
State of the ARTS Presentation

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Segment # 7 : Asian Nations Find Education for the Many Works Best

LINDA WERTHEIMER, Host: In many Asian nations, education has played a vital role in economic development. The economies of a number of east and southeast Asian countries are growing at spectacular speed. NPR's Ted Clark reports that much of this economic success can be traced to decisions those countries made about education - some decades ago, some right now.

TED CLARK, Reporter: When it comes to education, the most important decision a developing country can make is where to concentrate the spending. Governments can focus first on primary schooling, or they can emphasize higher education. Across east and southeast Asia in the 50s and 60s, most governments chose the primary school option, relying on the private sector to provide most college and university training. In Africa and Latin America, on the other hand, governments devoted a higher percentage of their education funds to universities. Nancy Bertzol [sp] co-authored a recent World Bank study that illustrates the trend.

NANCY BERTZOL, Vice Pres., Inter-American Development Bank: In east Asia on average now and over the last 25 years, perhaps 15 percent of all public expenditures on education went to higher education. In Latin America, it's something like 23, 25 percent, and in Africa it's been even higher than that at times, especially in French-speaking countries. And really what happened in east Asia is that relatively more money was put first at the primary level and then as primary enrollment reached close to 100 percent, at the secondary level.

CLARK: Most developing countries, whether in Africa, Latin America, or Asia, devoted roughly the same share of GNP to education - about 3 percent. In other words, developing countries everywhere have made about the same effort to educate their young. But when Asian governments like Japan's, Taiwan's, and Indonesia's emphasize primary schooling, they stretch their spending much farther. They educated more people than governments that subsidized university education. That's because the per-pupil costs are lower in primary school. Many Asian governments were able to provide basic skills to everyone. Universal primary education became a reality. Nancy Bertzol, who is now vice president of the Inter-American Development Bank, says many Asian countries concluded decades ago that they had to provide universal education.

Ms. BERTZOL: After the war, many of these countries in east Asia, especially in the north - Korea, Taiwan, looked around and said we don't have natural resources. If we are to become economically independent, we need to invest in our human resources. So the lack of natural resources was a kind of hidden blessing in that it turned the attention of policymakers very clearly to the need to invest in people. (cont.)

CLARK: In Africa and Latin America, on the other hand, there was heavier reliance on natural resources for economic development. Universal primary education had several salutary effects in east and southeast Asian countries. It created literate workforces with the skills to move into low and medium-tech industries, which contributed to rapid economic expansion. And as the GNP of Asian countries grew, there was more money available for education. The percentage of GNP devoted to schooling remained the same, but because the overall pie was growing, the slice devoted to education grew too. That meant more money per child. And universal education helped boost funding per child in another, unexpected way, by keeping the number of children in the population low. That's because universal education means schooling for girls, and when young women are educated, they tend to have fewer babies. Maver Hani [sp], with Creative Associates International, a consulting firm in Washington, D.C., says many studies in the developing world demonstrate this cause-and-effect relationship.

MAVER HANI, Creative Associates Intl.: The findings, the results of the studies tell us that a mother with no schooling usually has an average of seven children, but a mother with primary schooling, if she would have finished her primary cycle at school, usually has five or fewer children.

CLARK: There are several reasons for that. Women with education tend to marry at a later age, which lowers fertility. In addition, educated women generally space their pregnancies farther apart because they've learned that's healthier.

Ms. HANI: The other reason is, once they get educated, they have a bigger say at home in when to become pregnant, when to have a child, and so on. If they're not educated, they have very little say, sometimes no say. And it's only their husbands who decide.

CLARK: Universal education tends to produce a better learning environment for children in the home as parents who benefited from school pass along what they've learned to their sons and daughters. This trend was especially pronounced in parts of Asia where tradition bars mothers, even educated mothers, from the workforce. Nancy Bertzol.

