Education Reform Support

Volume Five:
Strategy Development
and Project Design

USAID

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Preface

In 1995, the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Bureau for Africa published a report titled *Basic Education in Africa: USAID's Approach to Sustainable Reform in the 1990s.* That technical paper examined Agency experience in education in Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s and drew out several lessons for how USAID could better approach the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs supporting education reform. One of those lessons concerned the role of information and policy dialogue in improving policy formulation and implementation in the education sector. This series, Education Reform Support, is the product of the Africa Bureau's two years of effort to pursue the operational implications of that lesson.

Neither information use nor dialogue is a new idea. USAID and other donors have years of experience supporting education management information systems. Likewise, the development community has grown quite fond of the term "policy dialogue." What Education Reform Support set out to do was to distill the best knowledge about information and dialogue, to examine the development field's experience in these areas, and to systematically apply that knowledge and experience to articulating a new approach.

This new approach, however, is not really new. Financial analysis, budget projection, planning models, political mapping, social marketing, and the techniques of stakeholder consultation and dialogue facilitation have long been available for use in education projects. These tools and techniques, however, have not been systematically organized into an approach.

Similarly, arguments abound for participation and for better—or more informed—decision making. The Education Reform Support series depicts realistically what those terms mean. Further, Education Reform Support identifies how capacity can be built within countries for broader, more effective stakeholder participation at the policy level, and, how that participation itself can contribute to better informing the policy process.

There is an ultimate irony to education. Good schools and good teaching can be found in any education system, sometimes under very adverse conditions. The problem is that they cannot be found everywhere. The challenge confronted in supporting education reform is exactly that: how to help good practice occur on a larger scale.

The inability of education systems to adapt and spread innovation is a result of poor policy and management environments. The policy environment is deficient for political as well as technical reasons. In most countries, the education of children is an issue of direct and personal concern to all sectors of the population, as well as to a number of large interest groups; as a result, education reform is a delicate and highly charged political force field.

To wade into the politics of reform we must focus on understanding the political economy of reform in the countries in which we work: Who are the key stakeholders (both potential gainers and losers) in a given reform direction? What are their strengths, depth and breadth of influence, and points of vulnerability? What are the characteristics of local institutions, groups, and individuals who might be able to play critical roles of influence and dialogue facilitation as well as analytical and technical support to the reform effort, over the long haul? And, most importantly, how can we design reform assistance that attenuates stakeholder tensions and exploits stakeholder alliances, vulnerabilities, and strengths, to the advantage of positive and sustainable movement toward reform overall?

Education Reform Support creates an operational framework through which education programs and projects can organize the techniques of information, analysis, dialogue, and communication into a strategic package. The objective of that package is to help improve a country's capacity to formulate education policy and implement reform. It does so by applying these techniques in order to

- recognize and counterbalance the political interests that accompany reform,

- build the capacity of diverse actors to participate in the policy process,

- reassert and redefine the role of information in policy making, and

- create networks and coalitions that can sustain the dialogue and learning that are essential to educational development.

The Africa Bureau believes this series will prove valuable in helping education officers in USAID and other organizations design projects that take into account the knowledge and lessons gained to better support education reform. The Bureau also feels that the Education Reform Support approach will help governments, ministries of education, and other interested actors better shape their contributions to the difficult process of negotiating and managing education reform.

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Foreword to the Education Reform Support (ERS) Series

This series of documents presents an integrated approach to supporting education reform efforts in developing countries, with particular emphasis on Africa. It is intended largely to specify how a collaborating external agent can help strategic elements within a host country steer events toward coherent, demand-driven, and sustainable educational reform. Additionally, this series of documents may help host country reform proponents understand the aims and means of donors who propose certain activities in this area. We hope that host country officials, particularly in reform-minded, public-interest nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations, find this series of documents both an inspiration and a guide for coherently proposing and articulating undertakings to donors, using the donors' own vocabulary of reform and modernization.

Several key premises and motivations underlie ERS. First, the major *binding* constraint to successful educational development in poor countries is neither the need to transfer more funds nor a lack of educational technology and know-how. That is, we contend that in most instances, countries can make sufficient progress by better using whatever internal or external funds and pedagogical technology already exist, but that in order to so, they need far-reaching modifications in the way they approach both policy formation and system-wide management.

Second, policy-analysis inputs (such as information systems, databases, and models; training in public policy and cost-benefit analysis; training in management, budgeting, and planning; and so forth) into policy reform and management improvements, while necessary, are not sufficient. The constraints to policy improvement are ideological, attitudinal, affective, and political-economic as much as—if not more than—they are analytical or cognitive in origin.

Third, as a means of pressing for the attitudinal and political changes needed for reform, donor leverage of various kinds is largely insufficient and inappropriate. The pressure has to come from within (i.e., it must be both indigenous and permanent), which means that until powerful national groups are mobilized and have the means at their disposal to exert positive policy pressure, little will happen in the way of thoughtful reform.

Our approach aims, therefore, to integrate traditional public policy analysis (using known information and analytical techniques) with public policy dialogue, advocacy, awareness, and political salesmanship, and to build indigenous institutional capacity that can strategically use this integration for purposes of effecting purposeful education reform.

The above suggests that in order to support processes of education reform, a donor would need a rather flexible and sophisticated approach—so flexible that it would verge on a nonapproach, and would simply rely on the difficult-to-articulate wisdom of individual implementors. Yet, to define activities in a way that renders them "fundable" by donors and intelligible within the community whose efforts would support these activities, one obviously needs to have some sort of system—some way of laying out procedures, tools, and

steps that can be used in this messy process. As a way of systematizing both lessons learned and certain tools and techniques, we have developed Education Reform Support (ERS).

A long-winded but precise definition of Education Reform Support is: ERS is an operational framework for developing policy-analytical and policy-dialectical abilities, and institutional capacities, leading to demand-driven, sustainable, indigenous education policy reform. The purpose is to ensure that education policies, procedures, and institutions empower the system to define, develop, and implement reforms that foster relevant and meaningful learning for all children.

There are both operational and technical dimensions to ERS. With regard to the former, we have developed steps one might take in an ERS project. First, there are processes, procedures, operational guidelines for designing a project in ERS. Second, there are the same aspects to running such projects. Aside from the operational and institutional "how-to's," we provide a set of guidelines on the tools, techniques, analytical approaches, etc., that can motivate and generate reform movements, as well as assisting in managing the ongoing reform in a modernized or reformed sector.

The ERS series is organized in the following manner. Volume 1 offers an overview of the entire ERS series. It also contains the ERS series bibliography and a guide to some of the jargon that is found throughout the series. In Volume 2, we introduce the problem, and establish the justification and basis to the approach in terms of past donor activities in the sector, and its critiques from both "left" and "right" perspectives. This volume also sets out some of the main lessons learned that establish a basis for the procedures and strategies described in the following volumes. An operational perspective on how to support reform activities is presented in Volume 3. It discusses both the institutional frameworks that reformers can seek to support or help coalesce if they are only incipient, and some likely ideas for sequences of activities. Volume 4 lists and discusses in considerable depth the specific analytical and communication tools and techniques that can be employed. It also places these tools and techniques in the context of past and ongoing donor activities in areas which have in the past used these tools and techniques disparately and unselfconsciously.

Having provided in Volumes 2-4 both the basic intellectual underpinning as to what might be done and how to proceed technically, sequentially, and institutionally, Volume 5 assumes that reformers, particularly donors, might be interested in designing an intervention of considerable size. Therefore, it lays out in detail the specific design steps one might wish to undertake to ensure a healthy start to a major level of support to an ERS process. Finally, Volume 6 presents ideas for how to monitor and evaluate a typical ERS intervention.

In addition to the volumes, the ERS series includes three supplemental documents: *Policy Issues in Education Reform in Africa, Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) for Accountability,* and *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation.* An ERS Course Description is also a part of this series. This course description provides guidelines for teaching almost any ERS-relevant course (e.g., education planning, EMIS, policy modeling) within a larger ERS construct. It also details the provision of a core set of ERS skills.

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Section 1

Introduction

In other series volumes we have established the theoretical basis for our approach (Volume 2, *Foundations of Education Reform Support*), and have defined the basic "how to" of education reform support (Volume 3, *A Framework for Making it Happen*) as a set of operational and institutional activities, as well as its technical components (Volume 4, *Tools and Techniques*). In this volume we concentrate on the development of (typically donor-funded) projects to carry out all of the operational and technical activities we have discussed so far. This document therefore sets forth tools and steps for defining activities that might make sense in a particular country's situation.

First, however, we emphasize that these activities should not necessarily be implemented as true "projects" whose sole purpose is the support of reform. Such projects are indeed possible, but in many cases what we really mean is that project-worthy activities may be a part of a larger technical assistance project, some part of the activities in a conditionality-based program, or—in the case of the Banks—part of the process of designing a loan. Thus, our suggestions are not an alternative to traditional activities, but simply a useful complement. We emphasize the "project" notion simply in order to suggest that the support of reform processes, although they are inherently messy, can indeed be approached as a set of well-defined, project-like activities.

Second, we note that an excessively supply-side approach to the activities shown below, taken mechanically and without the benefit of the points discussed in the other documents mentioned above (e.g., rooting everything in real demand, involving counterparts and fostering ownership of the process rather than advocating "participation," truly integrating the activities, etc.) can lead to the same ineffectiveness and sustainability failures that sometimes plague donor projects.

For purposes of organization, it is useful to think in terms of the following measures:

(1) assessing the overall and educational political economy of reform in the country in question
(2) determining problematic substantive policy issues

(3)   determining problematic process issues

(4)   determining the interrelationship between policy and process issues

(5)   determining which actors are involved and what their interests are in both policy and process issues

(6)   determining which tools and techniques (from data and information, through research and analysis, to advocacy and communications) can be used for which actors, around which issues

(7)   determining a set of likely starting points and a few initial branches

(8)   determining (on the basis of the tools, abilities, and techniques required) which human resources, in the form of long-term technical assistance and local collaboration, can be brought to bear on the issues.

By combining these measures, reform workers can begin to propose activities that make sense technically and within a highly specific context. The combined measures—i.e., the ERS design—can be viewed as a complex and unique scaffold. Since displaying more than two measures on paper is awkward, and since some of these areas are more than one-dimensional, we proceed by showing how some of these issues combine by looking at the important two-dimensional slices.

Note that this document essentially attempts to communicate a strategic design process. As a stand-alone text, it conveys the basic principles of the design strategy and reinforces some of the Education Reform Support concepts and techniques (by asking readers to think concretely about how they can be applied in specific settings). We have had good success using this document as the basis for an ERS workshop, turning the strategic design matrices elaborated in this volume into exercises intended to give participants a hands-on feel for what ERS entails. Ultimately we anticipate this volume being most useful to donor designers as a guide or contributing resource to an actual program strategy development or project design activity.

Section 2

Overall Assessment of Political Economy

Doing an overall assessment of the political economy both of education and of general reform is useful for two reasons. First, it can help focus donor effort on countries that may be readier than others. This is important given the scarcity of donor funding. Second, the assessment itself, general though it may be, will begin to point out flaws in the institutions, relations, and "spaces" that could support a country's reform processes.

The assessment can be formal or informal, depending on time and budget. The more formal, the better the results. In what follows we assume a rather formal assessment, via a checklist.[1] The checklist can be used quite informally if that is all there is time for; it can simply be used, for example, as a general sort of inspiration as to the types of information that should be sought.

Box 1 gives a sampling from the checklist's seven major areas; the full list is presented in Annex A. Note that some questions are intended only to elicit thinking and clarification, and make little or no reference to a country's readiness.

A country fulfilling, say, fewer than a third of the conditions[2] would be a questionable candidate for assistance, particularly if the aim of the assistance were to have some impact on actual education policy and reform. If the aim of the assistance were institutional strengthening per se, then obviously this "score" would not be as relevant. Even if the country scored low when the purpose was actual education reform, small investments in a very specific area might be justified. This would be true because (1) the very act of introducing the activity could change the environment; and (2) circumstances change, and being already on the ground is helpful when they do change. But large-scale

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[1]Note that inasmuch as this checklist can suggest the degree to which a country may or may not be ready for ERS activities, the results should be taken as indicative rather than as hard and fast. For example, Swaziland has proven to be very fertile ground for ERS work, even though it would have been deemed "not ready" by this exercise.

[2]The conditions are, for example, elements of civil society, some measure of ministerial accountability, a degree of public sector openness and transparency, and a measure of reformist activity.

Box 1. Elements of a Political-Economic Assessment

Civil society
- Are there organized groups articulate about education? How powerful are they?
- What is their technical capacity? What is their power of convocation?
- Are there independent think-tanks or consulting firms?
- Are there regular or intermittent fora on education policy issues?
- Are there intermediary organizations that have ties to grassroots membership?
- Are there functioning parent-teacher associations (PTAs) in the country? Are they united into a national organization?

Ministerial accountability
- Is the ministry of education accountable for target achievement?
- Are schools accountable to parents? Do parents know how well schools are doing?
- Is the ministry accountable to schools for inputs?
- Are the schools accountable to the ministry for outputs?

Communications
- Does the ministry of education have a public relations or communications specialist?
- Are there social marketing campaigns on education? By whom are they sponsored?

Media—newspapers, television, radio
- Is there a state-owned newspaper/television/radio? How independent is it?
- Are there private newspapers/television/radio? Do they reach the whole country?
- Is there regular coverage of education in the newspapers or on radio and television?

- How investigative/analytical is the reporting? What kinds of issues do reporters look at?
- Are there TV or radio talk shows devoted to (or that deal with) education?

Politics and bureaucracy
- Is there more than one political party able to compete seriously?
- Are there mechanisms for government to be held accountable (to itself and to the people)?
- How important are rhetoric and ideology to the bureaucracy?
- Is there a legislature? What role does it play? Does it have an education commission?

Reformist atmosphere in the country
- Are there any powerful currents toward decentralization of social services?
- Is there a movement toward privatization in the economic sectors?
- How seriously has the government taken structural adjustment at the macro level?
- How much support is there for these efforts among intellectuals and interest groups?
- What is the technical level of debate, if any, about these issues?

Donor activity in support of education reform, policy analysis, and information
- Have there been donor projects in education management information systems (EMIS)?
- Have there been donor activities in education policy analysis?
- Have there been donor activities in support of fora, dialogue?

activities ordinarily would not be justified. A country fulfilling somewhere between one third and two thirds of the conditions, on the other hand, might well justify full investment.

