



EFA | TOP PRIORITY FOR INTEGRATED SECTOR-WIDE POLICIES

Education
for All
IN AFRICA
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Introduction

Marking one third of the time span set in Dakar in the year 2000 for reaching Universal Primary Education (UPE), this report, based on the most recent data available (2004/05 and more rarely 2005/06), establishes a fairly precise assessment of the trends observed in Africa and endeavours to identify the successes and failures, in order to learn useful lessons.

The Dakar Forum has undeniably changed the deal for the development of education. The changes are manifest at institutional level, first of all, and are related to government and donor commitment: in many countries, local donor groups have set up a trusting dialogue with the governments, making it possible to move towards the globalization of actions and to cover current expenditure. Secondly, much has been accomplished in terms of real progress towards the set goals. The march towards UPE has become a reality in Africa, even if, for many countries, this may not be achieved by 2015. This goes, hand in hand, with a reduction in gender inequalities in primary education and, to a lesser extent, a reduction in geographical disparities.

The assessment set out in this report is not limited to the significant changes registered in the accomplishments and mechanisms of cooperation. It also concerns the consequences of the general trend in scaling up enrolments. It attempts to answer interrogations on the evolution of the quality of learning and on the place of non-formal education and specific literacy programmes in this general trend; and finally it looks at the concerns that may arise from the rapid development of post-primary education. Beyond the mechanical effect connected to the development of primary education, there is clearly a rise in demand for education in secondary and tertiary education. The issue of the physical and financial sustainability of the development of post-primary education is raised, just like that of its economic and social sustainability. The said growth in post-primary education must rapidly lead to more explicit provision for same in the definition and evolution of “credible” education system development plans, which so far have focused mainly on securing financing for the expansion of primary education.

These plans are not to be based on a single model; this would be totally unfounded in view of the variety of country situations, both in terms of structure and enrolment dynamics, as well as of economic situations and financing modalities. They must firstly be guided by the systematic promotion of the interests of society. They do not necessarily call for common solutions due to the variety of possible modes of organization and financing, but for solutions that take the constraints mentioned earlier into account. Bearing this in mind, the report suggests some « benchmarks for action ». These concern priorities, the agenda, financing modalities and technical and institutional tools, which must be defined in order to embark upon the reforms. Thus, the debate is open and must necessarily be enlarged to take in many other dimensions; UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa (UNESCO-BREDA) intends to be an active participant.



C H A P T E R 1

DAKAR +7
E D U C A T I O N F O R A L L I N A F R I C A

Institutional changes following the Dakar Forum

Following the somewhat questionable outcome of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, the Dakar Forum in 2000, reinforced by the agreement on the Millennium Development Goals the same year, seriously revived the cause of schooling in the World and initiated very real institutional changes. These changes took place, first of all, in the setting up of a series of mechanisms for the promotion and monitoring of the goals of Education for All (EFA). Secondly, they can be seen in the insertion of the EFA goals in a framework of global development of the education sector, which is itself a component of a national strategy for growth and poverty reduction. The Dakar Forum also gave rise to high international mobilization for education, declaring Africa as a priority, in terms of Official Development Assistance and in the different countries' intersectoral budget trade-offs. This mobilization has been reinforced by international initiatives in favour of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and the accelerated implementation of EFA (Fast Track Initiative), as well as by progress in terms of harmonization and alignment of aid. However, **in spite of this effective mobilization, the resources made available to the different countries are not in line with the promises made and are now showing signs of loss of impetus.**

1. Mechanisms for the promotion and monitoring of Education for All at international, regional and national levels

In order to generate strong political commitment at all levels in favour of education, the Dakar Forum (2000), drawing on experience from the Jomtien Conference, highlighted the necessity for setting up appropriate mechanisms to achieve the EFA goals. The Dakar Framework for Action has thus introduced several mechanisms for monitoring EFA at **international level**, organized around different aspects : political with the High-Level Group, technical with the EFA Working Group, and analytical with the EFA Global Monitoring Report. Civil society also has an important role to play, in vigilance and advocacy, especially with the Global campaign for EFA.

At African regional level, UNESCO's Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) has worked towards setting up an EFA Regional Forum in sub-Saharan Africa, drawing inspiration from the EFA Working Group at international level. This mechanism comes in addition to, and ties in with, the African regional authorities on consultation, exchange and cooperation in terms of education, i.e. the Conference of African Ministers of Education (COMEDAF) under the aegis of the African Union and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), consolidated by two decades of education in Africa (1997-2006 and 2006-2015) launched by the African Union. The Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) reinforces the mobilization for education in Africa, by acting as a spokesperson with the international community on behalf of the African national and local associations and by providing them with logistic support.

At national level, the Dakar Framework for Action has defined specific mechanisms, which are the national Forums, in order to develop national EFA plans. These mechanisms played an important role since their creation, enabling 42 sub-Saharan African countries to dispose of a national action plan for Education for All through a participatory plan. However, very few of these plans have been validated technically, socially and politically, and even less have been implemented due to lack of financing. This is explained by the fact that the plans have, for the most part, not sufficiently taken into account the countries' macroeconomic and financial constraints and the feasibility of planned action in the field. It was then difficult to fit them into ongoing national processes such as national strategies for reducing poverty, promoting growth or more global mechanisms for defining educational strategy. It must, however, be underlined that in some countries, the national EFA action plans, even if not implemented, have made a significant contribution to having the ongoing policy take into account all the dimensions of EFA by fuelling more global educational strategies.

2. Definition in many countries of a global framework for the development of the education sector

In order to reach the goals set by the different countries for the development of their education sector, the need became clear in the 1990's to move towards a more global framework for action for the different stakeholders in the education sector; the aim being to avoid past mistakes (external support on the periphery of the national strategy with very high transaction costs, resources-oriented running of the system with no medium or long-term strategic vision, lack of intersectoral dialogue, absence of appropriate budgeting, etc.). The desire, by both the governments and their partners, to see these practices change and shift towards a more global framework of development of the education sector arose from these admissions.

The framework is founded on in-depth and shared diagnosis of the functioning of the sector conducted by 26 African countries since 2000. This diagnosis, or sector-wide analysis, makes it possible to devise, set up and redirect education sector programmes allowing for the socioeconomic and financial constraints of the sector and the countries' human development goals. By highlighting the impact of education on society and the economy, the coherence of strategic choices with the objectives set and the way in which resources are transformed into results, sector diagnosis also facilitates financial mobilization: at national level, because it serves as advocacy for education in national budget trade-offs and also at the level of the international community, because it provides arguments as to the « credibility » of the sector.

The cornerstone of a more global framework certainly lies in the generalisation of medium or long term sector-wide plans in Africa. These are the outcome of a national process based on policy choices, which define a coherent set of interdependent strategies, activities and investments with a view to reaching a set of national goals, in the framework of a precise time-frame. They enable all the actions in favour of the education system to be registered in a common framework whatever the nature of the expenditure, the source of financing or the financial channel is. They then situate the strategies in a long-term perspective, thus ensuring continuity in the development of the sector. Finally, they contribute to encouraging mutual efforts and focusing dialogue around and on the national sector-wide policy and urge technical and financial partners (TFPs) to comply with national goals, positioning the ministry of education or the government as sector leader.

Carrying out and monitoring the sector-wide plans are then facilitated by a new type of dialogue between governments, TFPs and civil society, which is usually formalized by a partnership framework document and joint monitoring reviews. The overall framework for development of the education sector is then reinforced by incorporating education expenditure in global budget programming through the medium-term expenditure frameworks. Finally, it becomes all the more legitimate through the assertive and better-coordinated presence of civil society.

These global frameworks could still be very much improved upon but they certainly represent a definite advance forward in setting up concerted, relevant and efficient educational strategies, enabling attainment of the countries' goals.

3. High international financial mobilization

The year 2000 marked a change in the international community's financial support to developing countries. Following an almost continuous decline in the 1990's, Official Development Assistance (ODA) underwent a sharp increase starting in 2000 (+69% in 5 years), rising from 63.3 billion US dollars in 2000 to 107.3 billion US dollars in 2005¹.

Significant priority given to Africa but for how long?

Africa, and more specifically sub-Saharan Africa, still has high priority in aid flows: aid towards Africa represents around one third of total aid, making Africa the leading beneficiary² until 2005. However, **the share of Official Development Assistance for Africa has fallen since 2003**: it represented 38% of ODA then, compared to 37% in 2004 and 33% in 2005. Even if many promises have been made by donor agencies for a more favourable geographical distribution for Africa, the share of development aid for Africa in 2005 was far from what it was in the early 1990's (44%).

Very strong international mobilization for education after the Dakar Forum but now showing a loss of impetus

While the Jomtien Conference in 1990 did not enable the mobilization of donor agencies in favour of education, the Dakar Forum in 2000, due to the strong financial commitment made by the different countries, had immediate and very extensive consequences: aid to education rose from 1.6 billion US dollars in 2000 to 6.4 billion US dollars in 2005 and the share of aid reserved for education more than doubled over the period 2000-2004, increasing from 3% to 7%³. The strong financial mobilization for education was also observed in Africa: the share for the education sector in global aid thus increased from 3% in 2000 to 8% in 2004. However, in 2005, this share was cut back to 7%. **The drop was even greater for sub-Saharan Africa since the share fell from 7% in 2004 to 5% in 2005 for the education sector. This new trend raises concern as it suggests a slowdown in the priority granted to education and in the mobilizing effect of the Dakar Forum.**

The distribution of ODA for education hardly takes into account EFA goal n°2

Although not perfectly defined, the distribution in ODA disbursements for education in sub-Saharan Africa can give rise to some questions, insofar as there appears to be a dwindling interest for secondary education and very little priority for primary education, which is competing directly with tertiary education in the ODA allocation. Moreover, the share of aid for education devoted to basic education does not take into account the distance separating African countries from Universal Primary Education: in countries furthest from UPE (completion rate of under 50%), their aid for education is not directed with greater priority to primary education than in countries at an intermediate distance from UPE (completion rate of between 50 and 75%).