Ms. BERTZOL: You had in east Asia what I would call a kind of hothouse effect at home. That is, very well-educated mothers, anxious to ensure that their children would have opportunities, relatively low fertility, so substantial inputs of mother's time and mother's educated time into their children, and that helped ensure that when children in Asia entered school, they had already benefited from attention and interest at home.

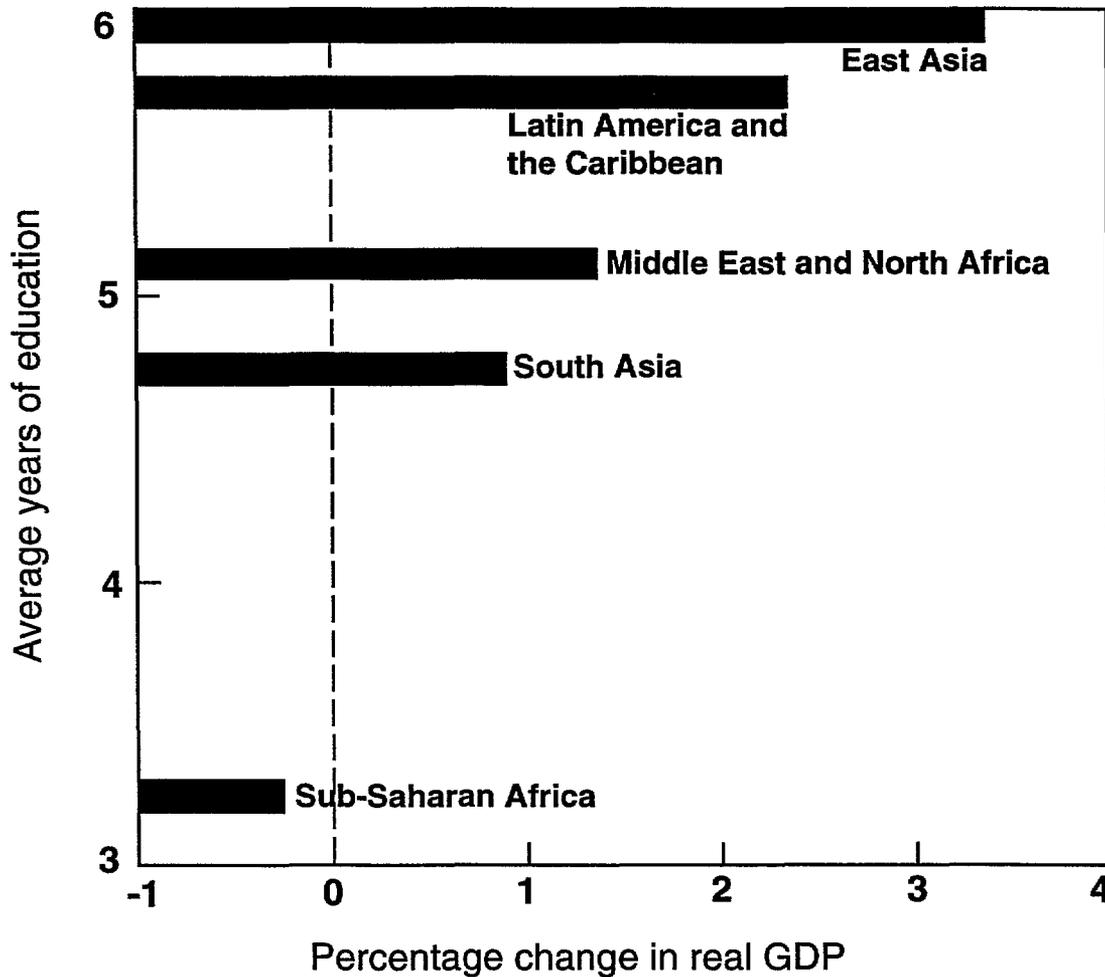
CLARK: Universal education had other beneficial effects in east and southeast Asia. It reduced inequality, narrowed the gap between rich and poor, and studies show as societies become more equitable, as the very poor and the very rich meld into the middle, the overall demand for schooling grows. In Singapore, South Korea, and other Asian nations, families sent their children to private universities, at home or in America or Europe. Public spending on universities, which seemed so important in Africa and Latin America, turned out to be largely unnecessary in the Pacific Rim countries that concentrated their efforts on primary education for all. It took several decades, but this egalitarian approach to education proved to be the wisest. This is Ted Clark in Washington.