Assuming that the country does meet the criteria for assistance, we can turn to the second use for the list of questions: to identify what kinds of activities donor support might best stimulate. The best areas for investment are ones that donors *and* counterparts rate as important, but in which the country has low "scores." Countries scoring in the middle may well justify a general and generous level of assistance in support of education reform. For example, the main or only area of work might be education reform support as opposed to curriculum reform.

A country fulfilling all but, say, one sixth of the conditions is already so well on its way that general assistance may be unjustified, but very specific kinds of assistance may be productive. Again, the list can identify areas of particular weakness and importance, where targeted investment could make a big difference.

We insert two point here, about practical applications as opposed to philosophical understanding of a reform approach such as ERS. It should be obvious that to apply this list properly, assessors need common sense, wisdom, and experience. Moreover, such lists should never be thought of as substitutes for human knowledge, nor for an understanding of the country's reform philosophy. In particular, we assume that those who are using this list, and who are therefore assessing a country for project design activities, have read most of the other volumes in this series. However, we believe that people absorb the philosophy of an approach by induction rather than by deduction. Perusing and then using checklists does lead to an induction-based understanding of the whole approach. In any case, however, a philosophical understanding without practical application is not much use.

While this overall assessment of the political economy is important in the design stage, to determine how ready a particular country may be to absorb a large investment in the area of education reform, once implementation starts, it is important to redo the assessment, and to pay just as much attention to the overall political-economic assessment as to the substantive issues.

Finally, we note that the assessment questions suggested in Annex A are meant to illuminate the overall nature of the political-economic environment. There are more specific aspects of the environment that are particularly important if the institutional framework for civil-society-based activities is weak. While we cover such issues in a rather summary form in, for example, sections 1 and 7B of the assessment questions we propose in Annex A, Welmond, in his ERS supplementary paper on stakeholder participation in education reform, (*Strategies for Stakeholder Participation*), covers them in much more detail. We reproduce his assessment questions as Annex B.

Section 3

Studying the Reform Issues

After assessors have determined the political-economic environment of reform in the country, the readiness of civil society and the state to engage in policy dialogue, and readiness to use information in that process, they can begin to look for specific points of action on which donors, in conjunction with local counterparts, can focus as productive areas of work. In this context, it is important to look at blockages to reform. Thus, in this section we look at substantive reform issues, at process problems that might result in blockages, and at the interactions between the two.

3.1 Substantive Reform Issues

A comprehensive list of substantive issues is beyond our scope and, in any case, can be obtained from most existing educational sector assessments. Almost all countries in Africa have had sectoral assessments done recently by one donor or another (more than 300 in the past decade by one count, for the continent as a whole—hardly a dearth of information). It is unnecessary to redo these in most cases. However, people who wish to become immersed in reform support must first grasp the issues. They must read existing assessments, and carry out interviews that are like sector assessments in conjunction with the overall political-economic assessment, for example. It is not enough simply to be familiar with the issues. Instead, practitioners somehow have to really own them and internalize them, which requires both discussion and time.

For this document, it would not do to pick a particular country as an illustration, so we need a more or less global list of issues and problems that are typical in African countries, and indeed most developing countries. Such a global list can come from one of the more comprehensive appraisals of African or developing country education, such as World Bank (1988), World Bank (1995b), or Heneveld and Craig (1996). The most important point is that the list should be country-specific. Thus, here we list only a few issues for illustration; of course, not all of these are appropriate for all countries. We focus particularly on the finance and management issues, selecting the complex and contentious ones. We realize this selection gives the impression that *all* aspects of education reform are contentious, but we choose to assume they are more contentious rather than less so. In the supplemental

document developed for this series titled *Policy Issues in Education Reform in Africa*, most of these items are discussed fully. The standard references cited above can generate discussion, as can Lockheed et al. (1991), Psacharopoulos (1990), Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985), etc. *Policy Issues in Education Reform in Africa* contains an extensive review of such issues, and extensive bibliographies on them. (Note that Volume 3, *A Framework for Making It Happen*, Section 3, discusses these issues in some detail as well, but in the context of actually initiating operations in a country, not creating an initial design.) A mere listing—all we can do in this particular piece—of the issues is included in Box 2.

3.2 Process Issues in Reform

Most of the issues usually needing reform in many countries can be found in Box 2, and are fairly well known. What is less commonly discussed is why such needed reforms do not happen. This is our next step. Change on substantive issues is often blocked by process issues. We have identified several process blockages:

(1)   lack of technical and analytical design capacity,

Box 2. Typical Policy Reform Issues

Finance
- Securing budgets, prioritizing education in general
- Diversifying sources of funding:
  – Tax base (e.g., local taxes)
  – User fees
  – Private education
- Reorienting spending:
  – Level-based targeting (tertiary vs. basic) based on external efficiency outcomes and equity
  – Income-based targeting based on equity outcomes
  – Design and implementation of loan and grant schemes
  – Spending on quality-enhancing inputs
  – Increases in maintenance spending
  – Funding of third-party providers (nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], etc.)
  – Exploration of more efficient intergovernmental transfers in fiscally decentralized systems

Governance and management
- Decentralizing appropriately:
  – Decision making based on information needs/costs, economies of scale, need for homogeneity/heterogeneity, etc.
- Increasing accountability:
  – Revitalized examination systems for quality control rather than (as well as) filtering
  – Publication of information on results

– Appropriate mechanisms for tying rewards to results
– Use of ideas regarding fundamental quality level
- Organizing and empowering PTAs, school councils, etc.
- Tying community organization to access, quality, and cost accountability

Teacher relations
- Setting salary levels
- Establishing conditions of work and teaching load
- Developing an incentive structure
- Determining locus of hiring and dismissal decisions
- Training teachers, measuring and increasing actual productivity, and rewarding

Other input issues
- Establishing construction standards
- Procuring construction
- Establishing policy on procuring and supplying books and materials
- Decentralizing or centralizing procurement functions

Language policy

Curriculum policy

Gender and ethnic equity policies

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(2)   budgetary limits,

(3)   legal and regulatory limits and problems,

(4)   pressure group power, and

(5)   realistic fear of management complexity due to lack of capacity to manage the reform process and the resulting system.

Technical analytical design capacity refers to the skills needed to do the hard background analysis to weigh the costs, likely returns, implementability, and so forth of proposed reforms. It also encompasses the skills needed to actually design the technical systems that make reform possible. (The poor capacity of education ministries in managing and tracking expenditures in francophone West Africa is a good example of how the lack of technical design capacity makes it difficult to implement reforms intended to target resources to improving primary education.) The budgetary constraints that block reform are self-evident.

What is important here is to be able to distinguish instances when a lack of resources is truly a constraint to reform from instances when other process factors (such as interest group pressure) are actually blocking the reform. Legal and regulatory constraints refer specifically to existing laws and codes that need to be rewritten if a reform is to be implemented (e.g., decoupling the teaching service from the civil service, decentralizing control of the budget, etc.). Pressure group power is most often what is masked as other constraints to reform. Pressure groups can be as diverse as business interests, unions, university students, and the bureaucracy itself. The point is that the status quo in the sector exists for a reason, and that reason usually has to do with how particular groups are extracting benefit from it. Change in the status quo is directly threatening to the beneficial station those groups have secured and therefore it will be resisted. The final category of constraints differs from the first. Here the emphasis is on managerial capacity. Even if the other constraints can be overcome and reforms can be technically designed, budgets secured, laws changed, and pressure groups co-opted, reform proponents will still need the capacity to manage both the new system and the process of change.

These blockages usually are interrelated. For example, legal limits are often related to pressure group problems, since pressure group privilege is usually given legal expression. Nevertheless, the blockages are not always related, and in any case analysts have to review them separately before they can design specific strategies.

The following matrix (Table 1) can help identify the specific process issues in each of the above categories that may be blocking the path of reform. Each row corresponds to one of the five process categories listed above. The matrix thus serves as a first-cut guide to selecting types of activities. Note that inside each cell referring to tools, we have already started mapping issues onto tools.

Recall that we are looking at process issues and tools specifically, but some of the actors in question are implicit in the contents of each cell. Moreover, since we have already started combining the various measures that we listed in Section 1, it is possible to intimate where the action points might have to be. Awareness as to where the donor-counterpart collaboration can be most fruitful builds up gradually, like a spiral.

Note that most of the process issues in Table 1 are stated in either positive or negative form. For example, there is either a lack of something (e.g., lack of managerial competence and vision to implement a technical vision, in the ministry of education), or too much of something (too much pressure from certain groups). One case that particularly concerns us—because it fits both categories—is the pressure from certain organized groups, listed above as item 4. To explain by example: Many African societies have had too much pressure from tertiary (and sometimes secondary) student groups, and also from teachers as a body. Parents and children tend to be grossly underrepresented in policy fora and discussions. Some democratic societies assume that the normal mechanisms of legislative representation, media coverage, the work of NGOs and PTAs, etc., will proxy for parental and child interests. But in emerging African democracies, this wholesale assumption is probably unjustified. For example, in some of these countries, since teachers are frequently the most educated elements in many locales, they tend to have a disproportionate weight in national assemblies, or even in the executive branch. Similarly, most technocrats have benefited from the system of disproportionate allocations to the tertiary sector, and they want their children to continue to so benefit, particularly as salaries of civil servants are low. Thus, it is difficult to assume that governmental processes, even as they democratize, will have the means to objectively weigh the interests of teachers or university students against the interests of society in general. Annex C summarizes Welmond's coverage of this topic in *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation*.

Table 1. Process Problems Often Blocking Reform Design and Implementation

Item	Problems	Goals	Tools
1	Lack of technical and analytical design capacity to define cost-effective, pedagogically sound policy. Disaggregate by substantive area (curriculum, teacher training, finance, decentralization and management, management in general, etc.)	Improve *technical* capacity for analysis, improve networking with NGOs that are living laboratories for innovation.	Technical assistance in education planning, policy analysis. Networking assistance for ministry of education (MoE) to tie into institutions modeling cost-effective provision.
2	Budgetary limits: Lack of budgetary support; unsustainability of education reform ideas if no budget.	Win support from policy makers with budgetary authority.	More and enhanced dissemination of (a) the value of education, using social marketing and policy marketing with economic ministries; and (b) more support from economic ministries based on a conviction that MoE now has cost-effective ideas to deliver. MoE ideas must be real, of course. Technical assistance focuses on policy dialogue and relates to item 1 above.
3	Legal and regulatory roadblocks.	Change the legal environment, including specific laws, decrees, and regulations. This goal ties to the one for item 4.	Legal and technical assistance, evaluation of current impact of regulations, etc.
4	Pressure group power to block implementation of already known, cost-effective, and equity-enhancing policies.	Create or assist countervailing pressure groups. Coopt, dialogue, neutralize, *and* compromise with blocking pressure groups.	Technical assistance in policy dialogue and social and policy marketing, including coalitions of NGOs and private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and institutional development. Encouragement of participation and public discussion. Isolation of blockers in public opinion *and* compromise when possible. (Blockers' objections may be valid and may be useful as true information.)Technical assistance for all (including the opposition, in many cases) to bring real analysis and information to the dialogue marketplace.
5	Fear of management complexity: Lack of managerial capacity, generalized bureaucratic lethargy, lack of team spirit.	Develop better motivated, more efficiently managed groups for leadership and implementation of the reform in the public sector.	Strategic planning, team building, goal clarification, and management technical assistance. Implementation assistance of the type used in the Implementing Policy Change (IPC) project, either in policy design or in execution.

Section 4

Available Actors

The next important theme is stakeholders, both individuals and institutions. In Box 3, we present a rather extensive (though not exhaustive) list of actors. We do this for two reasons. First, we want to signal the need to take this issue very seriously; and second, most people interested in the education sector tend to think of education stakeholders too narrowly. We believe there are stakeholders or potential stakeholders who can be mobilized but who are currently seldom even approached. In the scope of this paper, we cannot possibly discuss at length why each stakeholder is important, but after the list we have explained why *some* of these stakeholders are included. Our reasoning is an illustration of how reform proponents can analyze such topics when designing reform support activities.

The fact is that most education projects, and even education policy projects, ignore key opponents and potential allies of reform efforts. For example, staff from grassroots NGO schools, who might be able to prove that their form of service delivery is more cost-effective than traditional forms, may have unsuspected allies in private economic think-tanks and consulting firms (as suppliers of analytical input). Or they could ally with planners and economists in the ministries of finance and plan. These policy clients could defend their cause and even steer public money in the NGOs' direction, particularly if they are under pressure themselves to increase cost-effectiveness of service delivery. Many countries have started innovative social investment funds, usually controlled by economists and financiers from the planning and finance areas, that are channeling funds to social sectors via NGOs on a competitive-bid basis. Most traditional educators have few connections with these worlds, but they are very much worth exploring.[3]

Another example is the issue of tertiary student and professor unions, which frequently are partially responsible for the disproportionate levels of funding received by universities in Africa. Most education reform efforts in the past have put little effort into either finding

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[3]See Welmond's ERS supplemental volume *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation* for further discussion of this issue.

Box 3. Possible Stakeholders in Education Reform

Cabinet
- Chief executive
- Other ministers
- Interministerial committees, e.g., social sector reform committee, or decentralization committee

Ministry of education (most important decision makers)
- High-level officials (through, say, deputy director general)
- Mid-level, central officials
- Mid-level, field, regional, or provincial staff
- Teachers

Unofficial education sector
- Private/NGO/community schools (NGOs as service providers, as opposed to policy research and advocacy groups; see below)
  – Organizations
  – Key noted personalities as leaders
- Religious schools
  – Organizations
  – Key noted personalities as leaders

Economic ministries (funders of education)
- Finance
- Planning
- (High- to mid-level staff in both)

Production sectors (users of trained labor)
- State-owned sectors, if any
- Private production sector (certain sectors, such as banking and insurance, are more likely to be stakeholders; others, such as agriculture and mining, are less so)
  – Organized entities (chamber of commerce, etc.)
  – Specific "captains of industry," if any

Civil society organizations
- Teachers' union(s)
  – Leaders
  – Individual teachers

- Other unions
- Church or organized religious leaders
- Women's groups
- Military, particularly if "progressive" (however defined) or if organized into academies, think-tanks, etc.

Media
- Editors and owners
- Reporters
- Opinion and editorial writers
- Talk-show hosts

Policy research or advocacy NGOs, think-tanks (private, semi-official, and academic)
- Educators
- Economists in social and political sciences

Consulting firms
- Educators
- Economists in social and political sciences
- Managers

Legislature (often ex-teachers)
- Education commission
- Technical service staff supporting legislature

Universities
- Rectors
  – Councils of rectors
  – Key individual rectors
- Student unions
  – Leaders as group representatives
  – Key student leaders as individuals
- Professors' unions
  – Leaders as group representatives
  – Key academic leaders as individuals

Community interests
- PTAs
- Councils of local leaders
- Ministry of decentralization, interior, or home affairs

creative compromises with these groups, or launching publicity and debate efforts to isolate them in public opinion, or both. Most traditional educators, in fact, do not really know where to begin such debates, and do not look systematically for allies or opponents outside the immediate sphere of the public education sector.

