial level to the most remote local community, the reform of education may stand as a potential model for the democratization of other institutions in Paraguay [19]

Rationale for the reform

The specific rationales for the educational reform are threefold. First, according to the educational treatise *Reforma Educativa Compromiso de Todos* [20] the educational reform comes directly from a need to redress the civic damage wrought by the Stroessner dictatorship and a history of authoritarian governance Educational reform is seen as essential to affirm the country s democratic transition and to support institutionalizing a democratic society over the long term

Second, educational reform is necessary for Paraguay's membership in Mercosur, the Southern Cone Common Market Of the four nations in the regional trading bloc (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay), Paraguay has the most

severe human resource deficit It needs an adequately prepared work force to be able to operate successfully in the Mercosur arrangement [21] In joining MERCOSUR, Paraguay accepted the eventual integration and compatibility of its educational system with those of the other MERCOSUR members [22]

Third the reform is a much-needed response to the poor quality and dysfunctional state of Paraguayan education Significant reform, especially to achieve educational quality and equity, is as inherently necessary as it is important for successfully weathering the economic, political, and cultural transitions to a more modern economy and a more equitable democratic society

Administrative reform

Two important issues converge to contribute to the administrative reform of the K-12 system One is that, like other nations in the region, Paraguay has recognized the importance of decentralizing control of its educational administration and of democratizing participation in managing education The other factor is the desire to resurrect and strengthen the relationship between communities and schools Therefore, the government inaugurated legislation in 1992 to establish seven Regional Education Councils (RECs) in heavily populated areas in the eastern half of the country These councils consist of superintendents of primary, secondary, adult, and special education and of directors of the teacher training institutes, regional education centers, and national technical colleges The RECs also include community councils made up of school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community leaders The council s role is threefold (1) to develop and adapt educational policy for the region according to the national policies set by the Ministry, as well as to adapt the specific curricula, administration, budget, personnel training, evaluation, and other educational strategies, (2) to organize and coordinate efforts across the various education institutions and groups and (3) to serve as the link between the local educational community councils and the Ministry [23]

Structure of education in the reform

The reform alters the structure of the primary and lower secondary system by transforming the previous compulsory grades one to six primary education to compulsory *educacion pre-escolar* plus *educacion escolar basica*, (EEB) grades one to nine (basic school education) The EEB is divided into three cycles of three grades each

The reform staggers implementation over several years In 1994, preschool and first grade classes and part of the first year of teacher education were introduced to the reform In 1995, second grade classes and the rest of first year and the second year of teacher training were added. In 1996, third grade, and the third year of teacher training were incorporated into the reform In 1996 complete national

coverage was achieved for the first grade Implementation for the Guaraní-speaking track is designed to occur one year behind the Spanish-speaking track By 1998, the program is to be implemented up through the ninth grade for the Spanish track, through the fifth grade for the Guaranitrack, in all four years of teacher training, and initially introduced to the secondary level

Philosophy of the reform and objectives of Paraguayan education

The reform s philosophy is that education is a basic right and responsibility of citizens The reform builds on the United Nations Declarations of Human Rights and Rights of the Child MEC s *Delineamientos Curriculares* clearly state that education is an agent of personal and social transformation, a vehicle for social dialogue regarding the society s history, principles and values The reform should develop individuals capable of conducting their own education and should guarantee the opportunity for individuals to realize their own potential At the same time the reform views education as the creator of solidarity among the individual, society, God, and nature as well as the protector of the national identity and the nation s cultures The reform also considers education a bridge to understanding and participating in regional, continental, and global integration [24] This philosophy translates into several broad education objectives that relate to improving the individual the community, the family, the environment, the national culture, and the inculcation of democratic values and civic behavior

Emphasis on basic education and the teacher s new role

Currently, the reform implementation focuses primarily on *educacion escolar basica* The most significant changes affect both the nonacademic element and the delivery of the curriculum rather than the content of the curriculum. This change requires teachers to accept a new role they are more responsible for determining how learning occurs In addition new expectations have been developed for teaching methods and for ways of interacting with students, parents, and administrators The reform also consists of a new course of study for each grade level [25] a revamped evaluation system based on a combination of the achievement of minimum competencies in subject areas with the demonstration of formative skills, a retooling of teaching and learning styles, a new tripartite fundamental component including democratic family, and environmental education a local component to involve communities, and bilingual education

The reform redefines the role of the teacher by favoring student-centered methodologies rather than the traditional teacher centered ones Where teaching and learning strategies were once behavioristic, authoritarian and deductive, they are now experiential, play-centered, constructivist, and democratic The student becomes

the 'protagonist of his or her own learning, and learning is to be meaningful,not merely memorized.[26]

The new course of study for academic subject areas does not offer substantial new content, but is far less prescriptive and detailed than traditional courses Instead of predetermining the lesson plan and even the date for delivery of a particular lesson the reform provides broad learning objectives in all content areas These are to be studied, refined, elaborated, and translated into practice by individual teachers The course of study is designed so the teacher, not the Ministry, decides what kind of lessons happen in the classroom

In addition the course of study mandates within each subject area a set of basic competencies" that students are required to demonstrate before advancing to the next grade level A complex evaluation protocol indicates what skills or knowledge the student must achieve either through examination or through teacher observation of skill (such as good hygiene or proper use of a trash can) and how to estimate and incorporate them into the new evaluation system. Furthermore the educational product is no longer the sole instrument with which to gauge successful learning Rather the *process* of learning is equally important Teaching strategies should incorporate free expression game playing, and group work and should model and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills in students Teaching and learning must also relate to and incorporate the student s living reality cultural, geographic, and socioeconomic

Evaluation of the students and of the teachers own practice must be constant and dynamic Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own teaching and their students learning activities, to strive to have an open "democratic" attitude and to actively practice and model respect for others, for the exchange of ideas and for collective as well as individual rights and responsibilities No longer are teachers considered to be the authoritative source for knowledge The reform refashions them as guides and orienters who learn with students and who ' help students to realize individual potential within a democratic whole [27]

A community project forms the local component, it attempts to enrich and strengthen the school/community relationship by recasting students, teachers, and schools as catalysts for community improvement while integrating parents and community members more closely into the education process Projects are to be designed according to the needs and characteristics of the particular community where the school operates and can be classwide, schoolwide, or joint school-community-wide [28]

The new Constitution of 1992 mandated that students have access to education conducted in their mother tongue, be it Spanish or Guaraní The reform introduces

bilingual education in Guarani and Spanish from first grade in an effort to satisfy the mandate as well as to preserve the linguistic and cultural heritage of the indigenous Guarani in Paraguay The reform calls for phasing in bilingual education over the course of compulsory education In the Spanish track, students are to begin in first grade with 15 percent Guarani and 85 percent Spanish instruction while the reverse holds for monolingual Guarani speakers or bilingual students in the Guarani monolingual schools By the end of the ninth grade, students should be functionally bilingual in Spanish and Guarani The curriculum also integrates Paraguayan music, art, games, dance, poetry, and literature at all levels

Reform at other levels

Reforms are also being carried out in the teacher training programs They include incorporating teacher training in the new EEB curricula, and expanding, improving, and coordinating existing preservice and in-service programs In 1994, the reform designated a new organization, the National System of Teacher Modernization, to oversee the developing and implementing of a multitiered system of ongoing in-service training

Regional technical, curriculum, and administrative support teams have been created to assist with the activities of teacher-training institutions The Department of Teacher Training is producing additional materials to support the reform and has designed an "independent training project" in which the regional support teams provide in-service workshops for superintendents, principals, curriculum specialists, teachers, and new teacher graduates at the primary level The reform also includes investing in educational technology training and equipment for the training centers and programs that address needs of a particular region or institution.

The teacher training Institute of Higher Education (ISE) which is also undergoing reform, is initiating programs for specialists in educational research and educational administration and has created a Department of Educational Research ISE has also expanded buildings on its campus and is participating in the redesign of the national curriculum and evaluation system for teacher education and licensure

The proposals for the reform of secondary education aim for a 15 percent increase over five years in secondary enrollment beginning at the seventh grade level and a 15 percent decrease in the rates of repetition and desertion The reform mandates increased levels of achievement in Spanish, mathematics, and the natural sciences, the provision of educational materials and enhanced curricular support in those three subjects technical training and professional development for superintendents principals and teachers in school management, community participation, pedagogy, and classroom management, and the development of a system for measuring academic achievement [29]

A Deductive or Top-down Approach to Educational Reform

The reform of the 1990s was prepared by MEC officials with guidance from the *Consejo Asesor* This national advisory committee was comprised of civic leaders, educators researchers and evaluators, nongovernmental organization (NGO) staff, and members of the church The wide array of members ensured greater representation of national and citizen interests Yet the design of the reform itself and the way in which it was delivered initially to the key implementers, the teachers, was hierarchical, or top-down

The reform was originally introduced to preschool, first-, and second-grade teachers in 1993 and 1994 in intensive two-week seminars in large groups of anywhere from fifty to four hundred teachers The teachers participated in training on reform objectives, the constructivist theory, participatory teaching and learning methods, and bilingual education issues and methodology (outlined above in the description of the teacher's new role) MEC officials stood before them, and from their podium they explained the objectives, philosophy, and methodologies There was no forum for interaction or group participation and no opportunity for practice during the seminars As a result, teachers left the meetings with great enthusiasm for the changes to be made but were soon daunted by the implications when they tried to implement the theories in their schools

According to Teachers Reform Issues

In 1995, the MEC signed a three-year agreement with the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID) to receive technical assistance to carry out the national education reform. This agreement has included institutional strengthening of the MEC, regional education centers, schools, and local NGOs Efforts began at the central level to create arenas for listening and sharing, and a more flexible attitude towards change A Strategic Dialogue Group (*Grupo de Dialogo Estrategico*) was formed, and a Policy Analysis Unit (PAU) commissioned several groups to conduct studies to obtain information about educational services in Paraguay The focus has been on teacher training Dialogue as a process has been used as a tool for organizational learning, and the MEC has been encouraged to incorporate wider participation in educational planning, assessment, and governance Unlike previous education reforms, this participation extends from MEC officials to teachers, parents, and students from across the country And for the first time members of the MEC are considering teachers' reactions and opinions as they form new policies

In 1995, ISE and the Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos (CPES) were commissioned by the PAU to carry out a series of focus group interviews across the country to gain the teachers' point of view [30] While ISE focused on the delivery of reform materials and training, CPES sought a betterunderstanding of the prevalent

issues affecting teaching and learning at the primary school level However, since the majority of the teachers interviewed by CPES taught first or second grade and were therefore experiencing the transition to the new education system, reform issues took precedence The information from both studies coincided and has allowed the MEC to look closely at what is happening in the schools The following overview relates the concerns and issues that teachers encountered as they attempted to translate theory to practice

Classroom-related concerns

Planning The reform requires more planning time in two regards (1) Teachers have been asked to put aside the teacher s guide that was formerly prepared by the MEC, which outlines lesson plans minute by minute, and instead use a more general guide to design student centered activities in line with the new education philosophy This change is difficult for many of the teachers who have received only minimal training in the new methodology and, therefore, requires more preparation time (2) Teachers are now encouraged to work in groups to plan lessons This is a logistical challenge, particularly in rural areas Most teachers work double shifts, and many travel long distances to school Some must leave immediately after the school day ends to reach home before nightfall So, planning is often divided up and shared later or planning sessions are carried out during school hours Although group planning is often more time consuming than individual planning, teachers who do participate have found it more rewarding

• **Materials** Teachers are encouraged to create their own materials using local resources They also are provided with new teacher guides and books developed by the MEC s Department of Curriculum However, in 1995, private schools were required to pay for these reform materials, and public schools did not receive their materials until August, while the school year had begun in February This lateness caused a great deal of anxiety and a variety of reactions Most teachers concurred that they wanted to use the new materials, not only because they were mandated but also because they were of superior quality Since the order of presentation and content differed somewhat from previous years, some teachers became unsure of their own methods and quality of teaching They felt they needed to repeat the material to ensure that they had covered it thoroughly Many retaught lessons to make use of the books and workbooks, rushing to review six months of work, yet keep up with the established schedule Others assigned workbook pages as homework. In all cases, the late arrival of materials caused undue confusion. A private company was contracted to distribute reform materials in 1996 and was successful in delivering them on time

The use of materials is another issue of concern The MEC stipulates that materials be kept in good condition so as to be reusable the following year In some

cases supervisors and directors have told teachers that they must keep books clean and neat and will be responsible for replacing any damaged materials Thus materials have gone unused. Fearful of having to replace them with their own earnings some teachers have preferred to lock them safely away or bring them out only on special occasions and have students copy the work into their own notebooks This fear creates a situationwhere teachers are using the new curriculum but teaching the old way, using class time for copying and rote memorization

• **Teaching methods** Teachers are in a process of transformation, moving from leader and sole instructor to pedagogic guide They should no longer use teaching methods that stress rote memorization but rather should engage students in activities that allow them to evolve and to build on their own knowledge The reform's focus on constructivism requires teachers to emphasize student-centered learning While the teachers are quite enthusiastic about this new methodology, many are experiencing difficulties in translating theory into practice The lesson plan examples showed a strong tendency for teachers to continue traditional authoritarian teaching style, where the teacher presents students listen and respond chorally or by turn, classrooms are set up in rows, and individual work consists of problems copied from the board. Some of the teachers who are experimenting with group work feel frustrated by the perceived confusion it creates and their inability to manage the students in the way they feel most comfortable However, those teachers who have incorporated more student-centered teaching methods are excited by the increased enthusiasm and responsiveness they perceive in their students They are also energized by the ability to have a more personal relationship with their students, which was formerly "prohibited

Bilingual education Teachers involved in the Guarani program are supportive of using Guarani in the classroom They have noticed a marked positive change in students enthusiasm and attitude towards learning, level of participation, comprehension, and achievement. However teachers do not feel adequately trained in bilingual teaching methodologies nor in the language itself Some 90 percent of the Paraguayan population speaks Guarani or Jopara (a mix of Spanish and Guaraní) Yet the literacy rate is much lower, as Guarani is historically an oral language New materials that emphasize "scientific' Guarani are unfamiliar even to teachers themselves And requirements that lesson plans be written in Guarani add time to planning, at times unnecessarily as some directors are unable to read them and ask that they be translated back into Spanish Short four-day seminars on the philosophy and practice of bilingual education give teachers the sense that they should be doing something different, but do not provide sufficient materials or training to allow them to apply the methods in the classroom

The Guarani program has confronted a great deal of social resistance as well For years, the older ranks of teachers were taught that the use of Guarani in the

classroom was wrong In some schools, it was flatly prohibited Convincing them that now it is pedagogically sound is difficult Other teachers support the program itself, stressing the important role it plays in reaffirming Paraguay's cultural identity Yet they criticize the type of Guarani used They argue that students should be learning to read and write the more colloquial Guarani that is used at home and in the streets Parents take the argument one step further They view schools as responsible for teaching their children the skills they will need to achieve academic and economic success in Paraguayan society Although Guarani was declared an official language in the 1992 Constitution, parents see Spanish as the ticket to social mobility and school as the place where their children should learn the language They can learn Guarani at home Parents are concerned that schools are not providing students with the tools they will need to survive This concern is partly due to the lack of understanding by parents and teachers of bilingual education philosophy and the practical issues that support it and the inadequate promotion by the MEC of the program prior to implementation

Organizational concerns

• **Relationships among teachers, directors, and supervisors** One of the goals of the reform is to democratize school management and foster more cooperation among teachers directors, and supervisors Administrators are receiving training to reorient their role from that of bureaucrat to pedagogic guide They should be viewed by teachers as a technical resource available for consultation, rather than controllers who are looking over their shoulders Teachers are also encouraged to work together in planning community projects and other similar activities This cooperation has functioned to some degree by design and by default, but the transition has encountered barriers

Directors and supervisors are still required to respond to the central MEC with a series of documents that set them up in the role of controllers In fact many schools, especially the *escuelas asociadas* (associated schools) in rural areas, do not have a full-time director The ad honorem' (volunteer) directors teach regularly scheduled classes by day and take care of the paperwork in their free time This necessarily defines their director's role as purely administrative Supervisors have limited contact with teachers for two reasons First, supervisors often have as many as 120 schools under their jurisdiction, making it impossible to visit each school more than once or twice each year Second, long distances and lack of provisions for transportation make personal visits difficult without the help of local friends or government officials Thus for both reasons, visits happen infrequently, are used to review documents and observe classes and have more of a control element to them

As the responsibilities of administrators to the MEC have not changed significantly in terms of required documentation, the result is a slow shift in their role from

bureaucrat to pedagogic guide This limited availability because of lack of time or resources has forced many teachers to rely on each other to better understand the mandates of the new reform In the absence of a formal support system, teachers are working together to fill in the gaps left by insufficient training and materials Teachers often feel frustrated and abandoned, especially in rural areas where teachers have less formal training The training they have received from regional teaching institutes is less comprehensive than that offered in Asuncion, and resources are harder to come by, thereby making the task more difficult On a positive note, the limited guidance from administrators has enhanced the level of cooperation among teachers sowed seeds of teacher autonomy, and strengthened the potential for democratizing the workplace

Wider community concerns

• **Teacher-parent relationships** The reform is seeking to have parents more actively participate in their children's learning This participation has been attempted mainly through activities in workbooks that children take home Students are to complete certain sections with help from their parents Teachers agree that the workbooks are a good idea in theory However in some cases practical issues have made parent participation impossible Parents are often unavailable to children as they work long hours and are not home to help In rural and marginal urban areas some parents are illiterate In addition, some parents who speak Guarani are often unfamiliar with the languageused in the books This inability to participate often creates frustration among parents students and teachers who feel unable to comply with the reform s objectives