[The preceding text has been professionally transcribed. However, in order to meet rigid distribution and transmission deadlines, it has not been proofread against audiotape and cannot, for that reason, be guaranteed as to the accuracy of speakers' words or spelling.]



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THE EFFECT ON REAL GDP OF ONE ADDITIONAL YEAR OF EDUCATION PER PERSON



- Many studies of farm productivity, family enterprises, and wage earners have demonstrated the effects of education on output and productivity. As this table shows, the returns to education are substantial.
- An increase of one year in average years of education may lead to a 3 percent rise in GDP.
- About four years of education seem to be needed to attain functional literacy. Investments may yield substantial returns only when they are big enough to push the economy over such a threshold.

Source: World Development Report, 1990

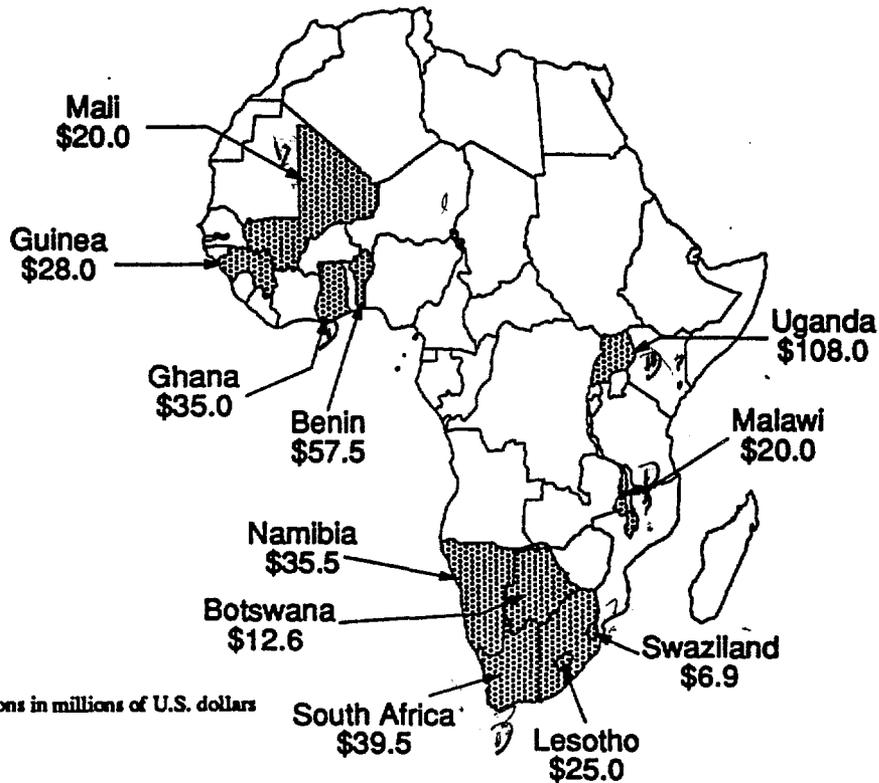


WHY INVEST IN BASIC EDUCATION?

- An analysis of 18 studies in low income countries showed a positive relationship between years of schooling and agricultural output. One study in Africa found that farmers having completed four years of education produce, on average, eight percent more than farmers who have not gone to school. Virtually all the studies show that better educated farmers earn higher returns on their land.
- A study in Niger showed up to 50 percent private rates of return in earnings to primary education for informal sector entrepreneurs. This study has been replicated elsewhere with similar results (Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Guinea...).
- A one point gain in literacy (aggregate national average) is associated with a two-year gain in life expectancy.
- Raising educational attainment in women beyond a three-year threshold point can reduce fertility by raising marriage age and reducing the demand for children through improved employment opportunities and increased probability of child survival.
- In Africa, one year of a mother's education was found to be associated with a nine percent decrease in under-five child mortality.
- Children of more educated parents are more likely to enroll and advance in school, and -- ultimately -- make better parents to their own children.