Because it is important to consider a broad rather than a narrow list, we have made our list very broad indeed. We emphasize that it should be a disaggregated list as well. That is, too often the tendency is to think

of particular institutions in monolithic terms, thereby limiting the ability to identify differing points of view or loyalties within a single institution. For this reason, we subdivide institutions such as the education ministry into several constituent elements.

Section 5

Available Tools and Approaches

By "tools" we do not mean only mechanical tools such as management information systems and related techniques, or presentational techniques for policy advocacy, etc. We also mean approaches to strategic planning for public policy NGOs, training in developing a philosophy of information management for public accountability, etc. Volume 4, *Tools and Techniques*, discusses this subject in great detail. Thus, here we simply summarize, without any discussion, the kinds of technical activities and tools reformers should consider. Box 4 is a fairly complete list that selectively emphasizes tools and skills not considered in the usual donor mix.

All of these techniques and tools may need to be made available to counterparts after project startup. Project designers simply need to be aware that these are important, and that they can indeed be made available. The ERS Course Description, which is a part of this series, discusses and references many of these skills.

Box 4. Tools and Techniques for Education Reform Support

■ **Data and information**
  – EMIS for accountability and dialogue
  – Survey research and census needs assessment, for analysis and public discussion

■ **Analytical approaches**
  – Internal efficiency analysis
  – External efficiency analysis
  – Budgeting and financial analysis
  – Analysis of financial transfers and school funding
  – Simulation, projection, and planning models
  – Analysis of salary scales and cost implications
  – Analysis of governance options

■ **Communications**
  – Policy dialogue
  – Policy marketing

  – Social marketing
  – Advocacy
  – Negotiation and mediation
  – Public communication campaigns
  – Political-economic discourse

■ **Institutional development for analysis, communications, and advocacy**
  – Networking and coalition building
  – Funding of public interest or advocacy groups
  – Strategic planning for public sector and NGOs in policy development and policy advocacy
  – Environmental mapping/scanning
  – Organizational capacity building
  – Technology transfer

Section 6

Combining Issues, Actors, and Tools

As noted above, an Education Reform Support "project" can be thought of as all the activities coordinated by various people and institutions. Assembling a project in Education Reform Support therefore means (1) dedicating tools and resources in order to (2) to deal with process issues that (3) are blocking the reform or resolution of substantive issues, thereby (4) helping local actors to arrive at a participatory and implementable definition of reform solutions. We focus on some of the most important combinations of these.

6.1 Substantive Issues and Process Issues

The relationships between substantive issues and process issues are quite important. Not all substantive reforms face the same process blockages; and some are blocked on many fronts, while others are blocked in only one or two. Table 2 is an example of how to analyze these issues—a complete list would be too big and too context-specific. This exercise needs to be done for each country. We have chosen, as generic examples, some difficult but often necessary reforms and have analyzed them across the five categories of process issues discussed in Section 3.2 above.

We emphasize that the important points about the following matrix are *not* the details of what is provided in the text, but instead the intellection—or the process of filling out the matrix for designing reform support projects in a particular country. That is, it is not the content of the cells that matters, but the process the designers go through in filling up the cells. Some extremely experienced designers go through this process intuitively, and that is fine. For others, a little formalism can be of help.

This set of examples should be enough to illustrate why such an analysis can be useful: It can focus action onto the most important process problems, and can suggest where activities would be worthwhile, assuming a given substantive issue has been deemed of very high priority. Or it can help choose issues whose resolution requires

Table 2. Relationships Between Substantive Reform Issues and Process Issues

	Relationship				
	Process issues[a]				
Substantive issues	**Technical and social design (cost-effective and pedagogically appropriate)**	**Securing of budget, securing of new sources of funding**	**Legal and regulatory technical roadblocks**	**Pressure group opposition**	**Management capacity**
Reform teacher salary scale to reward performance. De-link salary scale from paper certification and seniority.	Medium: requires human resources and public finance expertise. Activity may include technical assistance (TA) in these areas to ministry of education (MoE), or private sector think-tank.	None: unless it is tied to a general salary increase as a way to overcome union resistance.	May be high: requires labor law expertise. May require TA in legal areas to MoE or civil service commission.	May be high: will require much dialogue and marketing; union leadership may have to be distinguished from teachers.	Medium to high: depending on design and concomitant reforms, could be quite easy or impossibly hard. Would require TA in improved management of personnel, teacher supervision systems, school principals.
Increase user fees at university; move to system of grants, bursaries, and full fees based on objective indicators.	Medium: requires some experience in targeting subsidies, requires data for simulation of effects. Loans: much more difficult. TA specific to design of loan and bursary systems. Work with MoE or higher education council.	None.	Low to high, depending on whether budget shifts affect personnel, personnel contractual issues, and budget flexibility.	High, but can be done with sufficient discussion and public awareness. Activity includes TA and collaboration in dialogue. Work with ministry of finance (MoF), MoE, ministry of planning (MinPlan), think-tanks.	Medium. Requires data management on students, tracking. Loan system would be much more difficult: qualifying, tracking, collection.
Empower communities to hire and dismiss teachers, or to have more say in these actions. Possibly have the communities set wages, above a certain minimum.	Medium: requires knowledge of human resource management, good compromises between centralism and decentralization, to prevent abuses.	None.	High: may require redesign of civil service law as it applies to teachers.	High from union leadership. Medium from rank-and-file if the dialogue process is well managed. Work with unions, parent and community groups, MoE.	Medium. Requires sophisticated record-keeping and grievance procedures, and TA to community-organizing NGOs or MoE.

[a]Gradations represent the degree of blockage the process issue poses for the substantive issue.

Table 2 (Continued)

	Relationship				
	Process issues[a]				
Substantive issues	Technical and social design (cost-effective and pedagogically appropriate)	Securing of budget, securing of new sources of funding	Legal and regulatory technical roadblocks	Pressure group opposition	Management capacity
Allow private or autonomous schools to receive a government capitation subsidy, perhaps on a targeted basis, with or without private fees.	Medium to high (depending on whether and how the subsidies are targeted). Work with MoE, MoF.	Medium to high: if schools attract more attendees, may be high. Well-targeted subsidies could mean moderate impact.	Medium: may require some changes in laws.	High self-interested opposition if tied to hiring and firing decisions. Ideological opposition may occur due to misunderstandings regarding the role of private and public sectors. Self-interested bureaucratic opposition may also occur. Policy dialogue is highly necessary. Work with provision and advocacy NGOs, think-tanks, and MoF, MinPlan.	Medium to high. Requires good and up-to-date databases. Depends on targeting mechanisms used.
Allow community schools selectively, based on local tax base and intergovernmental transfers.	High: requires capacity to design and gather new taxes, or intergovernmental transfers that are both efficient and just. Work with MoE, MoF.	Medium to high: opposition will have to let go of budget.	Medium to high: may require changes in tax law.	Medium: from bureaucracy and/or union leadership.	High initially in center, high permanently in communities. Much training required.
Enforce quality through client information using assessment results and fundamental quality levels (FQLs).	High: requires designing and implementing better assessments based on census.	Medium to high: requires considerable budget for a bureaucratic function without self-interested backers.	Low.	Low: few groups would be offended. Some ideological opposition. More opposition if system is tied to rewards and personnel decisions.	High: requires managerial capacity to implement and to train communities in using.

[a]Gradations represent the degree of blockage the substantive issue poses for the process issue.

Table 2 (Continued)

	Relationship				
	Process issues[a]				
Substantive issues	Technical and social design (cost-effective and pedagogically appropriate)	Securing of budget, securing of new sources of funding	Legal and regulatory technical roadblocks	Pressure group opposition	Management capacity
Install competency- or mastery-based teacher training system with true apprenticeship components.	Medium to low.	Medium to low. Might actually save money.	Minimal.	Low to high, depending on whether it is tied to elimination of old-fashioned certification as source of higher pay.	High: Teacher training system requires a high degree of management oversight. Requires better and more serious personnel management.
Re-prioritize the budget to allow for more expenditure on books, materials, maintenance.	Low.	Medium to high, because these items are not likely to increase just because others decrease. Requires dialogue with economic ministries or internally if other areas are to be squeezed at all.	None to minimal. May require some changes in procurement and bidding regulations.	Minimal if done in addition to budget in other areas.	Low. May require improvements in procurement, bidding management.
Privatize book and other material procurement or production; decentralize other procurement to local level.	Low.	Low.	High (privatize books), to low (decentralize procurement of materials).	High: Opposition to privatization is strong and concentrated, often veiled in ideological terms. Technical opposition on grounds of simply shifting arena of corruption may be valid.	Low to high: depends on how much supervision the local level needs in order to carry out functions properly.

[a]Gradations represent the degree of blockage the substantive issue poses for the process issue.

the abilities already at hand.[4] Thus, if project managers want to engage in policy reform support and have plenty of legal technical assistance available, but none in managing human resources for education, then obviously they should not tackle reforms that require intensive use of human resource management abilities (e.g., reforming the teacher salary scale). This argument may seem to belabor the obvious. It is not unusual, however, to find donor agency field technicians paying attention only to the first "process issue" column. They inappropriately assume, for example, that if economists are somewhat like accountants, principals know about system management, and a contracting officer knows something about law, all of them together can redesign the teachers' salary scale. Such generalizations lead to the application of inappropriate skills to problems, and botched jobs.

6.2   Actors, Issues, and Relationships Between Actors: A Political Map

The systematic depiction of the relation of actors to other actors in the context of both substantive and process issues can be called a "political map." Various levels of complexity of political mapping have been proposed. (See Reich 1994 and Crosby 1992a for practical, yet more detailed methodological descriptions than are possible here.) For our purposes, a fairly simple tabular version will suffice. In any case, political mapping is more of an art than a science, and it should not be over-formalized. Many highly experienced practitioners often have these maps implicitly in their heads, and they simply adapt them for each situation. However, even the most experienced may find it useful to have some kind of systematic checklist, particularly when going into (to them) a new type of country, whose stock sets of actors and positions they may not know. Most actors in certain relatively homogeneous cultural milieus (e.g., Central America, English-speaking Southeastern Africa, French-speaking West Africa, etc.) behave in somewhat predictable ways, or at least tend to have the same sorts of preoccupations, institutional relationships, and institutional traditions (e.g., a certain style of teacher unionism). But that very predictability can blind technical assistants to nuances, and can be particularly dangerous when they unwittingly step farther away from the region with which they are familiar. Thus, political maps that are intuitive and "in one's head" may not always be reliable.

The kind of analysis suggested here is vital for project designers preparing to develop a reform support infrastructure as proposed in Volume 3, *A Framework for Making It Happen*. We note in Volume 3 that essential to the success of reform efforts (particularly in implementation-intensive sectors such as education, if not in macroeconomic reforms) is the development of a set of interlinked institutional and

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[4]Yet we warn about projects being supply-driven. The fact is that a project manager may have plenty of legal technical assistance at hand, but legal reform may not be the best place to initiate reform support.

personal actors, or the reform support infrastructure and a core group. Because these groups are interlinked and mutually dependent, given their technical and issue specialization, it is important to map them in relation to each other, and in relation to the opponents of reform. Again, this mapping is a part of the design process that will be invaluable in execution.

Table 3 below illustrates how reform proponents might begin to develop a simple political map. We use this illustrative approach because there really is no generic way to list these issues.

The first column lists a selection of key actors (refer to Section 4 above). For a specific case or country, this list will include some individuals, and also some organizations or groups of individuals. As we stated in Section 4, for the most important organizations, it is often wise to disaggregate into the relevant bureaus. Thus, within the ministry of education, for example, one may distinguish between the planning bureau, the Institut National Pedagogique, etc. Within the ministry of planning, one may distinguish between the upper echelons and the department that deals with education. The views of the upper echelons of the planning ministry will often be very different from those of the mid-level leadership of the education department of the same ministry. The upper echelons will be more concerned with trying to implement, say, austerity directives, whereas the middle levels will tend to be more sympathetic to their colleagues in the ministry of education. Note that it would be impractical to include in the political map all of the groups listed in the maximal list in Box 3 above. Thus, selecting whom to list implies that some are considered more important than others. But at this stage, importance may emerge out of the exercise of casting the net wide. The reform leaders therefore should include all actors who tend to be important in well-run education systems, even if in the particular case they do not appear to be important. And the list should contain actors that are important *de facto*, even if they should *not* be important, either *de jure* according to the country itself, or according to a preconceived notion of what actors should be important.

The second column lists which issues are important to the actors, and what their position on each issue is. Thus, for each actor in column one, several issues may be listed in column two. The issues to be selected, again, should be those that appear important to the country, based on a perusal of sectoral assessments, and lists such as that in Box 2. The issues should correspond fairly closely to those identified when Table 2 was created. With regard to the actors' positions on the issues, one should make the following careful distinctions. First, the designers should identify issues on which the group has formal, well-articulated positions, based on sound logic and empirical evidence. Second, issues

Table 3. A Simple (Hypothetical) Political Map

Actor	Issues	Relation to other actors	Influence base
Bankers' Association	Banks are one of the most intense users of trained labor in the country. Association is not aware of education quality issues. Domestic banks face stiff competition from overseas banks.	Association members have formal relationship with Ministry of Finance as members of committees on banking and monetary policy. No personal links otherwise.	Opinions are highly respected within private sector and financial public sector. Can indirectly influence monetary, public finance, and macroeconomic policy.
Export-diversification lobby	Exporters are another intense user of trained labor. Lobby is aware of education issues, but has no articulated position.	Not networked with other private sector or public sector organizations.	Supported by donors, personal relations with Ministry of Finance. Little influence otherwise, outside its own area.
"Save Our Country" Foundation—an economics and public administration think-tank	No known position/experience in education. Well-articulated position and research capacity on other social issues. Able to access, use, and disseminate information.	Head is cousin of Ministry of Education. Technicians frequently act as consultants to Ministry of Finance.	Ideological/technical. Highly respected by the public sector technocracy and donors. Held in suspicion by teachers' union. No real power base in grassroots or mass movements.
Minister of Finance	Concerned with costs of education sector. Minister fancies herself an expert on education management. Has good but not well-researched ideas for cost-effectiveness.	None to education actors. Casual friendship (membership in same country club, etc.) with "Save Our Country" Foundation head.	Formal control over public budget as vested in her office. A respected technocrat and innovative thinker throughout public and private sector.
Ministry of Education—Minister	Unconcerned. Little personal magnetism, not known for innovativeness. No strong ideas, but very competent general manager.	Cousin to "Save Our Country" Foundation head. Amendable to personal and intellectual influence. Obvious, customary relations to overall education sector.	That vested in his office. Little personal influence otherwise.
Ministry of Education—Head of Planning Unit	Young career technocrat. Concerned with almost all relevant issues. Imaginative and open to ideas. Knowledgeable about research base. Not a good manager. Little capacity for dissemination and communication. Not networked.	Same general orientation as mid-level thinkers in "Save Our Country" Foundation. Went to same economics graduate program as key assistant of Minister of Finance.	None whatsoever, other than that derived from personal friendships and donor backing. Planning unit seen as largely irrelevant from a true power (money, mass movement, personal relations to the powerful) point of view.
Local representative of Continental Multilateral Development Bank	Bureaucratic concern about lack of execution of EMIS project. Little overall understanding of the issues otherwise.	Went to same English university as Minister of Finance; overlapped briefly there.	Holds control over considerable amount of money across all sectors, including export diversification program.