National priorities more and more in favour of education

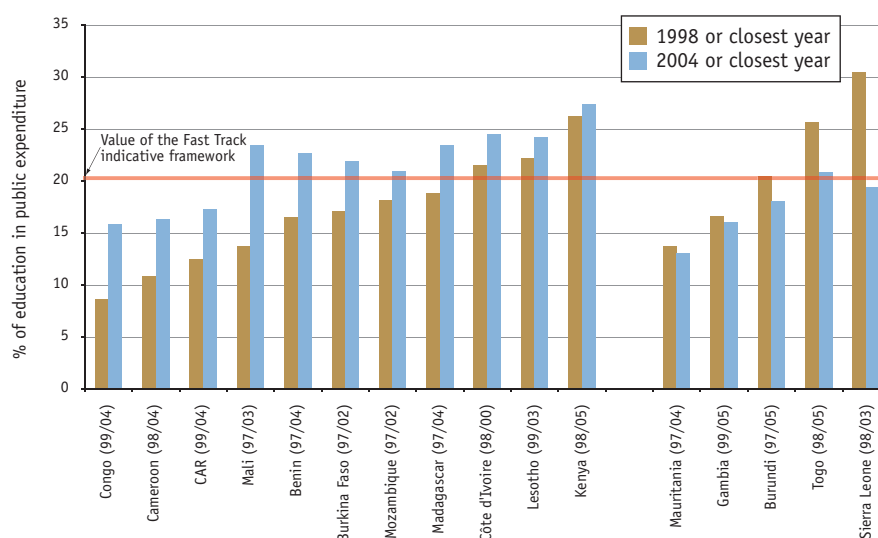
The mobilization of the international community for education since 2000 is also observed at African countries level. Even if information available is far from exhaustive, it seems that most countries have made a greater financial commitment to education. This translates by a more favourable intersectoral trade-off for education: out of the 16 countries for which information is available, 11 showed an increase in the share of public expenditure on education between 1998 and 2004 (or closest years) (graph 1.A), enabling, on the one hand, 5 of them to reach the level recommended by the Fast Track Initiative Indicative Framework. On the other hand, for the other 5, the share decreased.

1 Amounts expressed in 2005 US dollars.

2 In 2005, aid to Asia exceeded that to Africa, due to very high aid flow to the Middle East.

3 There is quite a difference between these figures and those presented in the 2007 EFA Global Monitoring Report, where the share for education rose from 10% to 13%. This is due to the fact that the figures in the Global Report refer to aid in terms of commitments, whereas here they refer to disbursements and this emphasizes the fact that commitments for the education sector are relatively less well respected than others.

Graph 1.A: Share of current expenditure on education in State expenditure excluding donations



Sources: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data

The Fast Track Initiative's multi-donor funds for education have greatly contributed to the high mobilization for education in Africa...

The Fast Track Initiative (FTI) is in line with the continuity of the Monterrey consensus, in the rationale of effectiveness of aid and of incentives: incentives for the beneficiary countries to set up a credible development policy for the education sector⁴ and incentives for donors to increase aid for education and the predictability of same. It has moreover greatly contributed to the transition from the project approach to the programme approach, by encouraging local donors to coordinate around the education sector programme of those countries elected to the Initiative. Since its creation in 2002, the FTI's role in the development of education sectors, especially in African countries, has become more and more important: seven countries were elected at the origin of the Initiative and there are 31 today, including 20 African countries. The Initiative's multi-donor funds - Catalytic Fund and Education Programme Development Fund (EPDF) - have played an important role in this evolution.

The Catalytic Fund, created in 2003, to enable low-income countries, which are donor «orphans» and have a credible education sector development programme, to benefit from transitional financing, in order to allow them due time to show performance liable to attract new donors, has become more and more important: at the time it represented 49.1 million US dollars compared to more than the double in 2006 (101.8 million US dollars⁵). **Amongst the Catalytic Fund's beneficiaries, African countries predominate in their numbers and also in the amounts disbursed to them:** they received two-thirds of the total amount disbursed to the Catalytic Fund's beneficiary countries between 2003 and 2006, i.e. 72 million US dollars. **Africa is also the main beneficiary of the EPDF fund.** This fund, set up in November 2004, was designed, first of all, to support low-income countries in the development or revision of sustainable education sector programmes aimed at achieving quality Universal Primary Education. Africa has been allocated 12.9 million US dollars by this fund, i.e. 53% of the fund. However, a very small share (10%) of this sum has been committed and an even smaller share spent: only 6% of the EPDF fund allocated to Africa has actually been used.

4 Any low-income country can be elected to the Fast Track Initiative by the donors if it has a complete Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper recognized by the World Bank and the IMF, and an education sector development plan deemed credible by the technical and financial partners' local coordination, in accordance with the Initiative's Indicative Framework.

5 Totals for 2006 do not take into account disbursements made by donors between November and December 2006.

... but the scale of FTI raises questions as to its capacity to address the goals

With the extension in the time span during which the different countries can benefit from the Catalytic Fund⁶, the considerable development in the number of countries elected to the Fast Track Initiative⁷, and with the promises from donors for the Catalytic Fund dwindling in the coming years, the question of the future sustainability of the Catalytic Fund is a critical issue. Will the Fund be in a position to address the needs of all those countries for which the Fast Track Initiative has undertaken to provide financial support, particularly once countries with a very large school population will have joined the Initiative? The answer is yes on condition of substantial donor mobilization, which does not seem to be the current trend.

If the Catalytic Fund's resources turn out to be insufficient, trade-offs will have to be made, either on the number of countries admitted to benefit from the Fund, or on the total amounts given to each country. In any case, it is important to decide upon trade-off criteria that would be favourable to those countries furthest from UPE, especially fragile States, and provide them with sufficient means to register true progress in terms of enrolments by 2015.

Financing EFA until 2015 does not seem sure at the present time

While the aid reallocations in favour of Africa and education have not been up to expectations, **the estimation of needs in external financing for Education for All by 2015 has been revised upwards.** The latest estimations, concerning more specifically the achievement of UPE, ranged in 2005 from 5 to 7 billion US dollars per year, and around 3 billion for Africa (UNESCO BREDA 2005)⁸. However, these estimations are based on annual needs between 2000 and 2015. And external aid disbursements between 2000 and 2005 have been significantly below the level of the needs estimated for achieving UPE by 2015. It is therefore a question of filling the gap, which would bring the total annual needs for this period to 11 billion US dollars per year (UNESCO 2007)⁹, i.e. almost twice the total aid observed in 2005.

Donors, especially bilateral ones, must work twice as hard as to the intensity and predictability of their financial support for the education sector in Africa, giving priority to those countries furthest away from reaching Universal Primary Education. On their side, the African countries must pursue their efforts for placing education at the centre of the debate, within the government and also with external partners and civil society.

6 At the start, the Fund enabled the countries to benefit from financing for a period of 3 years. Implementing this fund has brought to light the problems which could arise from its transitional nature and admission criteria. It was not easy to make take over by new donors happen and to foresee any change in this respect, in view of the tendency for bilateral cooperation to reduce the number of countries where it intervenes: it was therefore decided in November 2006 to allow financing in the longer term.

7 About fifteen countries should join FTI before the end of 2007; most of them are potential candidates for the Catalytic Fund.

8 UNESCO BREDA, 2005, Dakar+5 : Education for All in Africa : Paving the way for action, UNESCO, Dakar.

9 UNESCO, 2007, «Strong foundations: Early childhood care and education», EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2007.



C H A P T E R 2

DAKAR +7
E D U C A T I O N F O R A L L I N A F R I C A

The evolution of primary education

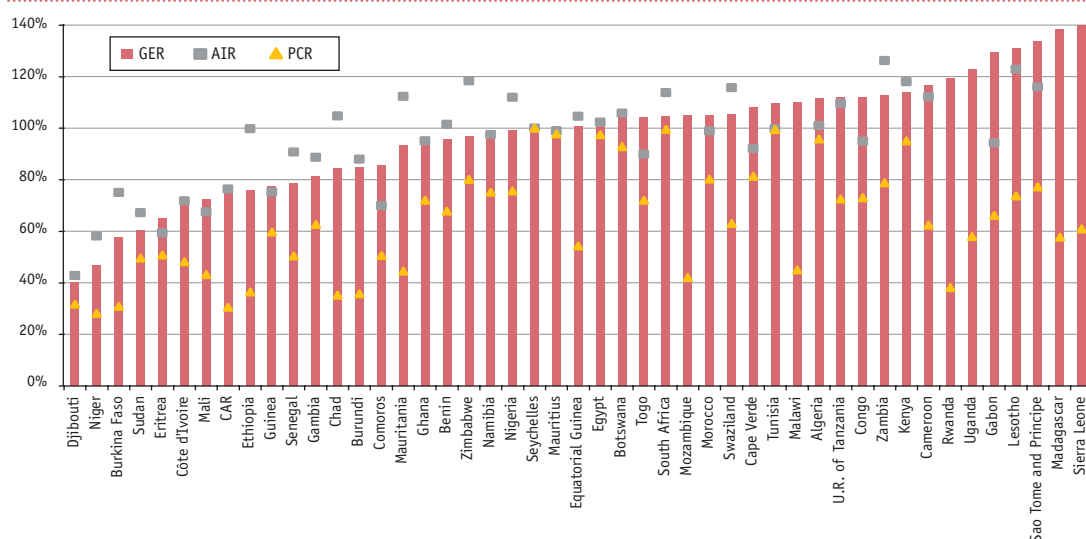
Seven years on from the Dakar Forum and the mobilization that ensued at country level and with the international community, it is now possible to establish a true quantitative assessment. It is obvious that these major events have reinforced the upward trend in education indicators in most African countries. Whether in terms of primary intake, coverage or completion, progress over the 2000-2005 period corresponds on average to that registered between 1990 and 2000, i.e. a period which was twice as long. This leads to reviewing earlier projections as to the perspectives of achieving Universal Primary Education: although they are more optimistic than two years ago, they are not sufficient for guaranteeing UPE by 2015 in all African countries.