**USAID basic education activities:
planned total funding obligations of current programs
as of January 1993**



| | Non-Project Assistance | Project Assistance | Total |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Benin | 50.0 | 7.5 | 57.5 |
| Botswana | — | 12.6 | 12.6 |
| Ghana | 32.0 | 3.0 | 35.0 |
| ✓ Guinea | 22.3 | 5.7 | 28.0 |
| Lesotho | 18.6 | 6.4 | 25.0 |
| ✓ Malawi | 14.0 | 6.0 | 20.0 |
| ✓ Mali | 3.0 | 17.0 | 20.0 |
| Namibia | 35.0 | 0.5 | 35.5 |
| South Africa | — | 39.5 | 39.5 |
| ✓ Swaziland | — | 6.9 | 6.9 |
| Uganda | 83.0 | 25.0 | 108.0 |
| Total | 257.9 | 130.1 | 388.0 |



1. What brought about the change in USAID's approach to supporting basic education?
2. What is the nature of that change?
3. What are some of the important operational considerations associated with it?



FACTORS LEADING TO CHANGE IN APPROACH

- Crisis in education systems in Africa:
 - Overall resource constraints
 - Misallocation of resources
 - Poor management and administration
- Lack of success of project interventions
- Adjustment dominant theme of the 1980s



PARADIGM SHIFT: TARGETED ASSISTANCE TO SECTORAL SUPPORT

- Link development of education to sustainable government allocative decisions within the framework of macro-economic constraints
- Support policy level interventions that are required to define the context for attaining sectoral objectives at a national level
- Develop institutions as foundation for sustainable capacity to implement policies and programs
- Treat education delivery system as a whole



SECTORAL SUPPORT: WHY NPA?

Using NPA to finance the implementation of the new approach has allowed the Agency to:

1. Provide budgetary resources to bridge the gap faced by countries during periods of macro-adjustment and to help cover the specific sectoral costs associated with launching an education reform.
- ✓ 2. Broker resource reallocations that favor basic education and permit expenditure on non-salary inputs to enhance quality.
- ✓ 3. Leverage other donor financing in support of sectoral reform objectives.
- ✓ 4. Have a seat at the policy decision-making table and weigh in on the side of reform-minded leaders and change agents.
5. Focus the responsibility for change and implementation within national institutions and work through national systems, mechanisms, and people.
6. Promote sustainability.



CRITICAL OPERATIONAL ISSUES

POLICY DIALOGUE:

- Stakeholder participation
- Facilitation
- Continuing, iterative process

CONDITIONALITY:

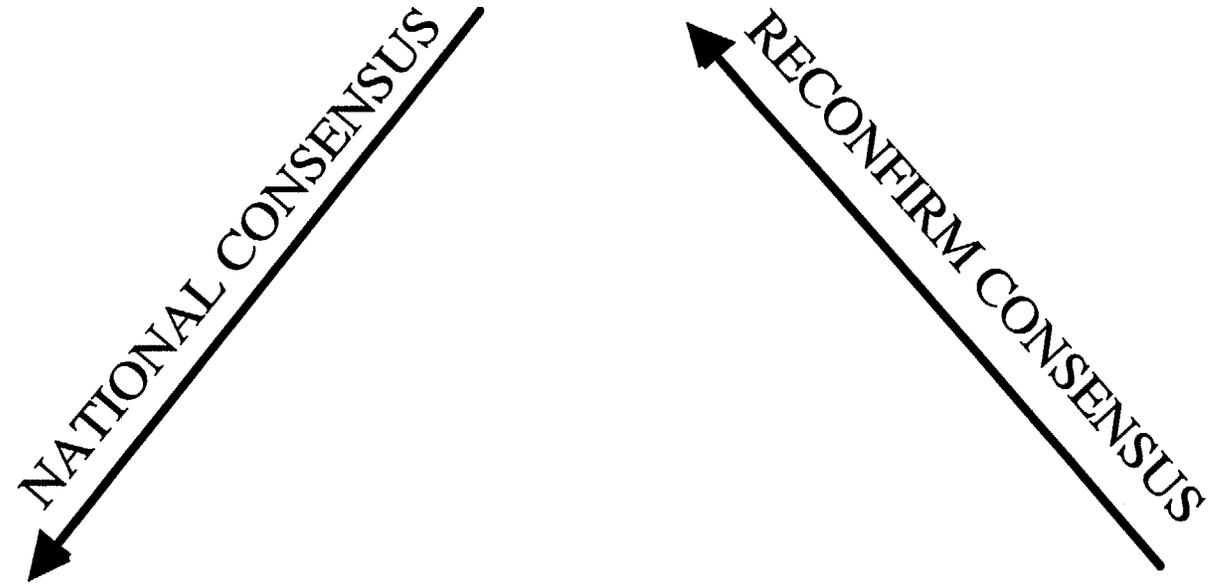
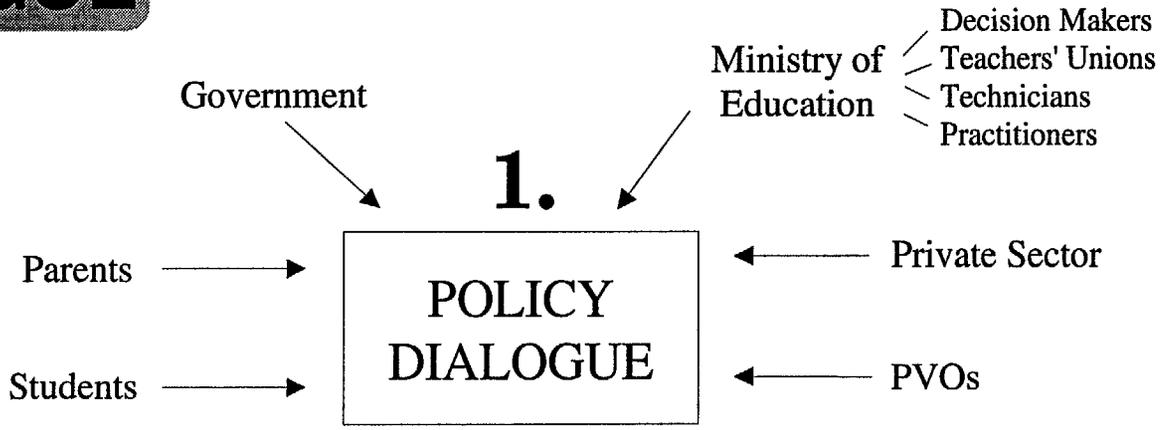
- Products of dialogue, not externally imposed
- Negotiation and agreement on:
 - Objectives, expectations, inputs, and anticipated accomplishments
- Flexible yet rigorously applied & interpreted
- Latitude to not disburse
- Management intensive

COMPLEMENTARY PROJECT AND NON-PROJECT ASSISTANCE:

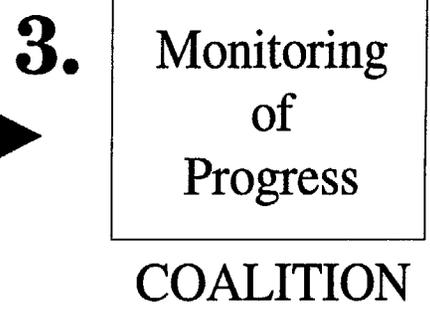
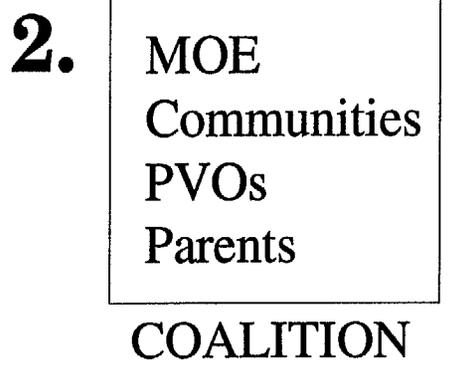
- Phasing
- Amount
- Targeting of PA

