



U.S. Agency for International Development—USAID

Abstracts

Technical Information from the Africa Bureau's
Office of Sustainable Development—AFR/SD

Spring 1997

Basic Education

Report on the Basic Education Workshop: Brits, South Africa, July 20-25, 1996

Moulton, Jeanne. Academy for Educational Development, Inc., Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC. SD Publication Series: Technical Paper No. 46. March 1997. 47 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-038

In July 1996, representatives from 10 of the 12 USAID-supported basic education reform programs in sub-Saharan Africa (Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Uganda) met in Brits, South Africa. Moving beyond the broad agenda of the previous workshop, held in 1994 at Kadoma, Zimbabwe, which emphasized policy dialogue, donor coordination, and strategies, the Brits meeting concentrated on six specific areas of systemic reform: 1) strengthening community support for schools; 2) enhancing girls' education; 3) supporting education reform through political negotiations within and outside the system; 4) implementing school- and classroom-level research that underscores the necessity of focusing change at the school level and engaging all levels of the system in dialogue on the learning and teaching process; 5) treating students' health, nutrition, and physical growth and maturation as critical components of their schooling experience; and 6) giving teachers and communities an active role in staff development and teacher support activities, including curriculum design and the development of teaching methods and materials. In addition to these issues, participants and presenters repeatedly emphasized the following points: the importance of support from outside the education sector (private enterprises, communities, other government sectors); the multitude and complexity of viewpoints, sometimes conflicting, on education

reform; the benefits of obtaining the active participation of all stakeholders in information-sharing and decision-making; the significance of what students bring to the classroom—their physical well-being, information, or lack thereof, and cultural and family values; and the vulnerability of plans to unanticipated events and, thus, the need for flexible conditionality and support programs.

Findings from Nine Case Studies

Ridker, Ronald G. Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC. IPR Working Paper Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 26 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-323

This paper presents an overview and discussion of nine studies that attempt to explain educational achievement and attainment/participation in Kenya, Malawi, Mali, South Africa, and Tanzania. (Seven of the studies were funded by the Africa Bureau's Office of Sustainable Development; these are abstracted on the following pages.) The studies explore available information on school, household, child, and community characteristics. Four of the studies analyze national sample surveys, and the remainder examine evidence from field investigations of specific interventions at the primary level. This overview paper discusses the significance, limitations, and policy and

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research implications of the findings. The studies speak to a variety of issues, including the importance of socioeconomic, as opposed to school, characteristics in determining educational outcomes, the effect of quality improvements on enrollment, the importance of hardware vs. software, textbooks vs. class size, professional vs. paraprofessional teachers, and the role of parent participation. Most of the interventions studied had positive, or at least promising, impacts. This overview finds that outcomes vary significantly, however, and depend on the context and status of variables from all the domains the authors considered. This greatly complicates the analysis required and makes simple generalizations about policy difficult to make. Nevertheless, the studies should encourage continued experimentation and search for innovative approaches to improving educational achievement and attainment.

Enrollment in Primary Education and Cognitive Achievement in Egypt, Change and Determinants

Fergany, Nader; Ilham F. Armaz; Christiane Wissa. Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC; USAID/Egypt. IPR Working Paper Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 59 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-324

This paper reports on research that added variables from the Ministry of Education's school data base to a 1994 survey that included information on students, households, schools, and cognitive achievement. The authors then used these materials to investigate the determinants of achievement and enrollment and to explain the deterioration in these factors that occurred over the last decade. The paper finds, among other things, that socioeconomic factors are more important than school characteristics in explaining results.

School Quality and Educational Outcomes in South Africa

Case, Anne; Angus Deaton. Princeton University, Princeton, NJ; Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC; USAID/South Africa. IPR Working Paper

Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 49 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-325

The authors studied the relationship between educational inputs such as pupil-teacher ratios and school facilities, and educational outcomes such as test scores, school attendance, and schooling for age. The study merged data from the 1993 South African Living Standards Survey (SALSS) with administrative data on pupil-teacher ratios at the magisterial district level. Even at the district level, there are large disparities in pupil-teacher ratios in South Africa, not only between Whites (19 pupils per teacher) and Blacks (41 pupils per teacher), but within the Black population, where the dispersion of pupil-teacher ratios is much larger than that for any of the other racial groups. The richness of the SALSS data and the merging procedure allowed the authors to study a wide range of inputs and outputs. The study found that family background variables and pupil-teacher ratios exert a powerful effect on educational outcomes for children. These effects are not detectable for Whites, and are much stronger for Blacks when pupil-teacher ratios are high. Low pupil-teacher ratios have a positive effect on test scores, school attendance, years of completed schooling at any given age, and parents' expenditures on their children's education. Private educational expenditures complement public educational expenditures, which suggests that parents will share the costs of educational improvements with the state. These results stand in sharp contrast to the often-expressed view that public expenditures have little effect on children's educational attainment.