Teachers also see parents attitudes as detrimental to the new teacher-parent relationship sought by the reform Most teachers feel that parents view the school as the sole institution responsible for children s learning, thus precluding family participation Another hindrance to a wider parental role in education is past experience Traditionally, parents are called to school to pick up report cards or donate funds for construction or school materials Many parents see their function strictly as monetary providers Teachers feel changing these attitudes without an extensive awareness campaign (concientizacion) to help parents and community members understand their new role in the reform will be difficult

• **School-community relationships** Another of the key components of the reform is the Community Project, an outreach activity developed to enhance school-community relationships Once again, teachers and administrators understand the theory behind this new mandate And once again however they have had difficulty in translating theory in practice for several reasons First, teachers receive little guidance about what the project should entail and how it should be carried out Second, the project is designed to be included in the school curriculum for 10 percent of class

time per week Yet teachers do not have time to cover the required academic subjects in the daily four-hour period, so the Community Project is often excluded from lesson plans Third, projects tend to be focused on building maintenance and facility improvements, which are considered extracurricular activities

The focus on construction projects is due, in part, to the traditional role that the community has played in education The majority of the nation's schools have been built with significant contributions from parents and community members, either through donations materials in-kind, or volunteer time for a specific task These kinds of projects are necessary for the upkeep of the school and are the most convenient since parents are unaccustomed and unavailable to commit to long-term participation However, nothing has been done to transform the nature of these relationships so that even if the activity is the same, its meaning to parents and the purpose for commitment to the project is different

Some schools have initiated projects more in line with the participatory nature of the reform, such as reforestation, neighborhood clean-up campaigns, monthly lectures on health issues with the local health clinic, or adult education courses for parents especially literacy classes However, sustaining parent participation has been difficult, so none of the projects had been able to last for more than a semester

Implementation of the Reform Recurring Issues

Several recurring issues have been raised with MEC officials, informally by directors and supervisors, and more formally by ISE and CPE in the results of the focus group interviews The MEC has considered and responded to many already in the evolving process of the reform The most significant issues are the following

- **Lack of training and preparation**

The majority of the teachers have not received sufficient training to carry out the mandates of the reform New methodologies such as student-centered teaching, group work, peer tutoring, or self-guided learning sound good in theory but are difficult to put into practice without local guidance Teachers understand the concepts, but are unable to translate them into real experiences in their classrooms To better understand these concepts and their application, teachers in the greater Asuncion area pooled their own monies to hire a Universidad Catolica professor to give a course on constructivism However educators in the rest of the country, especially in rural areas, have not had that luxury With few resources and little or no technical assistance, most teachers resort to the more familiar authoritarian practices

Training has become an issue with the new bilingual program as well Teachers understand neither the underlying concepts that justify bilingual education nor the

methods that should be used. The four-day training sessions have been insufficient in preparing teachers for their new tasks Thus they feel unable to explain or defend the program to critics, be they parents or fellow teachers, and incapable of executing it Furthermore, the criteria for choosing the participating schools and classrooms are not always clear to teachers Some feel resentful of the additional responsibilities placed upon them and find themselves scrambling to comply with their new responsibilities Many of them are investing their own time and money to learn to read and write in Guarani The Instituto de Linguistica Guarani in Asuncion is offering courses in Guarani to teachers in the capital and surrounding cities

- **Weak local support system and little follow-up**

Teachers' sense of incompetency has been compounded by the lack or lateness of materials Poorer private schools have not been able to purchase the materials because of lack of funding Urban schools have had greater access because teachers who have received materials have photocopied them for their colleagues However, all schools have had to create local materials, beyond those suggested by the reform This developing of materials has increased the planning and preparation time and has fostered certain negative attitudes towards the reform In addition, what little training teachers did receive in introductory seminars was lost, as teachers did not receive the new books and guides until months later By the time they arrived, teachers had forgotten how to use them Therefore, they have been unable to make the best of the training they received in the workshops

Availability of training is another important issue of concern For two years, training on implementing the reform was provided only to the involved teachers Teachers of other grades, directors and supervisors were not included. Thus serious consequences followed, especially in the rural areas Teachers have returned to their schools and found themselves isolated in their role as implementer, with no local resources and no one to turn to with questions Many teachers have felt overwhelmed by their new task

- **Unrealistic expectations**

Many teachers have expressed frustration at having to take on what they perceive to be a monumental task Because they are well aware their training is inadequate they feel unsure of their abilities to implement the reform Furthermore, they see some aspects of the reform as unrealistic such as parental participation and community projects (discussed earlier in this report)

- **Inconsistency between philosophy and practice**

Stressing the importance of teachers as guides and students as protagonists in their own learning the reform is based on the constructivist philosophy, emphasizing student-centered learning and participatory methods Yet, for the first two years, the actions of the MEC officials in introducing the reform belied their words Mass meetings, the medium used to introduce the reform, are clearly not in line with the new methodology Furthermore emphasis was placed on the importance of adapting the curriculum and materials to local circumstances, yet mandatory materials had already been prepared and the order defined In several of the focus group discussions teachers pointed out these inconsistencies They felt that although the reform propounded democratization it was being imposed from the top they were being told what to do and there was little room to exercise the flexibility that was being proposed.

MEC's Response The Evolution of the Delivery Process

In 1995 as a result of learning from their experiences and reviewing the findings from the studies by ISE and CPE, MEC officials changed the reform delivery style Teachers are now introduced to the reform in small groups conducted by local administrators and directors This change came about for several reasons teachers were unable to actively participate in the mass meetings the directors were mistakenly excluded from the training sessions, teachers floundered without local technical support, no follow-up system was available, much of the information imparted in the seminars was lost, and travel and lodging expenses for the large numbers of teachers increased the costs of the seminars [31]

The MEC has begun to use *Circulos de Aprendizaje* (Learning/Study Circles) [32] (based on similar groups that were successful in Costa Rica) Ideally, circles are composed of approximately ten teachers and meet as often as once a week or as infrequently as once a month To ensure the best use of time, participants know the topics to be discussed prior to each session The MEC has prepared a series of pamphlets, *Hacia una Educacion Participativa* (Towards Participatory Education), for the meetings Topics vary but may include reform objectives teaching methodologies (such as multigrade education), student-centered learning techniques (such as peer tutoring or group work) specific course instruction (such as reading or writing), bilingual methods and language issues, and other content areas The circles consist of a set group of participants, thus ensuring continuity and a growing sense of community Participants take turns leading the group discussions, always abiding by the established rules For instance, members will respect each others comments and opinions, the leader will not dominate the group but will intervene only to ensure that discussion flows and that all members have the opportunity to participate The training itself emulates the learning/study circle experience by offering the trainees

the opportunity to live the process and providing them withthe practical experience they need to be able to teach it or to form their own circles

Training for the study circles is organized and carried out in a trickle-down fashion First, MEC officials travel to the departments (regions) and offer local supervisors and educational area directors seminars on running a learning/study circle Next, supervisor and area directors in turn, provide training to the directors of the associated schools and the third-grade teachers These school principals then form circles in each of their schools or with nearby schools, depending on the number of teachers involved Ideally, every school in the country will have a learning/study circle by 1997 Although they now involve only third-grade teachers, future circles will invite teachers from first and second grade to share their experiences Then fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade teachers will be included to introduce them to reform issues before they begin to apply these in the classroom This will help to integrate the reform into the whole school, rather than segregate the teachers into two groups those who have implemented and those who have not, as has happened in some schools

The circles have several advantages over the mass meetings Small groups allow everyone to participate, provide time for teachers to share concerns and ways of dealing with the reform, and offer immediate feedback for teachers as they grapple with reform issues By working together to come up with practical solutions to their problems and specific suggestions for ways to implement the reform, teachers increase the probability that they will apply the new philosophy and methodologies in the classroom Local circles allow teachers to discuss relevant issues, the process offers flexibility, encourages interaction among educators from within schools or among schools from the same region and enhances the reform s goals for higher levels of cooperation between teachers and administrators

The Reform in Action

The Paraguayan education reform of the 1990s mandates significant changes in the education system It strives to alter the role of the central government as it relates to schools and teachers, the role of schools as they relate to parents and community, the role of teachers as they relate to administrators, students, and parents, and the role of children as they relate to their society as citizens By stressing participation and collaboration at all levels, the reform is creating expectations for new relationships new teaching and learning methods, and different priorities

At the institutional level the MEC is looking for ways to decentralize their responsibilities and involve other actors in the reform process Although MEC officials create the materials and design the training, they have sought ways to include regional supervisors directors and teachers New study circles and the

creation of Unidades Pedagogicas Departamentales (Regional Pedagogic Units) to offer local technical support are establishing better conditions for group work and collaboration Materials are now more open ended and more adaptable to local conditions In-service training using the study circle method provides (1) a forum for teachers to express their needs and concerns (2) a time and place to work on the materials together and to process other reform issues as they arise, and (3) ownership and responsibility for developing practical ways to implement the reform. Directors are encouraged to participate in the circles on equal footing, to relate with teachers in a more collaborative way, and to provide them with pedagogic and technical assistance, thereby transforming their role from bureaucrat to resource guide This new relationship requirescommitment at all levels and holds everyone accountable, rather than concentrating all the responsibility at the top

In the classroom, teachers and students ideally work and learn together through peer tutoring and group activities Teachers guide the students through the learning process and interact with them, rather than one-sidedly dictating lessons to the group Teachers also relate differently to the materials They are no longer copying directly from the MEC teacher guides, but are including in their lesson plans local references neighborhood outings and hands-on activities to involve the students more Teachers now think about the education they are imparting in a new and different way What was often a rote exercise is now an active, dynamic process To that end, teachers are also being asked to think about themselves and their function as educators Learning/study circles include these topics and help teachers to reflect on their own teaching styles, their behavior in the classroom, and their role in the wider community

The community is also being drawn into the education reform Parents, who traditionally have seen their role as monetary contributor, are now asked to take part in their children s education in more active ways Student workbooks involve them in the academics Community projects encourage them to participate at other levels and sometimes provide them with learning opportunities (such as adult education classes offered by local schools or seminars organized by municipalities or local health centers) The reform is helping schools parents, and community members to integrate more

Of course, these changes do not happen overnight Nor are they taking place in all schools at the same rate or with the same level of intensity or quality As was noted in the discussion of reform issues, there are significant differences between rural and urban schools, and public and private ones Teachers in urban areas and in the wealthier private schools have greater access to additional resources and materials to help them interpret and implement the reform Sheer proximity allows urban teachers to work together and assist each other And parents of higher income families, prevalent in private and urban schools, tend to be more educated and available to participate in the schooling of their children Preservice training and in-service

training are also an issue as the regional teacher-training centers do not offer the same quality of instruction as those in Asuncion, and public schools are unable to offer teachers ongoing training opportunities Therefore, teachers in rural and marginal urban areas are less prepared to take on the new tasks and responsibilities of the reform Even within the new learning/study circles, teachers from these areas are less able to reflect on their own teaching styles and the implications of changes in methodology for their students learning, given the low quality of their preservice education They are more focused on resolving immediate problems and finding new ways to abide by the reform's regulations This inequity in applying the reform in different areas of the country should be considered in future policies and implementation procedures

Conclusion

Several important conclusions can be drawn from this latest education reform in Paraguay First, the reform is not an end product but rather an evolving learning process The objectives should be continually reviewed feedback should be elicited from participants at each level, and formal and informal evaluations should be carried out to ensure that goals are being met Thus far, MECofficials have demonstrated an unprecedented degree of flexibility in their willingness to involve many actors and sectors in forming policies and implementing procedures A significant effort has been required to shift attitudes and behaviors from the traditional authoritarian decision-making methods that government officials are accustomed to Even within the Ministry itself, groups such as the *Consejo Asesor* have experienced growing pains as the members have learned to listen to and respect each others' opinions and find common ground to reach consensus

One of the keys to the evolving process of the reform has been the MEC s level of responsiveness This has made a significant difference in the way the reform is perceived and received. Past reforms were designed and executed from the top by bureaucrats in the capital city, with little consideration for the effects they were actually having in the schools By contrast, this reform has involved those actors most responsible for implementing the new policies that is, the teachers The focus groups carried out by CPE s and ISE's research teams were unprecedented in their scope and nature Teachers from across the country were invited, in many cases for the first time, to openly share their concerns and opinions about the philosophy, delivery, and implementation of the reform More remarkable still was the response The MEC officials listened, reevaluated, and made changes to facilitate the process This has had a very positive effect Teachers feel they are being heard and taken seriously

The MEC s acknowledgment of the role of teachers in successfully implementing the reform has stimulated collaboration and enthusiasm Although teachers have

encountered many difficulties in applying new methods, creating materials, working with the new curriculum and following the general guidelines of the reform, most have remained optimistic They feel they are being included in the process and, therefore, they are willing to become more involved. They are not bystanders, watching as the reform passes before them Rather, they are the protagonists, the ones who can make it happen This sense of meaningful participation fosters a sense of responsibility and ownership

Finally, the MEC's move to the learning/study stand behind their efforts to be responsive and flexible by putting new policy into action One of the premises for the reform has been the promotion of democracy The circles themselves, as they are designed, model the democratic values of participation of all members, the art of listening and considering others' opinions and points of view, and the ability to achieve group consensus to resolve common problems As teachers participate in the circles, they are practicing democracy As they carry the circle skills over into their classrooms, they are teaching democracy In its own small way, introducing the learning/study circles as an alternative to more effectively promoting the reform has planted the seeds for significant changes in the education system

NOTES

[1] United Nations Development Program *Human Development Report* New York Oxford University Press 1995

[2] Secretaria Tecnica de Planificacion Direccion General de Estadistica, Encuestas y Censos *Censo 92 Paraguay Censo nacional de poblacion y viviendas* Asuncion Author 1994

[3] For a description of the historical political context of Paraguay see Baer W and Birch M The International Economic Relations of a Small Country The Case of Paraguay *Economic Development and Change* 35 601 27 Bruneau, T *Paraguay Latin America and the Caribbean Contemporary Record Vol 7* Hopkins J ed. New York Holmes and Meier 1989 B135 153 Bruneau, T Paraguay *Latin America and the Caribbean Contemporary Record Vol 8* Hopkins J ed. New York Holmes and Meier 1989 B129 144 Da Rosa, J Eliseo Paraguay *Latin America and the Caribbean Contemporary Record Vol 5* Hopkins J ed New York. Holmes and Meier 1989 B143 165 Hanratty D and Meditz S eds *Paraguay A Country Study* Washington DC U S Government Printing Office 1990 Lewis P 'Paraguay *Latin America and the Caribbean Contemporary Record Vol 1* Hopkins J ed New York Holmes and Meier 1989 B39-43 Miranda, A C *The Stroessner Era Authoritarian Rule in Paraguay* Boulder CO Westview Press 1990 Nickson The Overthrow of the Stroessner Regime Reestablishing the Status Quo *Bulletin of Latin American research 8* (1989) 185 209 Neild, R *Paraguay UnaTransicion en busca de la democracia* Asuncion, Paraguay Intercontinental Editora 1991 Rivarola, D Politica sociedad en el Paraguay Contemporaneo El Autoritarismo y la Democracia. *Revista Paraguaya de la Sociologia 25* (1988) 141 83 Roett, R. and Sacks R.S *Paraguay the Personalist Legacy* Boulder CO Westview Press 1991 Sondrol P 'The Emerging New Politics of Liberalizing Paraguay Sustained Civil Military control Without Democracy *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs 34 2* (1992) 127 63 Williams J Paraguay *Latin America and the Caribbean Contemporary Record Vol 2* Hopkins J ed. New York Holmes and Meier 1989 384-92 Williams J Paraguay *Latin America and the Caribbean Contemporary Record Vol 3* Hopkins J ed. New York Holmes and Meier 1989 431 33 Williams J 'Paraguay *Latin America and the Caribbean Contemporary Record Vol 5* Hopkins J ed. New York Holmes and Meier 1989 365-73

[4] World Bank *Poverty and the Social Sectors in Paraguay A Poverty Assessment* Washington DC Author 1994

[5] Nicholson, R. *U S Aid to Education in Paraguay—The Rural Education Development Project Aid Project Impact Evaluation* Washington DC USAID 1993 Winkler D R. The Distribution of Educational Resources in Paraguay Implications for Equality of Opportunity *Comparative Education Review 24 (1980)* 73 87 Personal communication, suburban district superintendent, August 23 1995

[6] Secretaria Tecnica de Planificacion, Direccion General de Estadistica, Encuestas y Censos *Censo 92 Paraguay Censo nacional de poblacion y viviendas* Asuncion Author 1994

[7] Rivarola, M M *Educacion y desarrollo rural en Paraguay* Asuncion CPES/CPEA 1990

[8] Quintana de Horak C *La educacion escolar en el Paraguay* Asuncion Imprenta Salesiana, 1995 Rivarola, D Educacion y desarrollo en el Paraguay· La ensenanza basica. *Revista Paraguaya de Sociologia 14 (1977)* 245 248

[9] MEC *Paraguay Estadistica Educativa. Anuario 1993* Asuncion author 1994 Rivarola, D Educacion y desarrollo en el Paraguay La enseñanza basica. *Revista Paraguaya de Sociologia 14 (1977)* 245-248 Rivarola, M M Educacion y desarrollo rural en Paraguay Asuncion CPES/CPEA 1991

[10] Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Estructura y procesos de la educacion Paraguaya* Asuncion author June 1994 World Bank *Poverty and the Social Sectors in Paraguay A Poverty Assessment* Washington DC author 1994 There is some controversy over the accuracy of the data reported on retention and dropout rates For a discussion of similar reporting problems regarding primary education see Harvard Institute for International Development and the Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Analisis del Sistema Educativo en el Paraguay* Asuncion Author 1993