POLICY DIALOGUE

**REFORM
AGENDA**

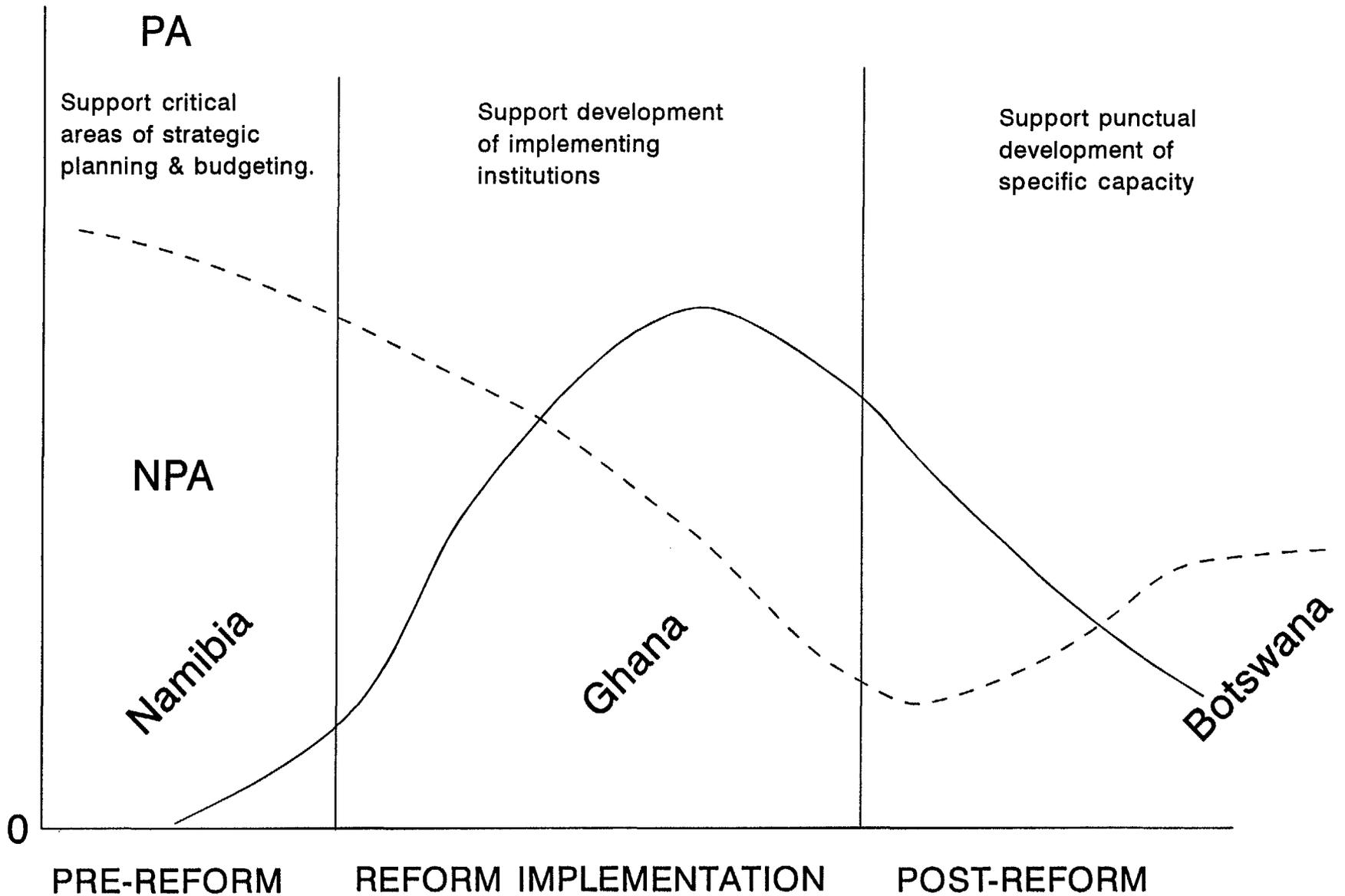


**REFORM
PROGRAM**



PROJECT AND NON-PROJECT ASSISTANCE

LEVEL OF FUNDING





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The following table summarizes the policy content of USAID's education programs in Africa. The policy content is often expressed in the conditionalities of an NPA program, or may simply be part of the government's reform program to which USAID is providing support.

Policy Issues in USAID Education NPA Programs in Africa

| COUNTRY | MAIN POLICY ISSUES |
|----------------|--|
| Mali | Redirect resources from higher and secondary education subsidies to permit expansion and improvement of basic education. Facilitate expansion through improved personnel management (staffing patterns and recruitment). |
| Ghana | Increase amount of budget available for non-salary quality-enhancing inputs such as textbooks and the development of criteria referenced testing. Development and implementation of pilot programs to improve equity. |
| Guinea | Expand the provision of basic education through more efficient use of teaching personnel (redeployment) and of infrastructure (multigrade teaching and double shifting). Improve quality through increasing non-salary expenditure. Development of policies to promote rural/urban and gender equity. |
| Lesotho | Large initial increase in and maintenance of higher level of budget for education, with 70 percent of new resources to go to improving the quality and efficiency of primary education. Reform of laws governing non-governmental ownership of schools. |
| Malawi | Increase overall budget allocation for primary education. Improve efficiency by developing strategy to address repetition and by making greater use of existing facilities through multigrade teaching and double shifting and greater enrollment in teacher training colleges (TTCs). Promote girls' access through targeted fee waivers and development of gender-sensitive curricula. |
| Benin | Develop a minimum standard for basic quality education as a tool to ensure equitable allocation of increased level of non-salary inputs. Promote decentralization of administrative and budgetary responsibility. |
| Namibia | Consolidation and integration of regional education authorities and development of basic standard of quality tools to guide equitable re-allocation of qualitative improvements |
| Uganda | Improve quality through targeting of resources for textbooks and through upgrading the qualifications of the teaching force. More efficient management of teaching personnel. Reform of teaching profession. |