Textbooks, Class Size, and Test Scores: Evidence from a Prospective Evaluation in Kenya

Kremer, Michael; Sylvie Moulin; et al. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA; Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC; USAID/Kenya. IPR Working Paper Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 49 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-326

A Dutch non-profit organization chose seven rural Kenyan primary schools randomly from a group of 14

candidates and provided them with textbooks and uniforms. The program cut absence rates by 33 percent, reduced the dropout rate by 10 percent, increased transfers into the schools by 20 percent, and reduced transfers out by 8 percent, leading to an overall enrollment increase of 40 percent. Nevertheless, there was no difference in average test scores between program and comparison schools. One hypothesis is that the increased enrollment created overcrowding, offsetting the program's effects. In support of this hypothesis are the facts that test scores rose in grades in where there was little increase in enrollment and in relatively isolated schools that could not attract many new students. Instrumental variables estimates suggest that in the absence of enrollment increases, the program might have increased test scores by one-third of a standard deviation, but that each additional student reduced test scores by 6 percent of a standard deviation. The estimated effects suggest that the provision of textbooks is 10 times as cost-effective in increasing test scores as is reducing class size.

Village-Based Schools in Mangochi, Malawi: An Evaluation

Hyde, Karin A. L.; et al. University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi; Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC; USAID/Malawi. IPR Working Paper Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 69 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-327

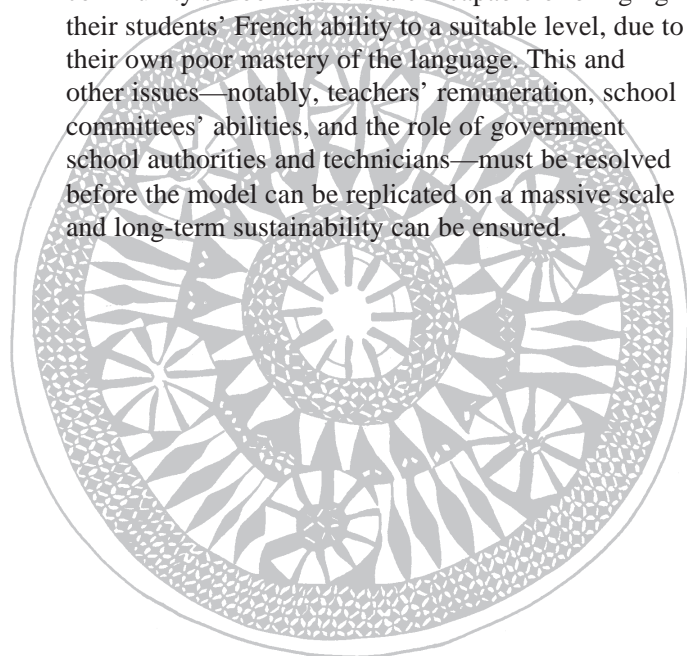
This evaluation of four village-based schools in Mangochi district of Malawi was designed to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of an innovative community school model run by Save the Children/USA. Using a variety of data-gathering techniques, including student tests, parent interviews and focus groups, teacher and head teacher interviews, and classroom observations, the authors compared the village-based schools to government schools in the same geographical areas, principally in the realms of student achievement, community and parental involvement, teacher effectiveness, and cost. The village-based schools were generally rated higher than the government schools on all measures. The authors judged the reasons for this better performance to be, in order of importance: a curriculum that focused on the core subjects, more regular supervision, smaller class sizes, and more participatory instructional strategies.

Evaluation of Save the Children's Community School Project in Kolondieba, Mali

Muskin, Joshua A. Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL; Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC; USAID/Mali. IPR Working Paper Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 66 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-328

With universal basic education beyond the modest means of most developing countries, they and their development partners are looking increasingly to local communities for vital inputs. Save the Children/Mali's community school project is one example of this approach, making use of local school management, local villagers with limited to no formal schooling as (low-paid) teachers, local language instruction, parity in girls' recruitment, and other innovations. Learning levels of community school students matches those of students in government schools in arithmetic and exceeds them in reading and writing (of the local language). Classroom management and enrollment and retention also seem better. Although not high, the level of community school committee and parental involvement is notably greater than in government schools. Despite these favorable results, it is doubtful that students completing a six-year community school cycle will be prepared to enter the government's formal school track, which is taught in French. The community school teachers are incapable of bringing their students' French ability to a suitable level, due to their own poor mastery of the language. This and other issues—notably, teachers' remuneration, school committees' abilities, and the role of government school authorities and technicians—must be resolved before the model can be replicated on a massive scale and long-term sustainability can be ensured.