[11] Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Estructura y procesos de la educacion Paraguaya* Asuncion author June 1994 Roett, R and Sacks R.S *Paraguay The Personalist Legacy* Boulder Westview 1991

[12] Harvard Institute for International Development and Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Analisis del Sistema Educativo en el Paraguay* Asuncion author 1993 Quintana de Horak C *La educacion escolar en el Paraguay* Asuncion Imprenta Salesiana, 1995 Rivarola, M M *Educacion y desarrollo rural en Paraguay* Asuncion CPES/CPEA 1991 World Bank. *Poverty and the Social Sectors in Paraguay A Poverty Assessment* Washington, DC author 1994

[13] Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Estructura y procesos de la educacion paraguaya* Asuncion author June 1994 Nicholson R *U S Aid to Education in Paraguay The Rural Education Development Project Aid Project Impact Evaluation* Washington, DC USAID 1983 Rivarola, D Educacion y desarrollo en el Paraguay La ensenanza basica. *Revista Paraguaya de Sociologia 14* (1977) 245-248 Rivarola, M M Educacion y desarrollo rural en Paraguay Asuncion CPES/CPEA 1991 Winkler D R. The Distribution of Educational Resources in Paraguay Implications for Equality of Opportunity *Comparative Education Review 24* (1980) 73 87

[14] Corvalan, G Education in the mother tongue and educational achievement in Paraguay *Prospects 14* (1984) 95 106 Corvalan, G *La educacion bilingue para el Paraguay* Asuncion CPES 1992

[15] Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Estructura y procesos de la educacion paraguaya* Asuncion author June 1994

[16] Reimers F 'Formacion Docente In Harvard Institute for International Development and Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Analisis del Sistema Educativo en el Paraguay* Asuncion CPES/ HIID 1993 187-224

[17] Rivarola, M M *Educacion y desarrollo rural en Paraguay* Asuncion CPES/CPEA 1991

[18] The information in this section is based on the following materials from the Ministry of Education and Worship (MEC) *Delineamientos Curriculares Educacion Inicial Educacion EscolarBasica* Asuncion 1992 *Diagnostico del sistema de formacion docente* Asuncion 1992 *La reforma educativa en el aula Guia para la implementacion de la educacion escolar basica Serie Hacia una educacion participativa Fasciculos 1 5 10* Asuncion, 1993 *La reforma educativa en el aula Guia para la implementacion de la educacion escolar basica Serie Hacia una educacion participativa Fasciculos 6- 9 11* Asuncion, 1994 *Cuadernos de educacion* Vol 1 Nos 1 and 2 Asuncion, 1994 *Desconcentracion y descentralizacion de la educacion Informe final* Asuncion, 1994 *Programa de estudio Primer grado* Asuncion 1994 *Programa de estudio Segundo grado* Asuncion, 1994 *Sistema nacional de actualizacion docente* Asuncion 1994 *Circulos de Aprendizaje* Series 1 and 2 Asuncion, 1995 *Guia didactica del docente* Vols 1 and 2 Asuncion, 1995 *Hacia una educacion con calidad Un debate actual* Asuncion, 1995

[19] D Rivarola, personal communication March 20 1995

[20] Consejo Asesor de la Reforma Educativa. *Reforma Educativa Compromiso de Todos* Asuncion Fundacion En Alianza, 1993

[21] McGinn, N El desafio que representa el Mercosur para la educacion. In Harvard Institute for International Development and Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Analisis del Sistema Educativo en el Paraguay* Asuncion CPES/HIID 1993 39 80 Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociologicos *Estructura y procesos de la educacion Paraguaya* Asuncion author June 1994

[22] MEC official personal communication, September 1995

[23] MEC *Descentralizacion y regionalizacion educativa* Asuncion author 1993

[24] MEC *Delineamientos Curriculares Educacion Inicial Educacion Escolar Basica* Asuncion author 1992

[25] The analysis of the various aspects of the reform are based on general materials for the entire reform as well as the materials published at the time of the research for use with first and second grade

[26] MEC Proyecto comunitario (Fasciculo 2) and La reforma avanza (Fasciculo 7) *La reforma educativa en el aula Guia para la implementacion de la educacion escolar basica Serie Hacia una educacion participativa* Asuncion. author 1993

[27] MEC *Delineamientos Curriculares Educacion Inicial Educacion Escolar Basica* Asuncion author 1992

[28] MEC *La reforma educativa en el aula Guia para la implementacion de la educacion escolar basica Serie Hacia una educacion participativa Fasciculo 2* Asuncion. author 1993

[29] MEC *Cuadernos de educacion* Vol 1 Nos 1 and 2 Asuncion author 1994

[30] These nationwide surveys of primary teachers concerns about education issues were supported by HIID The CPES project included twenty initial focus group interviews Results of the interviews were then translated into a questionnaire to be distributed to approximately 600 teachers and administrators in 280 schools around the country The groups were selected with the collaboration of the MEC s regional supervisors to represent rural and small and large urban areas from across the country Although the groups do not constitute a random sample the similarity in issues that the teachers call to our attention is notable For a detailed discussion of these issues see Hobbs C Rojas M and Walder G *Educacion Primaria Practicas Docentes Organizacion Escolar yRelaciones con la Comunidad* Preliminary Report, Mimeograph. Asuncion. CPES September 1995

[31] MEC official, personal communication September 1996

[32] For a more detailed description of the Circulos de Aprendizaje see Instituto Superior de Educacion Dr Raul Peña. *Practicas Efectivas para una Educacion de Calidad, Estudio de Casos Documento para Apoyar a Circulos de Dialogo entre Maestros* Asuncion author September 1995 and MEC *Circulos de Aprendizaje* Series 1 and 2 Asuncion. author 1995

THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE REFORMERS

Vicente Sarubbi Zaldivar[1]

Objectives of the Reform

Educational reform in Paraguay is aimed at consolidating democracy increasing productivity, and reducing poverty while preserving national identity within the framework of regional integration In order to achieve these goals, the reform follows two axes or principal lines of action The first line of action is to ensure a true basic education for all, both through the traditional path of formal education—Basic School Education (EEB)—as well as through non-formal education—Basic General Education (EGB) The second line of action is to orient education toward work as a means of improving the living conditions of the population

The Reform in Progress

In 1990 the Consejo Asesor de la Reforma Educativa [Advisory Council on Educational Reform] was established under the Minister of Education with the mission of assessing, proposing, and working with an educational reform for Paraguay This group, made up of people individually selected by the minister for their experience in the educational field and their interest in reform—and not including any members of the corporate community—developed an educational philosophy, a style of reform, and some priorities that were subsequently discussed and agreed upon at nineteen regional and two national conferences

This reform is based on a belief in individual potential, and the assumption that even if it takes time, it is possible to transform a society that is evolving in a multicultural and multiethnic world. In the same spirit as when the dictatorship was overthrown in 1989 this reform is meant to be liberating It is seeking to free education from authoritarianism, an overly centralized administration, and political divisions and to allow it to be both democratic as well as a force for democracy The reform is an attempt to free people from ignorance and to help them realize their potential so that they can escape from poverty and marginalization

Consistent with this philosophy, the educational reform adopted the style of a process and not of a 'blank book' that could be pondered and then completed in the first attempt Beginning with the Advisory Council on Educational Reform and the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), the reform was developed through participation and consensus-building so that education and educational reform would be a commitment of all the actors involved.

Unlike other reforms that propose changes in the curriculum, this reform was intended to reform the entire educational system, encompassing the local education community focused around the school or learning center Its center, therefore, is not the curriculum and the central administration within the ministry, but rather schools with their students, teachers, fathers and mothers and managerial and support staff

Some Milestones

The changes made in the school system reflect the new emphasis on universal participation At the end of the third year of implementation in the classroom, we can summarize by saying that the reform has achieved the following

Decentralization

1 Establishment of learning circles in the schools so that teachers and administrators can define appropriate strategies for their reality in order to achieve the objectives of the reform in the classroom,

2 Creation of a system to provide continuous in-service training for active teachers (SINAD) through the installation and operation of departmental pedagogical units (UPDs) everywhere in the country, and

3 Facilitation of participation by directors of educational fields, as well as school supervisors and principals, in communicating the reform's basic principles to the country's school communities

Participatory teaching

1 Establishment of a new way of educating that focuses on learning more than teaching, and

2 Emphasis on the importance of encouraging fathers and mothers to help their sons and daughters learn

Bilingual education

1 Initiation of education in the Guarani language in around 430 schools This has been extremely important to the reform, since 40 percent of the population speak only Guarani and 45 percent are bilingual in Spanish and Guarani,

2 In order to foster coordinated use of both official languages (Spanish and Guaraní), preparation of a country wide bilingual education program to teach Spanish as a second language to monolingual Guarani speakers and Guarani as a second language to monolingual Spanish speakers, or those who are bilingual but predominantly Spanish-speaking, and

3 Improvement of children's learning especially at schools taught in Guarani

Professional training for teachers

1 Updating of the system for teacher training, increase in the number of teacher training centers—from 25 to 40—and improvement of the selection system through the use of national admission tests, and

2 Establishment of a competitive nominating system for teachers and other staff with participation by union representatives and departmental education ministries

Research and evaluation

1 Establishment of a system for evaluating the educational process (SNEPE) which has already carried out experimental performance assessments of third graders, and both experimental and final assessments of sixth graders, and

2 Completion of a school census and a national school map to permit rational allocation of human and financial resources in the country's educational institutions

The Effectiveness of Some Measures Adopted Under the Reform

A survey conducted by the Unidad de Investigacion y Experimentacion Pedagogica (UIEP) [Pedagogical Research and Experimentation Unit] on the implementation of the educational reform in public and private primary schools[2] produced the following results

Decentralization

- In general, both teachers and principals feel that the training about the reform they received through learning circles—the modality used from the time the reform began to be implemented in the third grade—was more effective than the training carried out through technical meetings which were huge courses involving up to 15 days of attendance Eighty-seven percent of the teachers and 90 percent of the principals mentioned conclusions or achievements that came out of meetings that were part of the circle modality More than 50 percent of the principals and teachers meet at least once a month, 25 percent meet more often,

- Ninety-three percent of urban principals and 87 percent of rural principals have attended some kind of training course

Participatory teaching

- The survey shows that the reform is reaching the schools and is well accepted in the education community—teachers students, principals, and parents,

- Sixty percent of the teachers surveyed said that they meet with other teachers to do planning work related to the children's learning process At the same time, 64 percent of the teachers and 83 percent of the principals mentioned that they experienced problems with planning their school activities Eighty-two percent of the teachers said that they include community projects in their planning, but that it was very hard because they hadn t received any training in that area, and

- Ninety-four percent of the principals said that parents helped their institution either through working on the building or making cash contributions Eighty-three percent mentioned that their school had a school cooperative liaison Sixty-six percent said that parents took part in activities organized by the liaison

Bilingual education

- Three years after the curriculum for monolingual Guarani speakers had been launched, fewer than 20 percent of the members of this language group had been reached In any case, results in the form of reductions in repeat grades and school leaving in primary school, as well as improved performance in the comprehensive examinations, are very encouraging and certainly better than those obtained when Guarani-speaking children are forced to enter the written culture using Spanish, a language they do not know The level of acceptance of Guarani-based instruction for monolingual Guarani speakers is high for children in the rural area (80 percent) and somewhat lower in the urban area (around 55 percent)

In order to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of the reform and to meet the challenge of achieving the goals of a basic general education for all, in 1995 the MEC and the Advisory Council on Educational Reform began to prepare a strategic plan to support educational reform. The Harvard Institute for International Development collaborated in the preparation of this strategic plan, which was discussed extensively in order to achieve broad social consensus, with the participation

of politicians public officials, business owners teachers' unions, parents associations journalists church groups, and the general public

This effort took shape as the strategic plan for reform described in two publications "El Desafío Educativo Una propuesta para el dialogo sobre las oportunidades educativas en el Paraguay,' [The Educational Challenge A proposal for a dialogue on educational opportunities in Paraguay], and 'Paraguay 2 020 Enfrentemos juntos al desafío educativo Plan estrategico de la Reforma Educativa." [Paraguay 2,020 Facing the educational challenge together A strategic plan for educational reform] Both publications were issued during the first half of 1996

Effective implementation of the plan can be accomplished in Paraguay as part of a tight social agenda that calls for a reduction in poverty, but must be initiated with a vigorous investment in education [3] This is the only way that Paraguay can experience equitable and sustainable growth

---

[1] Minister of Education

[2] In order to show some of the outcomes of the reform, the recently created Unidad de Investigacion y Experimentacion Pedagogica (UIEP) was asked to prepare a national survey on the implementation of educational reform in the public and private schools in the country s basic education school system The work was carried out before the end of the 1996 school year and covered the country s 5 616 public and private primary schools through a multiphase random sample of 343 preselected schools The instrument used was a questionnaire containing both open-ended and closed ended questions

[3] A recent study carried out with the support of the World Bank made it possible to define the cost of implementing the strategic plan for educational reform. It was published under the name Paraguay 2 020 Enfrentemos juntos al desafío educativo An initial investment of US$158 million is required, with recurring annual costs of US$70 million.

6

IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION REFORMS A LEARNING APPROACH

Benjamin Alvarez H

This chapter compares four case studies on the educational reforms of the current decade in Latin America and the Caribbean Its purpose is to stimulate learning about the factors that have caused different countries to follow distinct paths in their effort to achieve similar goals The chapter begins with a description of the selected approach and the characteristics of the case studies that were the main source of information Then the lessons that emerged from collective analysis and dialogue by researchers and reformers are identified and discussed

Educational Reform as a Collective Learning Process

An educational reform is a revision, a broader application of a successful experiment or a radical change, it is a collective learning experience All the actors in a reform—planners, implementers or researchers, parents, teachers, students, and administrators—are involved to a greater or lesser degree in an information network, a questioning process, and ultimately a transformation of values and behavior As with all learning, the changes achieved by way of a reform are important in and of themselves, but they take on perhaps even greater importance as a basis for future learning, innovations, and development

In a process analogous to human development, the changes proposed by a reform are supported by structures established by previous experiences and memorie and a specific history Paradoxically, this process of developing new schemes and behaviors is usually limited by earlier structures, ingrained customs and routines, established interests, and unexpected pockets of resistance

The products of an educational reform tend to be less specific and directly measurable than those of reforms in other social sectors such as health, housing, or environmental management. Nevertheless educational achievements are indispensable for change in any other sector Education makes it possible to connect knowledge with the requirements for action

This invisible but inevitable relationship between knowledge and power—which applies to both individuals and groups—has long been recognized but has become

more evident in recent history in light of the notable role that science and technology are playing in the progress of nations In *The Republic*, the most renowned work on pedagogy and politics in ancient times, Plato described this relationship by drawing the analogy of gears or wheels that move the State The knowledge accrued through education is a vital force and energy source that contributes to the process even as it benefits from it

Educational reform is, in essence, an enterprise based on knowledge and power which requires a methodology for change that reflects its essential nature The best metaphor to apply to the process of design and implementation is pedagogy, rather than the currently popular re-engineering"concept that is used to describe the process of organizational change Reform is a learning adventure whose goals and strategies are less precise and predictable than those found in industrial production, and whose mission is shaped by philosophical concepts and political logic

Neither does the pedagogy of reform fit comfortably within a programmed, linear and predictable model of instruction On the contrary, available evidence suggests a less certain and precise picture, containing a mixture of diverse dynamics political, technical and cultural processes that interact by means of continuous assimilation, adaptation and restructuring As Anne Bernard indicates

> Changes of this kind are invariably of indefinite but probably long-term duration, only moderately predictable and always iterative They require the ability to analyze current conditions, to synthesize novel arrangements, to pursue the realization of those arrangements through conceptualization and implementation and to apply both tolerance and flexibility in the face of the continuing need to negotiate among goals, constraints and resources [1]

The experience of those countries that have committed themselves to making far-reaching and profound changes in their educational systems offers several lessons One of the most consistent is that the process of implementing new policies requires ongoing training for the participants and continuous dialogue that goes beyond the search for initial consensus or the social marketing of preconceived ideas Constant negotiation among the diverse interests and powers that are in conflict is another essential component of the process All of the cases analyzed in this report suggest that it is possible to achieve modest changes in a relatively short period of time, but all of them also highlight the relative weakness and instability of these achievements and show how this vulnerability is related to the success of efforts to strengthen the local technical and political capacity of the central organizations and peripheral institutions involved

The Case Studies and Their Main Foci

Each of the cases described in this report reflects the reversals, difficulties and achievements that are part of an ongoing effort to bring about educational change at the national level Each case study approached this history by looking at a key clearly identifiable and tangible component, which could provide the nucleus for posing useful questions speculating on possible explanations, uncovering relationships, and learning new lessons The four central socially, technically, and politically important approaches that were the focus within the different participating countries as well as outside their borders, were mobilization of civil society to participate in formulating education policy (Dominican Republic), community participation in running schools (El Salvador), establishment of strategic consortia between private and public organizations to introduce advanced technology into the schools (Jamaica), and involvement of teachers in the reform process (Paraguay) This does not mean that educational reform in thesecountries was limited to the above-mentioned components (see Table 1) In each case, however, there was a process of assimilation, negotiation, and accommodation of social learning