1. 1.Education indicators in primary education on a distinct upward trend since 1990

All education indicators show very clear improvement since 1990. Significant progress has been made in terms of intake capacity in primary education, measured by the evolution of the gross enrolment rate (GER): on average, the GER registered at 98% in 2004/05 compared to 78% in 1990¹⁰. On the one hand, five countries still have coverage levels lower than 70%; Niger and Djibouti, with a GER of 47% and 40% respectively, are the countries with the lowest coverage. On the other hand, 25 countries showed a GER exceeding 100% in 2004/05 and 6 more a GER of between 90 and 100%.

Evolution in the apparent (gross) intake rate (AIR) and the rate of access to the last year of primary education (PCR), which gives an approximate measure of primary education completion¹¹, is just as remarkable: these rates rose from 85% to 95% and from 48% to 65% respectively between 1990 and 2005. **While in all the countries taken into account, only one out of two pupils completed primary education at the beginning of the period, this has risen to two out of three today.** In 2005, only Niger is still very much behind with a PCR of 28% and thirteen more countries still have a low completion rate at the present time, below 50%. These average trends do however conceal a variety of situations and it should be noted that in 2005 four countries have a lower completion level than in 1990: Burundi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Finally, nine countries, mainly from Northern Africa and Southern Africa, already show a completion level of over 90% and can therefore be considered as being close to UPE. It is interesting to note that on a parallel with this progress, repetition is, in general, on the decrease since 1990/91.

Graph 2.A: Gross enrolment rate, apparent (gross) intake rate and primary completion rate, 2004/05 (or closest year)



10 When, instead of the simple average, the weighted GER average is taken into consideration for each country per the total school-age population, these values are 95% in 2004/05 compared to 73 % in 1990/91.

11 It is indeed calculated on new entrants to the last year of primary education, which implicitly supposes that there is zero loss during the last year.

Sources: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data

A number of countries remain far from the gender parity goal, both in terms of intake and completion. For the 41 countries where data is available, **there are only 92 girls for every 100 boys getting access to school.** This drops to under 90 in 14 African countries: in Niger, Chad and Central African Republic (CAR), there are less than 80 girls for 100 boys. Fewer in numbers on entering primary school, girls also have lower survival: **in the last grade, there are 88 girls on average for 100 boys.** Chad and CAR have the lowest parity indexes, with 51 and 64 girls for 100 boys respectively. In contrast, there are between seven and nine countries where more girls than boys enter and complete primary education.

2. The Dakar Forum in 2000 marked a turning point in the dynamics of primary education in Africa

In 2000, the international community renewed its commitments to UPE and, since that date, it seems clear that there has been a positive evolution. By comparing the two sub-periods 1990-2000 and 2000-2004 (which correspond to 1990/91-2000/01 and 2000/01-2004/05 school years), a turning point in the rate of expansion of the education systems is observed, with progress stepped up in the period following the commitments made at these summits.

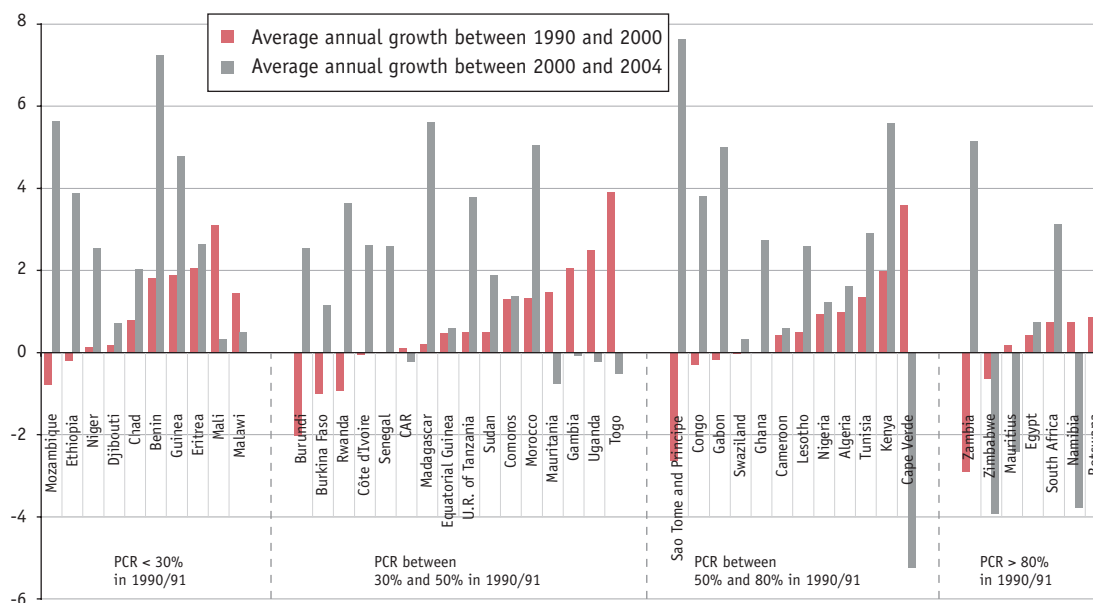
Concerning enrolment, **for the period following 2000, twenty-five countries experienced a higher annual rate of increase in pupil numbers than between 1990 and 2000,** while, on the recent period, 12 countries show a slowdown in the rate of growth. The opposite trend can be observed for some countries, starting in 2000: further to expansion which had led them to over 100% of GER in 2000, they have experienced a decrease, rather than a slowdown, in enrolments: this is the case for Algeria, Botswana, Cape Verde and Equatorial Guinea.

For intake, the annual increase in terms of percentage points on the apparent (gross) intake rate has been compared for the two sub-periods¹². **The majority of African countries have demonstrated a sustained increase in apparent (gross) intake rate, with higher average annual increases between 2000 and 2005 than between 1990 and 2000,** except for the countries that had already reached universal access in 1990.

As for completion (see graph 2.B), the same phenomenon can be observed for most countries, since the year 2000. **On the one hand, the group of countries with a very low completion rate in 1990 (under 30%) show the highest annual increase,** gaining over 3 percentage points per year for the 2000-2004 period. On the other hand, there has been a slowdown, and even a reversal of the trend, in some countries that have not reached UPE and that must be carefully watched.

¹² For a given period, the average annual increase in percentage points is calculated as follows:
(AIR at end of period - AIR at beginning of period) / Period.

Graph 2.B: Average annual increase in PCR: 1990-2000 and 2000-2004, Africa region



Sources: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data



3. Looking back at the projections regarding the perspectives of reaching universal education by 2015

The Dakar + 7 report provides the opportunity of looking back at the projections made in the Dakar + 5 report for primary completion on the horizon of 2015, and which it is appropriate to update in the light of the latest school statistics¹³. **Anticipated trends are generally better than in the previous report, but they are still far from the goal of UPE.** Moreover, it can be seen that trends vary greatly depending upon the country (graph 2.C).

Graph 2.C: Primary completion rate on the 2014/15 horizon, revised estimates



Source: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data

A fall in completion rate is expected in seven countries, seeming to lead them away from the goal of UPE by 2015, even if for Eritrea and Morocco, this trend is more a question of stagnation than of decline.

Very little evolution (less than five percentage points by 2015) is expected for four countries, with the situation therefore virtually stagnating in the meantime. This is cause for concern insofar as all the countries in this group have a completion level of under 75% at present.