Evaluation of the Aga Khan Foundation's School Improvement Program in Kisumu, Kenya

Capper, Joanne. Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC; USAID/Kenya. IPR Working Paper Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 85 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-329

This study evaluated a six-year effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the primary schools of Kisumu, a city in Western Kenya. The treatment involved extensive training of teachers, head teachers, inspectors, and staff of Kisumu's Teacher Assistance Centers. The project, supported by the Aga Khan Foundation, ODA, CIDA, and Comic Relief, ran from 1990 to 1996. In the first three years, the project focused on teachers in standards 1-3, and in 1994 began working with teachers in standards 4-6 and head teachers. Workshops were offered on an ongoing basis. During each school term, teachers in three schools were offered intensive, classroom-based coaching and technical assistance by project staff. The primary intention of the training was to make teaching more child-centered (i.e., children working in small groups; class discussions; activity-based learning; and asking questions that evoke thinking, analysis, and reasoning). The evaluation study compared three levels of the project intervention representing different times and extent of treatment exposure, and used a neighboring district as a control. Results showed that pupils in the treatment groups learned significantly more than did control pupils, but all groups performed extremely poorly on tests that measured simple reading and writing in English. Treatment teachers exhibited significantly more child-centered teaching and classroom-management behaviors than did control teachers, but only classroom-management behavior correlated with improved test scores. Workshop attendance positively and significantly correlated with increased test scores. Although treatment teachers' behaviors were more child-centered, few actually engaged pupils in discussion, asked thinking-type questions, or had pupils work in small groups.

Assessment of the Community Education Fund (CEF) Pretest Phase in Tanzania

Sumra, Suleman. University of Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Institute for Policy Reform, Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC. IPR Working Paper Series: Determinants of Educational Achievement and Attainment in Africa. February 1997. 41 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-330

This study evaluated the early stages of a pilot program that provides funds to communities on a matching basis for school improvements, using a formula based on local income. So far, the system is working well: acceptable plans for using the funds have been prepared, the mechanisms for ensuring proper protection and use of the funds are operating well, and, as a consequence, parents have been willing to contribute more than in previous years. The paper raises questions, however, about the long-term viability of the scheme and its effects on school outcomes.

Decentralizing Education: The BESO/Tigray Case Study—A Summary

Academy for Educational Development, Inc., Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC; USAID/Ethiopia. November 1996. 52 p. \$3.00

PN-ABZ-920

This study was carried out in the Tigray Region of northern Ethiopia in 1995 as one of the activities leading to the start-up of USAID's Basic Education System Overhaul (BESO) project. The study's primary objective was to model a new, decentralized approach to addressing the problems of Tigray's education system—a system being rebuilt after two decades of war. The study was carried out in a context in which the central government had promulgated, but not yet defined, a policy of decentralization to the regional level. The study methodology included a series of five workshops—involving educators from all levels of Tigray's education system—at which data collected by the research team at school and system levels were presented. This process brought to the surface two views of decentralization in Tigray, one focused at the regional level, and the other more concerned with schools, local administrative offices, and communities.

From the first perspective, the primary task was for the regional office to obtain the resources and capacities to manage the system. From the second, since decentralization had done little to improve schools or their relationships with the education administrative system, the primary task was to develop new relationships between schools and the administrative organization. These perspectives framed very different approaches to system reform. Though the study did not bring about fundamental changes in the system's decision making, it did model a decentralized process for incorporating field data and participatory dialogue into the policy formation process. It provided comparative data about the region's schools and gave frontline educators an opportunity to discuss the system's organization and its future.