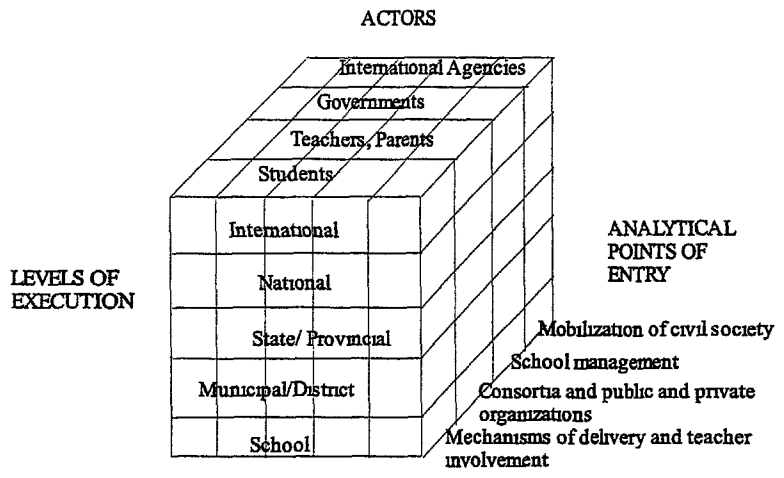
Table 1 Main Focus of Each Study

Focus/ Country	Mobilization of civil society	Community participation in running schools	Consortia to introduce technology	Involvement of teachers in the reform
Dominican Rep	■			
El Salvador		■		
Jamaica			■	
Paraguay				■

The focus of each study reflected the central approach of each national reform. Democratization of schools, for example, is a central element of the new educational policy in Paraguay as is community participation in El Salvador National consensus-building in the Dominican Republic was the backbone of that country s educational reform. Linking the private sector to education and technological innovation is one of the three most important changes in the recent evolution of education in Jamaica

As a group, the foci selected for the four case studies also reflect the general ssues that characterize the majority of the educational reforms in this decade stablishing new relationships in the running and administration of schools, promot-ng more local participation and autonomy, and improving the supply and utilization f information technology resources Any one of these might serve as a point of entry or analyzing other dimensions of the educational reforms, such as their different evels of execution (local, municipal, state national, and international), the actors nvolved (members of the government, teachers, parents, members of the business ommunity, etc), or the interactions between the actors at the different levels where hese exchanges are occurring (see Illustration 1)

llustration 1 The Case Studies and the General Dimensions of the Reforms



or example, the analysis of the mechanisms for "delivering" reform principles to araguayan teachers reveals not only the tensions that arise between groups of people ffected by a reform, but also the theoretical ambiguities associated with irreversibly hanging the central government's work and responsibilities It also demonstrates the npact that a relatively small ministry of education can have on a large segment of e nation while working with very limited resources

Similarly the analysis of the introduction of computers into Jamaican schools elps us understand how social systems can be changed through private initiative

The potential as well as the vulnerability of the educational revitalization process in the Dominican Republic is revealed through the achievements and pitfalls of curriculum reform The problems faced by democratization efforts in Salvadoran society are accurately represented in microcosm by community participation in school management

These issues also allow us to take a historical perspective since, although they are very topical they are not new to the education scene in the region On the contrary, experiences with community participation and educational decentralization in Latin America particularly in Argentina, Mexico, Colombia and Chile, date back at least two decades [2]

But perhaps the oldest issue is that of state control versus parent participation in schooling Twenty-five centuries ago in the Greek world, Athens and Sparta respectively, were archetypes of schools as a private enterprise and schools as a fundamental part of the state apparatus [3] No single model of school administration has prevailed in Latin America and the Caribbean Schools administered by the state private organizations, churches, and communities are present in different combinations from country to country But the signs of the times point to the need for profound changes We are faced with dilemmas similar to those faced by other nations in other times, but the difference today is that we are working in a much broader context—the global society—and we are motivated by the desire to "virtualize" or at least reduce the role of the state Information technology will inevitably be one of the most useful tools we have in the learning environments of the future, although we need to remember that the use of educational technology in teaching already has a long tradition in countries such as Brazil (educational television), Colombia (radio programs for rural schools), and Costa Rica (computers)

Methodology

The case studies described in the previous sections used a several-part methodology consisting of a review of available documents and statistics on the reform efforts in each country interviews with key participants in the field of policy formulation and central administration, as well as local implementation, and visits to schools and discussions with community organizations Education ministers, students, parents, researchers, and reformers provided first-hand information, opinions, and constructive criticism Although both resources and time were limited, the Jamaican study involved three case studies

The results of the case studies, combined with observations made in other countries such as Brazil Chile Colombia, and Nicaragua, helped to identify and provide comparisons of some critical factors that have shaped the profile of these educational reforms during their practical implementation First, ten decisive factors

in the implementation of the educational reforms in various countries were identified. According to many actors involved in the process, these factors had an obvious impact on the direction magnitude speed of execution or interruption of the proposed changes This does not mean that as a group, these factors constitute an algorithm that guarantees the success of a reform, nor does it imply that they are independent and clearly distinguishable from each other But they provide a useful analytical tool that can enable these nations to promote learning in the way necessary for them to begin to realize the commitments formulated in the new reforms

These factors can be grouped around three main axes Some are related to the history and specific context of each country, which in turn is part of a set of global dynamics that are beyond its immediate control In other words, these factors are related to the *contexts or environments of the reforms* Other factors have to do with the *operational strategies used to deliver education supply* and the final group relates to the demand side, and to *the pressure exerted by groups* that have a special interest in education A more detailed discussion follows

The Environment of the Reforms

The global context and the profile of the educational reforms

The objectives, policy components and concepts that orient the relationship between state and society in the educational reforms of this decade reflect a dynamic process that originates beyond the borders of each country All the educational reforms are built on the need to respond to the challenges of a global economy, or at least to each country s urgent desire to participate in international networks of trade and knowledge

At least in the documents that support the educational reforms the goal is to reorient education to meet the demand for competitiveness, the overwhelming obsession of our times In Jamaica, this new direction for reformulating education is taking the place of promoting representative democracy, which was the axis for mobilizing the education system during the post-independence period.[4] A direct line can be traced from Jomtien to Santo Domingo The principles stated at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, which the Dominican Republic helped to frame, formed the conceptual bases of the recent reform efforts in that country For El Salvador as well, educational reform is a response to changing national and international contexts [5] Paraguay's entry into the common market of the countries of the Southern Cone in Latin America (MERCOSUR) has helped to accelerate the implementation of educational reform.[6] Something similar occurred when Spain joined the European Community [7] For Nicaragua, the new educational reform represents a link in the process of adjustment to a new liberal political regime, committed

to globalization and reductions in the size and role of the state apparatus launched at the beginning of the decade [8] However this connection with the global society, which is an explicit goal of the reforms tends to weaken as reform activities move away from the center (the Ministry of Education, for example) towards the periphery (schools and municipalities)

Evolution and priorities of education

Although the reform projects, especially those promoted by central governments with support from international agencies, follow an almost identical model, the diverse environments in which they areimplemented lead, in practice, to diverging priorities, varied implementation styles, differing speeds of implementation, and the development of individual experiences

It could not be otherwise Despite undeniable progress recently in formal education in all the countries studied, there are still major differences between these countries and within each one in terms of the services supplied by as well as access to, the school system. Although school enrollment has steadily increased despite the grave economic and political difficulties that these countries have faced, there are notable differences, especially in the levels of coverage at the secondary school level (29 percent in El Salvador, 37 percent in the Dominican Republic and Paraguay, and 66 percent in Jamaica)

When compared to the educational level achieved by other countries with similar levels of economic development, the four countries in the sample present quite a varied picture While the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Paraguay fall well below expectations in terms of the percentage of students that finish fifth grade, Jamaica is above the expected percentages, as shown by the comparison of "national performance gaps" A national performance gap is defined as the difference between the percentage of children who reach fifth grade of primary school in each country, and the average percentage for countries that have the same level of economic development (see Table 2) [9] The four countries in the sample had different starting points for launching their educational reform in terms of the strength and scope of their education systems and Jamaica had a different institutional tradition as well The central themes of educational reform in each country and the specific goals to be achieved, for example through the ten-year education plans, are influenced by the previous development of the education system

While El Salvador has focused its efforts on establishing local collective power for running the schools Jamaica's school councils have been around for a century in the secondary schools and forty years in the primary schools Education policies such as decentralization make more sense in some countries than in others Similarly, the capacity available for research, design, execution, and surveillance of interventions

impacts on the stability and sustainability of the processes involved. And this capacity, in turn is a function of the way that the education system has evolved in the past.

The government's commitment to investment in education has also followed different paths in the four countries (Figure 1) The educational evolution of the countries and the financial priority placed on education help to determine the limits and potential of the reforms The government of the Dominican Republic began to implement its national consensus-based Ten-Year Plan with the help of international loans, but was subsequently unable to make good on its commitment to increase itsfinancial support, which was one of the reasons the process began to lose momentum El Salvador and Paraguay were able to fulfill their commitment to education, once the war and the dictatorship ended, respectively Jamaica has maintained a relatively stable pattern of financing education, despite the country's economic difficulties

Table 2 National Performance Gaps

	Percentage of children reaching grade 5 of primary school		
Country	Real %	Expected %	Difference
Dominican Republic	41	75	34
El Salvador	58	79	21
Jamaica	96	80	+16
Paraguay	74	81	7

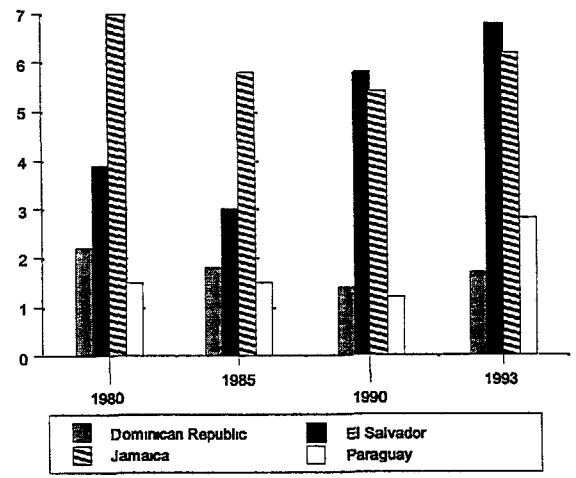
A *national performance gap* is the difference between the percentage of children reaching grade 5 in each country and the average performance of countries at the same level of economic development.

Sources Reaching grade 5 UNICEF figures based on UNESCO statistics GNP World Bank, *The World Bank Atlas 1995* 1994

However, although the allocation of economic resources is an indicator of the value that a society places on education, it does not in and of itself constitute the most dynamic force for change The hypothesis stated in the Jamaican case study is indicative of this

> Placing high value on education by communities is more advantageous for schooling than having greater resources Clearly, a high value on education combined with wealth can offer significant support to schooling However, a high value on education combined with poor circumstances could produce greater support for schooling than wealth and combined with a low value of education Emphasis on community possession of resources is misplaced if it is not backed by a high value on education [10]

Figure 1 Total Educational Expenditure as a % of GDP



Source Statistical Yearbook 1995 UNESCO

History and political dynamics

The relationship between education, national history, and general social policy reveals what may be the most marked contextual differences between the educational reforms in the different countries The activities leading up to educational reform in El Salvador were launched at a turning point in the country's history between the signing of the peace accords and the first post-war elections [11] From the earliest stages of the process, the promoters of the reform sought broad national participation by conducting an assessment in 1993, setting up the Commission on Education, Science, and Development one year later, and promoting a national conference in which more than 4,000 people took part Clearly democracy and participation were the backbone of the proposed reform, and remain the greatest challenge of its implementation, particularly at the level of the schools

Similarly, for Paraguay, the revitalization of education is viewed as a way to consolidate democracy Throughout almost two centuries of Republican history,

Paraguay has had very few democratic periods In 1989, after four decades of dictatorship, the country is rebuilding a pathway to democracy via the school system

The political history of Jamaica is also reflected in its education system and the approach it has adopted to promote educational reform The process is unfolding in a less conflict-ridden atmosphere than is the case in Nicaragua and El Salvador, and Jamaica already has a tradition of more autonomy in the schools, which explains why a theme like decentralization which is so important in almost all the countries of Latin America, has received less emphasis in Jamaica

In other countries of the region such as Nicaragua education has been the arena for political battles during the last two decades [12] And so it continues The ideological boundaries between the Sandinistas and the Liberals are clearly drawn in relation to the education system, its management and organization, and the orientation of the curriculum By contrast, in the Dominican Republic education has contributed to national unity All the political parties have worked to achieve the objectives of the educational reform, which emerged through the initiative of private enterprise

In every case the national political context is a major factor in determining how rapidly or slowly the reforms are implemented, particularly when they are promoted by the central government, as is the case with most of the reforms in Latin America The importance of these contextual factors has been highlighted in previous analyses of the successes and failures of educational reforms These studies also suggest that the political will of the Ministry of Education is not enough a favorable political climate for reform cannot be created without bringing in other ministries as participants and educating state governors and municipal administrators, as well as special interest groups such as teachers unions, private education and parents' associations The pedagogy of reform begins at home [13]

Institutional context for the implementation of reform

The immediate setting for an educational reform is the institution that is promoting it In most cases this is the Ministry of Education, but there are exceptions In the different states of Brazil, Minas Gerais and Parana, to mention examples with the broadest settings, ambitious educational reform plans are integrated through a network that includes every education ministry in the entire country The political and technical capabilities of the state or district ministries and secretariats, and their network of relationships with supporting organizations such as research centers, universities, and professional associations make up the resource base not only for energizing and launching the reform, but especially for ensuring its continuity and growth Observers of Colombia s educational reform in 1991 [14] and the reform in the Dominican Republic [15] the first of which was incomplete and the second of which was interrupted, agree that in both cases the level of training and professionalism in

the state bureaucracy was strongly related to the ultimate sustainability of the reform Educational reforms tend to be fragile especially when they depend on external resources, and they require a solid and committed group of professionals who are able to survive political and financial crises as well as credibility problems

The ministries can develop this capacity either internally or by establishing close partnerships with other organizations Chile provides one of the best examples of how the existing capacity of academic and research institutions can be used to improve the education system as a whole The Ministry of Education and Culture of Paraguay created an advisory council on the reform, departmental pedagogical units, and a unit for pedagogical research and experimentation Although almost all public centers for education research established in the past in Latin America have failed (INIDE in Peru and ICOLPE in Colombia are typical examples) for a time they have been able to provide very useful technical support to their respective ministries of education The positive relationship that the university has had with public education in Jamaica is in sharp contrast to the tension that reigns in Nicaragua between the universities and the public schools El Salvador has involved the universities as well as research groups directed by foreign agencies, in the assessment and development of proposed new educational reforms [16] But even more important than these temporary strategic alliances is the current movement to establish consortia that commit different social sectors to taking responsibility for education This trend can be seen most clearly in Jamaica, but it is also present in slightly different form in the other cases For example, El Salvador has used EDUCO in the local setting and the Dynamics Committee at the central level National consensus-building in the Dominican Republic is another example of this trend

It can be said, to summarize the contextual factors related to the implementation of educational reforms, that the changes occurring outside the borders of the nations in the region have inspired their efforts toward educational reform in all cases The educational path chosen by each country as well as the value placed on education, expands or shrinks the horizon of what is possible, and determines the issues that, in practice, are going to drive each national reform The dynamics of party politics accelerate or delay the implementation of these reforms, and the existing institutional capabilities provide energy and direction and a degree of stability for these changes

Implementation Strategies

The pedagogical strategy

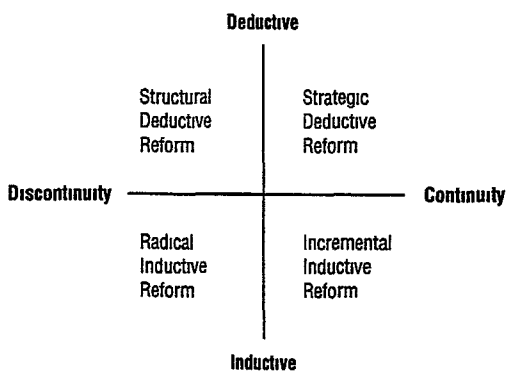
As with individual learning, the effort to bring about the changes in group behavior that are outlined in an educational reform can be guided by deductive reasoning, which usually moves from the general to the specific from the center to the periphery, and from the cosmopolitan setting to the local one This is true of the reforms

planned by the ministries of education which are then passed along to local governments, institutions, or communities to be implemented. Reforms can also be guided by inductive reasoning In the reverse process, these reforms grow out of practical experience or local movements that gradually move into the broader public domain, from one locale to another, from the periphery to the center, from the individual to the universal

The implementation of a social reform is usually understood and interpreted according to another axis or continuum, which represents the scope and coverage of the proposed change The difference can be seen in two opposing positions the belief that the reform is a fundamental change or break with the past, and the position that the reform is a normal extension of preestablished trends, in other words, a maturation rather than a revolution In the first case, generally the implementation process starts with a broad legal reform of the system, while in the second case the process begins with programs to reform or improve existing services

Examining the intersection of the two axes representing deduction-induction and continuity-discontinuity is a heuristic and temporary approach that can help us understand the different strategies used in the educational reforms (see Illustration 2) Although no educational reform can be precisely described by a single model in all cases, for the sake of discussion we can illustrate four approximate models of implementation that can serve as analogies for school teaching

Illustration 2 Implementation Strategies for Educational Reforms



A *structural-deductive* reform, for example, attempts to establish a system that is fundamentally new in all aspects and at all levels simultaneously, it is comprehensive and tends to be designed and implemented by central organizations The educational reform carried out in Peru from 1972 to 1980 is a good example [17] This strategy favors a coherent system over local participation and creativity Its success depends on eliminating old behavior patterns and learning new ones in various spheres and at various levels at the same time