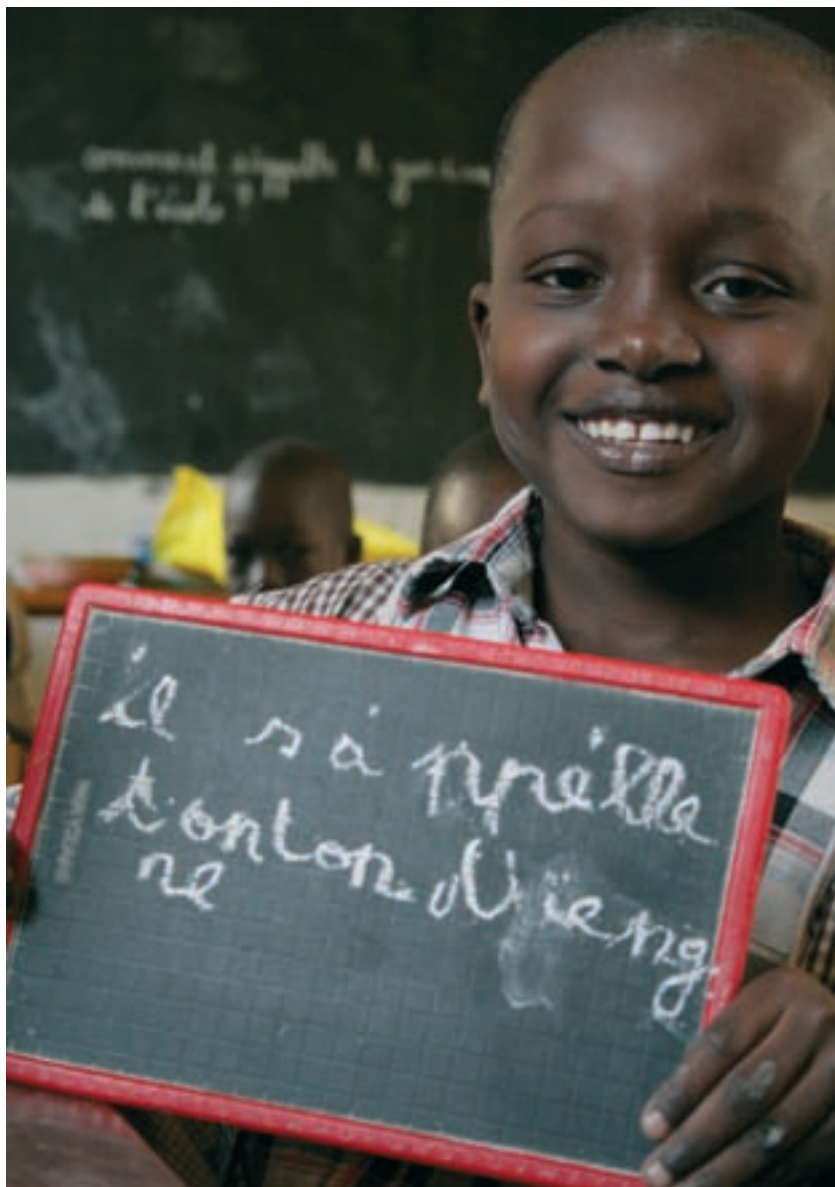
Eight countries should register an increase of between 5 and 15 percentage points; this is however insufficient for the countries in the group overall to reach the Dakar goal by 2015. The current scenario is more optimistic for all countries in the group, with the exception of Cape Verde and the United Republic of Tanzania, which have experienced a large drop in their apparent (gross) intake rates (AIR) in recent years.

A high increase of over 15 percentage points is expected for over 15 countries, which will allow some of them to reach the 2015 goal. This is the case for example for

¹³ The data used concerns 2002/03, or closest school year.

Zambia, Cameroon and Madagascar, where the scenarios are more optimistic than in the earlier report. It can be noted that while trends in countries such as Niger, CAR, Chad or Burkina Faso will probably not allow them to be on time for the Dakar goal, the pace of their evolution should enable them by then to multiply their current primary completion level by two, which obviously represents considerable progress.

Finally, for countries with a PCR of over 90%, projections show that they should theoretically all be on time for the 2015 goal, as previously forecast.



3

C H A P T E R 3

DAKAR +7
E D U C A T I O N F O R A L L I N A F R I C A

Post-primary levels and enrolment dynamics¹⁴

The vast progress made in primary access and above all in primary completion leads to wonder about the expansion of post-primary levels. What is the status on the development of these levels, and more particularly is there ever-increasing pressure to enter secondary education? The idea is therefore to draw up a panorama of post-primary secondary education in Africa and then to study the enrolment dynamics at work.

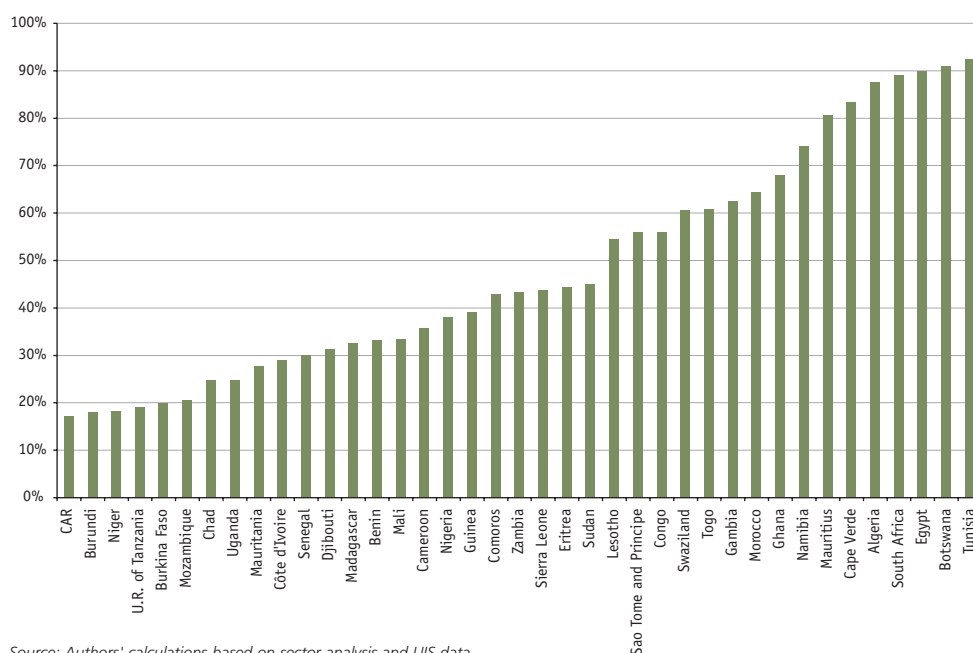
¹⁴ NB: Only the countries for which data is available, subsequent to the 2003/04 school year, are taken into account in this chapter. Angola, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Seychelles, Somalia and Zimbabwe are therefore not included in the analysis.

1. Current status: many different situations throughout the continent

General secondary: from very marginal access to almost universal access

Average gross enrolment rates in Africa registered at 49% for lower and 24% for upper general secondary in 2004/05. Access rates are very similar : **one out of two children on average has access to lower secondary education and more than one out of three completes that level, whilst one out of four children has access to upper secondary education.** Nevertheless, this situation conceals very significant disparities, since some countries have very marginal secondary access (below 20%) and others have virtually universal access (over 80%): the access rates for the 39 countries for which data is available range from 17% to 92%.

Graph 3.A: Access rate to general secondary (lower) in 2004/05



Source: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data

Since 2000, with the exception of the eight countries with a high access rate (over 70%) at that date, the access rate to lower secondary education has increased by around 10 points in all the countries, whatever the departure point. This represents a rapid increase, perhaps voluntary, perhaps not, and which can therefore be questioned as to sustainability in the short and medium term.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET): very different policy choices

TVET coverage has increased on average in Africa. It accounted for 549 pupils in Africa and 409 pupils in sub-Saharan Africa per 100 000 inhabitants in 2004/05. But as opposed to general secondary where the increase was generalized, TVET trends vary greatly from one country to another, revealing a wide variety of policy choices. Some countries have less than 100 pupils in TVET for 100 000 inhabitants (Chad, Niger, Sudan, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal and Eritrea) while others have over 1 000 pupils (Congo, Botswana, Algeria, Mauritius, Cameroon and

Egypt). TVET coverage results from a policy choice to give more or less importance to this secondary education sub-sector. The share of technical and vocational pupils varies widely, reflecting very different priorities granted to this type of education: while not exceeding 2% in ten countries (Comoros, Sao Tome and Principe, Kenya, Eritrea, Sudan, Senegal, Ghana, Guinea, Zambia and Namibia), this share is over 30% in Egypt, Cameroon and Rwanda, where it reaches 36%.

Tertiary education

In recent years, tertiary education in Africa has undergone considerable expansion : the number of students is calculated at 985 per 100 000 inhabitants, but if North Africa, where tertiary education is much more widely developed than on the rest of the continent, is excluded, then the average for sub-Saharan Africa registers at 400 students per 100 000 inhabitants. There again, the average figures mask a wide variety of situations depending upon the country: out of the 37 countries where recent data is available (2004/05 or closest year), 23 have under 500 students per 100 000 inhabitants, 8 countries between 500 and 1000 students per 100 000 inhabitants and 6 countries over 1 000 per 100 000 inhabitants.

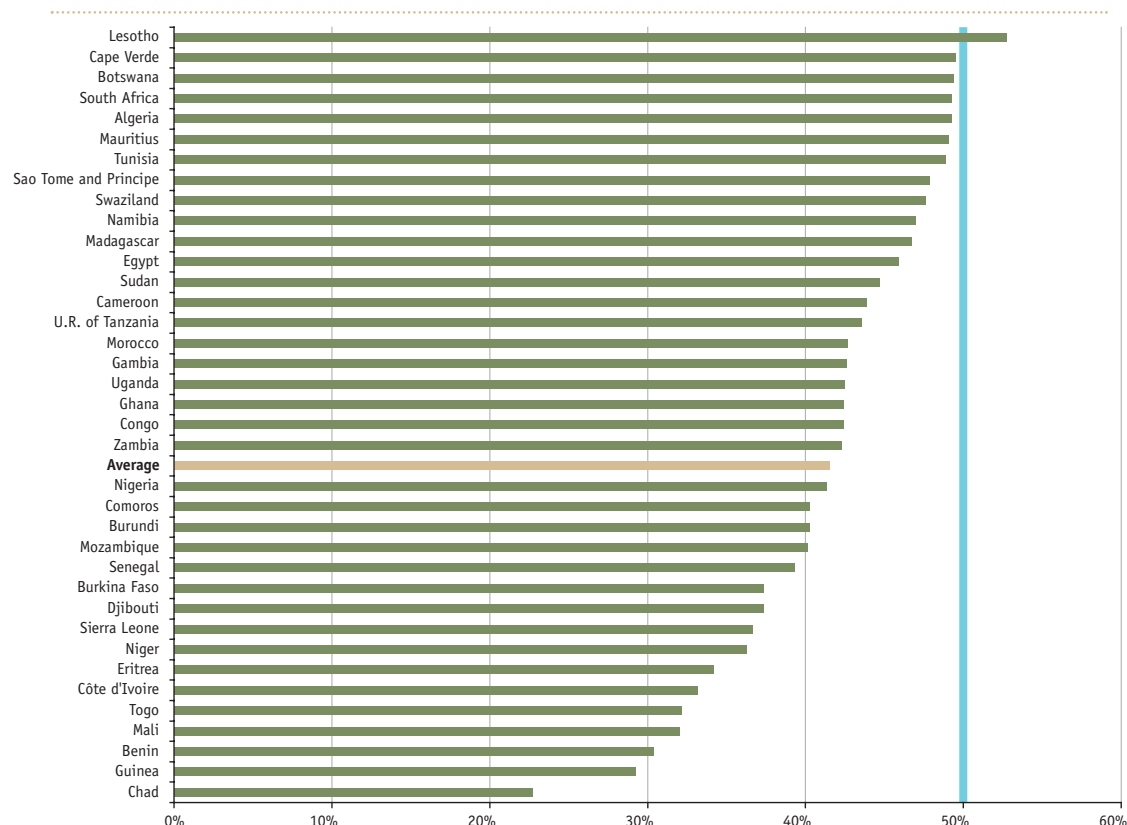
Gender disparities are still significant