Education-Health/Nutrition/ Population Linkages: A Guide to Resources

Christopherson, Kaaren. Academy for Educational Development, Inc., Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC. October 1996. 237 p. \$3.00
PN-ABZ-921

This resource guide compiles the experience of multilateral and bilateral donor organizations, PVOs, NGOs, foundations, and individuals concerning the relationship between education and health/nutrition/population, particularly with respect to child and adolescent development. Although the guide focuses on Africa, it draws on experiences from around the world—particularly experiences with in-school health, nutrition, and family life education, but also with school feeding, growth monitoring, deworming, and gardening programs. The introduction lists the health and nutrition interventions that have the greatest impacts on learning: deworming programs; child-to-child programs; family life education and family planning; immunization; micronutrient deficiency alleviation; nutrition education; protein-energy malnutrition alleviation; school feeding; school health education; school health services; and short-term hunger alleviation. The guide includes four sections: descriptions of and contact information for relevant organizations; a list of experts on the linkages between education and health/nutrition/population; descriptions of projects, programs, research efforts, or other activities that cross the education and health sectors; and an annotated bibliography of over 100 articles,

papers, monographs, and reports on child health and education linkages. The section on projects and other activities includes programs and activities of USAID, the World Bank, and other donors; in the case of USAID, the section provides project descriptions, evaluation abstracts, and document citations.

Advocacy

Introduction to Advocacy: Training Guide

Sharma, Ritu R. Academy for Educational Development, Inc., Washington, DC; USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC. 1997. 128 p. \$10.00
***PN-ABZ-919**

This guide explains how to advocate for change in the policies, positions, or programs of any type of institution—a small NGO, a council of elders, a ministry, a parliament, or an international agency. The first of its 10 modules explores the concept and basic elements of advocacy as it applies to professionals working in Africa and presents a conceptual framework for advocacy. The second module explains how to use data and research to identify and resolve issues for policy action; case studies from Kenya and Senegal illustrate the material. Some basic criteria for selecting an advocacy objective that is realistic, achievable, and worthwhile are reviewed in the third module. The fourth module explains how to identify and conduct research on primary and secondary policy audiences. The fifth module shows how to develop messages for each audience group and explores options for delivering the messages. The sixth module explains the formal and informal decision-making processes with which advocates must be familiar, while the seventh demonstrates how advocates can build networks and coalitions with other advocates and advocacy groups. Techniques for making persuasive presentations are explored in module eight. The ninth module shows advocacy groups how to develop a budget and establish fund-raising goals and a strategy. Finally, the tenth module shows advocacy groups how to maintain motivation and how to use a questionnaire to assess an advocacy effort after 6 to 12 months. Includes references and numerous checklists.

**Available to non-USAID readers from the Academy for Educational Development, SARA Project, 1255 23rd Street, Washington, DC 20037.*

Child Survival

African Framework for Design and Implementation of Child Survival Interventions: Focused Interventions for Impact, Strengthened Systems for Sustainability

Academy for Educational Development, Inc., Washington, DC; USAID/G/FSR, USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC. January 1997. 40 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-217

The health of Africa's children has improved dramatically in recent years, due in large part to USAID-supported interventions, yet the continued success of these interventions is in doubt because indigenous institutions often lack the capacity to sustain effective health care delivery. This document recommends strategic directions for USAID child survival interventions for the immediate future, and reviews progress made on the goals established in USAID's 1987 Child Survival Strategy for Africa. The implementation approaches described in this document have been derived directly from the experience of USAID's child survival program in Africa. They include continued emphasis on successful focused interventions—immunization, improved child nutrition, control of diarrheal diseases, child spacing, malaria and HIV/AIDS prevention and control, and management of acute respiratory infections. At the same time, however, USAID will focus increasingly on strengthening health systems, depending on countries' needs and the Agency's comparative advantages. USAID will also support efforts to increase public demand for child survival services and community involvement in health management and financing; promote public-private partnerships between governments, private providers, and NGOs; emphasize the role of policy dialogue managed by host country government; and support decentralization of health services. In the interest of sustainability, USAID will require long-term commitments from host governments and donors, and will incorporate the multiple approaches to

implementation that are required to promote sustainability—including strengthening management capacity, implementing cost recovery systems, and promoting host-country ownership—at the project design stage. The framework suggests a subregional approach, given the limited financial resources available and the reality that communicable diseases cannot be controlled successfully at the national level only. This approach takes advantage of the benefits of sharing experiences and lessons learned across countries, as well as the excellent technical assistance available to USAID at the subregional level.