What are the impacts of USAID's education programs in Africa?

- There are either none, some or many impacts depending on the varying definitions of educational impact and the level at which it is measured.
- Three out of four DFA-mandated impacts are defined in terms of student or household outcomes, and program success is measured by improvements in enrollment, student wastage, and literacy rates.
- But actual program impacts to date cluster at the system-level and demonstrate tangible improvements in educational system structure, resources, management and service provision.

| STEPS OF REFORM | LEVELS OF EXPECTED IMPACT | SOME INDICATORS OF IMPACT | SOME ACTUAL PROGRAM IMPACTS | ESTIMATED TIME FRAME |
|---|---------------------------|--|---|----------------------|
| Def. and dev. of ed. reform and strategy | SYSTEM-LEVEL IMPACT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codified Reform and Policy Declaration | Lesotho, Namibia, Ghana, Guinea | 1-2 Years |
| Improvement of administration and management of the sector | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reallocation of Resources • Better Planning & Mngmnt • Better Budgeting/Accounting • Better MIS/School Mapping • Better Teacher Training | Benin, Malawi, Guinea Benin, Guinea Mali, Lesotho Guinea, Benin Uganda, Guinea | 3-8 Years |
| Improvement in quality of learning environment | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student:Teacher Ratio • Book:Student Ratio • Diagnostic Tests • Constructed Classrooms • Equity Programs | Ghana, Guinea Ghana, Mali, Guinea Ghana, Lesotho, Swaziland Guinea Malawi, Mali, Guinea | 3-10 Years |
| Attainment of results in student outcomes and system efficiency | STUDENT-LEVEL IMPACT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased GER • Girls' Participation • Increased Completion • Reduced Repetition/Dropout • Reduced Cycle Time/Cost | Guinea, Mali " " " " " " " " | 3-13 Years |
| Improvement of human capital stock | PEOPLE-LEVEL IMPACT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Literacy • Increased Numeracy | | 15-25 Years |
| Increased labor force productivity | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Productivity • Increased Employability • Increased Entrepreneurship | | 15-25 Years |
| Increased household welfare | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Household Income • Reduced Fertility Rate • Reduced Infant Mortality Rate | | 25-35 Years |