Table 3 (Continued)

Actor	Issues	Relation to other actors	Influence base
National PTA	Concerned over accountability of schools to parents; ranks quality over access. Has well-articulated positions, but no clear research base. Positions would not hold up to true technical scrutiny.	Has few relations with formal or "shadow" technocracy or any of the other actors listed here.	Can mobilize some mass opinion, but weak otherwise.
Teachers' union leadership	Concerned with bread-and-butter issues. Sound research base on those issues. Opinions on other issues are counter to what is known about efficiency and good management. Opposed to performance-related pay. Has sabotaged implementation of EMIS because of its ability to uncover corruption in allocation of teacher training opportunities.	Normal relations with Ministry of Education.	Very powerful capacity to mobilize teachers. Alliance with university student union leadership. Large capacity for mass mobilization, violence, urban disturbances. Allied with opposition party.
Fast Computer Systems—a private-sector consulting and systems firm	No knowledge or interest in education per se. Experience and ability in developing information systems for the public sector.	Owner is cousin to key technician in "Save Our Nation" Foundation. Several technicians are related to members of Education Commission.	None
"Care for the Children"—an international PVO with strong domestic presence	Concerned with access and quality. Excellent, articulate position. Experienced in cost-effective, community-oriented delivery. No documentation or research base. No capacity for dissemination.	Strong personal and institutional links to Head of Planning Unit at Ministry of Education.	Little or none, except for significant moral credibility based on ability to deliver quality for price.
Education Commission in National Assembly	Most assembly members are ex-teachers but now have a broader responsibility to electorate. Technicians in Education Commission are frustrated because there are no comparative data on districts with which to satisfy deputies' requests for information (on which they base pork-barrel politics). Some members are relatively enlightened and wish to portray themselves as concerned with "good governance." Lack of information. No research base on positions.	Has good relations with teachers' union, but differs on some opinions now that they are in different roles.	Electoral base. Has capacity to steer budget and resources to its districts.

should be noted on which the actor has a well-articulated and formal position, but *without* empirical evidence or strong logic. The third types of issues to be distinguished are those for which the actor should or might have positions if the actor was better informed and knew how to articulate them. In summary, analysts need to figure out what the position is, and what the support base is, in terms of information, analysis, and rhetorical and communicative ability.

A third column can record each actor's relation, or potential relation, to a few other important actors regarding a particular issue. For example, which other actors offer institutional or personal support? It is vital to include personal, political, bureaucratic, and ethnic relations, etc., but it is also important to concentrate only on *key* relations and to disregard noise.

Finally, a fourth column can list each actor's source of influence, both in civil society and in the state. Sources of influence may include:

- personal power and magnetism (e.g., a leading education intellectual, respected for wisdom, honesty and outspokenness);

- the power of the office (e.g., a minister who otherwise has no power or influence base, as opposed to one who has an independent base within the party);

- ideological or informational power (e.g., an NGO or other group with access to data and capacity for intellectual dissemination, and with the respect of donors and the enlightened technocracy);

- mass power (e.g., the teachers' union); or

- nominal and potential mass grassroots power (e.g., a parent-teacher association).

Much of the information that goes into a political map (such as the one illustrated in Table 3) comes out casually in conversations rather than being systematically assessed, which is difficult to do. For this reason, in Volume 3, *A Framework for Making It Happen*, we have stated that anyone who launches an activity in Education Reform Support should prepare to constantly adjust strategy. Similarly, any real map of this kind needs to be much more complete and inclusive than we have space for. These maps only really come alive in practice, and when actual names, issues, and personalities are involved.

Note that the actors need not be listed in any particular order initially. As their importance, or lack thereof, to the overall process becomes more apparent, however—and simply for ease of exposition—the more important ones should be moved up in the matrix.

As this mapping process unfolds, potential project activities emerge. For example, suppose a reviewer perusing column one discovers that two important actors feel or might feel similarly about a certain issue, *if* they knew each other better, and if they had access to the same information. Then suppose a third actor is found that has the ability to bring the information to the fore, and has credibility with both of the others, but has no power base of his own. The implicit networking suggestion is obvious.

As a further example, take the issue of EMIS as suggested by the hypo-thetical map. The teachers' union opposes it and has secretly sabotaged its implementation, since the purpose is to increase the efficiency of, among other things, the allocation of teachers to remunerative training courses (because the training courses pay a lucrative per diem). The representative of the Continental Multilateral Development Bank is frustrated by the lack of implementation of the EMIS, since non-disbursement is bad for his career, but otherwise he really has little ideological or technical interest, competence, or ability to mobilize opinion. Key members of the Education Commission of the Parliament, as well as the Head of the Planning Unit, are frustrated by the lack of planning data, in the former case for relatively undesirable pork-barrel reasons, in the latter case for commendable "good governance" reasons—but their interests coincide. The Minister of Finance and the head and technicians of the "Save Our Country" Foundation do not particularly know or care about the EMIS, but they do know, in general, about the importance of good data for management in the public sector. The Minister of Education, who does not much care one way or the other, is under pressure from the teachers' union to block the EMIS—such pressure that he is not even willing to hold a national seminar to kick off the EMIS project.

The "Save Our Country" Foundation could become the key node in a mini-project to mobilize attention to the need to finally develop the EMIS. This strategy would neutralize the union's leadership in terms of semi-public technocratic opinion, and increase public and private commitment to the issue. For example, an initial seminar could invite all the key actors, so that those whose interests coincide can begin to realize that these interests do coincide, can begin to identify those groups that oppose them, and can start to network. Seminar participants could pursue follow-up seminars, articles in the teachers' magazine, action in the national assembly, etc., to keep up the pressure. Note that private, personal interests, whether political (members of the Education Commission), commercial (Fast Computer Systems and other potential suppliers), or bureaucratic (resident representative of Continental Multilateral Development Bank), often must be tapped and must be made to coincide with public interests ("Save Our Nation" Foundation, Head of Planning Unit). If these interests are not merged,

little will happen, because the key decision makers (e.g., the Minister) either are indifferent or are under the sway of interests contrary to the EMIS (the leaders of the teachers' union).

Another example would be the somewhat related issues of budgetary support for the Ministry of Education, and the implantation in the Ministry of more imaginative, modernized delivery systems. In this example, the Minister lacks the technical and visionary capacity to be a good advocate for his Ministry, and in any case is under the influence of his own bureaucracy and the teachers' union. Neither of these two parties is particularly interested in giving communities and parents more say over how schools might run, for example. Nor is either one interested in redesigning the salary scale to increase the sensitivity of salary increases to actual teacher performance as determined by community review. The Finance Ministry therefore sees the Ministry of Education, as currently run, as a "black hole" of consumption and inefficiency, and starves it of funds. Meanwhile, key elements in the private sector are vaguely aware of the threat that an uneducated labor force poses to the survival of the sector. In this situation, an alliance could develop between "Care for the Children" (with its experience and grassroots legitimacy) and the "Save Our Nation" Foundation, with its access to the private sector and the Ministry of Finance. The allies could devise a set of activities to influence and explain to the high-level private sector, and to the Ministry of Finance itself, the importance of the Ministry of Finance pressuring the Ministry of Education to modernize. The pressure could consist of a promise for better budgets in exchange for serious progress toward modernization, meaning the implantation of delivery systems such as those "Care for the Children" has been experimenting with. "Save Our Nation" Foundation economists, who by now have formed an alliance with "Care for the Children" (which in turn has the backing of the PTA and a few key parliamentarians), would help document the need for modernization with a research base, and would help convince economists at the Ministry of Finance to negotiate adoption of this kind of model by the Ministry of Education.

Obviously, activities such as these are far more detailed than is needed during the project design stage. But sensitivity to these sorts of issues is important in the design stage, because the design stage must provide a few starting points for the project, and must choose the appropriate skills that need to be brought to bear.

6.3 Combining Actors and Tools

The admittedly sketchy discussion of each cell in Tables 1 through 3 above already hints at the actors to be involved and the tools to be used. We finish this discussion of how to structure activities by matching actors to types of technical or institutional development activities. Once again, we note that a "project" like this needs to do more than support disparate activities. It most likely needs to include some single institution, staffed by a long-term technical advisor or host-country personnel, whose function it is to broker and coordinate all these actions, by supporting the core group and the reform support infrastructure. The whole point of ERS activities is to support local institutions, bring together a core group, and assist the core group in forging a reform support infrastructure. Moreover, the components of a reform support infrastructure typically are mutually dependent based on their respective technical strengths and weaknesses. Hence, it is important for reform proponents assisting the reform support infrastructure to analyze, even during project design, the technical strengths and weaknesses of the actors who will eventually form the infrastructure.

A matching of tools (technical approaches, institutional development assistance) to actors yields the matrix in Table 4. Again, we do not fill out the matrix exhaustively, but do give enough details to enable readers to understand the utility of filling out such a matrix in thinking about a country.

Note that the networking of actors (view the last column) is a kind of spinal column of reform support: It is the one column that has an entry in every row, and it is the one column that implies relationships among the rows. As we have stated elsewhere in this volume and even more so in Volume 3, providing a locus, and providing some financial and institutional support to this kind of networking, at least during the reform motivation and definition process, is one of the essential ways a donor can assist. That is, the last column refers to the need to form or abet both a reform support infrastructure and a core group that animates that infrastructure. The technical activities in the first three columns also stem from the last column. The column on "institutional capacity" stems from the networking spinal column, but also supports it, because without proper internal development, most institutions find it difficult to be part of an effective network or reform support infra-structure.

One last important point is that the issues of institutional capacity and networking imply not just working institution by institution, but also working on improving the overall institutional environment so that networking can take place. This is a highly complex issue which Welmond, in his ERS supplementary document, covers in much more detail than we have room for here. In particular, he offers detailed

Table 4. Matching of Actors to Support Activities and Tools

Actors	Support activities and technical tools				
	Data and EMIS	Analysis	Dialogue	Institutional capacity development	Networking
Cabinet				Ability to provide information about leadership for think-tank and advocacy NGOs. Capacity to serve on boards.	With MoE, think-tanks.
MoE	Use of data in creating policy. Reorientation to community-based qualitative assessment. Ability to create demand for data.	Assessment development, education finance, governance design.	Workshop design and leadership. Use of social and policy marketing.	Human resource management.	With ministries of finance and planning (MinFin, MinPlan), think-tanks, etc.
MinFin	Establishment of electronic link to personnel records.	Budgeting and finance. Targeting, intergovernmental transfers. Assessment of local-level tax code options.			With MoE, NGOs in service delivery and advocacy, think-tanks.
MinPlan	Establishment of electronic link to data on socioeconomic status (SES) for targeting, poverty mapping.	Budgeting and finance, targeting of capital improvements.			With MoE, NGOs in service delivery and advocacy, think-tanks.
Legislature		Legal analysis of issues such as civil service, tax law.		Development of education commission.	With MoE, NGOs in service delivery and advocacy, think-tanks.
Universities	Establishment of electronic link to MoE data and analyses.	Analytical capacity in pedagogical, financial issues.	Workshop design and leadership; policy dialogue surrounding fee and budgetary issues.		With MoE, student unions, and MinFin on issues of fees, bursaries, loans.

Table 4 (Continued)

Actors	Support activities and technical tools				
	Data and EMIS	Analysis	Dialogue	Institutional capacity development	Networking
NGOs—think-tanks (including consulting firms)	General capacity in analytical rather than management databases.	General analysis, particularly finance and governance, monitoring and evaluation.	Technical assistance (TA) in workshops, use of social and policy marketing.	General management, contracts, funding, interinstitutional relations, creation of a market for these services.	With MoE, MinFin, media. Critical: links to universities, service-oriented NGOs.
NGOs—service providers *including* associations of private, community, or religious schools	Some capacity in database management.	Capacity to document cost effectiveness, evaluation and monitoring.	TA in workshops, use of social and policy marketing.	General management, contracts, funding, interinstitutional relations, creation of a market for these services.	With MoE, MinFin, media. Critical: links to universities, think-tank NGOs.
Religious organizations					With MoE, NGOs (both service providers and think-tanks)
Women's organizations					With MoE, NGOs (both service providers and think-tanks)
Community organizations, PTAs				General management, instruction in ways to democratize effectively.	With MoE, ministry of interior or home affairs, councils of local officials, NGOs.
Local government unions or alliances (e.g., association of mayors)					With PTAs, MoE, ministry of interior or home affairs, NGOs.
Media		Training in analytical reporting and editorializing on education.	Workshop leadership; ideas for articles, talk shows, etc. Capacity to tap NGOs and think-tanks for ideas.	Development of specialized function in education.	With MoE, NGOs (both service providers and think-tanks), community organizations.