Agricultural & Environmental Project Financing

Basic Guide to Using Debt Conversions

Dunn, Elizabeth G. University of Missouri at Columbia; AMEX International, Arlington, VA; USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC. SD Publication Series: Technical Paper No. 44. 36 p. March 1997. \$3.00

PN-ACA-093

A debt conversion occurs when a group uses hard currency to buy discounted debt from an international creditor. The debt is then delivered to the financial authorities (central bank or ministry of finance) of the debtor country, and is retired. In exchange, the financial authorities provide local currency to the organization in an amount greater than the equivalent amount of hard currency paid by the organization for the debt. Through a debt conversion, an organization gains additional funds for its programs and the debtor country reduces its debt and gains additional benefits from the organization's work. In order to use a debt conversion, an organization needs access to hard currency, and the country has to have eligible discounted debt, be open to having the organization's activities occur within its borders, and be willing to go through the debt conversion process. Questions that arise with debt conversions have to do with unfavor-

able changes in exchange rates, or whether the debtor government will follow through. The organization might also need details of administrative and transaction costs. The debtor government may worry about generating inflation or of having the resources to pay the organization. Also, the government may need to make provisions against “round-tripping,” or the practice of taking local currency from the conversion, converting it back to hard currency, and then leaving the country. Some countries may be concerned about “additionality,” or generating the same amount of funds that were already available from the donor. Or the debtor government may want to ensure that the additional funds generated by the debt conversion will be well-used. It is important to remember that debt conversion is merely a financing mechanism—just one option to consider in project planning. Some debtor governments devise debt conversion programs with guidelines that might include: types of projects to be supported; financial terms, such as the amount to be paid in local currency and the schedule for disbursing the funds; exchange rate; and application and review procedures. As with any financial transaction, there are transaction costs, which good planning can reduce. To undertake a debt conversion, organizations should prepare a detailed budget and investigate possible funding sources. Experts should handle the complex financial and legal issues. Finally, a professional intermediary can help locate eligible discounted debt at the best price, negotiate with the debtor government, and manage the transaction.



Natural Resource Management

Guide to the Gender Dimension of Environment and Natural Resources Management—Based on Sample Review of USAID NRM Projects in Africa

Picard, Mary. Mayatech Corp., Silver Spring, MD; AMEX International, Arlington, VA; USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC; USAID/G/FSR, Washington, DC. SD Publication Series: Technical Paper No. 30. August 1996. 26 p. \$3.00

PN-ACA-089

The purpose of this review was to gain insight into how various kinds of natural resource management (NRM) projects have incorporated gender (or women-in-development) issues in the design and other stages of the project cycle. Another purpose was to give an indication of the trends or improvements in the approaches to gender considerations in project and policy planning. The first part of the review investigates the degree to which certain kinds of gender analysis questions were explored as part of the social or gender analysis and resonated throughout the project paper. The second section identifies a set of common problems or phenomena that relate to gender and environment and reviews projects to determine whether the problems pertained to the individual country and project. The third section scrutinizes projects for the implicit or explicit strategies used to address gender issues. This is followed by an overview of some general observations on the review of projects. Overall, the paper provides insight into the ways in which gender issues have been or can be conceptualized as part of a design effort and, most importantly, the many substantive and non-substantive ways that benefits to and participation of women has been defined. The paper should give project staff a broader framework for deciding what questions need to be asked or what steps need to be taken in a particular situation. The final section on postulates for further research and monitoring purposes is followed by conclusions.

Considerations of Wildlife Resources and Land Use in Chad

Keith, James O.; Darrell C.H. Plowes. AMEX International, Arlington, VA; USAID/AFR/SD, Washington, DC. USAID/Chad. SD Publication Series: Technical Paper No. 45. 38 p. December 1996. \$3.00

PN-ABZ-699

Chad once possessed one of Africa's most unique and diverse arrays of wildlife species. In the last several decades, however, Chadians have seriously depleted their fish and wildlife resources and greatly reduced the ability of their environment to support wildlife. Game poaching and overharvesting of fish and other wildlife during the country's long period of civil unrest were major causes of Chad's biodiversity loss, causes exacerbated by drought, disease, and a growing population. This report describes Chad's wildlife species, their habitats, and the threats posed to them by human activities. Individual sections examine: 1) birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and plants; 2) biogeographic regions (northern deserts and mountains, the central shrub steppe, southern savanna woodlands, rivers and flood plains, and lakes); 3) wildlife management (organizations, activities, national parks, and faunal reserves); 4) agricultural activities; 5) agricultural impact on wildlife (habitat alteration due to land clearing and the impact of agricultural wastewater, shortening of fallow cycles, intensified land use, and use of insecticides and agrochemicals); 6) critical wildlife habitats (lake and savanna wetlands, the Tibesti and Ennedi Mountains in the north, national parks, and faunal reserves); and 7) threatened vertebrates.

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