Another group of reforms follows a pattern that is deductive (*strategic-deductive* reform) but concentrates on strategic axes where it is hoped that changes will occur that will gradually evolve to affect the entire system, as in the present reform in Chile This strategy allows for focused implementation and accumulation of experience over a gradual period of time

Another type of cumulative change that stems from experiences in the system's periphery constitutes the third perspective *incremental-inductive* reform. Its Achilles heel is the institutional capacity available for it to expand horizontally and vertically Finally, bringing about radical change by starting at the grassroots level and working up exemplifies another style (*radical-inductive*) There are few empirical references to this type of reform, beyond the pedagogy of liberation and other similar alternative education proposals

Three of the reforms analyzed in the previous chapters—Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, and El Salvador—were deductive in approach, implementing a systematic and centralized plan to renew the education system [18] El Salvador and Paraguay, like Argentina (1993) and Panama (1995), opted for a general educational reform supported by national legislation Reform in Jamaica, as in Chile, was defined by incremental changes rather than a reform of the entire system The changes in Jamaica s educational system during this decade fall within three complementary spheres of action transformation of primary education a reform project at the secondary level and a private sector initiative to introduce computer technology into schools

The pedagogy of deductive reform calls for designing a package or model that the higher levels then distribute to the lower ones, or which is passed along via social marketing schemes, entertainment media, advertising, seminars, publications, and guides This type of scheme tends to favor uniformity and central control of the process The contradictory forces aroused by inductive changes, such as local creativity and participation, are resolved under the umbrella of a deductive approach through strategies such as consensus-building or public debates This is the approach being attempted by the Ministry of Education in El Salvador

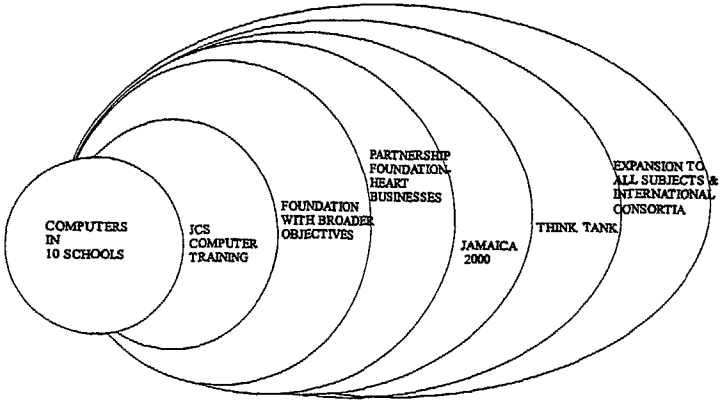
Inductive reforms follow various sets of guidelines and, analogous to the Socratic method of teaching, require constant adjustments The outside reformer acts more as a facilitator of change someone who inspires new approaches and trains human resources Inductive reform is constantly at risk because of the natural vulnerability that grows out of its dependence on local leadership and its lack of technical

resources and political support. Strategic ties with public organizations and international institutions help to resolve some of the difficulties encountered in this type of reform The benevolent support provided by Jamaica's Ministry of Education to the reform described above was a decisive factor in its continuity A similar case is that of the New School which was developed in Colombia and adapted in ten other countries thanks to linkages between governments and international organizations

The dynamics of expanding the reform in Jamaica are shown in Illustration 3 The reform was implemented through an expansion process that began with the establishment of computer laboratories in ten public secondary schools and a narrow focus to provide computer training and to continue expanding geographically and in terms of focus until all material in the school curriculum was covered. This process has been accompanied by significant institutional development by the Jamaican Computer Society (JCS) and its foundation, as well as by a number of consortia and interactive networks The question posed by the Jamaican case is whether a reform, like this one to introduce information technology into schools in order to improve quality and access, would produce better results if an inductive and spontaneous approach were used rather than central planning [19]

The above does not mean that the history of these educational reforms can be characterized by a consistent approach Reforms evolve and do not necessarily follow a single path The first stage of reform in the Dominican Republic could be described as an inductive process that emerged from the interest and commitment of a group of local business people and was subsequently expanded in a more deductive manner to include the entire country

Illustration 3 The Implementation of Educational Reform in Jamaica



Ownership and goals

In all of the cases studied, the single most important determinant of successful implementation of a reform that calls for profound changes and has a certain level of stability is the degree of ownership felt by the principal actors and ultimate implementers of the change This element, which is critical to any type of reform, is especially important in the case of education It does not fundamentally refer to the actual control of property per se, but rather to intellectual control of the main concepts, social significance, justification, and logic of the reform, as well as the ability to influence the reform and to harmonize ones own values with the general dynamics of the process Outside agencies can provide resources and opportunities but it is essential that a learning process go on within the organizations involved

It is easier to claim ownership of a future endeavor if one has a clear understanding of the underlying philosophy and goals The scope and complexity of the tasks required to implement an educational reform are reflected in the implicit and explicit goals that are expressed. El Salvador defined its goals in both quantitative and qualitative terms [20] The Ten-Year Education Plan in the Dominican Republic presents ten key goals described in terms of the actions that the central government expectsto carry out [21] The goals connect the abstract rhetoric of reform with the concrete methodology and the specific programs to be executed, but they are not unchanging Throughout the process of implementation, the goals of the reform are being continually reformulated and redirected. However, this provides the opportunity for interaction and thus leads to the inevitable collective learning process which is, in the final analysis the essence of educational reform

The goals and principles of a reform belong first to the reformers themselves A weak and uncommitted ministry of education cannot experience ownership of the reform, nor can it convince other sectors and levels of government to provide the necessary support In countries as diverse as Paraguay,[22] the United States, the Dominican Republic, and China,[23] recently proposed curriculum changes have met with serious obstacles in the classroom These changes require a profound shift in how a teacher s daily work is viewed, which is extremely difficult to achieve unless teachers have a clear intellectual and attitudinal understanding of the theoretical bases and practical implications of the proposed changes

The gap that separates abstract understanding from actual changes in behavior is well known Common sense, the literature available on educational reforms, and the information collected for the case studies presented in this report all tell us that it is important for teachers to feel ownership of the principles and practices of the proposed changes

Without exception, the training received by teachers and their professional commitment to the reform are the *sine qua non* of successful implementation in the

schools Most of the problems with the EDUCO programs in El Salvador are due to poor teacher training [24] This is probably the biggest challenge currently facing the reforms in Paraguay and the Dominican Republic To respond to this need in a manner that is more coherent with the philosophy of the reform, Paraguay is consolidating its Learning Circles, which bring together the principal actors who implement the change in the schools However despite the fact that all the reforms include a training component the training does not appear to be adequate for the task The inductive reform in Jamaica has also experienced similar problems The Brazilian state of Parana, in addition to its teacher training programs is experimenting with systems for institutional learning and development through projects that use a team approach to promote excellence in each school as an organization

Given that the majority of the educational reforms in the region have relied on international loans and donations for their execution, the question of where to obtain massive social appropriations once this first pilot stage is over will be an issue of overriding importance, since the answer will affect not only the survival of specific reforms, but, more importantly, the possibility that new reforms can be implemented without external support In many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the most influential social sectors tend to be isolated from the concerns and reforms of public schools Ensuring their support and involvement is a vital task for reformers But this support cannot be obtained if these sectors do not view the reforms as responding to their broader social needs and their interests as members of a national community

Leadership

Consistent leadership has led to notable achievements, within only a short time after the implementation of educational reforms in the four countries in the sample The first lesson offered by the Jamaican case is that,

> leadership is the *sine qua non* of educational reform Imaginative, bold, and dedicated leadership at all levels is the crucial ingredient for achieving fundamental change in the education system.[25]

The ministers of education in Nicaragua, El Salvador the Dominican Republic (at least during the initial stage), and Paraguay in collaboration with international officials, have provided stable and consistent leadership for the process Paradoxically, this at times overly centralized leadership can become a source of discontinuity when these officials themselves leave office In the Dominican Republic, for example, the implementation of the newly developed reform was affected by the departure of leaders from the Ministry of Education and the coordinating international agency What a reform needs even more than a charismatic leader to direct its implementation is a varied leadership structure that includes technical, administrative, and political staff who, in their different areas of work and through the various stages of the process, can involve other organizations or individuals as participants in the reform, and bring about the necessary changes in behavior and procedures

Although the ministries of education in most countries of the region have little influence or prestige, in some cases—for example El Salvador—they exercise national leadership when their reformbecomes a model for reform in other government sectors [26] If education is not viewed as a national priority by the government as a whole and if the officials in charge do not have broad convening power, then educational reforms remain isolated from the main issues that concern the society

Management and monitoring

The implementation of all the proposed reforms in the countries sampled calls for a management culture to be established that is substantially different from the one that existed before the reforms And unfortunately, the age-old practice of political favoritism has not yet been completely uprooted.[27] There is always the risk of returning to pre-established behavior patterns In the development of the Ten-Year Education Plan in the Dominican Republic, according to direct observers

> major distortions of essential aspects have occurred. The openness flexibility, and participatory processes that characterized the proposal and made it unique have progressively disappeared, to be replaced by activities that increasingly bureaucratize the formulation development, and evaluation of the different activities carried out within the framework of the reform There has been a return to the traditional authoritarian practices characteristic of educational management [28]

New words do not necessarily signify new behavior on the part of administrators and teachers Here Francis Bacon's assertion is very appropriate 'We think according to our nature, we speak according to norms and we act according to custom

The institutional constraints of the central agencies that manage a reform frequently impose a sluggish, bureaucratic style on its implementation In reforms that use a deductive approach and thus are normally driven by supply rather than by demand, monitoring is limited to verifying activities at the central level, rather than ensuring that real changes are taking place at the periphery of the system The achievements of the reform in the Dominican Republic for example tend to be measured in terms of the numbers of new curricula designed, books published, and teachers trained, rather than in terms of the level of execution or the impact of the reform on schools

In more inductive reforms the pressure of demand provides evidence of the limited capacity of local organizations to respond quickly and efficiently to technical needs This is a critical problem for the JCSF in Jamaica which affects the expansion of the reform program In Paraguay the process of ' delivering reform to teachers underwent a substantial change because of the response that the Ministry of Education was able to assemble and process The flexibility to adapt to needs andcircumstances is a sign of learning

As in the case of all purposeful learning, the essential conditions to ensure that a reform will be resilient and have broad social support are clear and attainable goals, importance in the eyes of society as a whole, and a sense of social ownership among the social actors involved Effective strategies for change, stable and dedicated leadership, and the organizational capacity to learn and adapt help to promote the execution of these reforms, provide continuity, and expand their influence by involving new agents of change

External Pressures

Capacity for negotiation and coordination

The implementation of an educational reform and its ultimate impact are shaped by a number of external forces The spokespeople for the reformers include a large variety of groups with a range of interests in education The reformers on the other hand, must deal with inevitable negotiation processes, and they also have the strategic option of encouraging consortia and associations to work toward common goals In both cases, the unified purpose and energy to conduct joint operations comes from addressing the interests of the groups involved

Some educational reforms on the national level have included a stage of "consciousness-raising" and consensus-building, which has developed from proposals by international agencies and national expert committees or from empirical assessments of education [29] However, the tendency has been to abandon this dynamic once the programs have begun execution, and to return to it only when politically expedient Paraguay has tried to maintain a reform advisory committee on a more permanent basis The government of Colombia and some private foundations opted in 1996 to create a mixed corporation to provide a more stable means of promoting research and development in the field of basic education in the country

As the experience of Jamaica suggests, reforms which begin at the grassroots level cannot achieve any kind of broader impact without either the participation, or at least the tolerant approval of the central government, as well as the support of organizations which provide economic stability and contact with the outside world. The experience of the Fe and Alegria Schools and the New School adapted in several countries of the region, bear out the importance of this kind of support

The capacity to negotiate with teachers' unions is probably one of the most decisive factors for the success of an educational reform which, like those in the present decade, is oriented towards making fundamental changes in decision-making about teaching practice, the relationship between the state and the unions, and how to establish effective partnerships between actors such as parents, and the productive sector [30] The need to negotiate extends beyond the education system to other spheres, including other ministries the business community, and the political arena

There is a better chance of successfully implementing a reform based on active involvement by local communities and families in poverty-stricken environments if there are other programs dealing with employment, adult education, child nutrition and development of local governments which strengthen the role of these communities and families

The parents and teachers involved in the EDUCO program in El Salvador identified some of the most serious obstacles to the implementation of the reform, stemming from financial problems on the part of parents, unemployment lack of education and local political power to participate in school decisions high rates of undernutrition, and a lack of local teachers in the regions where the reform was being implemented.[31] The demand for a better education increases as the local community organization becomes stronger

Institutional mechanisms of participation and networks of knowledge

Since educational reform is an endeavor involving both power and knowledge, the ties to knowledge-based institutions such as research centers, nongovernmental organizations that develop educational innovations, the publishing industry, and the mass media are vital Countries with limited research funds tend to make use of international consulting services These can play a very important role in providing orientation, but they cannot take the place of the kind of permanent expert knowledge that is needed in order to do follow-ups and evaluations of the reforms, as well as to develop new reforms

Research provides basic information, alternative models of operation, and evaluations The critical pressure imposed by researchers is also very useful to improve the quality of the services provided under the reform, and to reformulate policies In countries with a longer tradition of social research, such as Chile, Brazil Mexico, and Colombia, research centers and universities provide invaluable support to reform processes In other cases there are fewer of these institutions available, but they are no less necessary El Salvador for example, managed in a very short time to develop a diagnostic assessment of its educational system as the basis for reform, with the cooperation of a number of national and international organizations The Dominican Republic was an early subscriber to cosmopolitan trends of thought

regarding education issues In all the cases analyzed, however, the research component was tenuous and poorly developed.

The Life Cycle of Educational Reforms

The educational reforms at the end of the 20th century are being generated by political forces and global changes outside the education systems themselves These reforms are a response to the uncertain future facing these nations, and they are built around a core of ideas that transcends the concerns of any particular country On one hand, it can be said that there is a new humanism that places individual and group learning at the center of social policy On the other hand, current educational reforms are not immune to the influence and appeal of contemporary productive organizations, or to the temptation to reduce education to a mechanism for achieving economic competitiveness

After an educational reform is launched in a given country, it takes on a life and profile of its own as it begins to mix with local political forces and the interests of different actors even if it has similar ideological roots to other reforms Often reforms do not survive past their initial stages when they fail to achieve political viability, a legal framework or financial support In other cases, they have time to mature, to produce results and to give rise to another cycle of change and adjustment But what makes the educational reforms of our era different from past reforms is that, by trying to establish a broader base of social participation, they create a new political climate as well as an unprecedented opportunity to organize civil society The final phase in an educational reform cycle is implementation at the national or state level, beyond the limited scope of the original pilot projects or modest trials While all the reforms analyzed in this document survived their design or self-definition stage, none has achieved full implementation Some educational reforms have produced dramatic social changes and become prototypes for introducing other social innovations, as is the case in Jamaica and El Salvador

The social learning pattern implicit in the execution of an educational reform cannot be described by a single model More inductive reforms, for example, tend to have a lengthy design phase based on trial and error, assimilation, and accommodation In other reforms, various stages can be identified as the reform passes from thought to action, since the intervention model is first developed and then implemented, according to a stimulus-response methodology The most influential factors also vary during each stage that can be differentiated throughout the evolution of a reform

The Future of Past and Present Reforms

The experience of past educational reforms indicates that, although most proposed reforms are never completely implemented,[32] the process of developing and executing a reform with broad coverage in a field like education where technical elements converge with special interests and national utopian ideals can help create the capacity required to establish goals, execute programs, rethink policies, negotiate with special interest groups, and develop mechanisms for participation and interaction among the different sectors of society

The educational reforms in progress allow us to confirm that this capacity is still weak in the countries in the sample Despite the fact that each country presents a range of relatively modest achievements in terms of coverage, changes in organizational culture, family and community participation, and changes in local schools, all of these accomplishments seem tenuous and vulnerable in the face of political variables and limited technical and financial resources Above all there is little capacity to inspire the society to work together as a whole

The reforms of the present decade, perhaps more than past reforms, reflect a growing demand that is based on the countries urgent desire to close the performance gaps that exist inside their borders, as well as between them and other nations But these reforms must obtain wide support beyond the education field, demonstrate that their strategies are politically feasible, and provide evidence that these strategies are connected to the results that have been achieved In their conception and execution, these reforms must practice the same pedagogical principles that they preach provide a stable capacity that will make it possible to find solutions to new problems and to develop new reforms, promote contextual relevance and participation, and emphasize results, rather than inputs

NOTES

[1] Bernard Anne *The Consortium Graduate School of the Social Sciences The Process of Building an Institution* Ottawa International Development Research Centre 1993

McGinn Noel and Borden Allison. *Framing Questions Constructing Answers Linking Research with Educational Policies in Developing Countries* Boston Harvard Institute for International Development 1995

[3] Coulson Andrew Market versus Monopolies in Education. The Historical Evidence *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 4 9 (1996)

[4] Miller Errol Chapter 4

[5] Hobbs Cynthia and Rentel Kathryn Chapter 3

[6] Sarubbi Zaldivar Vicente Message to the editors Asuncion, December 16 1996

[7] Ruiz Casares Monica. La Reforma Educativa en Espana. Appendix

[8] Perez Andres Condicionantes de la Reforma Educativa en Nicaragua, presented at the meeting on educational reforms in Washington, DC 1996

[9] The expected percentage is calculated based on a regression line that uses per capita income and data on the number of children who have attended fifth grade (UNICEF *The Progress of Nations 1995* 150-151) So in the Dominican Republic for example 41percent of the children enter fifth grade The average percentage in countries with a similar level of economic development is 75 percent. The Dominican Republic would therefore be 37 percentage points below these countries