In general, gender inequalities are more pronounced the higher the level of education, since they are accentuated between the two secondary levels, then between secondary and tertiary education : the share of girls overall drops from 45% in lower secondary to 42% in upper secondary and finally to 40% in tertiary education. The extent of the inequalities greatly varies from one country to another, as shown in graph 3.B. The high level of gender inequalities in secondary education, in many African countries, has shown signs of a slight reduction since 2000: the share of girls has stagnated or slightly increased in almost all countries, with the notable exception of Eritrea¹⁵.



¹⁵ And of some countries where the share of girls was and is still over 50%.

Graph 3.B: Share of girls' in general secondary education



Source: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data

In TVET, the share of girls is slightly lower than in general secondary, registering at 41%. It should be borne in mind that the share of girls in this level of education very much depends on the fields of study on offer. As a result, there is a wide range of parity indexes: in some countries, there are five to ten times fewer girls than boys (Comoros and Zambia) and in others there are just as many, even more (Burkina Faso, Lesotho and Ghana). Even so, it should be highlighted that girls are in the minority in the great majority of countries.

Pupil/student-teacher ratios on a downward trend

In general, pupil-teacher ratios in secondary and tertiary education deteriorated between 2000 and 2005: in this respect, there was an increase in pupil/student numbers in secondary and tertiary education but this did not coincide with an adjustment in teacher numbers. For example, in Ethiopia, the GER rose from 21% in 2000/01 to 31% in 2004/05 for secondary education and the pupil-teacher ratio increased from 44 to 55 pupils per teacher. For tertiary education, there is the case of Ghana where coverage increased from 323 to 552 students per 100 000 inhabitants between 2000/01 and 2004/05, along with a student teacher ratio which increased from 18 to 39 students per teacher. Some exceptions do exist like Burkina Faso, where the student-teacher ratio has improved in spite of the rise in the number of students.

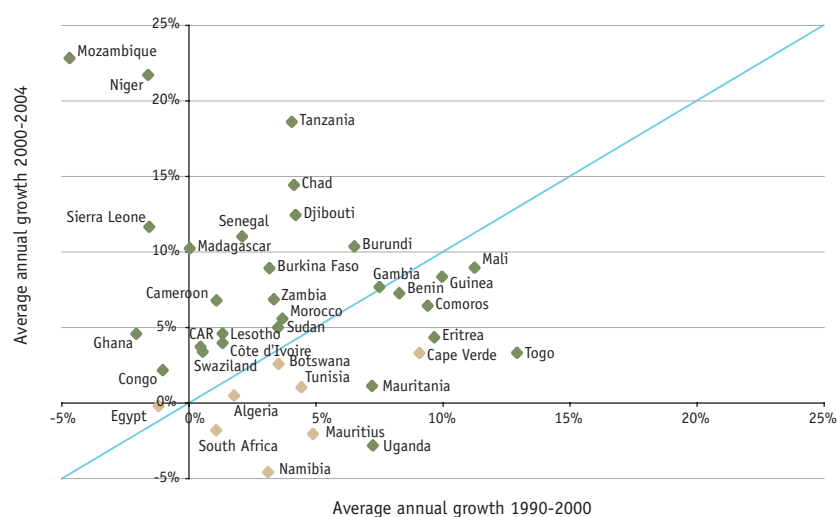
2. Has focalisation on UPE goals mechanically increased the pressure of demand on secondary education?

Past trends and recent trends: comparison of growth rates

No global acceleration of the growth in access rates to secondary education is noted. However, if we set aside the eight countries with an access to secondary education of over 60% in 2000, and which have therefore limited possibilities of growth in secondary education (Cape Verde, Botswana, Algeria, Mauritius, Tunisia, Namibia, Egypt and South Africa), it is noticed that for many countries, access to secondary education has increased, on average, more rapidly between 2000 and 2004 than between 1990 and 2000. It must be highlighted that amongst the 22 countries with acceleration in their growth rate, 9 show average annual growth rates of over 10%, which seems very high, especially with regard to the level of development of secondary education in these countries: the cases of Niger, Mozambique, Chad and Tanzania are typical in this respect. These countries have particularly poor levels of development in secondary education, and show very high rates of growth, over 20% per year on average for Niger and Mozambique: there is clearly an issue as to the sustainability of such a pace of expansion for these countries.

Very much the same observations are made when looking at growth in pupil totals (see graph 3.C): for countries where access to secondary education was already high, the growth rates are low and often lower than those observed over the 1990-2000 period. For the others, 10 countries show a decrease in the rate of growth in pupil numbers, compared to 20 countries where this has increased over the 2000-2004 period. There are even 13 countries with average annual growth rates in pupil numbers of over 10% between 2000 and 2005, and over 20% for Mozambique, Niger and Tanzania.

Graph 3.C: Average annual rate of increase in pupil numbers in the first grade of general secondary education between 1990/01 and 2000/01 and between 2000/01 and 2004/05



Source: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data

All in all, if we take only those countries with access of under 60% in 2000 into account, then two-thirds of them have registered acceleration in growth rates in terms of pupil numbers or of access to secondary education: this is particularly marked for Chad, Niger, Mozambique and United Republic of Tanzania. For around ten countries with access of under 60% in 2000, there has been a slow down in growth rates, which remain high in spite of everything.

Where does the growth observed in access to lower secondary education originate?

Access to secondary education results from three factors, i.e. access to primary, survival in primary and transition between primary and secondary education. Using a breakdown technique, the growth in access rates to secondary education can be expressed as the sum of the evolution of these three components, in order to see to what extent access to primary education translates into access to secondary education.

Once again, the variety of situations makes it impossible to outline country profile types. However, a number of elements seem to emerge. Firstly, the highest increases in secondary access are noted in the 12 countries with a low rate of access (under 25%) in 2000, and which had therefore plenty of leeway for making rapid progress; it is also in those countries where the primary access rates have progressed the most since 2000. It is important to underline the fact that, in these countries, the rise in access to and survival in primary education has not been compensated for by lower transition to secondary education. On the contrary, all the rates combine and there is therefore an absence of flow regulation.

The situation is very different for the other countries, where the access rate to secondary education was already a little higher in 2000 (ranging from 25% to 60%): for these countries, it can be noted that the survival rate observed in primary education is a determining factor on access to secondary education, even if this sometimes rises or sometimes falls, making it impossible to define a specific trend. In the great majority of cases, it compensates for the rise (or fall) in access to primary education, whilst there is little evolution in transition between primary and secondary education.

Finally, for the last group of countries (access rate over 60% in 2000), all the indicators seem to have been stabilized since variations are hardly significant.



4
C H A P T E R 4

DAKAR +7

E D U C A T I O N F O R A L L I N A F R I C A

Measures, evolution and management of the quality of learning

Within the EFA framework, it is essential to grant just as much importance to what pupils actually learn in the classroom as to access and survival in school, given that learning achievements are the ultimate aim of all education. Available data shows that the African school is very much behind quality-wise since the average level of pupils is low, both in absolute and relative terms. This poor average does however conceal many disparities, from one country to another but also within countries. It can then be asked whether this poor performance is imputable to the expansion of the education systems, as per the well-known saying that deterioration in the quality of learning is the price to pay for scaling up enrolments. This argument does not stand up to analysis, as it is shown to be possible to make significant progress in enrolments while, at the same time, guaranteeing a certain level of learning. In fact, it turns out that the major problem, typical of African education systems, lies in the considerable variation in results depending upon the schools, highlighting the shortfall in management in terms of the quality of learning, which puts a strain on national average scores.

1. Panorama

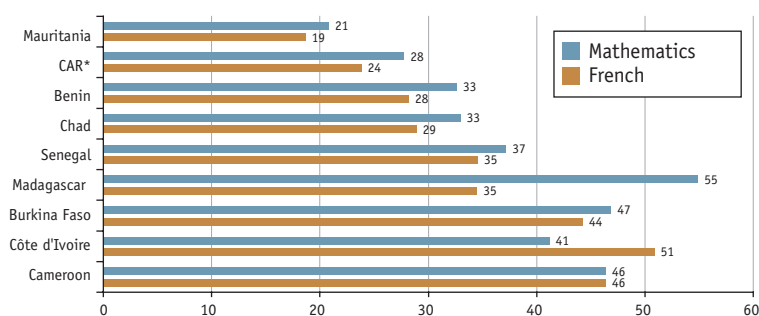
International surveys

The few countries that have participated in international programmes display performances very much below the international average, since they are generally ranked in bottom place. Thus, for example, the five countries that participated in the TIMSS¹⁶ survey in 2003 (South Africa, Botswana, Ghana, Morocco and Tunisia) are to be found in the last 7 out of 45 countries. It is important to underline the fact that these international surveys were designed, above all, for developed countries and have been carried out in very different contexts. Even so, these results do provide a first impression of the level of school learning and confirm the common opinion that the quality of education in Africa is poor. It is, however, worth looking into these results in more detail, as this average performance conceals very significant disparities between the different countries, which are not all faced with the same situation.