Table 4 (Continued)

	Support activities and technical tools				
Actors	**Data and EMIS**	**Analysis**	**Dialogue**	**Institutional capacity development**	**Networking**
Chambers of commerce, captains of industry, or production ministries or parastatals				Ability to provide and identify leaders for advocacy and research NGOs. Capacity to serve on boards and lend them legitimacy.	With MoE, advocacy NGOs.
Organizations of principals, school directors				General management; instruction in ways to democratize effectively.	With MoE, community organization groupings, service-provider NGOs.
Teachers' unions, both leaders and rank-and file		Capacity to analyze, respond to, and initiate proposals in governance, finance, and rewards for productivity. Ability to train in social modernization.		Ability to shift from proletarian and bread-and-butter issues to issues affecting professional orientation and the support of professional members.	With MoE, MinFin, service-provider NGOs, PTAs.

suggestions for how donors can work on developing institutional capacity and on networking (the last two columns of Table 4). For example, the assessments done in the initial stages of developing an ERS strategy for a country may determine that institutional issues are the biggest problem, or a donor may choose to focus on institutional issues. In either case, it may be wise to use the framework proposed by Welmond in preference to the one proposed here, or to use the one proposed here to supplement the one proposed by Welmond. To give an idea of the sets and types of institutional interventions Welmond suggests, we list them (Box 5), while noting that he goes through a detailed process for determining which are the most appropriate actions given each set of circumstances. (Most of the assessment processes he suggests already have been alluded to above, and closely mirror many of the assessment ideas we present, as well as the institutional steps and interventions discussed in Volume 3, *A Framework for Making it Happen.*)

Box 5. Some Possible Interventions in Institutional Development

Situation 1: There is little institutional base, and many problems are in the way
- Enabling-environment assistance
  – Help local associations revamp local constitutions and regulations through local NGO interventions
  – Help local associations develop conflict-resolution mechanisms
  – Make available to government and nongovernment actors the results of policy analysis through non-threatening workshops, but emphasize the problems certain constraints pose to the sector's development
- Development of political culture
  – Support local groups in taking on local initiatives with payoffs
  – Support NGOs engaged in political mobilization of communities

  – Support increased decentralization of the sector to give motivation for local political participation
  – Consider minimum or fundamental quality level (FQL) projects (see *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation*, on Benin)
  – Encourage government to distribute more information about education reform efforts
  – Create fora where information about education and potential group activity is discussed
  – Introduce discussion of education issues into fora on other issues
- Organizational capacity
  – Establish basic NGO or association capacity-building in targeted areas
  – Use local NGOs to support target organizations

(Continued)

Box 5 (Continued)

Situation 2: There is little institutional base, but much potential
- Enabling-environment assistance
  - Sponsor government and stakeholder analysis barriers posed by the legal framework
  - Develop a "common project" between government and stakeholders to address problems
  - Help local associations revamp local constitutions and regulations through local NGO interventions
  - Help local associations develop conflict-resolution mechanisms
  - Provide technical assistance in how to advocate and develop a better legal framework
- Development of political culture development
  - Sponsor encounters between stakeholders and government on decentralization process
  - Sponsor workshops for stakeholders to learn about what decentralization is, what is at stake, how to mobilize to provide input into the decentralization process, and how to manage the decentralized system
  - Hold workshops in which broad stakeholder groups can be attracted to the education sector
  - Sponsor third-country visits to countries where ERS is already taking place
  - Sponsor fora where stakeholders can discuss education reform more broadly than previously
  - Conduct workshops on leadership and communication skills
  - Fund public information campaigns run by stakeholder groups (or contracted out by stakeholders to specialized NGOs or private sector outfits)
- Organizational capacity
  - Train stakeholders and NGOs in targeted skill areas
  - Select recipients based on stakeholder position and nature of organization
  - Continue providing assistance in basic institutional capacity

Situation 3: There is considerable base already, but many existing problems
- Enabling-environment assistance
  - Bring together competing stakeholder groups and share and discuss results of analyses

- Propose ways for stakeholders together to develop strategy for dealing with problems via technical assistance and training
- Involve government in settling these problems, by sharing both substantive and institutional analysis and knowledge of the importance of clearing up institutional barriers
- Encourage informal working groups, such as core group
- Development of political culture
  - Sponsor conferences on very specific issues
  - Train further in analytical skills
  - Train further in institutional capacity
  - Aggressively target stakeholder groups that are inclusive and attentive to the public interest
- Organizational capacity
  - Establish basic NGO and association capacity-building project(s) in targeted area
  - Use local NGOs to provide capacity
  - Train recipients in specific skill areas, based on their existing influence and inclusiveness

Situation 4: There is already a good base, and much potential
- Enabling-environment assistance
  - Popularize analysis of environmental issues to those responsible for improving the institutional environment
  - Offer support in missing areas
  - Incorporate suggested analysis results into targets agreed to by host country counterparts
- Development of political culture
  - Continue coordinating opposed interest groups in fora, raising standard of debate and proof
  - Sponsor study tours
  - Continue researching analysis and communications
  - Hold fora to broaden policy interest, inviting non-education stakeholders
  - Sponsor permanent working groups on education that include noneducation stakeholders
- Organizational capacity
  - Sponsor concrete projects in which multiple stakeholder groups participate
  - Provide skills training to reinforce existing capacity

Section 7

Putting It All Together: Technical Design Ideas and Steps

Once reform leaders have worked through all the suggested matrices to this point, they will have all the elements needed to assemble a project in Education Reform Support. However, such a "project" may not necessarily be defined strictly from any particular donor's lexicon, with all the attendant paperwork and project definition steps. As we stated in Section 1, we mean simply a set of coherently organized activities with goals, and with an implementation plan or process. This ERS project could be an addendum to an actual, traditional, "bricks and mortar" project, or to a conditionality-based program. It could even be a modest consultantship, attempted on a trial or highly specific basis. In any of these cases, the following steps are relevant and should be undertaken.[5]

We note that this step-by-step outlining is not meant to be a strait-jacket. Nor does it substitute for a profound understanding of the subtleties of the policy processes outlined below and in other pieces in this series. As we have noted repeatedly, policy reform is messy, complex, and chaotic. Defining support to these processes therefore requires depth of understanding, experience, knowledge of the situation on the ground, and intuition based on both experience and theoretical understanding. No checklist can be of use in the absence of those requirements. However, once those requirements are met, a checklist or set of step-by-step instructions is useful simply as a reminder or general guideline.

First, we *define* a particular project—the activities that take place before anything technical actually happens and that set the stage for the technical assistance work. Next, we show how to *execute* the project. We have paid a good deal of attention to the first part, as well as to *initiating* execution. By contrast, we have minimized our discussion of actually carrying through execution, because it depends almost entirely on real in-depth understanding, technical ability, and adaptation to

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[5]Obviously, the care and detail with which the steps should be carried out depend on the complexity and size of what is being contemplated. It would make little sense, for example, to spend a few person-months to define a small activity implemented through a consulting agreement or purchase order.

changing circumstances based on local knowledge; it depends very little on checklists. Execution itself also depends highly on the actual design. Until the design is known, it is not possible to say much about the how-to of execution, beyond the general guidelines suggested in other documents in this series.

We assume that the design stage is tightly controlled by a donor or funding agency itself, or by a tight collaboration of donor and local groups, whereas the execution stage is much more likely to be under the direct control of an agent of the donor, such as a local or international NGO, PVO, or contractor. We make both of these assumptions merely for convenience, because it is the most likely scenario. However, a donor obviously could contract with an agent to carry out much of the design stage as well, even if the funder had done the original pre-design work itself. It is also possible, but less common these days, that much of the execution work could be done by someone working directly for the donor.

We present these steps in the form of another matrix (Table 5), shown below. The matrix is subdivided into steps, and describes the importance and details of each step, with references to other sections or annexes to this volume.

The first two questions are "stop points." If the answer is essentially "no" to either of these, then no activity should be undertaken, with the exception of rather small activities as noted in step 2. We urge that the assessments outlined in the first two steps be done with considerable professional integrity. The ultimate applicability of ERS activities and their likelihood of success hinge enormously on the extent to which these two questions are assessed honestly. On the basis of somewhat superficial knowledge, we venture to guess that only about a third of the African countries in which the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is working, for example, might merit a full-fledged, single-purpose ERS activity (e.g., Mali, Malawi, perhaps Guinea). About half are likely to be able to absorb only small preparatory activities as per step 2 (e.g., Ethiopia, perhaps Guinea), and perhaps one-sixth are able to undertake the full range of activities but may deserve only a smaller investment because they are more advanced than the rest (possibly Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia).

We also guess that following these steps to the definition of a moderately ambitious ERS project in the "preparatory-activities-only" category would require 2 to 3 person-months in order to lead to a technical profile of the project. The ideal mix would be about 1 to 1½ person-months of foreign technical assistance time, if needed, and 1 to 1½ person-months of local time. The definers of the project should be thoroughly steeped in and sympathetic to the methodologies described

Table 5. Steps in Defining and Initiating an Education Reform Support (ERS) Project

Step	Detailed description
1. Is there really an issue, or set of issues? Evaluate carefully. Note the most important and "hot" ones must be made the immediate focus of reform.	Remember that supply-side technical assistance to increase technical analysis capacity often fails for lack of demand; that demand arises where there are pre-existing hot issues, or issues that can easily be made hot; and that demand creation depends on the existence of real stakeholders with sufficient awareness and budding informational capacity.
	Check lists of substantive and process issues shown in Box 2 and Table 1.
	Prioritize the issues based on discussions with key actors (see list of actors in Box 3). Select those key actors based on key initial informants as provided by colleagues. (Requires considerable networking.)
2. Is the country ready for a process of participatory policy dialogue? How ready? If not, or not very, define activities that would increase long-term readiness.	See checklist for assessing readiness in Annex A. If a country seems very unready, it is probably unwise to start a significant activity in the ERS area. Modest interventions may be justified. Countries satisfying around 1/3 to 2/3 of the criteria need and probably are capable of absorbing assistance. Consider major activity. Countries in the top 1/3 probably have high absorptive capacity but less need. Consider limited, specific activities.
	Use also the checklists contained in *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation*.
	The lists also can suggest activities to increase the country's long-term absorptive capacity or receptivity to more democratic policy development. Any possible actions need to be prioritized.
3. Identify actors and tools to be used with them and extended to them. Identify activities the project is likely to undertake, as well as key actors who could give feedback in the project definition stage. Note that the point here is *not* to identify the *key* counterparts of the project.	Use the list of actors in Box 3 and Table 3, the list of actors and tools in Table 4, and the implicit listing of actors contained within the cells of Table 2.[a] To the extent that the problems are judged to be institutional, refer also to Welmond's supplemental volume for assessment guidance.
4. Continue to identify technical areas of assistance and work.	Use the list in Box 4, and Tables 1 and 2[a] and their surrounding text, to identify areas of need for technical and institutional assistance.
5. Identify a few key likely starting points, and a few initial nodes and branchings.	The process is nonlinear and interactive. The project will need a starting point, however, and part of the definition problem is to identify a few of these initially and their likely branches. Using Tables 1–4, as well as all of Section 8 below as inspiration, identify a few key starting points based on the importance of the substantive and process problems, the accessibility of the tools and techniques to be used, and the ready availability of actors with whom to network.
	Particularly for institutional problems, also use Welmond's supplemental volume.
	The starting points and first few nodes or branches may be described in terms of key technical and institutional activities and events. These should be considered not a work plan, but simply a way to get a handle on the kinds of counterparts and technical advisors likely to be needed.

See footnote at end of table.

Table 5 (Continued)

Step	Detailed description
6. On the basis of the skills and abilities implicit in steps 3–5, determine profile of key implementors of the process, including the foreign PVO, NGO, or contractor and the key local counterpart(s).	Remember that good counterparts are not necessarily only in the government, and in many cases the key counterpart of choice will not be in the government. Use Annex D and Tables 1–3[a] to develop profiles of individuals and skills needed.
7. Select a few other likely areas of further, ongoing assistance with long-term needs.	Use same information as in step 5, namely Tables 1–4[a] and supporting text. Use also Welmond's supplemental volume.
8. Develop level-of-effort estimates by type of activity and type of expertise. Determine what is available within the host country and where foreign technical advisors are needed.	Use same information as in steps 5, 6, and 7, and Annex D.
9. Develop statement of work, request for proposals (RFP), etc., depending on size and complexity of envisioned activity.	Use all of the information thus far gathered. Step 8 is key to determining final level-of-effort and budget estimates.

[a]When we refer to Tables 2 and 3, we mean the tables prepared for the specific host country or situation in question, not our sample entries.

in this volume and the whole series. Neither the foreign nor the local person-months should be divided over more than two individuals (totaling four). Thus, ideally, it should be possible for a team of two foreigners and two locals to make an initial technical definition of this kind of project if they work intensely over 3 to 4 weeks. The local counterparts would need to be highly placed persons with relatively easy access to, and intimate knowledge of, the high-level decision-making events of the society in question. We emphasize that we are referring strictly to the technical/institutional design and ignoring the donor's own complexities, or the complexities that the donor's internal requirements place upon the design. Therefore, we have purposefully underestimated the amount of labor required. We realize that the design of most USAID and other donor projects requires a lot more labor due to these complexities.

To judge whether a given project has a serious stopping point, we strongly recommend that an initial assessment be carried out, requiring some 2 weeks of effort by a foreign expert working closely with a highly placed counterpart. This assessment will help determine whether the activity is worth pursuing further. If it is, then the team should allow the initial ideas to mature, and return in fuller force for a longer and more intense period of design.

As we have indicated several times above, by "project" we mean a set of activities that may well be linked to a traditional project or be an integral part of it. The estimates for level of effort that we give here can simply be added on to the calculations for a larger project.

Our suggested multi-step approach is very different from a traditional approach for strengthening capacity to create and analyze policy. Such approaches are normally institution- and supply-side focused: Which institution's capacity do we bolster with technical assistance (supply-side) in policy analysis? Our approach, following Lamb (1987) as well as our own practical experience, starts with the policy issues and reform concerns, and only then looks for institutions.

Three final notes. First, for less ambitious projects, readiness could be assessed and a project design developed with much less effort than we have indicated, and perhaps in one visit. However, compressing these actions raises the value of the collaboration of a highly placed counterpart working closely with the foreign technical advisor. Second, these estimates of level of effort do not include the (sometimes large) workload required to turn the technical definition into a project that meets the typical donor's procedural, budgetary, and legal requirements. Third, in some countries it may well be possible to dispense with the foreign technical assistance altogether, depending on the expertise available locally.

To repeat what we stated in Section 1, the technical preparations for an ERS project involve all of the following stages.

- assessing the overall and educational political economy of reform in the country in question

- determining problematic substantive policy issues

- determining problematic process issues

- determining the interrelationship between policy and process issues

- determining which actors are involved and what their interests are in both policy and process issues

- determining which tools and techniques (from data and information, through research and analysis, to advocacy and communications) can be used for which actors, around which issues

- determining a set of likely starting points and a few initial branches

- determining (on the basis of the tools, abilities, and techniques required) which human resources, in the form of long-term technical assistance and local collaboration, can be brought to bear on the issues.