- While improvements in student access, attainment and achievement are the inarguable objectives of educational reform, they must be preceded by changes in the education system.
- Student-level outcomes are the perultimate final chapter in the educational reform saga. Indicators of impact measured solely at the student-level do not capture the changes in the education system which constitute the substance of educational reform.
- As long as we continue to assess impact by the wrong yardstick, the less likely we are to understand, appreciate and support the substantial positive educational reforms USAID's programs have helped bring about in Africa.



What have we learned from the results of USAID's education programs?

- Education reform happens in phases and at different levels.
- Education reform takes a longer timeframe than most of the programs presently have.
- Education system linkages are unclear, loosely coupled and resistant to change.
- Knowledge of the “ingredients” and inter-relations of educational systems are only partially understood.
- NPA guidance confuses; DFA and API pressures can distort design and reporting.



What have learned about impact assessment of education programs?

- Proper assessment of systemic educational reform requires unprecedented amounts of data.
- Data reporting is confounded by non-existent or poorly functioning government data collection, reporting and accounting systems, whose improvement is part of the reform process.
- USAID accountability and reporting systems are not designed to capture program impacts.
- Confusion between government-led reform and USAID programs causes us to overestimate our role, control and impact.
- It is impossible -- given the nature of budgetary support, donor collaboration and system-wide reform -- to track and directly attribute impacts uniquely to USAID support.



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USAID PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT EDUCATION REFORM: CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVENESS

Favorable Macro-Economic and Political Conditions

- Economic adjustment policies
- Government financing and personnel reform
- Political climate favorable to public participation in policy dialogue

democracy!

Country Leadership of Policy Dialogue & Reform

- Wide participation of stake-holders and public in policy review
- Analysis and decisions on sustainable reform measures
- Articulation and dissemination of policy framework
- Coordination of donor support for policy dialogue and implementation

Institutional Capacity Building for Reform

Need to analyze institutional capacity and adopt strategies for developing:

- Information systems for managing and monitoring reform
- Financing, budgeting and accounting systems
- Managing process of change to meet reform objectives
- Key program areas:
 - Curriculum reform & instructional materials
 - Pupil assessments
 - Teacher & staff development
 - Physical infrastructure planning
 - School effectiveness strategies
 - Action research to monitor and shape policy implementation



IMPLICATIONS FOR USAID MANAGEMENT

- **Continue support for systemic, sustainable policy reform**

- **Use NPA where pre-conditions are in place.
If pre-conditions are NOT in place, design program to achieve:**
 - **Support for policy analysis and dialogue**
 - **Support for formulation of sustainable reform policies**
 - **Analysis and support for capacity building**

- **Establish Realistic, Manageable Objectives and Impacts**

Leading Education Indicators for:

- **Policy-level changes**
- **Institutional changes**
- **School-level changes**

**For long-term impact on:
improved access, retention and learning**

The modality of assistance, whether NPA or project assistance, can change, but it is clear that the human resource base cannot be improved without restructuring the education system. We note with dismay that many education programs are returning to narrowly-focussed traditional projects to meet the perceived need to link AID inputs to specific outcomes, at the expense of systemic reform and institutional capacity building. Can we ignore what we now know is necessary to transform African education so that it serves children more effectively because a modality is unwieldy or subject to risk? How can we craft a modality that is both acceptable to the Agency and truly achieves its goal of supporting sustainable education in Africa?