Regional programmes

SACMEQ¹⁷ and PASEC¹⁸ are two regional assessment programmes, with SACMEQ supplying data for 14 Southern and Eastern African countries and PASEC for 9 French-speaking African countries. The analysis of results confirms, first of all, the modest level of the countries taken into account by these two programmes. For example, no country participating to PASEC tests has an average score higher than 50/100. More refined analysis shows that **performances vary greatly from one country to another**: for SACMEQ, there are huge differences between Malawi or Zambia, with average scores of close to 430, and Kenya or Mauritius, where average scores are over 550. Similarly, results in the PASEC tests show big differences between Mauritania or Central African Republic (CAR), on the one hand, and Côte d'Ivoire or Cameroon, on the other hand, which have noticeably better results (see graph 4.A).

Graph 4.A: Scores in PASEC Mathematics and French tests in 5th grade (Score out of 100)



Sources: PASEC and the Pôle de Dakar for CAR

Moreover, within countries, pupil results are very heterogeneous and scores are very much dispersed. If we take the example of Cameroon in Mathematics, where the average score is of 46, we can note that a little more than 6% of pupils had such low scores that they are below or equal to the scores they could have obtained if they had replied randomly to the tests, while around 5% of pupils had scores of over 80 out of 100. Such a situation is far from being specific to Cameroon and is rather one of the characteristics of the African school. **Indeed, it is not unusual to see excellence side by side with an absence of basic knowledge: the idea that all pupils have a mediocre level of learning is thus totally inaccurate.** The situation is much more complex and the fact that some classes show remarkable performance tends to prove that it is possible to dispense education of good quality in African countries.

16 TIMSS: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

17 SACMEQ: Southern Africa Consortium of Monitoring Education Quality.

18 PASEC: Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems of CONFEMEN (Conference of Ministers of Education in countries sharing the French language).

Literacy

Another way of approaching quality is to look at the probability of literacy after six years of schooling; household surveys make this possible. Measuring the probability of literacy today amongst young adults does not however inform on the quality of school today but of school in the early 1990's. In spite of that, recourse to this data provides extensive international comparisons: it is possible to compare African countries with other developing countries for example.

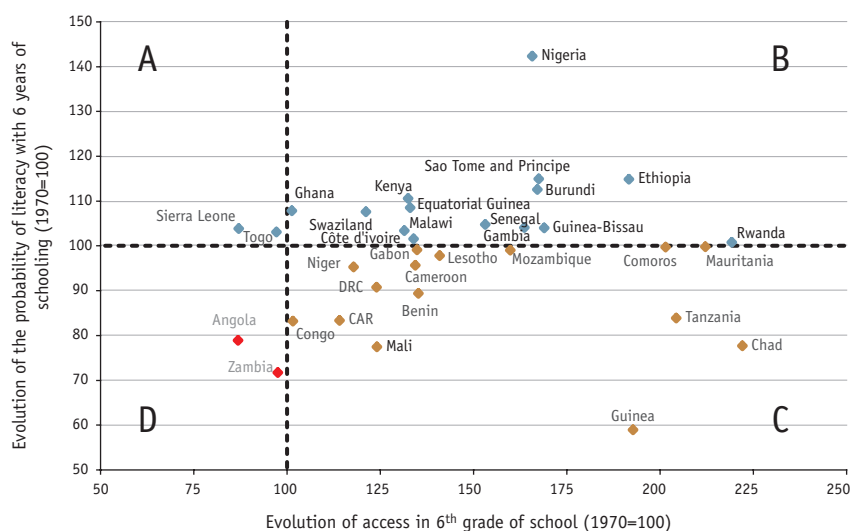
Once again, results confirm the problems of quality in education in Africa. In the early 1990's, the probability of literacy, after accessing the sixth grade of primary education, was estimated at around 68% in African countries, which means around one in three pupils was not literate at the end of primary education, while the probability of literacy reached 93% in 9 developing countries outside of Africa. However, there are again huge disparities, since this probability varies from under 30% to almost 100% on the African continent overall.

2. The quality/quantity trade-off, an invalid argument

On seeing these results, one may be inclined to explain them by the rapid expansion in enrolments in the last twenty years: the relationship between scaling up enrolments and the quality of learning has therefore been examined very carefully. This issue can be studied from the angle of literacy over the 1970-1990 period or for more recent trends (end of the 1990's and early 2000's) using the SACMEQ and PASEC tests.

Over the period ranging from the early 1970's to the early 1990's, characterised by a high growth in enrolments (the access rate to 6th grade rose by 34%), there was moderate evolution in quality of learning achievements, and this was sometimes positive and sometimes negative, according to the country (see graph 4.B). Among the countries where school enrolments increased, one counts as many countries showing an improvement in the probability of literacy as countries where this probability had fallen: there was therefore no apparent relationship between quality and quantity over this period.

Graph 4.B: Relationship between quantitative and qualitative progress over the 1970-1990 period



Sources: DHS, MICS and QUIBB data, 2000 (or closest year) and authors' calculations

The study of recent trends leads to similar conclusions: the increase in school enrolments has not coincided with a deterioration in quality either in Cameroon or in Madagascar, where even an improvement is seen, whereas a very significant fall in Reading performance is noted in Namibia and Malawi, along with an increase in rates of access to 6th grade.

These results are therefore very far from the generally accepted idea that a growth in school enrolments induces necessarily a drop in quality. The varied country situations show that nothing is inevitable in this respect, even when the arrival of children in school from the most underprivileged backgrounds could explain a drop in the level. In fact, democratising access to primary education does lead, undeniably, to pressure on the education systems but some countries are seen to have successfully faced up to this while others have experienced serious difficulties.

3. For better management and a significant increase in time spent in school

It is not sufficient to observe that there are huge problems of quality of learning, it is also necessary to search for explanations, in order to come up with appropriate solutions. The analysis conducted in this chapter highlights the extent of the disparities between classes and schools within the African education systems. This fact seems indeed to be an African specificity, with consequences on the average performance of the systems: statistical simulations show that these disparities have considerable impact on the average of the quality of learning. There are thus significant levers for improving the quality of learning achievements that involve the reduction in disparities between classes and schools.

However, traditional factors such as teacher training, textbooks, and class size, etc. do not provide an explanation for the major part of these disparities. In fact, it seems that the time spent in school could be a determining factor in explaining these disparities: indeed, many observations in the field converge towards the fact that actual teaching time is distinctly insufficient in African schools and is also very unevenly distributed between schools and classes. The reasons are numerous and varied: they concern, on the one hand, the length and adaptation of the school year and, on the other hand, teacher and pupil absenteeism. Difficult socioeconomic conditions often place strong constraints on the populations that they are unable to break away from in order to respond to school requirements: this suggests the idea of introducing some flexibility into school calendars, in order to adapt them to local context. As for teacher absenteeism, this is a complex problem since it concerns health problems, administrative reasons (delays in assignments, travel to draw salary, etc.) and problems of assiduity.

Although complementary studies still need to be conducted, it is essential for school management to tackle the problem of time spent in school as a priority since, it must be stressed, **one can hardly hope to improve significantly the quality of learning in basic education in Africa if pupils are not ensured of benefiting from a number of teaching hours close to the international norm of 900 hours**. This implies more effective management of the education systems, especially at local level. Identifying schools in great difficulty and providing support to them are essential. This will only be possible if current management methods change in order to incorporate in their common practice, performance in terms of enrolment, quality of learning and equity. One of the direct consequences would be the redefinition of the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the educational chain.



C H A P T E R 5

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E D U C A T I O N F O R A L L I N A F R I C A

What strategy for non-formal education in the current panorama of Education for All?

Along with the mobilization in favour of UPE, the fight against illiteracy is increasingly focused on formal education. Today, the financing of non-formal education programmes for illiterate adults and for young people, with poor or non-existent schooling, has become an even more acute issue. The aim here is to examine very generally the relevance of non-formal education on different aspects and then to see why and how the programmes can be assessed. Advocacy developing today around the issue of non-formal education has indeed little chance of being heard, if it does not also promote the implementation of reliable programme evaluations allowing the foundations to be laid for efficient management of the sub-sector.

1. Non-formal education : relevance and social effects

In the past, literacy and non-formal education were sectors that received little financial support from governments and external partners and today, they seem to be further marginalized even though the needs they specifically address have far from disappeared: the literacy rate calculated on the over 15 age group for the 2000-2004 period for the whole of sub-Saharan Africa registered at only 61%.

The weight of non-formal education varies greatly according to the country: around zero in most countries where formal education is well established, and between 0.3% and 26.7% in the other countries where attendance in formal education represents practically less than half that of the different types of education for the 15-49 age group. Its effectiveness will only therefore be analysed in countries where data is available and where such programmes are sufficiently represented, i.e. Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Gambia, Niger, Senegal and Chad. In the absence of a direct measure of the effectiveness of specific non-formal education programmes, it is interesting to study, at least for exploratory purposes, their impact on a number of social dimensions and to compare this with those associated, in the same areas, with the absence of education or with the benefits of formal education. The data sources used are the MICS¹⁹ household surveys carried out by UNICEF between 2000 and 2002. In these surveys, non-formal education is not broken down into its different components and so covers, without distinction, adult literacy activities and complementary (for specific populations) or substitute (for a school-age population) non-formal education as well as formal education structures.