This whole section has provided details and suggestions on how to make these determinations. The design process will end with a set of activities to be developed, and a set of personnel resources and counterparts with whom to work. All of these will be oriented at resolving process and substantive problems in education reform— including the institutional development of counterpart agencies, as indicated in Table 5 above.

Section 8

Executing an ERS Project

Given the chaotic nature of the policy process as described in Volume 2, *Foundations of Education Reform Support*, as well as in the background literature (e.g., Porter 1995), laying out abstract guidelines for executing an ERS project seems like a contradiction in terms. Planning the execution of this kind of project is more like planning the prosecution of a war than like planning the construction of a set number of schools, or a rural feeder road. Essentially, this kind of activity requires reform leaders to (1) take a strategic stance; (2) constantly reassess the situation; (3) constantly refocus on the end goals and the evaluation criteria progress, as outlined in Section 9 below; (4) constantly reassess the implementor's capacity to meet the new challenges and upgrade that capacity; and (5) know about and have facility with the strategies, tactics, and resources available for dealing with the situation as it changes so that everyone can progress toward the goals. There is another limitation on the ability to lay out an "execution plan" in the abstract: The process needs to unfold based on the specific strategic assessment for a particular country. By definition, such assessments are not available generically. Finally, note that Volume 3, *A Framework for Making It Happen*, goes into the operation and execution of Education Reform Support activities in much more detail than is suitable here. In this volume, we discuss the ideas only to the extent that they can help concretize the design. In summary, it is very unlikely that anyone could lay out a meaningful generic approach for executing ERS projects. Again, reform proponents generally need strategic knowledge—and an ability to continuously realign strategy based on monitoring and assessment of the situation—rather than blueprint plans. This statement is particularly true in education reform. Note, however, that many writers on planning and implementation suggest that collecting specific knowledge should be the preferred method for any type of project or intervention (see Bryant and White 1982; Paul 1982; Rondinelli 1993, 1994).

Nevertheless, to show how events normally unfold, reform proponents *can* specify starting points and operational guidelines. That they do so is necessary because there are many aspects of the proposed activities that simply must be planned well if they are to be executed at all. Finally, there are activities that reformers must engage in *today*, even

if they eventually are needed only because of the strategic outcome of some *other* unpredicted activity. (For example, reform leaders might start a public debate process that eventually will drive up demand for data, but they also must start working on the supply—beefing up the EMIS—today. They cannot wait until the debate process causes people to clamor for data to start creating data-gathering instruments.)

Wherever possible, we try to list such activities and key starting points chronologically, but reformers need not adhere rigidly to this sequence. The following steps, then, are the ones likely to need carrying out in most situations. For discussion, we will assume a 5-year project.

Step 1—Disseminate the ideas.

Be ready to constantly explain and re-explain the nature of the project, and to continue to gather allies. Presumably this was done to some extent during the design stage, but it will invariably need to be done and redone in the first few months, tapering off as the project evolves. Save time and budget for this effort, and plan and execute seminars on this issue. The materials provided in this series can be disseminated for this step, but leaders who are ready to present the materials and hold workshops in person often will have better results, especially if they can supplement face-to-face discussions with reading. Furthermore, the explication has to rely on highly specific local examples that relate to the hot issues of the day. Finally, the reform proponents need to be extremely clear as to the specific policy-change goals they are trying to accomplish, in terms of both the hot issues and the longer-term evaluation criteria set forth during the design stage. These may range from redesigning the salary scale, to changing the education law so that private schools can receive public funding with transparent formulae and contracts, to accepting and designing an attendance incentive system targeted at girls, and so forth.

Step 2—Develop the institutions.

We are assuming that the counterpart institutions were preselected and exist as of project start-up. If that is the case, then the counterparts need to execute or contribute to all of these steps. If they were not pre-selected, or were selected but have yet to be developed institutionally, then clearly most of the project effort will be oriented at institutional development. Seriously supporting education reform is a task far too complex for anyone to achieve while simultaneously developing an institution. Thus, either the reform proponents must choose between strengthening the institution and carrying out the key reform tasks, or the budget and timeframe for the activity have to be increased significantly. Note that it is normally not possible to overcome time shortages by doubling the intensity of the effort, because policy reform is event-dependent, and the occurrence of critical events is beyond any single person's control. Thus, budget and timeframe both have to double to encompass a dual task of institution-building and actual reform support. On the other hand, it is practically impossible to

engage in serious institution-building without real reform issues to work on, so it makes little sense to define projects that are aimed purely at institutional support.

Step 3—Write and publicize a position paper.

Prepare a position paper on the role of policy and planning for the specific country. Are research results being used? Why, or why not? How is this usage related to who produces them, and for what? Responses to all such questions will be communicated along the lines discussed in this series of documents. Again, these questions will have been answered in writing to some degree during project design and preparation, but the writeup should be redone or thoroughly updated, for several reasons. First, resident technical advisors, who may be different from the project designers, then can internalize and take ownership of the approach, and their names can become fully identified with the approach. This paper also can serve as the basis for discussion about some of the key institutional issues that the project aims to help solve. Budget time for preparing this paper and discussing it at workshops.

Step 4—Begin training; provide technical assistance.

Begin any training activities that were proposed in the project development papers. Plan venues, trainees, arrival of trainers, etc. Similarly, plan to provide specific technical assistance around the pre-specified tasks. The series of which this document is part contains considerable resource materials for training in many key areas. In addition, resources are available from various institutions (e.g., courses from the Harvard Institute for International Development, the University of Pittsburgh, the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank, the International Institute of Education Planning in Paris; courses funded by bilateral donor projects; etc.). Note that some activities have very long gestation periods, and thus should be started immediately. ERS examples are developing or upgrading the EMIS, carrying out major education quality surveys, planning a major national conference, etc. To the extent that these activities are both planned and major, presumably some long-term assistance is oriented toward them. If they are to be handled via short-term assistance, this needs to be planned at the very beginning.

Step 5—Consult with stakeholders.

Presumably, the design of the project was consultative. In that case, re-engage in consultation with key stakeholders (as identified according to the suggestions above), over the specific hot issues—exercising judgment and tact, naturally. If the design was not consultative, the reform designers will need to engage in consultation at this point. All these initial steps need to be consultative, and the counterparts need to be involved in the consultation process so that they can learn by doing. The consultation simply helps hone the strategy, and refine the design, as per all the steps above. It alerts everyone to the issues, the personalities, etc. It also spreads ownership and mutually informs all

parties.

Step 6—Develop some early technical interventions that can focus attention.

A computerized simulation model of the education sector's finances and budgetary needs is a very good way to focus attention on a few key issues, and to engender and focus discussion. Developing the model can generate results for feeding the analysis and presentation of options, but it is also a bit of a ruse to get discussion focused and going. Thus, the model, when used to feed public debate, helps both developers and clients focus their consultation. The modelers and stakeholders together should develop the model, decide what issues it should address, determine what data sources it should use, etc.. Then, as the model develops, it should be demonstrated and discussed in seminars, with as much real-time use as possible.

*Step 7—Stimulate both supply **and** demand for analysis and data.*

The process of public debate and consultation will both provoke anxiety and increase the need for more and better information. This result will be even more pronounced if the reform team is successful at bringing out into the open some relatively contentious but analytically tractable issues and building them into a model. (Some issues might be the underutilization of teachers, the overspecification of construction standards, the salary creep inherent in the salary scale, or the impossibility of meeting current enrollment targets.) This process needs to be abetted constantly and consciously. Since demand can quickly surpass supply, reform leaders need to begin to strengthen the supply immediately, but in a planned and orderly manner. However, they should never make the mistake of working on supply only, because this effort can rapidly become an end in itself, and a safe and comfortable, if useless, alternative to doing the real work of reform.

Step 8—Facilitate hands-on learning in analysis.

The need to refine the model (or whatever tool is used to begin to focus attention) also creates both a demand for training and an opportunity for hands-on, on-the-job training in the technical analyses that are collateral to the model.

Step 9—Begin assembling the core group.

Simultaneous with the technical and training work, the reform team needs to start networking institutions and creating a core of reformist support. This core group can be called a strategic working group, or an education reform working group. It may or may not have the direct support of the state. This core can be a loose coalition of key thinkers and activists. The exact form and nature of this core is not predictable. It may be the board of trustees of the counterpart NGO. It may be a national education commission. In any case, the reform team needs to work with this group to help it acquire links to other groups, use the analytical results, and exercise its power of convocation around important issues. The growing technical proficiency of the counterparts becomes part of the power of convocation of the notables in the formal

or informal core group. Such a group rarely can come into being without a push. Its existence and level of power will evolve, and will depend to a large degree on the technical proficiency of those that support it, as well as its ability to broker both technical and political solutions. Success will feed success.

Step 10—Carry out workshops.

Begin orchestrating a series of workshops that use the technical tools, that give credibility to the core group, and that display the technical abilities of the counterparts. Discuss real problems, rather than airing simple bromides. Workshop designers may need to gain trust and confidence first, and only then have participants discuss serious problems. The series of workshops could culminate in a national conference aimed at the reform issues that were identified in the design stage. This national conference should be convened by, or should at least highlight, the core reformist group. It should be planned for one to two years into the project, when some concrete analytical results are being generated. It should lay the groundwork to support the impending demand for analytical work, and should lend it legitimacy, but should really be seen as the beginning of the real work.

Step 11—Continue technical assistance and workshops.

During the next few years, continue the assistance, the workshops, the creation of tools and approaches that address the hot issues, and the public and open discussion of the problems and the proposed solutions. Constantly identify points of resistance, and create and support synthetic compromises. All this activity should lead to passage of the desired laws and policy decisions. For example, intervenors might offer technical support and workshops on means to lower the relative spending on tertiary education, means to initiate and design user fees, etc.[6]

Step 12—Facilitate local-level innovations.

While all of this macro work is creating an enabling environment for micro innovations to both take place and spread, those involved in the policy work have to constantly and sharply connect the macro, legislative, and policy work, and encourage the spread of innovations at the school and classroom level. People leading experiments in community-based schooling, innovative use of techniques, etc., need moral, intellectual, and possibly financial support. This support will

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[6]The abilities needed for all of the activities listed above, culminating in key policy decisions and changes, are somewhat different from the abilities needed to actually manage or implement the decisions once they have been made. Thus, either the decisions have to be inherently implementable with the abilities and human resources at hand, *or* the project needs to be creating those abilities and human resources, *or* other projects and donors have to be creating these abilities. Remember that we are concerned with supporting the reform *process*, not with running the reformed sectors. Managing reformed sectors may be more important, but is beyond the scope of our work. In any case, management training usually is widely available from donors and in other training venues. All this is not to slight the problem of implementation. On the contrary. We actually define good policy decisions as those that are inherently implementable, and hence a good process of policy design as one that pays careful attention to implementability, under a not-too-restrictive set of assumptions.

help counterparts understand that the policy work is not for its own sake, and is not another version of centralized planning. In fact, policy reform work likely will not succeed if (1) there are no local experiments that embody the responses that policy change is supposed to facilitate, or (2) those working at the reform level do not see the two as being tightly connected. For example, observers might draw the connection between a locally funded community experiment and a formula-based, district-level grant for school improvement based on the central tax authority of the government.

Section 9

Summary and Conclusion

This volume lays out a fairly systematic approach to Education Reform Support project design—or at least a design starting point. The essence of a successful process of ERS is constant restrategizing and redesign, based on monitoring of how the process is going. This volatility makes it difficult for donors to fund and monitor. But, if we are correct that this really is the only way to support reform, and that supporting reform is worthwhile, then we will simply have to find a way to deal with the unpredictability. The donors need confidence that there is some method in the madness, and a means to monitor progress, more than they need complete methodicalness and predictability. Careful design, and an explanation that careful design and redesign are possible, are part of the method in the madness.

To summarize, the design process we have laid out involves several steps. On paper we can only describe them sequentially, and in an initial assessment a sequential process is not only unavoidable but useful. During ongoing redesign, however, the steps completely lose their sequence. The design steps are as follows:

Step 1—Assess the political economy.

Step 2—List and understand the key substantive reform issues.

Step 3—List and understand the key process issues blocking reform.

Step 4—List and understand the actors and stakeholders.

Step 5—Understand the tools and techniques that can be used.

Step 6—Relate substantive issues to process issues.

Step 7—Assess the relationships of actors with each other and with issues.

Step 8—Associate actors with tools and techniques.

Step 9—Develop concrete action steps, levels of effort, etc.

Step 10—Develop a monitoring and assessment strategy.

The first step is a stand-alone step, and represents a kind of cutoff or abort/takeoff point: In certain countries, the activities recommended here should be tried only very cautiously and slowly. Steps 2 through 4 (lists) involve the accounting of entries in three "vectors." The next four steps (5 through 8) involve combining these vectors, two at a time, into three matrices (see Tables 2 through 4). The matrices thus evolving constitute the basis of the design. The last two steps comprise developing an initial implementation plan for the activities implicit in the matrices (see Volume 6, *Evaluating Education Reform Support*).

After all these steps have been completed, a reasonably solid strategy for starting out with ERS activities should emerge. Two factors combine to produce a good strategy. The first factor is carrying out the above process *thoroughly* and with a good base of knowledge about all of the issues involved. Participants need to thoroughly understand how to use all the tools and techniques, be able to distinguish between social marketing and policy advocacy, and cast a wide net over the actors and understand the real and rhetorical interests of each. The second factor is doing all this nonmechanically, and with a good deal of sensitivity and strategic "nose." We should note that while both factors are necessary, a wooden, mechanistic approach will yield very bad results even if it is complete and systematic. Thus, simply following steps is not a good idea; a project designer who cannot get into the spirit of the process, and absorb the "theory" of it, probably is not suited for this kind of design or this type of work in general.

Policy reform processes are inherently messy. Even so, these processes are understandable. It *is* possible to develop serious, systematic strategies for supporting these processes with technical and institutional tools and approaches. Education Reform Support is one such systematic strategy—maybe not the only one possible, but at this point the only one worked out in any detail. It may not be easy, and its implementation may require individuals possessing a rare (thus far) combination of strategic rationality, tactical flexibility, and subject matter knowledge. And it may not conform easily to the standard donor project cycle. Yet the approaches proposed as Education Reform Support offer systematic, implementable means of supporting these messy, politicized reform processes.