[10] Miller Errol Chapter 4

[11] Guzman Jose Luis In *La educacion en El Salvador De cara al siglo xxi Desafios y oportunidades* San Salvador- UCA Editores 1995

[12] Arnove Robert. *La educacion como terreno de conflicto Nicaragua 1979 1993* Managua. Editoral UCA 1995

[13] Montenegro Armando *An Incomplete Educational Reform The Case of Colombia* Human Capital Development and Operations Policy Working Papers World Bank, 1995

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Zaiter Josefina. Chapter 2

[16] Simeon Cañas Central American University *La educacion en el El Salvador De cara al siglo xxi Desafios y oportunidades* San Salvado author 1995

[17] Ines Aguerrondo proposes that the failure of many of the past educational reforms in Latin America was due to their initial approach of using centralized, normative and linear planning Educational reform in Latin America. A survey of four decades *Prospects* 12 3 (1992)

[18] Although the first stage of educational reform in the Dominican Republic was more inductive the opposite occurred in Paraguay The reform is attempting to follow less deductive paths (*see* Chapter 5)

[19] Miller Errol Chapter 4

[20] El Salvador s educational reform proposed ambitious quantitative and qualitative goals to be achieved by the year 2005 The quantitative goals include specific enrollment levels in preschool (60 percent) and the first level of basic education (90 percent) as well as lower rates of repeat grades school leaving and older students The qualitative goals include involving families and communities in running schools and more efficient management of state resources

[21] Among the ten goals proposed by the Dominican Republic are expanding educational services at the preschool primary secondary and technical education levels ending illiteracy reorganizing higher education reevaluating the teaching profession and teacher training- increasing investment in education and developing a national awareness campaign

[22] Information collected from focus groups and interviews with teachers involved in educational reform in Paraguay in 1995 suggests that most teachers were more or less confused about how to implement the new educational reform This situation led to a change in the methodologies for working with teachers See *Proyecto de apoyo a la reforma educativa del Paraguay Educacion Primaria practicas docentes organizacion escolar y relaciones con la comunidad* Mimeo Asuncion 1995

[23] The main obstacle faced by the educational reform of primary education in rural China was the poor qualifications of teachers See Wang Yidan and Jacobson, Stephen L 'The Reform of Rural Education in China. *International Journal of Educational Reform* 2 4 (1993)

[24] Bejar Rafael Chapter 3

[25] Miller Errol Chapter 4

[26] Bejar Rafael Chapter 3

[27] Vincent M. and Pimentel J Cited by Josefina Zaiter Chapter 2

[28] Zaiter Josefina. Chapter 2

[29] El Salvador and the Dominican Republic developed a national consensus building process Colombia and El Salvador created national expert committees who articulated the general principals of the reforms

[30] In addition to the voice that teachers unions have had in stipulating the working conditions of their members they want to help teachers become more active as professionals The educational reforms in Spain, Mexico and Colombia have also sparked technical debates

[31] Bejar Rafael Chapter 3

[32] Aguerrondo Ines 'Educational Reform in Latin America. A Survey of Four Decades *Prospects* 22 3 (1992) and *op cit* Montenegro 1995

APPENDIX

EDUCATION REFORM IN SPAIN

Monica Ruiz-Casares

Abstract
The rapid and profound changes that the world economy and the information systems are going through are pushing for education reforms all around the globe Spain is no exception Immersed in a process of change, Spain, like many other countries, confronts severe challenges, such as budget constraints, domestic and international pressures, and decentralization of education management and finances In addition Spain has been undergoing a process of democratization for the last two decades and is involved in the construction of the European Union, to which it has belonged since 1986 This new scenario of democratic and European life in which present generations are being brought up and trained differs radically from the Spain of the 1970s and, therefore, is a key to understanding the new education reform efforts This study examines the interaction among the global environment, the European context, the internal evolution of Spain, and the recent changes in the education system

This paper mainly focuses on reactions to structural changes and the perceptions about such changes The diverse factors that were operating at the time the reform is undertaken and that are central to its understanding led to a profound change in all nonuniversity education levels Increasing compulsory, free and comprehensive basic education, without divisions by branches or schools, up to age sixteen, rearranging the old system's structure, and improving the quality of education are the main objectives of the reform.

The new legal structure will allow students to get two more years of free basic education and will facilitate a more agile management by decentralizing the competencies up to now held by the central departments of the Ministry while preserving common minimum standards throughout the country The structure of the education system is now similar to that of other European countries and facilitates the overall improvement of education Further, a channel is open for the participation of the community in the education process, as well as for the establishment of mechanisms for bringing teachers and curricula closer to the real context in schools and the specific needs of each student.

This paper starts with an overview of the historic and sociopolitical circumstances that preceded and encompassed the reform A brief description of the Euro-

pean policies on education will follow as the mandates of the European Union filter through the text of the reform The analysis of the new policy guidelines and the main changes introduced by the new law constitute the core of this study Finally, the reaction of the people who are most directly affected by these modifications will be presented.

The methodology consisted of analyzing documentation related to different aspects of the reform, namely, the General Arrangement of the Education System Organic Act (LOGSE 1/1990, October 3rd), literature published by the Spanish Ministry of Education articles and books written by experts in the field of education and by people involved in the reform process and updated press releases and articles Additionally, some interviews were conducted with teachers and staff of the Education Department at the Spanish Embassy in Washington DC

Education in Perspective

Recent educational history The Education Reform Act of 1970

Change in education was more perceptible in the 1960s and 1970s than in the two previous decades of Franco s Spain In the 1960s, several steps were taken to articulate the growing demand for education in 1963, a national campaign to eliminate illiteracy was undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Science, in 1964, the Government increased compulsory school attendance by two years, therefore, requiring children to be in school from the age of six to fourteen In the same year, the Technical Education Act increased opportunities in secondary and higher education as did the opening of additional state and private secondary schools In 1966 a Primary Education Act was promulgated. However, the lack of funding made compulsory education impossible, and the social impact of extended, free compulsory education would not be known until the General Education Act (LGE for its Spanish terms, 14/1970 of 4th August) was passed.

For the first time, the LGE considered education as a means of social advancement and developed a new social structure and a new way of economic production, in fact, the Act aimed at preparing the work force that is necessary to operate modern industrial technology Certainly, "before the education reform, the situation with regard to vocational training was, to put it briefly, characterized by a traditional super-abundance of university graduates a widespread scarcity of professional or technical workers at the intermediate level, and a labor force with an inadequate basic education and few or no occupational skills [1]

The Act includes the following main contributions [2]

- Unity, continuity, and flexibility of the educational process
- Adaptation of content and methodology to the psychological changes in the pupils

- Replacement of the traditional examination by continuous evaluation Interest in life-long education to help everyone develop to their full capacity
- Greater attention to the principle of participation by all sectors involved in education
- Significance of equal opportunity

Although this system officially guaranteed ten years of compulsory schooling, the generalization of education only reached as far as General Basic Education (EGB) [3] The equality of opportunities that the Act addresses was jeopardized by constant cuts in the budget for grants, the low amounts of financial aid offered students, and a basic education that was not adequate to the socioeconomic and geographical environment of students, "imposing a mandatory uniformity or an authoritarian centralism [4] The refusal of the Government to recognize local language differences in Spain is an example of the uniformity and "ideological reproduction sought

Numerous circumstances explain the general discontent and push for change the contradictions and ambiguities of the LGE that low-ranking administrators must interpret the government's favoritism of private (Roman Catholic) schools, a detriment to the public ones, the failure to offer free, compulsory education to all Spaniards and to consider the different needs and heritage of children from the diverse regions, social classes, and rural/urban environments, and the political circumstances that followed the end of the dictatorship

Inadequacies and deficiencies in the 1970s

With the death of Franco in 1975, a democratic and decentralized form of government substituted the existing autocratic institutions, and a great deal of political collaboration, compromise, and consensus among all political groups with parliamentary representation was needed to hold the country together The ending of the Franco regime, the transitioning to democracy, the passing of the Constitution of 1978, and the integrating of Spain into the European Community changed the focus of the governing of the educational system The system of education needed to be transformed

In the late 1980s, besides the new political and social circumstances, some educational problems also had to be solved

- High failure rates in compulsory education and need to support educational guidance
- Lack of organization and regulation of preprimary education Insufficient attention to physical exercise, arts subjects, and foreign languages

- Excessive formal academics of vocational training
- Inadequacy of the curriculum, particularly at the Baccalaureate level, to address the needs abilities, and motivation of the students
- Need to establish a better connection between secondary education and occupational work
- Insufficient attention to children with special needs
- Need to match the European Union regulations and to give the Spanish educational system a structure and teaching quality similar to other European countries
- Insufficient mechanisms to evaluate the educational system
- Need for better teacher training

In 1983 the Ministry of Education and the Autonomous Communities started to experiment with partial reforms in volunteer schools in the last years of compulsory schooling, in Vocational Training and Baccalaureate *institutos*, and in preschool education The results of these experimental reforms and the conclusions arising from the debate on the Education Reform Project, presented by the Ministry of Education and Science in June 1987, and a specific document on Vocational Training presented in February 1988, were used to develop the White Book for Reform of the Educational System. Following months of continual student and teacher strikes in 1989, the Minister of Education presented the White Book, which was then open to public debate In October 1990, the new bill LOGSE,[5] was approved by the Socialist Party, the Nationalist Parties of Catalonia and the Basque Country, the Union of the Left, and other small parties The Conservative Party, the main opposition party at the time (approximately 30 percent of the votes) voted against LOGSE [6]

Political Context

The Constitution of 1978 found a balance between two models the unitary and the federal Following the death of General Franco, the fifty existing provinces were aggregated into seventeen Autonomous Communities, each with its semiautonomous, popularly elected parliament Each region was shaped, as much as possible, around common socioeconomic cultural, and linguistic characteristics

The Constitution of 1978 included education as one of the areas of shared authority among the central government and the regional parliaments The central government[7] has exclusive responsibility for the general framework of the educational system and the broad strokes of policy and direction, including basic legislation, general organization of the system's levels and subject material regulation of the core body of knowledge (called *minimums*), the requisites for passing from one grade to another, and the minimum condition that educational centers must comply with In addition only the national government can grant graduation diplomas, manage teacher training and placement, and control the academic calendar Finally,

the central powers determine the general planning of education investment policy on study assistance ownership and management of Spanish schools abroad, and international cooperation on educational matters

The regional and local powers would fill in the established framework The Autonomous Communities assume responsibility for regulating and administering all aspects levels, and forms of education except for those responsibilities attributed exclusively to the State Finally, the local schools and teaching staff would elaborate and execute the resulting program within a considerable margin of autonomy To a certain extent, this organization is based on the principle of subsidiarity, according to which the State forgoes management of those matters that can be undertaken by the regions themselves Therefore the Spanish education system has a common structure and core curriculum that is decentralized by the Autonomous Regions

However, not all the regions would receive their competencies (decision-making authority with corresponding financial transfers) at the same time An incremental approach was adopted (devolution at fast, medium, and slow tracks) To date, transferral of educational responsibilities has only been completed to seven Autonomous Communities (Andalucia, Canary Islands the Basque Country, Catalonia, Galicia, Navarre, and Valencia) In the rest of the Autonomous Communities, educational management is still in the hands of the Ministry of Education and Science This means that the Ministry of Education plays a dual role in ten Autonomous Communities first by exercising the functions of the State in education and, second, by assuming some of the responsibilities that belong to these regions

The educational responsibilities of the Town Councils are very limited. The Municipal Governments are responsible for maintaining preschools and providing the land for their construction These institutions also have the option to hold complementary activities, such as other pedagogic and orientative services, the organization of seminars and workshops, artistic and sports activities and centers for adult literacy programs

Encouraging community participation in educational management is also part of the decentralization process Furthermore, to achieve greater social representation and to be more receptive to particular education needs, the reform emphasizes that all governing bodies (staff meetings, school boards at all levels the General Council of Vocational Education, and the Universities Council) have to be participatory

Finally, the powers of the peripheral services of the Ministry of Education have been modified not only because of the return of educational powers to the Autonomous Communities but also because of the process of decentralization taking place at the Ministry itself therefore many matters are resolved at the provincial level

The European dimension of education

In 1986 after decades of isolation Spain joined the European Economic Community—called European Union since 1 November, 1994— which aims to reach the total union (political social, and economic) of the member nations Consequently, the European Union strives to democratize the process of social change and to construct a people's Europe The fifteen countries of the Union together face major social and economic challenges, such as improving the employment situation, strengthening the Union s international competitiveness, promoting equal opportunities for men and women, and fighting against poverty and social exclusion

Hence, investing in human resources development as a key means of ensuring competitive success in the global market is important Emphasis on initial training and education is essential because of the significant preventive function they can provide and their medium- to long-term importance in determining a meaningful continuing education and training system. [8] Also, to reinforce the social cohesion, the Union stimulates establishing youth policies, integrating older and disabled people, fighting against racism and xenophobia, and creating new partnerships between all kinds of institutions

There have been profound changes in the structure of the working population, both in occupation and gender, in demography and migration in the balance between the urban and the rural population, in the family structure, and in working-education-leisure patterns The Union recognizes the urgency and the potential of a common action to address the new challenges of the future and pays special attention to the development of the most marginal areas of the region Accordingly, some of the Spanish less-favored and more remote regions have benefitted from special Community policies [9] During the last two decades most of the European Community s education initiatives have gone towards encouraging cooperation between universities and colleges and helping European students to become more mobile However, the Maastricht Treaty on European Union has given the Community new competences in education A legal framework that allows the Community to take further action in education, particularly at the school level, now exist Nonetheless, member states remain responsible for the content and organization of studies Two principles, integration and subsidiarity (European), are combined in a spirit of cooperation among States and consultation with the social partners Promoting European citizenship is one of the main functions of education in the Union The Community adopts a pan-European approach to education as a means of strengthening Europe s economic and social cohesion [10] Hence, in order to develop a Europe of unity, education must instill European and multi cultural democratic values and knowledge of the various European cultures

Nevertheless article 126 of the Maastricht Treaty adheres to the Principle of Subsidiarity to ensure that no attempt is made to harmonize education systems in

Europe Consequently, the Community will contribute "to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action while fully respecting the responsibility of Member States for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity"[11]

The European Union relies on the use of three principal methods or "instruments of cooperation

- **Networking**, by exchanging ideas and creating transnational partnerships of organizations and institutions facing similar issues
- **Mobility and exchange** of staff and students, and long-term collaboration among educational institutions
- **Joint transnational projects** aimed at sharing innovative approaches to education and at introducing a European dimension to the content of training

The exchange of experience and information on the education systems of Member States and on their reforms and innovations has been boosted by the creation of the European information network on education, as well as by the study visits for education policymakers and specialists organized by the ARION Community action program

Cooperation among educational institutions at all levels is one of the best ways of giving concrete expression to the European dimension in education The Commission encourages the learning of languages the mobility of students and teachers, the mutual recognition of qualifications, and an extension of distance teaching In school education, special attention is given to the cooperation among schools at the Community level and to the development of a network of partnerships geared towards ensuring that everyone enjoys equal opportunities in a quality education system

Spain's process of integration in the European Union presents challenges such as raising the country's competitive level and, therefore, increasing the quality of education at all levels The right of movement of residence of citizens in the Common Market gives rise to international equivalences and adaptation of professional titles and capacities In an increasingly interdependent world, a large number of national goals are a reflection of or at least a complement to international recommendations and expectations Certainly the Spanish Educational Reform follows European guidelines consequently, it emphasizes the shared values of democracy, the equality of opportunity and respect for diversity, the improvement of the quality of education and, particularly, of the vocational qualification of the Community s

workforce, and the broadening of students' competence in foreign languages Similarly, the reform introduces a European dimension in training, promotes innovation in teaching, and invests in teacher training and re training

Education Reform in the 1990s

New educational policy guidelines

Access, equity and quality are the three main goals of the current educational reform in Spain This reform aims at extending compulsory education, promoting equal opportunities for all, and improving the quality of teaching The restructuring of the education system aims to give it a structure similar to that of other European countries and facilitates the overall improvement of education

One of the main objectives of the reform is to extend basic education The LOGSE offers complete basic education for all young people up to sixteen years of age Not only was the eight-year compulsory schooling period introduced by the 1970 General Education Act shorter than that of the majority of the other European countries but it was insufficient to guarantee good educational opportunities to Spanish citizens and the level of basic education necessary in our modern society Extending compulsory education by two years, modifying educational levels, and improving teaching quality will help fourteen-year-olds avoid making premature choices between educational and professional options and will reduce the present high examination failures and dropout rates Catching up with other European countries also required that Spain change the school leaving age of fourteen to match the European Union regulations age of sixteen Also, the new design of Vocational Training aims to offer both practically oriented courses and a real link between schools and the occupational world.