Specific beneficiaries

The population benefiting from non-formal education over the seven countries taken into consideration is relatively distinctive. It most often concerns men (except in Burundi and Comoros) and rural areas (except for Côte d'Ivoire, where most beneficiaries live in town). The beneficiaries according to the income of the head of the family are, somewhat unexpectedly, quite evenly distributed between the income quintiles: attending non-formal education is therefore not typical of being poor.

Good results in terms of sustainable literacy...

The primary objective of non-formal education programmes consists in providing the participants with sustainable literacy. On this point, the results clearly show that the probability of literacy for individuals who have followed a literacy programme is higher than for those who have had no education.

When results are compared, in terms of literacy between formal and non-formal education, they are seen to be varied: in Burundi and Côte d'Ivoire, a non-formal education programme is the equivalent of less than two years of formal education, i.e. the proportion of sustainable literacy amongst the beneficiaries of non-formal education corresponds to that observed after a year and a half of formal primary schooling. In the other countries studied, the non-formal education programmes are, in literacy terms, the equivalent of 4 to 7 years of formal education, which is very high.

Table 5.A: Equivalence of literacy programmes in number of years of formal study

Country	Equivalent years of formal education
Burundi	1.6
Côte d'Ivoire	1.6
Comoros	6.8
Gambia	4.6
Niger	3.9
Senegal	3.8
Chad	4.6

Source: Authors' calculations based on MICS surveys

This result should however be qualified, as it is rather when the formal system is itself of poor quality in terms of sustainable literacy (low proportion of literate adults after 6 years of primary education), that the benefit of non-formal education appears high.



...not necessarily having an effect upon health attitudes

Literacy is often associated with an improvement in behaviour in areas such as birth control and health. The idea is therefore to see if literacy and non-formal education programmes do have a positive impact on a number of variables related to these areas. The results do not provide clear conclusions on this point. Indeed, on the different areas taken into consideration, the practices of those who have benefited from non-formal education do not differ significantly from those who have had no education. When there is an effect, it is often country-specific and undoubtedly reflects the variability in content of non-formal education from one country to another.

Thus, it appears that non-formal education enables, above all, to gain access to literacy without, however, guaranteeing some of the externalities generally associated with it. It is also important to highlight the variety of results undoubtedly corresponding to the variety of programmes, goals, organization methods, contexts and, in all likelihood, populations. There is consequently room in the non-formal education sector for the same type of assessments as those conducted in primary education in the past.

2. Determining factors in the quality and sustainability of adult literacy taking Morocco as an example

An exploratory analysis of the decisive factors in the quality of learning in literacy programmes was conducted in Morocco in 2004, based on the results obtained by trainees in end of session knowledge tests. This study underlined the importance of the operators and, above all, of the trainers in differentiating results: on the one hand, as opposed to what is noted in primary education, individual trainee characteristics were not as important as those of the operators and trainers. On the other hand, the analysis did not able identification of the trainer characteristics the most likely to account for the marked differences observed in pedagogical effectiveness, that is to say that the differences have undoubtedly a somewhat strong personal dimension (teacher's personal qualities and also his/her level of involvement); taking into account the teacher effect in the beneficiaries' achievements, this would justify more active regulation (inspections/assessments, greater transparency in terms of results...) and even maybe more rigorous selection (possibly *a posteriori* in the case of annual contracts). These evaluations, followed by a selection process, could constitute a more effective strategy for guaranteeing better results and increased mobilization for the sector.

In any event, these observations argue in favour of the professionalization of the sector, and especially the implementation of sound assessments, which appear to be the prerequisite for defining education policies in which non-formal education could find a true place to the benefit of those specifically excluded from formal education.

CHAPTER 6

DAKAR +7
EDUCATION FOR ALL IN AFRICA

Financial sustainability in the development of secondary and tertiary education

The increasing number of pupils completing primary education today²⁰ and their desire to continue education beyond this level combine to place mechanical pressure on post-primary education. Moreover, many arguments are put forward to justify not only an expansion in universal education to nine or ten years but also to enable the access of more young people to tertiary education in Africa.

The question is then to know whether post-primary education in Africa will be able to give a positive response to a large share of this potential demand as it has done so far? In other words, are these rates of expansion appropriate, considering the conditions of education observed today? Are they realistic as to the economy considering the low job opportunities available in the productive sectors²¹ on the one hand and national development priorities on the other hand? Finally, are they financially sustainable and possible in real terms, considering the number of places to be created and of teaching staff to be recruited and trained, even if the financial resources were to be available? Such are the questions that this chapter tries to answer, by providing factual information based on the latest available data.

²⁰ On average, 80% of pupils completing primary education accessed lower secondary education in 2005 compared to hardly 60% in 1990.

²¹ See chapter 7.

1. The case of general secondary education

High rates of expansion in general secondary education, whatever the scenario²²

On the basis of the projections for primary completion rates in 2015 made in chapter 2 and supposing that the primary-secondary transition rate, as well as dropping out and repetition in lower secondary education, are maintained at their 2005 value, enrolments in this level, for the whole of the 26²³ countries taken into account, would rise from 8 million in 2005 to 13.9 million by 2015. **Even in the hypothesis of not achieving UPE in 2015, 11 of the 26 countries for which this simulation has been made, will have to multiply their secondary capacity by at least two before then, in order to enrol their pupils in the same conditions as in 2005.** Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad will have to multiply their schooling supply by three. Knowing that on average the schooling conditions in terms of available places and pupil-teacher ratio are not currently very satisfactory, this result constitutes an important element to be taken into account when giving consideration to the possibilities of expansion in secondary education. On the basis of a progressive increase in transition between the two cycles with an objective of 100% by 2015, and maintaining survival rate and the proportion of repeaters at their 2005 value, enrolments in lower secondary would rise to 20.4 million, and to 22.4 million in the case of an improvement in survival and a reduction in repetition.

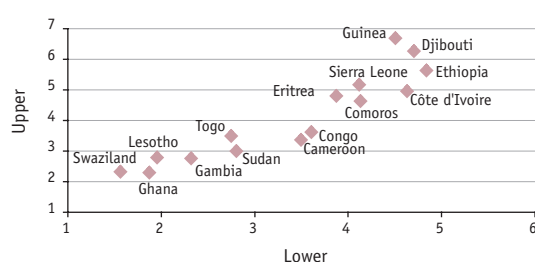
Supposing that UPE would be achieved by 2015, that transition rates between primary and secondary, and survival rates and the proportion of repeaters all maintained at 2005 values, then **the number of enrolments in lower secondary for the whole of the 29 countries would rise from 9.1 million in 2005 to 25 million in 2015, i.e. multiplied by 2.8.** If transition between primary and lower secondary education was then progressively increased in order to reach 100% by 2015, and survival rate and the proportion of repeaters were maintained at constant values, the number of enrolments in lower secondary would be 35.5 million, which would imply, on average, a four-fold increase of current supply. Finally, the number of enrolments in this level of education is estimated at 52.6 million supposing that universal education of nine or ten years is achieved by 2020. Thus, **universal schooling of nine or ten years, on the 2020 horizon, would involve multiplying the supply of lower secondary education by 6 on average by then in the 29 countries.** On the one hand, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad and Niger should enrol ten times more pupils on average in 2020 than in 2005, in order to ensure universal secondary education for their populations (graph 6.B). On the other hand, less effort will be needed for countries like Swaziland, Ghana, Gambia, Lesotho and Togo but even so they would have to multiply the number of places supplied by two or three (graph 6.A).



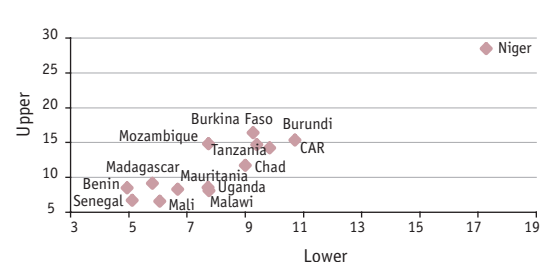
²² In the group of countries with a completion rate lower than 75% in 2005.

²³ The analysis was conducted for countries with a primary completion rate lower than 75%, for which complete data (2005 or closest years) was available for primary and the two levels of general secondary education, i.e. a total of 29 sub-Saharan African countries. Cameroon and Madagascar were not included (which, according to the projections in chapter 2, will reach UPE by 2015) as well as Sierra Leone, due to significant fluctuation observed in primary access and survival over recent years.

Graph 6.A: Multiplication factor of under 5 for enrolments in secondary education - hypothesis of achieving universal education of nine or ten years



Graph 6.B: Multiplication factor of over 5 for enrolments in secondary education - hypothesis of achieving universal education of nine or ten years



Sources: Authors' calculations based on sector analysis and UIS data

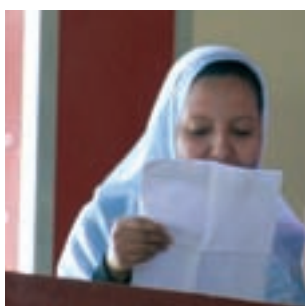
Such rates of expansion will have high financial consequences

Further studies on the financial implications of the scenarios based on different hypotheses as to the evolution of the macroeconomic aggregates and the principal elements of educational policy show that the financial consequences for each country are far beyond what is sustainable with public financing, whatever the configuration envisaged for the development of secondary education.