Annex A

Checklist for Assessing Country Readiness for Participatory Policy Reform Support

A.1 Civil Society

1.a   Are there organized groups articulate about education?
       Leadership of various churches
       Unions' leadership
       Associations of private schools
       Women's groups
       Business councils, chambers of commerce, etc.
       Teachers' unions, on issues other than salary and perquisites
       General unions
       The military (relative to civil society):
           Is the military more or less professional, or only one step above thuggery?
           Are there leadership groups in military academies, think-tanks, etc.?
       Parent-teacher associations

(Analyze the following by group)

1.b   How powerful are these groups?
       Who pays attention to them?
       How capable are they of mobilizing?
       What type of influence do they have to mobilize?
           Funding of campaigns, politicians' livelihood
           Intellectual/ideological
           Ethical
           Votes
           Mass movement
           Violence, counterviolence, and military capability
           Technical information and brokerage for crisis solution
           Political brokerage for crisis solution
           General political brokerage

1.c   What is their ideological/technocratic stance. . .
          regarding each other?
          toward the reformist paradigm emerging from donors?
          in traditional left-right terms?
          in terms of free-market vs. centralist?

1.d   What is their technical capacity?
          Are they able to discuss these issues technically?
              Which of them?
          What is their power of convocation?

1.e   Are there independent think-tanks or consulting firms?
          How are they funded?
          Are they more like consulting firms or more like think-tanks?
          How able are they, politically, to do critical analyses?
          How technically solid are the analyses?
          How much data and numerical argumentation do they use?
          How much of this information comes from official sources?
          How current is the literature they use?
          How rigorous, logical, and common-sensical is the thinking?
          How institutionally solid are they?
          Does anyone listen? What is their power of convocation?
              Do only donors listen?
              Does the government listen as well?
          Do any other powerful national interest groups in civil society listen/read their output?
          Are there any think-tanks in education?
          If there are think-tanks in education, do they see their interlocutors as being only the ministry of
              education (MoE)?
          Do they also interact with powerful ministries like finance or planning? Or the executive cabinet?
          Do other powerful foundations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), or intermediary organiza-
              tions serve as interlocutors?
          What grassroots legitimacy/ties/networking do they have?
          Are they "merely" analytical, or are they also carrying out advocacy for reform?
              If not, would they be able/willing to do so? Would they see the value of it? Would they network
                  with others who might?
          If not in education, are there any in general social science but that do work in education as well?
              That have the characteristics we have been discussing?
          Are they in economics? If so, could they take an interest in education?
          What is their ideological/political orientation?

1.f   If there are no such think-tanks or research-advocacy NGOs, are there persons who would be capable
          of leading any?
          Are there any technical/intellectual leaders?
          Are there any organizational leaders?
       Are there persons who could staff them?
       What are the options for funding?
       How amenable to this kind of arrangement is the overall institutional environment?

How solid, institutionally, are the consulting groups that do exist, or the individual researchers?
Is there much implicit respect for contracts?
    Are consulting or research contracts becoming somewhat standardized?
Are donors willing or able to pay overheads? Do locals understand the notion of overhead?

1.g   Are there regular or intermittent fora on education policy issues?
Are there fora on any other social sector issues? Economic issues?
Who sponsors them?
Who attends?
    Just government and donors?
    Also members of organized groups outside government?
    NGOs in service provision?
    Organized groups such as church, labor, military, business?
    Also members and intellectuals in think-tanks or research-advocacy NGOs?
How serious is the discussion?
    How impassioned?
    How technical?
    How well-informed, empirically, numerically, qualitatively?
    Is the discussion usually mere posturing and position statement?
Are there mechanisms for resolving differences and moving forward, or are people just talking past
    each other and venting?
Are there mechanisms for making collective—implicit or explicit—judgments about the technical
    merits of arguments?
If there are no such fora in education but there are some in other sectors, can they exist in education?
    Who can lead, sponsor?
    Would people attend?

1.h   If neither fora nor institutions (think-tanks, research-advocacy NGOs) exist,
    Are there prominent interest group leaders in civil society (see first list above, 1.a) that would be
        willing to back their creation?
        What kind of backing?
            Financial?
            Moral?
            Intellectual/technical?
            Political?
            Would they be willing to serve on a board?
        Would they be willing to avow and back their publications/positions, no matter how critical
            those positions were, as long as their criticism was technically justified?
    Are there leaders in government who would also offer backing?
    Would they see their service in terms of ex-officio backing, say, on boards?
    Do other sectors have examples of successful backing from these leaders?
        Women?
        Environment?
        Family planning?
        Health?
        Economics?
        Agriculture?

1.i   Are there intermediary organizations that have ties to grassroots membership, communities, and
          service-delivery NGOs, but that work at the national level and can be interlocutors with the
          ministries, the national think-tanks, and the consulting firms?
       What is their technical capacity, and what connections do they have to carry out dialogue at a high
          level?
       What is their power of convocation?
       How real is their tie to the grassroots? How legitimate are they perceived to be by grassroots and
          service providers?

1.j   Are there functioning parent-teacher associations (PTAs) in the country?
          Is their leadership democratically elected?
          Are local-level politics such that democracy can work?
          Or are PTAs likely to be captured by the bigger landowners or local chiefs?
             Would such capture be positive or negative?
       Are the PTAs united into a national-level intermediary organization?
          How much respect does this organization receive?
          What is its ground-level legitimacy?
          What is its technical ability to hold its own in discussions with, e.g., the MoE?

1.k   Same as 1.j., but for associations or networks of private schools and religious schools.
       Determine whether these schools receive any kind of subsidy from the state, and what bearing this
          support has on their relationship with the MoE.

A.2 Ministerial Accountability

2.a   Is the ministry of education accountable for target achievement?
          To the ministry of planning?
          To the ministry of finance?
       How seriously is this accountability taken?
       Are there quantitative performance indicators?
          In access goals?
          In equity goals?
          In quality goals?
       Is there serious discussion of target achievement?
       What happens if targets are not achieved?
       Is the budgeting related to policy targets?
       Does spending follow budgeting?
       If the ministry of education has interlocutors in planning and finance,
          How technically proficient are they in education, education finance, and education governance
             issues?
          Is this a friendly but serious interlocution? Or is the ministry of education held in technical disdain?
       Is the ministry of education considered to defend its budget well, technically and rhetorically?

2.b   Are schools accountable to parents?
          Do parents and local leaders know how well their schools are doing. . .
             in terms of input provision?
             in terms of student achievement?

To what do the schools compare themselves?
    Can they compare themselves to schools in villages nearby?
    Can they compare themselves at the national level?
How are they judged?
    Are quantitative and qualitative fundamental quality indicators used?
    Are standardized national exams used for comparison?
    Are these exam results and other quality indicators distributed to towns, parents, local leaders?

2.c   Is the ministry accountable to schools for inputs?
    Are the schools accountable to the ministry for outputs?
    Is output even monitored?

A.3 Communications

3.a   Does the ministry of education have a public relations (PR) or communications specialist?
    How much power/rank does he/she have?
    How integrated is his/her performance with the results of the research, monitoring, and evaluation units of the ministry?

3.b   Are there social marketing campaigns on education?
    Who are they sponsored by? Government, donors, or NGOs?
    Who actually implements? Government, donors, NGOs, or private sector contractors?
    What are their aims?
        Attendance/access?
        Gender equity?
        Ethnic equity?
    How proficient would you judge them, according to the criteria set forth in the Education Reform Support series?
    Have they had any measurable or anecdotal impacts?

A.4 Media

4.a   Newspapers
    Is there a state-owned newspaper?
        Is it a party paper or a state paper?
        How independent is it?
        How independent has it been traditionally?
        Is its publication a function of the current government, a duty of the current editorship, or a structural tendency?
    Are there private newspapers?
        Which ones are owned by whom?
        Are they controlled by economic interests or political parties?
        What is the readership of which?
        Which ones reach the political and technocratic leadership?
        Which ones reach the middle class?
    How much scope is there for critique of government policy?
        Is the critique more likely to be tolerated if it is fiery but unfounded? well-founded and

well-argued, but not very passionate?

(Next questions apply to all types of newspapers, including all the main private ones.)

Are the papers read only in the capital city? What percentages, where?
How wide is the reach, in general? Circulation?
How often are they published?
How easy is it to get newspapers out to the smaller towns? Is this a constraint?
Which newspapers regularly report on education?
How investigative or analytical is the reporting?
    What kinds of issues do reporters look at?
        Quality of education? Exam scores? Trends in exam scores?
        Access issues?
        Scandals?
        Community gripes in general?
How would you rate the quality or progressiveness of the reporting?
Does the reporting or editorializing taking the interest of children and parents seriously?
Or is the reporting weighted to one particular side? Which? Teachers? Or the bureaucracy?
Are opposing viewpoints represented in any single papers, or across various papers?

4.b   Television
     (Don't do until done with papers)
     Include same issues as for newspapers.
     Add talk shows.

4.c   Radio
     (Don't do until done with papers)
     Include same issues as for newspapers.
     Add talk shows.

A.5 Politics and Bureaucracy

5.a   Is there more than one political party able to compete seriously?
     Are there serious chances for competitive political succession?

5.b   Is there serious accountability in general even if no or little democracy of a Western type?
     That is, are there mechanisms and targets whereby government is held accountable to itself and to the
         people?
     To donors?
     Where does this accountability pressure come from? How likely is it to last?
     If the country has emerged recently from nondemocratic rule,
        Was the previous government a serious socialist one, or a nonideological, predatory kleptocracy?
           or somewhere in between?
        How did this past rule affect the current tone of the bureaucracy?
        Is the bureaucracy serious but overconfident of itself and the power of planning?
        Or is the bureaucracy loose, relaxed, and totally out for itself?

5.c   How important are rhetoric and ideology to the bureaucracy?
       How important are rhetoric (in the good sense) and ideology to the political parties?
       Is the bureaucracy considered reasonably well paid?
       How hard working (at their jobs!) is this bureaucracy compared to others you have known?
       How much moonlighting is there?
       Is the bureaucracy in the ministry of education considered serious by donors?
           By themselves?
           By civil society's organized groups?
       If the bureaucracy is not considered serious, are there examples of serious bureaucracy elsewhere in
           the country?
           If so, is anyone extracting lessons from these examples?
           How are these lessons to be communicated, acted upon?
           To whom are they to be delivered?

5.d   Is there a legislature?
       Does it have more than rubber-stamp power?
       How are the legislators elected?
           In consequence:
           How prone is it to pork-barrel politics?
           On the flip side, how accountable is it to local pressure?
           (Note: Accountability to real interests and to pork-barrel politics tend to be the good and bad sides
               of the same coin. A similar pair is an interest in one law for everyone in matters of national
               concern on one hand, and lack of accountability to concrete interests on the other. How
               successful is this balancing act, particularly on education issues?)
       How does the legislature relate to the ministry of education?
       Is there an education commission?
       Does it have any technicians on its staff?
       Are there any technicians at all among staffs in the legislative branch?
       If there are technicians, either in general or in the education commission, do they know how to access
           the ministry?
           How close are their relations?
           Do they have access on personal and favor levels only?
           Do they use data and information produced by the ministry?
           Do they confront the ministry with data gathered independently?
           Do they gather the data themselves?
           Do technicians or legislators use information gathered by NGOs or think-tanks?
       Do members of civil society, NGOs, or think-tanks testify to the legislature when laws or decrees are
           being considered on education issues?
       How organized is this process? Who can testify?

5.e   How often do ministers of education change?
       How different is this turnover from other ministries?
       What about the parliamentary-secretary or director-general levels? How often do they change?
       How far down do political appointments go?
       If there is no government-in-turn policy, how is continuity ensured?
       Is continuity a theme of discussion in the country?
       Are there any serious ideas or proposals for dealing with continuity?

Is anyone aware of the role civil society can play in continuity?

A.6 Reformist Atmosphere in the Country

6.a   Are there any powerful currents toward decentralization of social services?
       How powerful?
           Who is in charge?
           Is there an interministerial commission?
           Is there a decentralization czar?
           Is there emerging consensus?
       How deep will decentralization go in terms of actual institutional autonomy at the village level?
       Are schools or communities being given independent spending authority?
       Are fiscal transfers from the central government being contemplated?
       Are policies such as allowing communities to hire and dismiss teachers contemplated?

6.b   Is there a movement toward privatization in the economic sectors?
           How powerful?
           Who is in charge?
           Is there an interministerial commission?
           Is there a privatization czar?
           Is there emerging consensus?
       Is there a similar movement toward privatization in the social sectors?
           Any discussion of the role of private schooling?
           How will finance, control, coordination, and networking be handled between the state and private
               schools?
           How serious and well-informed is the discussion?

6.c   How seriously has the government taken structural adjustment at the macro level?
       Has it made genuine progress?

6.d   For all three areas (decentralization, privatization, structural adjustment):
       How much support is there for this movement among intellectuals and interest groups?
       Does anyone in civil society back these movements? openly, publicly?
       What is the technical level of debate, if any, about these issues?
       How much of the discussion is posturing and ideology (in the bad sense)?
       Do the discussants see these ideas as either magic bullets that will solve everything, or evil plots that
           will destroy the country? To what degree does this polarization occur?
       How much discussion is there of the institutional and informational framework needed to make these
           reforms work?
       How much discussion is there of property rights, governmental accountability, the role of information
           and market infrastructure, the role of competition, the role of safety nets, etc.?
       In short, are there any intellectuals or technocrats capable of understanding, articulating, and publicly
           discussing and presenting the deep issues surrounding these reforms?
           In the economic areas?
           In the social areas?
       If in the economic areas but not in the social areas, is there any interest or ability in generalizing?
       Among key leaders and opinion-shapers in and out of government, is progress in the three areas

named above seen as donor-imposed?

What roles have donors in fact played or are they playing?

    Conditionality?

    Intellectual conviction or training?

    Provision of impetus and legitimacy to locals who are already convinced?

6.e   In the education sector, can you identify a nucleus of 5-10 key individuals, in and out of government, who share a national-interest agenda that more or less conforms with the donor consensus (if there is such a thing)?

How much leadership potential do they have?

    Technical, ideological, organizational, political?

    (Refer to section A.1 for related issues/questions.)

A.7 Donor and Other Activity in Support of Education Reform, Policy Analysis, and Information

7.a   Have there been donor projects in education management information systems (EMIS)?

Have there been any other EMIS projects?

If so, are data provided by the EMIS used? (Beyond merely fielding requests and disseminating data.)

Has there been any conscious assessment of data usage?

Data are used for what kinds of decisions?

    Internal to the ministry?

    Strategic or day-to-day?

    External policy discussions?

    Budgeting?

Does the EMIS explicitly engage in activities to create demand for data and information? (Other than divulging the fact that the data exist.)

Are the EMIS technicians aware of the role of information in bureaucracies and in societies?

Are the EMIS technicians or leaders aware of the relationship between data demand and accountability?

What kinds of technical problems were encountered?