The reform also answers to the principle of comprehensiveness by offering the same educational opportunities to all children and postponing the separation of cohorts into different tracks until the age of sixteen A holistic approach is balanced with the respect for diversity of abilities and interests Hence, diverse arrangements are available to support children with special needs, the openness and flexibility of the curriculum, and the introduction of optional subjects at the Basic Secondary Education level

The most relevant point in the present laws on Special Education in Spain is the project for integration of students with special education requirements into ordinary schools Integration is a process through which a child with a disability is accepted in the ordinary school The renovation of the general education system that this project involves includes curricular adaptations organizational and structural changes, and any support that individual students may need This work is carried out by an Interdiscipline Team in cooperation with the school and the family As the Ministry

itself states, 'the education administration must respond to all the demands on the school caused by integration and the concept of special education requirements for students with individual needs, special education needs in rural areas and unusually intelligent students which is a challenge for centers as well as the education administration "[12]

The Law offers several recommendations for improving the quality of all levels of education the professional satisfaction and training of teachers, the new curriculum and educational materials, school resources and organization, innovation and research, educational and professional advice, and the assessment of schools and the educational system Each of these aspects of education is summarized below

- **Professional Satisfaction and Training of Teachers**

To provide professional and economic incentives to teachers and to improve their working conditions, the Ministry has negotiated a salary structure based on training and has developed an Annual National Teacher Training Plan, which offers an extensive range of free training courses through universities, Teachers Centers (CEPs), and other institutions The LOGSE significantly increases participation of the corps of teachers in planning courses and in developing of performance standards at the school level

- **New Curriculum and Educational Materials**

The new curriculum is flexible and sensitive to recent scientific social and technological changes, as well as the priorities of each Autonomous Community The openness of the new curriculum allows schools and teachers to adapt the basic curricular requirements to the cultural and social characteristics of the region, the school, and each student The curriculum, as well as the evaluation criteria, aims not only at acquiring of specific content, but also at developing students diverse aptitudes The reform underlines the importance of developing books and teaching materials that respond to the needs of teachers and students and that facilitate introducing of the reform

- **School Resources and Organization**

"The new level of Basic Secondary Education presents numerous organizational difficulties, because it is necessary to include more optional subjects, cater to the heterogeneity of students, and coordinate the different departments The reform puts an emphasis on the role of head teachers, on reinforcing the role of governing boards by appointing a professional administrator, and on flexible and effective management by the heads of departments "[13]

The restructuring the system also involves extending transportation and lunch services, constructing new schools, and adapting of the existing ones (by incorporating libraries and computer, technology art, and music rooms, and by creating an advisory department in all secondary education centers)

Innovation and Research

The LOGSE encourages research and innovations in curricular development, educational methodology, teaching materials, school organization, and cooperation among institutions A new concept considers school to be not only a work space but also a place where research can be conducted and daily problems can be solved. Thus teachers become researchers of their own teaching methods, bringing theory and practice closer

- **Educational and Professional Advice**

Each group of students will have a tutor who will provide counseling and academic and professional guidance Additionally, an advisory department in all secondary schools will collaborate in elaborating of the school Curricular Project, promote guidance to students, and support students who have learning difficulties Furthermore each educational district will have a psycho-pedagogical team to help children who have disabilities and an advisory department to provide technical support and advice to teacher teams, to contribute to curricular development, to promote cooperation among schools, and to collaborate with Teacher Centers and other local institutions [14]

- **Assessment of Schools and the Educational System**

The Law pays attention to the examination and assessment of students, as well as to the assessment of the way schools and the whole educational system function The LOGSE indicates that assessment of the students' learning should be global and continuous" (Article 15 1), and is the basis for students advancing from grade to grade

To guarantee implementing the laws and to improve the quality of the educational system, the LOGSE reinforces the role of inspectors in assessing schools and the educational system, and proposes establishing of the National Institute for Quality and Assessment (INCE) [15] This institute s functions would be to create systems for assessing the different educational levels and schools and to conduct research, studies, and evaluations of the educational system with the aim of putting forward initiatives and suggestions to the Educational Administrations that may help to improve teaching quality

Faithful to the principle of permanent education the law also regulates adult education the purpose of which is to ensure that adults can acquire, update complete, or broaden their knowledge and aptitudes for their personal or occupational betterment Following European dictates, the new regulation also gives an impetus to distance education

Organization and structure of the new education system

The new educational structure consists of preschool education (up to six years old) primary education (six to twelve years old) basic secondary education (twelve to sixteen years old), Baccalaureate (sixteen to eighteen years old), cycles of vocational training intermediate level (sixteen to seventeen years old) and cycles of vocational training advanced level (eighteen to nineteen years old) All levels are divided into two-year cycles [16] each cycle constituting a complete curricular and organizational unit The LOGSE involves only nonuniversity levels and, therefore, does not bring any changes in higher education which remains as established by the Organic Act 11/1983 on University Reform (LRU)

For the first time the law regulates the educational objectives of preschool education and decrees that it is voluntary for parents, but mandatory for local educational authorities Primary education and *compulsory secondary education* (ESO) constitute a ten-year compulsory basic education program for all students In both levels of compulsory education, physical exercise, arts subjects, foreign language education, and special arrangements for children with learning difficulties are emphasized. The most striking changes in the new system arrangement are proposed in the secondary education level The structure outlined above consists of two levels compulsory lower secondary (ages twelve-sixteen) to complete basic education and postcompulsory upper secondary (ages sixteen-eighteen), made up of the Baccalaureate and the specific middle Vocational Training At the end of ESO, students who have achieved all the stipulated objectives receive the "Graduado en Educacion Secundaria certificate which gives them access to the Baccalaureate or the Intermediate-grade Vocational Training For those who do not achieve the objectives, social guarantee training programs will provide them with basic and vocational training to prepare them to start working or to enter Intermediate-grade Vocational Training

The Baccalaureate covers the last two years of upper secondary education and comprises four different modes Arts [17] natural and health sciences, human and social sciences, and technology Each of these modes will give preference to certain university careers and to specific Upper Vocational Training modules In each branch, several options are available In addition to the subjects common to each branch and the strictly optional subjects, there are some common core subjects for all students physical education, philosophy, history, and language and literature (regional language Spanish, and foreign language/s) The fact that not all the *institutos* offer all the branches may generate some discrimination when students try to enter tertiary

education institutions An important change is that the Baccalaureate now prepares not only for access to the university but also for a higher-level vocational training

In an effort to respond to changes in the labor market and to comply with the European regulations in this matter the reform pays considerable attention to extending and building up regular vocational training The effective implementing of the principle of free movement of workers among the fifteen Union countries and their right to work involves establishing common contents, training levels, and criteria to ensure recognition of vocational qualifications The law indicates that all students should get professional basic training at the Compulsory Secondary Education and the Baccalaureate levels (basic Vocational Training) At the same time, the new regulation dedicates Chapter IV of Title I to design the new structure, thus, Vocational Training is made up of Intermediate and Higher-level training cycles (specific Vocational Training), divided into modules of variable length depending on the different occupational fields The LOGSE encourages continuing training of young and adult workers and developing courses that are practically oriented and updated in content Furthermore, it calls for the participation and cooperation of employers and trade unions in the designing, planning, implementing and development of the curricula, as well as in the organizing of practical trainings in companies Business circles must establish closer links with education and increasingly consider training as a profitable investment so that, once the population has been given a broad basic education, this can be completed and molded in line with the changing needs of the labor market"[18]

The calendar of the reform

The new Act should be fully implemented in ten years [19] For most educational levels, the structure established by the LGE of 1970 will be replaced as the new levels and cycles are brought into effect (Figure 1) In addition, early implementation of Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate in a specific number of schools has been planned in parallel with the gradual implementation of the system, this "implementation in advance has been the cause of concern for parents, teachers, and administrators

Alvaro Marchesi former Secretary of State for Education explains that ' the extension of compulsory education implies a great effort of organization of the centers, teacher training and investments, and postponing the reform of the 1,200 centers until the year 1996 would create many difficulties [20] Instead, the Act calls for a gradual, sustained, and systematic process The introduction of the new system will span until the year 2000, giving schools time to make the changes to comply with the minimum requirements established by law

Figure 1 General Timetable for Implementing the LOGSE

Academic Year	New System	Replacing
1991 1992	Preschool Education	
1992 1993	1st and 2nd primary	1st and 2nd EGB
1993 1994	3rd and 4th primary	3rd and 4th EGB
1994 1995	5th primary	5th EGB
1995 1996	6th primary	6th EGB
1996 1997	1st ESO	7th EGB
1997 1998	2nd ESO	8th EGB
1998 1999	3rd ESO 1st Baccalaureate	1st BUP (Unified Baccalaureate) 1st FP I (Vocational Education) 3rd BUP 1st FP II (specialized studies system)
1999-2000	4th ESO 2nd Baccalaureate specific vocational training at the middle level	2nd BUP 2nd FP I COU (university preparatory year) 1st FP II (general system) 2nd FP I (specialized studies system)
2000 2001		2nd FP II (general system) 3rd FP II (specialized studies system)

Note Specific vocational training at higher level will be progressively brought in throughout this period and is therefore not included in the table
Source Education at a Glance OECD Indicators 1995

Curriculum and assessment in the new system

Every education system has its own context, its own history, and characteristics that define the debate on issues (such as quality, efficiency, and equality) and the decisions adopted.

The new system has several major changes The LOGSE extends compulsory schooling up to the age of sixteen, following a comprehensive school model that students follow the same route through school until the age of sixteen In the next few years Spain will face an increase in the proportion of young people between the ages of fourteen and sixteen who will be studying in the general stream of the educational system.[21] The implementation of the reform generates the need for more *institutos* (secondary education institutions), different qualifications of teachers, and

restructuring of schools This situation has given rise to concerns that have been voiced publicly by parents students, and other people involved in education

The new structure and requirements of the educational system bring other important changes, such as reducing the student teacher ratio[22] (still not in place in all parts of the country), introducing at the primary level teachers specialized in music foreign language, and physical education, and generating a surplus of primary teachers who will have to be retrained to teach new subjects at primary level or sit for exams to move up to secondary level Meanwhile, teachers lacking the appropriate training in certain levels and subjects are teaching 'related disciplines, which has generated heated social debate

The LOGSE introduces a new curriculum design and development model which is more flexible and open, and gets the Autonomous Communities, schools, and teaching staff more actively involved. The new curriculum is conceived as a compendium of concepts, attitudes and values, as well as a guide to teaching This curriculum is defined at three different levels the Basic Curriculum Design the Curricular Projects, and the Classroom Programs The Basic Curricular Design or official curriculum, comprises the compulsory nationwide core curriculum and the curriculum established by the Autonomous Communities All the proposals made by the different administrations have to be discussed in the State/Regional School Council, a body of participation in which teachers, parents students, and administrators are represented.

At the second level are the Curricular Projects, adaptations of the official curriculum to the specific characteristics and circumstances of the school The Curricular Projects are designed by levels areas and cycles by the team of teachers of each level, approved by the Teachers Senate and the School Council, and finally, supervised by the Inspectorate At the third level are the Classroom Programs that accommodate the school's Curricular Project for a particular set of students Each teacher has to create a project for every set of students each year

In line with the Spanish model for curriculum development assessment of pupils, teachers, and schools is conducted through a flexible, school-based system Schools[23] should include attainment targets for the different areas of each level in their Curricular Project, always respecting the official curriculum, and decisions about accreditations, qualifications and moving up a grade are made by teachers and tutors together This is another example of how the LOGSE aims at increasing the involvement of teachers in decision making processes According to Alejandro Tiana-Ferrer, Director of the INCE,

> This approach to assessment is based on a constructivist conception of learning which has inspired the Spanish model of curricular development From the need for coherence between the curriculum and the assessment of pupils are derived requirements such as the continuous, global and integrated nature of the latter and the insistence on the formative, regulatory, guiding and self-correcting nature of the assessment which must be geared to improving processes and results In daily classroom activities teaching, learning and assessment are very closely linked, forming part of a teaching and learning continuum[24]

In contrast to nearly all other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, there are not national or external examinations in Spain except after the Baccalaureate for those wishing to enter university Having each school decide whether students move up and having teachers assess their own students throughout the period of compulsory schooling can create problems of inequality among students and among schools [25]

Few teachers have changed from assessing contents to assessing abilities Although limited change is visible, some schools are developing innovative approaches to the process of assessment Hence, the Ministry of Education is giving importance to implementing the new curriculum, in-service teacher training and support for schools

Implementation of the Reform and Reaction of the Spanish People

There are numerous groups with vested interests in educational reform activities Numbered among these are teachers and administrators' unions, parents and students, the Catholic Church, corporations and financial institutions, and many other individuals and groups with different degrees of influence in furthering the reform impetus

Even though it is early in the history of the reform to expect extended evaluation of the changes in Spanish education, parents teachers researchers, policymakers, and other social agents have already undertaken that task and have voiced opposing opinions and interests The new Government is confronted with a dual social reaction—one of hopeful enthusiasm and another of drastic rejection In their inauguration speeches both the new President, Jose Maria Aznar and the Minister of Education and Culture Esperanza Aguirre, addressed the existing social concern because of the implementation of the reform and shared their interest in promptly answering social demands and taking the necessary steps to confront these demands through dialogue with the Autonomous Communities, the municipalities and other social agents [26]

This is a decisive year because the first cycle of Secondary Compulsory Education has to be introduced in all centers of secondary education and because the newly

arrived Government opposed the LOGSE when the Socialists submitted it to Parliament for approval To date, only the three cycles (six years) that constitute Primary Education have been established. In addition, establishing the Secondary Compulsory Education is raising numerous complaints among parent associations and municipalities in the rural and the urban areas [27]

Notwithstanding the hopes and achievements of the reform, what is true at this point is that

> empirical data show that Spain continues to suffer from inequalities in education, which have mainly to do with access but also with performance The length of time spent in the classroom is notably shorter and the qualifications achieved inferior for pupils from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds Differences are also shown to depend on where students live (they do better in urban areas) and gender (girls do slightly better than boys) [28]

Teachers and School Administrators

Many teachers have resisted this education reform. Among the reasons that explain teachers' frequent resistance to innovation are the lack of confidence in the ability of the reform to attain the intended goals, the rejection of the pedagogical/curricular theory used to justify the reform, and the belief that the needed resources will never arrive and the reform will bring more work without additional compensation In addition, recent cuts in the budget for education for 1997 include no more hires for this year, numerous layoffs, and a major "restructuration of teachers across levels [29] The lack of sufficient funding also concerns school administrators as the introduction of basic Vocational Training in the Secondary schools requires a versatile space and classroom equipment/workshop/laboratory"[30] which they may not be able to build and maintain without public funds

At the origin of the conflict are the agreements signed between the Socialist Government *Comisiones Obreras* (CCOO, labor union with more members that teach primary than secondary education levels) and *Union General de Trabajadores* (UGT, second largest labor union), which are regarded by many teachers, mainly at the secondary level, as political compromises at the expense of pedagogical and ethical interests

The new reform that is being put in operation necessarily raises a number of questions Will the LOGSE bring about equal opportunities for all? Will it increase social mobility? Does it answer the needs and interests of Spanish children and youth? To these and other questions, Jose Benedito Alberola, president of the National Association of Baccalaureate Professors, offers a very skeptical, if not negative, answer In his opinion, a delay in the selection process will widen the gap between lower- and upper-class students because the latter will have been attending better and more specialized pre-Bachillerato institutions for a longer period of time In the same line, Mercedes Rosua, Bachillerato teacher foresees a battle against overcrowding and the poor quality of public education, two problems that will encourage parents to send their children to private schools, both in Spain and abroad [31] Alberola agrees that the extension of compulsory education is a step forward for Spanish society,[32] however he and many other teachers think that the new ESO does not really deal with the heterogeneity of interests and needs among youth[33] and that unifying curricula and methodology and lowering the level of contents to make them accessible to all will not lead to a better equipped/more prepared work force [34] Apparently parents who think that the reform will improve their children's opportunities for social and economic betterment are those who have at-risk students

Many teachers have manifested their discontent with the reform because they consider that it lowers the level of the education provided.[35] In their opinion, too much attention is paid to free expression and personal development and not enough given to the acquisition of basic skills and concepts that are essential for all subsequent learning Rosua asserts that the reform ' extends infant methodology, minimizes the basic cultural subjects, and trivializes the conceptual element [36] Cardoso Garcia, secondary education teacher and member of the State School Council representing the Teaching Federation CCOO defends the importance of maintaining an updated, reflexive, and autocratic mastering of contents" (*dominio de los contenidos*), not only of those introduced by the teacher in class, but also of the new cultural resources brought in by students [37] Furthermore, Alberola denounces the rupture of the Spanish educational level completed by the LOGSE and the LRU and warns the reader about the consequences of lowering the level of contents in the secondary education curricula Universities he concludes, will have either to teach the general contents previously taught during the Bachillerato or ignore them and train superspecialists "[38]

The Ministry of Education has developed a monitoring plan for LOGSE implementation by collecting information from teachers, families, heads of schools, inspectors, and school support services through opinion questionnaires, qualitative analysis of cases, and examination of a sample of Curricular Projects Based on this data Tiana-Ferrer concludes that teachers are experiencing difficulties in drawing up Curricular Projects, especially for secondary schools The aspects that have presented most difficulties have been the most innovative ones, that is the decisions and procedures for assessment,[39] accreditation moving students up to higher levels and dealing with diversity On the other hand, other matters such as the sequence of contents the teaching methodology, the selection of curricular material, the adaptation of the area objectives and level goals to the specific characteristics of the school and their distribution in cycles, have not caused great difficulty

Experience proves that poorly trained and unmotivated teachers are not effective agents of reform No education reform will succeed unless teachers understand it, sympathize with it, and master the requisite skills During the first years of the reform process, the in-service training that was offered was often inappropriate or nonexistent In 1993, when some *institutos* started to implement the reform 'in advance, teachers complained of the short notice and the lack of training and preparation that they had to teach the new curriculum [40] Certainly, teachers and parents alike showed their concern, not only because students were going to be incorporated to the second cycle ESO not having gone through the first one, but also because the materials were not available and sufficient support was not provided by the Administration to teach the new subjects [41] Alicia Mederos (teacher) describes the general feeling of teachers who had to put into practice new and still vague,[42] pedagogical criteria without much help from the Ministry of Education as one of confusion and anxiety'