Has the budget of the EMIS unit been sustained by government?

    To what degree?

How many times have donors set up EMIS units in the past?

If more than once, why has it been necessary to set them up again?

Were EMIS activities well-integrated upstream to policy analysis and budget activities?

7.b   Have there been donor activities in education policy analysis?

If so, what were the results?

Have these analyses been oriented toward limited activities, such as forecasting and budgeting technical assistance in the development of a plan?

Or has there been an attempt to institutionalize analytical activity?

    If so, did the analysis units succeed in being institutionalized?

    Did they manage to secure their own budgets after donor support ceased?

    Have they been able to hire the right complement of analysts, and keep them?

Did the analysis units disseminate data passively, or actively engage in public debate?

    Or did they at least provide input that the minister, parliamentary secretary, or director general

needed to engage in public or interministerial debate?
Were the analysis units in government or in civil society?
    If in one but not the other, were there links between the two?
    Were there links between analysis units and more grassroots organizations that have a true stake
        in the analysis and policies?
What was the technical quality of the analysis? (Assume that an analysis conducted by the World
    Bank or a good university ranks as a 5, and an analysis conducted by a traditional MoE bureaucracy
    in a poor country is a 1.)

7.c   Have there been donor activities in support of fora, dialogue?
      Did these activities use analysis results from other donor efforts in EMIS and policy analysis?
      What was accomplished?
      Were they sporadic, limited activities, or has there been awareness of the need for ongoing, permanent
          discussion and reflection?
      (Refer to section 1.g, on fora.)

Annex B

Specific Questions Related to Assessment of Stakeholder Institutional Problems

These questions are derived from the ERS supplemental volume *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation*. See original for an elaboration and guideline to actions based on these questions.

B.1 The Enabling Environment

What are the contours of the existing legal framework?

Are there national, regional and local regulations that dictate organizational structure and functioning that are coordinated/redundant/in conflict?

Under whose authority have regulations and/or other conventions been issued?

Are they legally binding or voluntary, or is this status unclear?

To what extent does the existing legal framework:

(1)   clearly define the relative roles of members, education authorities, and other actors (e.g., prefecture, traditional authority);

(2)   provide for organizational issues such as financial accountability, representativity, and monitoring;

(3)   determine the scope of activity under the purview of the association;

(4)   provide for conflict resolution and grievance procedures within the association or organization and with regard to the education system;

(5)   provide for individual variation in organizational structure and function?

What has been the history of this legal framework over the past generation? Have significant changes been introduced? What were the formal and informal objectives of modifications?

To what extent has the existing legal framework been enforced? Who does the enforcing?

What are the opinions of different education stakeholders with regard to the enabling environment of the stakeholder organizations? Is there consensus, or is opinion clearly divided on different issues?

What regulations and laws have been or could be invoked that are not specifically geared toward the stakeholder group in question but have definite implications for their activities and organization?

Have recent changes in the political environment rendered existing regulations obsolete or contradictory?

What do the stakeholders, donors, and the government believe to be the major problems with the existing legal framework for NGOs? Is there consensus or sharp division among these actors?

Are self-policing mechanisms in place for NGOs? Are accreditation norms or functions explicitly in place? Are there standard contracts for establishing relationships with NGOs?

B.2 Political Culture

B.2.1 General Questions

To what extent are individual stakeholders aware of and interested in the functioning of organizations that claim to represent them?

What education issues are salient for individual stakeholders? (Issues might be infrastructure, student achievement, teacher behavior and performance, relevance of instruction, school calendars, school feeding programs, etc.)

Do individual stakeholders believe that there is a way for these issues to be addressed, either locally or nationally? If not, do stakeholders believe that such a mechanism needs to be created?

If the answer to either question is yes, how do stakeholders believe these issues are/should be addressed? (e.g., through direct contact with central ministry, through the school staff, through the stakeholder organization)

To whom do the leaders of stakeholder organizations believe they are accountable?

Are stakeholders aware of education reform strategies? If so, are they correctly informed of priorities, strategies, and upcoming activities?

Do they have an opinion about the government's education reform strategy? Do they believe that they have or should have a say in its formulation? What do they propose?

How easy is it to obtain this information? Are local or other officials enabling or presenting obstacles to the conduct of the process by which the information is gathered? Do they insist on being present during the information-gathering process? How about other key figures such as leaders of parents' associations?

Has there been an evolution in the thinking of stakeholders as a result of political changes (with regard to either the education sector or government authorities and services more generally)?

Have the stakeholder organizations been following developments in the education sector or the education reform program? Have any NGOs developed a position on the government's education reform strategy? Do they believe that they have or should have a say in the formulation of such a reform?

B.2.2 Questions Specific to Grassroots Organizations

What is the relationship between the stakeholder organizations and government officials (hostile, partnership, collusive, mutual neglect)?

What are current plans for decentralization both for the education sector and for the general government administration? Will there be any impacts for the stakeholder organizations?

Are there (or have there been) autonomous community schools in operation (either officially or clandestinely)? Are there or have there been community school projects promoted by other donors?

B.2.3 Questions Specific to NGOs

Perform an inventory of all the country's NGOs that are involved in the education sector, either as a principal activity or as one of many sectors of involvement. Categorize and evaluate their functioning in the areas of advocacy, training and technical support to grassroots efforts or specific stakeholder groups, policy analysis and research, dissemination of information, and social marketing.

Identify NGOs that are currently and effectively playing active, similar roles in other sectors.

Identify NGOs that focus on issues of government accountability, decentralization, and grassroots mobilization on civic issues.

Which are the most outspoken and influential NGOs in the country?

B.2.4 Questions Specific to Education System Stakeholders[1]

Do teachers' unions provide pedagogical support services for teachers (helping to prepare for examinations, providing other types of inservice training)?

Do the stakeholder organizations have a position on the government's education reform program? Do they communicate with their membership about reform priorities, strategies, and upcoming activities? Have they generated counterproposals?

B.3 Organizational Capacity

B.3.1 General Questions

How representative is the stakeholder organization (frequency and type of elections, who participates in what sort of decisions)?

How structured are principal tasks of managing finances, maintaining records, addressing grievances, holding meetings, etc.?

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[1]In the course of the questions, distinguish between what stakeholders "believe" and how they act.

How do the organizations communicate with their membership?

Do the organizations set goals and strategies, and if so, based on what information?

What is the age of the stakeholder organizations in the country?

Do the organizations have any capacity to conduct policy analysis and research? If so, on what issues?

Do the organizations have any advocacy experience? Were they successful?

Do the organizations have any experience conducting public information campaigns at the local, regional or national levels? What were the results of these efforts?

B.3.2 Questions Specific to Grassroots Organizations

Are there federations of grassroots organizations? If so, how are they structured, and how do they function? Are they representative and accountable?

B.3.3 Questions Specific to NGOs

Have donors or the government evaluated the institutional capacity of the country's NGOs? If so, what were the findings?

Annex C

Analyzing Interest-Group Pressure

Analyzing the issue of interest-group pressure is thorny and complex. Welmond has focused on this issue in an ERS supplementary document, *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation*, as a stand-alone problem. We strongly recommend that readers pay careful attention to the problem of stakeholders and interest groups. Welmond pinpoints the third row of our Table 1 (in the main text), looks at both the existence of negative pressure and the failure of positive pressure to emerge, and unpacks all the factors accounting for each. He identifies three sets of issues (see outline in Box C1), discussing them in significant detail. The first concerns the enabling environment for effective participation. The existence, invocation, and application of certain rights are the main factors determining the nature of the environment within which stakeholders can be expected to engage actively in education policy making. The second relates to the nongovernmental institutional environment—in particular, the way in which that environment defines its relationship to "official" institutions, and the level of political consciousness of the civil society organizations. The final set of issues concerns the organizational capacity of any of the individual entities that make up the nongovernmental institutional environment.

Welmond suggests crossing these sets of issues with three skills that are crucial to effective participation in the policy process: (1) the ability to identify problems and participate in a social process of problem identification; (2) the ability to participate in processes that formulate policy solutions, including the ability to propose that a problem is policy-related (rather than a natural phenomenon, say); and (3) the ability to bring policy issues and potential solutions into the government's agenda, or the "political salience" issue. This crossing begins to reveal where the very specific problems are.

Box C1. Factors Affecting Emergence of Positive Grassroots Pressure to Counteract Negative Interest Group Pressure

1. **Enabling Institutional Environment**
   - Democracy and legal framework
     – *Existence* of democratic rules and regulations governing these processes
     – Ability to *invoke* these rights
     – Ability to *apply* the rights, which includes technical, institutional, and management capacities
     – Ability and will to *enforce* the rights, which includes the same capacities as those needed to apply the rights
   - Degree of centralization

2. **Nongovernmental Institutional Environment**
   - Normative inclusion and exclusion assumptions
   - Tools and resources at the disposal of participants
   - Internal institutional norms and organizational behavior
   - Political consciousness
     – Historical constraints, behavioral and cultural responses to past policy
     – Rational avoidance of participation based on free-rider concerns

3. **Organizations**
   - Ability to articulate, represent, and be accountable to individual stakeholders of the organization
   - Capacity to formulate policy positions
   - Ability to communicate policy positions
   - Ability to communicate with own constituents
   - Ability to create alliances and networks

Annex D

Skill Profiles for Possible Long-Term Technical Assistants in ERS Projects

As stated in this volume's main text, the whole Education Reform Support process involves feeding and creating institutional networks, and providing manifold technical assistance. Precisely because of this complexity, one key implementor or counterpart is needed who can broker the technical assistance, and act as the key node of the network. Whoever performs this brokerage function must understand the range of skills needed to implement ERS project activities, either in education or in other sectors that are reforming more or less according to the precepts underlying ERS. To synthesize the knowledge needed, we developed the list in Table D1.

This list of technical and process skills defines the types of individuals and institutions that may be needed, depending on what technical and institutional areas were prioritized in the main text in Table 5, steps 5-7. We offer two clarifications here. First, any institutions chosen for collaboration should have a reputation for being able to provide individuals from their own staff, carefully selected based on their skills. Second, we have not listed traditional skills typically needed in "bricks and mortar" projects (teacher training; school construction; textbook design, publishing, and distribution).

Table D1. Skill Profiles for Technical Assistance Providers

Areas of expertise for technical advisors	Aspects where skills are needed [a]		Further elaboration of skill profile
	Reform motivation and definition	Management of reformed or modernized system	
Mechanics for guided consensus: process skills in leading workshops, strategic planning, "technified" village meetings, meetings at town hall, etc. Expertise should extend to the process of using dialogue to create processes for teaching bureaucrats and disseminating information.	○	●	Should have expertise in guiding processes where there are opposed interests, rather than simply clarifying issues. Experience in finding win-win solutions is key. Must collaborate with finance and policy expert below, since sectoral technical skills are needed to define such win-win situations. Maximum collaboration also required with community organization and participation expert.
Communications and social and policy marketing.	○	○	Expertise should go beyond the usual demand-side expertise of social marketing. Needs to include aspects such as the use of boardroom or policy marketing techniques. This expert will require maximum coordination with consensus expert and policy expert.
High-level technical policy issues for consensus: expertise in education finance, decentralization, strategic management.	○	○	Expertise needs to include the usual planning and budgeting skills as well as skills in true finance, decentralization, private sector and community roles, local taxation, etc. Expertise is key to guiding consensus because positive-sum or win-win resolution of opposed wish lists frequently requires technical knowledge.
Monitoring and evaluation, including tests and assessments.		○	Must include expertise in monitoring community-oriented processes, and teaching communities to monitor services provided to them.
Contractual management.		○	Expertise is required in the privatization and contracting out of services (e.g., hostels, printing, laundry services, transportation, warehousing, distribution, etc.). Advisor should have specific education-sector contracting-out experience. Should have experience in writing implementable, monitorable contracts and should cooperate with monitoring and evaluation expert in development of contractual indicators.

[a] ● = needed; ○ = strongly needed.

Table D1 (Continued)

Areas of expertise for technical advisors	Aspects where needed [a]		Further elaboration of skill profile
	Reform motivation and definition	**Management of reformed or modernized system**	
Education management information systems (EMIS), including tests and assessments, incorporation of fundamental quality levels (FQLs), client-oriented statistics.	●	○	Should have solid technical background, but current programming skills are secondary to knowledge of how data and information are used to promote management and accountability. If hard-core programming skills are not available locally or through short-term technical assistance, then these skills are equally important. Must work closely with monitoring and evaluation expert. Must be willing to establish relations and work with community-level expert for developing schemes for data and information use in helping communities monitor their schools.
Teacher labor issues, salary scales, human resource management in general.	○	○	Expertise is required in salary scales; performance evaluation; and tying of pay to productivity in ways that do not backfire, are culturally appropriate, and allow communities some say.
Management, with experience in decentralized education management, including strategic planning, financial controls, purchasing, policy-based budgets, human resource management, etc.	○	○	Overall management expertise is key. Advisor ideally should not be rooted in or sold on traditionalist types of developing country public sector management, since this is the paradigm that needs to change. Should understand where current practices came from, which can be changed, and which not, in the context of state modernization.
Community and school relations, organizing and training, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and PTA relations, etc.; participation.	○	○	Should combine traditional community organizing skills with sectoral education skills, but with an awareness of how these play out in the context of high-level reform and state modernization. Needs to collaborate with experts in monitoring and evaluation, finance and decentralization, management, and EMIS. Should be aware of role of community-based strengthening in the definition of high-level policy of decentralization.

[a] ● = needed; ○ = strongly needed.

Documents in the ERS Series

The Education Reform Support (ERS) series of documents presents an integrated approach to supporting education reform efforts in developing countries, with particular emphasis on Africa. It is designed for development agencies and for individuals interested in helping strategic elements within a host country steer events toward sustainable reforms in education, as well as for host country reform proponents who wish to understand the aims and means of agencies that propose activities in this area.

The six main volumes in the series are:

Volume Number	Title
1	*Overview and Bibliography*
2	*Foundations of the Approach*
3	*A Framework for Making It Happen*
4	*Tools and Techniques*
5	*Strategy Development and Project Design*
6	*Evaluating Education Reform Support*

There are also three supplementary documents:

- *Policy Issues in Education Reform in Africa*

- *Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) for Accountability*

- *Strategies for Stakeholder Participation.*

The series also includes an ERS Course Description, which consists of materials for teaching topics related to Education Reform Support.

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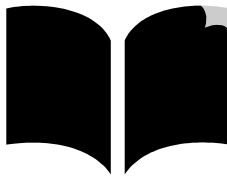
Advancing Basic
Education and Literacy
Phase 2

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