Tight deadlines have led many schools to emphasize developing the product rather than incorporating the process Many schools contend that they have not received enough help from the educational authorities to prepare the Curricular Projects Tiana-Ferrer points out how some of the difficulties experienced by teachers in the process of drawing and developing Curricular Projects and Area and Classroom Programmes are due to the marked individualism of a number of teachers the centralist tradition of the Spanish education system, a certain tendency towards bureaucratization, and an evident distrust of pedagogical leadership '[43] However teachers (mainly for primary school) believe that Curricular Projects are useful because they encourage team work, adapt teaching to suit characteristics of both students and of the school and improve the art of teaching

At present indications are clear that the situation is improving in these aspects, with the Ministry and other regional institutions emphasizing training and offering incentives as well as better and more opportunities for teachers to acquire the new skills necessary for implementing of the new system Additionally, competition among publishers is bringing about a significant variety of high-quality materials from which each teacher can choose and Provincial Teacher Training Plans are gaining strength and extension through the creation of a network of Teacher Centers[44] and a series of cooperative agreements with the Autonomous Communities with full powers, and with Town and Provincial Councils

Notwithstanding all the difficulties and faults of the LOGSE several teachers have expressed their conviction as to the value of a reform that promotes interdisciplinary and team work, as well as a more flexible and open curriculum that caters to the diversity of students Cardoso Garcia describes the old Bachillerato as brutally segregative and "addressed to a minority around some specialized areas of knowledge Another major achievement of the reform is its "integration policy, that is the establishment of measures to improve the educational provision for students with

special needs so that they can achieve the general objectives established for all students [45] Finally, the extension of free and compulsory education for all children is by itself a success, the task of making it real beyond all egalitarian demagogy, a challenge

Rosa Lopez-Boullon, Education Advisor at the Embassy of Spain in Washington, DC, does not agree with those who think that the reform lowers the quality of education and asserts that the reform introduces innovative methodologies that will help students develop different abilities as well as acquire substantive concepts [46] As Cardoso Garcia points out, "the new social demands call for a new professional identity and for different professional practices '[47] Even though this is not an easy process, teachers will have to get rid of their old plans

- **The Catholic Church**

Additionally, the decision that religious instruction should be available at all schools but that it would be voluntary for students, generated substantial rejection from some of the most conservative Catholics and from the Spanish Catholic Bishops Sarah J Evans describes the situation

> In recent years students have been able to opt for ethics instead of RE (religion) The take-up for ethics was never great. Under the new Bill, the option disappears, on the grounds that it should appear throughout the curriculum, and is replaced by free time The Bishops are seeking another substitute, such as religious culture, arguing that to make the alternative free time puts RE at an unfair disadvantage [48]

- **Parents and Students**

The scarcity of economic means also presents itself as a barrier All this change—new and handicapped-accessible buildings, better equipped libraries and laboratories, improved instructional materials, higher salaries, and more qualified teachers—means increased expenditure The budget for education for 1997 decreases 2 5 percent,[49] which affects mainly public primary and secondary institutions The insufficient infrastructure and resources to implement the reform are particularly acute in the rural areas, where students will have to travel up to 90 miles to attend classes [50] The new Government has given special permission to students in the rural areas to attend Secondary Compulsory Education in their local schools instead of commuting to *institutos* in larger localities This is a temporary solution (1996-97 school year) to a problem that will have to be studied in depth [51]

Parents are also concerned with the interaction and mix of eighteen- and twelve-year-olds within the *institutos* particularly those infested with drugs and delinquency in the urban areas Finally, the unavailability of the four modalities of knowledge of

Secondary education in all the *institutos* will discriminate against some students limiting their future access to certain university studies Numerous *institutos* offer only some of these modalities, many others cover the gap by offering electives, but parents complain that this alternative creates a second-rate Baccalaureate [52] Other complaints presented by the Spanish Confederation of Students Fathers and Mothers Associations and that affect students in the rural areas are the lack of school transportation facilities the increase of lunch fees and the poor conditions of school buildings [53]

The Catholic Confederation of Students' Parents and the Spanish Society of Classical Studies are among the groups that have been putting pressure on the Ministry of Education to get an extension in the calendar for implementing the LOGSE order to have time to correct its shortcomings ,[54] however, not all Parents Associations (APAs) agree with this solution Carlos Magdaleno coordinator of the rural APAs, declared that the reform is already done and it would be very complicated to stop it Besides it would harm students The only thing we are revindicating is an adequate investment in education that allows quality education and a network of schools and *institutos* that does not discriminate against the rural environment " [55]

Another hot issue for some APAs is the marginal attention given to the Castilian language in the Basque Country, Galicia Catalonia, and in other Autonomous Communities, where more time is dedicated to learning English and other regional and foreign languages than to learning Spanish Ultimately APAs say students are harmed because their mobility within regions and their ability to obtain regional student financial aid is more difficult [56]

After several months of demonstrations, Secondary Education students protested again in several cities on November 14 1996 Students blamed the Ministry for delaying solving problems, such as large student-teacher ratios and lack of teachers for all the new subjects The current Secretary of State for Education denied the accusation of budget cuts and emphasized that the number of teachers had been increased in the territories administered by the MEC

Conclusion and Questions—Challenges for the Future

The Spanish education system has been undergoing a process of reform for several years The merging of diverse legal, social, and political aspects with the strictly educational aspects generated the need to reform laws affecting the Spanish educational system Certainly changes in the legislative framework because of the passing of the Constitution of 1978 the full integration of Spain in the European institutions, the technological and cultural changes in the last decades and several insufficiencies of the previous education system required a profound change The General Arrangement of the Education System Organic Act established a new nonuniversity education

system that started in the 1991-1992 school year and that is being gradually implemented In the current period of educational reform decentralization is bound up with the extension of compulsory schooling the structural transformation of the educational system the curricular renovation and the improvement of the quality of education

The new shaping of the educational system, which includes rearranging its structure and increasing compulsory education entails among other things, providing all Spaniards with a secondary education (from age twelve to sixteen, Compulsory Secondary Education) and offering an education sensitive to the socioeconomic and cultural circumstances of the schools while ensuring that all students master a *minimum* of content and skills Likewise, the methodology has to be renewed and the curricular content adapted to the students Furthermore, teachers need to accept the reform school administrators and teachers need to be trained to implement the reform, and a system of evaluation has to be developed at all levels To carry out this reform, legal, organizational and financial actions have been taking place However recent cuts in the budget for education for 1997 have generated numerous demonstrations and social unrest.

In accordance with the new legal and ideological framework of the State arising from the 1978 Constitution and Spain's process of integration in the European Union the LOGSE establishes a new legal framework defining the common educational structure and curriculum throughout the country and, in doing so, outlines the minimums required to validate degrees across Europe The LOGSE attempts to reconcile three different identities European, Spanish, and regional Throughout history, the diverse territories and peoples of the Iberian Peninsula and, on a broader scale, of Europe, have struggled to get their issues onto the political agendas The educational reform is a step forward in recognizing the peculiarities of these regions strengthening democracy, and preparing the work force for the demands of an increasingly competitive labor market

The enormous efforts made by Spanish people to back and transform society and its institutions should be matched by a similar effort in educational circles The Ministry is aware that having the main actors especially teachers, on board is key for the success of the reform. Thus, for instance, emphasizing the development of materials and training courses has helped teachers in the process of change and diluted some of the anxiety, confusion and even hostility that many teachers expressed at the beginning of the implementation of the reform For the success of the reform, all the actors have to be given a voice and be committed to increase the quality, access, and efficiency of education However resistance and protest demonstrations caused by the belief that the new educational reform would lead to a degradation" of the educational level (functional illiteracy"), the schools, and the professional identity of teachers[57] are still alive

Implementing the educational reform requires a political commitment from the Government as well as strong support from the Spanish people The new Government, which took office in May 1996 is faced with the difficult task of giving voice to all the actors and ensuring the continuous implementation of the reform At this point there is no way back. The future of this process will come hand in hand with dialogue

NOTES

[1] Diez Hochleitner R Tena Artigas J and Garcia Cuerpo M Education and work in the Spanish educational reform *Experiments and innovations in education No 42 UNESCO* (1981) 17

[2] Ministerio de Educacion y Ciencia. *National Report* Madrid, 1990

[3] With a duration of eight years generally from the age of six to fourteen

[4] World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) Compulsory Education Social Expectations National Reports on the Theme for 1977 in Their Original Languages 26th Assembly of Delegates (Lagos Nigeria, August 3 10 1977)

[5] The Spanish Constitution of 1978 distinguishes among others between Organic Laws (art 81) and Ordinary Laws Organic Laws are mainly those related to the development of the fundamental rights and public freedoms the ones that create and regulate the Autonomous Communities (Autonomy Statutes) and the general electoral system The approval modification and/or annulment of this type of law cannot be done without the absolute majority of the House of Representatives in a final voting on the whole project On the contrary Ordinary Laws used for all the issues that are not required to be regulated in an Organic instrument, are passed by the majority of the members that are present at the time of voting provided that Congress meets as prescribed by regulations and the majority of its members attend the session Therefore the significance of the *Organic Laws* the most important ones immediately under the Constitution is explained both by its content and by the process and requirements that have to be followed for its creation change and nullification In Spain, the University Reform Act (LRU 11/1983 of 25th August) the Right to Education Act (LODE 8/1985 of 3rd July) and the LOGSE are Organic Acts as they relate to a basic civil right· they develop Article 27 of the Constitution and regulate education at university and nonuniversity levels

[6] In 3 March 1996 the Conservative Party won the elections in Spain, even though the new government was not formed until May some rumors of change had already started to spread.

[7] The terms central administration 'national government, and central government' are synonymous

[8] Commission of the European Communities *Green Paper European Social Policy Options for the Union (Summary)* Luxembourg ECSC-EEC EAEC 1994

[9] Several of the programs have assorted concrete measures in favor of the socioeconomically disadvantaged regions notably by providing extra information technical assistance and /or financial support

[10] To achieve this goal the European Community Commission has several programs for intercommunity education such as Socrates Leonardo da Vinci and Youth for Europe III

[11] Treaty on European Union Chapter 3 Article 126 Paragraph 1

[12] *Op cit* MEC 1990 105

[13] Marchesi Alvaro 'Educational Reform in Spain *International Review of Education UNESCO Institute for Education and Kluwer Academic Publishers* v38 n6 (1992) 204

[14] In several Autonomous Communities Support and Resources Centers (CARs— *Centros de apoyo y recursos*) have been created to assist teachers and students in the rural areas They include teachers specialized in physical education, music languages and therapeutic pedagogy

[15] See Royal Decree 928/1993 of 18th June (BOE of 6th July)

[16] Except preschool education which is made up of two levels one from age up to three (lower level) and the other from age three to six (upper level)

[17] The LOGSE defines arts disciplines and language teaching as special system education. Arts disciplines are divided into dramatic art, plastic arts and design, music and dance

[18] Ministerio de Educacion y Ciencia. *National Report* Madrid, 1992 79

[19] For the legal framework of the timetable see Royal Decree 986/1991 June 14 (BOE 25 June 1991) modified by Royal Decree 535/1993 of 12th Abril (BOE 4 May 1993) modified by Royal Decree 1478/1994 of 1st July (BOE 28 July 1994)

[20] Perez de Pablos Susana. 'Reforma si reforma no *El Pais* (May 11 1993) 8

[21] According to the Ministry of Education joining the notable effects of the decrease in births with the fact that full school attendance of pupils between six and 13 was achieved early in the eighties and also in recent years full attendance of children aged 5 together with high percentages for age four (88 percent) fourteen (92 percent) and fifteen (78 percent) it is reasonable to consider the increase of the compulsory schooling age up to sixteen. (*Op cit* MEC 1990 92)

[22] Maximum of 25 students per classroom at Primary level and 30 at Secondary level

[23] Note the risk of schools applying heterogeneous criteria in the areas of assessment, promotion, and accreditation of students To avoid this problem several control and monitoring mechanisms have been established for controlling the assessment system and as an instrument of guidance for schools Among these mechanisms are the Inspectorate services the aptitude tests for university entry and the new INCE The Teachers Centers offer training services and thus contribute also to support schools and teachers to develop and apply the new curriculum

[24] Tiana-Ferrer Alejandro Spain In *Performance Standards in Education In search of Quality* Paris OCDE 1995 175

[25] Lowe John Overview In *Performance Standards in Education. In search of Quality* Paris OCDE 1995 16

[26] 'Esperanza Aguirre Ministra de Educacion y Cultura. Las actuaciones del nuevo departamento estaran presididas por la austeridad y el dialogo *Comunidad Escolar* (May 8 1996) 5

[27] La reforma de la enseñanza provoca la indignacion en las zonas rurales *Tribuna* (May 13 1996)

[28] *Op cit* Lowe 1995 18

[29] Blanco Cruz. Educacion reduce en 1 708 millones los fondos para la ensenanza publica. *El Pais* (October 8 1996) De P S P Los estudiantes se manifiestan hoy contra la politica educativa del PP *El Pais* (October 15 1996) Interinos en paro *El Pais* (November 5 1996) 32

[30] *Op cit* MEC 1990 100

[31] Rosua, Mercedes Enseñanza media. de la guarderia a la jungla. *El Pais* (March 2 1993) Several regions are already fighting overcrowding *see* Hernandez, Elena. La Sierra Noroeste se alza contra la masificacion escolar *ABC* (January 5 1997) 66

[32] Not all the opinions are favorable though. Thus M Rosua thinks that 'the strategy consists of building up a huge parking lot in which to place students until they are sixteen

[33] Opinions have been voiced against the extension of compulsory education by students who do not pass the evaluations and want to master a craft and work. *See* Aqui los profesores llegan sueltan la leccion como antes y se van *El Pais* (November 5 1996) 31

[34] Alberola, Jose Benedito La otra cara de la LOGSE *El Pais* (November 9 1993)

[35] Badia, Javier 'No se podra reformar la LOGSE para establecer tres años de Bachillerato *ABC de la Educacion ABC* (April 4 1996) 59

[36] *Op cit* Rosua, 1993

[37] Cardoso Garcia, Honorio 'Reforma y nueva identidad profesional *El Pais* (June 8 1993)

[38] *Op cit* Alberola, 1993

[39] Determining attainment targets according to area and cycle is revealed to be one of the aspects with which teachers have most difficulties Tiana Ferrer points out how Curricular Projects and Classroom Programs tend to be limited to very general references on continuous and integrative assessment, without specifying the exact measures (procedures instruments times) when these will be used in the classroom On occasions attainment targets have been understood as end goals for each subject and level as in the old style curriculum Teachers express their concern regarding the implementation of the LOGSE model of assessment and their lack of training

[40] Several parents and teacher associations also complained because they had not been given the opportunity to vote whether they wanted to join the movement of advanced implementation of the reform Representatives of the Ministry of Education denied that they had been forced to participate but acknowledged the short notice with which they were informed to do so Susana Perez de Pablos 'Reforma si reforma no *El Pais* May 11 1993

[41] *Ibid* Perez de Pablos 1993 8

[42] Even today teachers are confused by the new nomenclature (Personal interview with Mª Dolores Luque teacher of English at Primary and Secondary levels August 13 1996)

[43] *Op cit* Tiana Ferrer 1995

[44] There was a total of 109 CEPs in the 1990 1991 academic year Education National Report 1992 92 For more information, see Analisis de la profesion docente en la EU *Comunidad Escolar* (June 5 1996) Claves para la formacion docente *Comunidad Escolar* (May 1 1996)

[45] For more information, see R.C Programas para favorecer la integracion educativa *Comunidad Escolar* (April 5 1995) 8 R.C 'Un real decreto regula la Educacion Especial de acuerdo a la LOGSE *Comunidad Escolar* (May 10 1995) 7 Bimes Puri. Lazos de convivencia para aceptar la diversidad *Comunidad Escolar* (October 4 1995) 20-21

[46] Personal Interview Washington, DC August 8 1996

[47] *Op Cit* Cardoso Garcia, 1993

Evans Sarah Jane Catholics oppose the reform proposals *Times Educational Supplement* 3849 (April 6 1990) 14

[49] Blanco Cruz Educacion reduce en 1 708 millones los fondos para la enseñanza publica. *El Pais* (October 8 1996)

[50] Several schools in urban areas have had to shut down because they could not meet the requirements of number and accreditation of teachers minimum areas of Secondary Compulsory Education etc

[51] Even though the new Government talked about modifying the LOGSE because of lack of funding and creating an education finance law nothing has been done *See* El PP modificara la LOGSE por razones financieras *El Pais* (April 19 1996) 16 La LOGSE en peligro *El Pais* (April 22, 1996) 12

[52] Ramos Mar Alumnos de zonas rurales acusan al Ministerio de discriminarles en el acceso al Bachillerato *ABC de la Educacion ABC* (February 13th 1996) 71

[53] El dificil comienzo de la estrella de la reforma. *El Pais* (November 5 1996) 32

[54] Badia, Javier Es urgente detener la anticipacion de la ESO segun Rodriguez Adrados *ABC* (June 15 1996) 82 Gallego, L Las zonas rurales presionan a la ministra para que les de una solucion firmada y sellada a la ESO *ABC* (May 10 1996) 72

[55] *Ibid* Gallego 1996 72 For the situation in the rural areas also see Fernandez Nuria. Un alcalde soriano ofrece casas gratuitas para que los alumnos cursen la ESO en su pueblo *ABC de la Educacion ABC* (April 16 1996) 58

[56] 'El español recibe peor trato que el ingles en Cataluna, Pais Vasco y Galicia. *ABC de la Educacion ABC* (February 13 1996) Iglesias M R. Padres gallegos vascos y catalanes pediran a la ONU que ampare al castellano *ABC de la Educacion ABC* (April 16 1996) 58

[57] Mederos Alicia. Un año de intuiciones *El Pais* (May 4 1993) also see *op cit* Cardoso Garcia, Honorio 1993