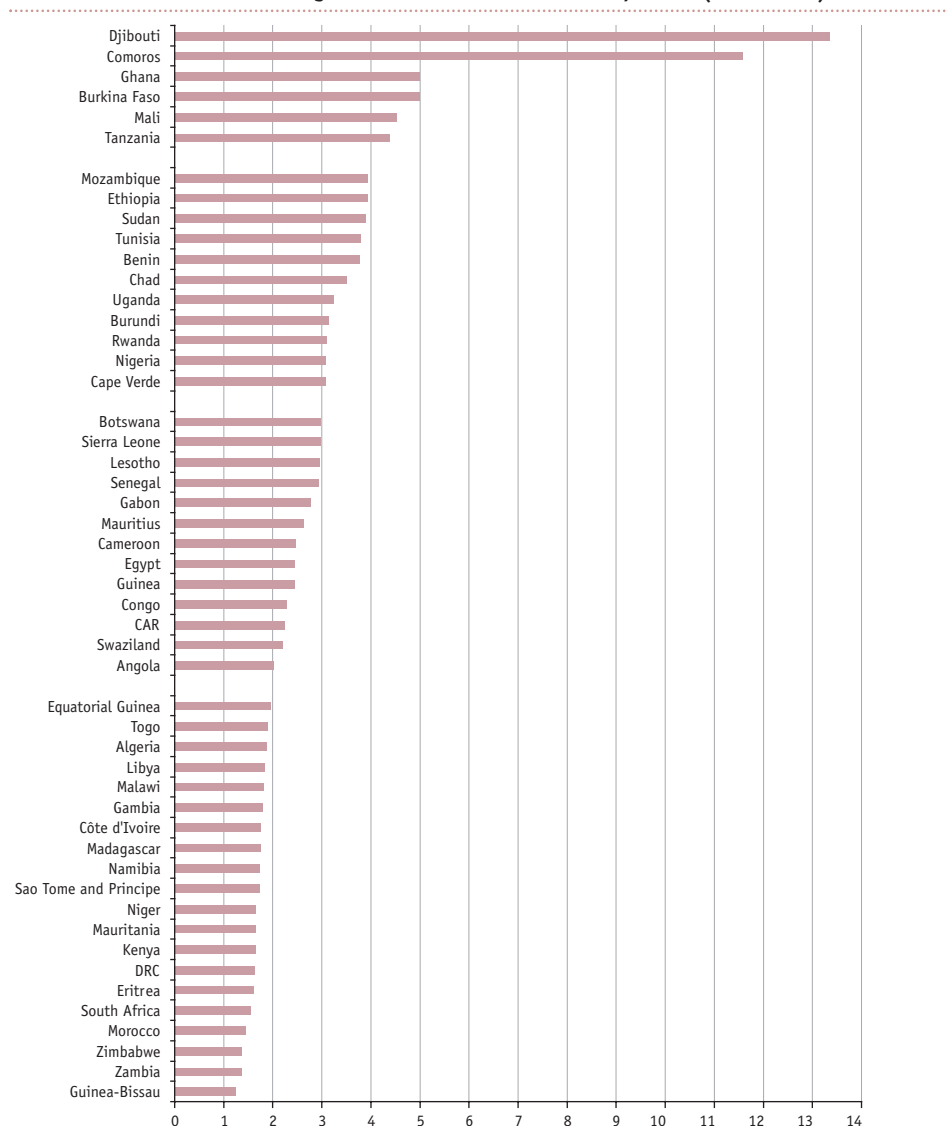
2. The case of tertiary education

There is growing demand for tertiary education in Africa and this trend could continue

On the continent as a whole, the number of students in tertiary education increased from 5.6 million in 2000 to 8 million in 2004, showing a higher average annual increase than between 1990 and 2000. Thus, there is clearly a significant rise in demand for tertiary education, which was addressed so far by the present structures "absorbing" each year a growing number of students. Supposing that the expansion of tertiary education continues at the pace observed between 2000 and 2004, the number of students will more than double between 2004 and 2015. In other words, in these conditions, around 20 million students could be in tertiary education in Africa in 2015, including 9.4 million in the poorest countries of the region. The average situation following on from this projection is however very different from one country to another (graph 6.C).



Graph 6.C: Multiplication factor of increase in enrolments in tertiary education in Africa between 2004 and 2015, taking into account current rates of expansion (simulations)



Sources: Calculations based on sector analysis, UIS and World Bank data

For 13 of the 50 countries, the need is estimated at between 2 and 3 times the number of places available today and for 17 countries, the potential demand for tertiary education should be even higher if current trends were to continue: the number of students in 2015 could be 3 times higher than today. For these countries, should current paces of growth be maintained, this would lead to an absolute «explosion» of the social demand for tertiary education.

Current rates of expansion will not be financially sustainable in many countries ...

In order to provide a rapid evaluation of the financial viability of the perspectives of expansion in tertiary education in Africa, simulations have been made for 30 African countries for which necessary data was available, making hypotheses on the national public resources liable to be mobilized in favour of tertiary education and on total costs (current and investment) necessary for the expansion of the systems. In addition, it has been supposed that education structures would positively address the potential demand estimated earlier. These simulations show that **maintaining the current pace of expansion will represent a huge challenge for most countries**. The average annual financing need for the 30 countries overall varies between 515 and 583 million US dollars per year between 2005 and 2015, according to the modalities of financing. This shows that on the scale of 30 countries, as a whole, **the alternative hypotheses concerning the mobilization of public resources for tertiary education have a limited influence on the financial gap**.

The extent of the financing need encourages thinking on other financing alternatives and/or giving consideration to other models of expansion. The financial leeway will however be tight in many countries. Tertiary education is indeed in competition with the other levels of education in public resources appropriation and, for certain levels, the needs generated by the necessary progress towards UPE will lead to curbing, and even to reducing, the relative priority for tertiary education in countries where this is relatively high. This suggests that **the different countries should pursue very ambitious policies in order to prevent deterioration in study conditions and in the quality of service in tertiary education**, such as controlling enrolments by quantitative flow management on entering and within tertiary education, controlling production costs of services while maintaining or even improving the quality of services provided, developing the private sector, transferring part of the costs to the students or setting up incentive measures authorizing public institutions to develop income-generating activities.

...and raise concerns as to the physical capacity of the countries to address this demand

Apart from the budget needs required in order to run the structures, **the significant increase in enrolments will also require a very high number of qualified teachers to be trained and considerable investments**. With regard to the needs in teaching staff, it is estimated that, on the basis of a constant average student-teacher ratio of 1 teacher for 23 students²⁴, needs in teachers should rise from around 56 000 to 142 000 between 2004 and 2015 for the 30 countries as a whole. In other words, **between 2004 and 2015, it will be necessary to train twice as many teachers as between 1990 and 2004**. This «physical» constraint is still underestimated if one considers that student-teacher ratios are already, in many countries, unfavourable to quality teaching and if one aims at higher-ranking teaching staff being represented in the universities. In addition, expansion of the systems will require considerable investment with a view to increasing intake capacity in the existing educational establishments (lecture rooms, libraries, laboratories, workshops, lecture halls ...) or to decentralize them (build and equip new educational and administrative structures).

24 Average value for a sample of 23 African countries in 2003 (cf. Brossard M., Foko B., 2007, *Coût et financement de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique francophone*, World Bank, Africa Region Human Development Series, Washington DC).

In conclusion, this chapter shows that the high increase in potential demand for post-primary education is the source of tremendous physical and financial challenges to be faced by many countries in the region, especially the poorest countries where significant progress is expected towards UPE. These challenges are all the more extensive as growth in post-primary enrolments should not take place at the expense of conditions of study, as it has often been the case to present. Faced with the different constraints, several levers are available for building sustainable and socially realistic post-primary education systems. The main ones are the control of pupil/student flow and considering alternative modes of providing educational services.



C H A P T E R 7

DAKAR +7
E D U C A T I O N F O R A L L I N A F R I C A

Social and economic sustainability in the development of post-primary education

The question of the social and economic sustainability of post-primary education is closely linked to the individual and social returns to this type of education. Recognition of primary education, as a basic right and of the high social benefits (the economists' *positive externalities*) it generates, guarantees the convergence of individual interests and the interests of society in pursuing UPE. At post-primary level, this convergence is not necessarily evident : the social externalities associated with a higher level of education are largely marginal compared to those already associated with primary education ; as for the economic benefits, they depend crucially upon the integration of school leavers in the job market and therefore upon the adjustment, in quantity and in quality, of the number of those qualifying from the different levels and fields of study to the needs of the economy. Such an adjustment is difficult to achieve: projections in this area are somewhat unreliable and individual behaviour patterns do not systematically guarantee reaching community goals.

1. Characteristics of educational investment, its consequences on demand and financing of education

Economic theories on education continue to provide a useful conceptual framework for discussion regarding the evolution of public education policies today, especially in developing countries where the weight of financial constraints must lead to the greatest possible vigilance as to the management of public activities. Far removed from the traditional conception of an “education market” naturally balancing out after a period of crisis, these theories announce the possibility of lasting imbalance and the development of diploma inflation dynamics, the reality and scale of which are uncontested today in many countries. These theories announce the fact that rationality in individual behaviour can go up against the satisfaction of community goals:

- i) for the same expected benefits, returns to education can vary significantly since individuals are faced with different costs: financing capacities for the direct costs of education are not equal between rich and poor, opportunity costs differ between urban and rural, between boys and girls, etc. For obvious equity reasons, and also to be effective, society may not make do with these situations and decide to adjust its aid accordingly, in order to partially compensate for a part of the costs at the charge of individuals belonging to the different groups for whom investment in education is less profitable ;
- ii) return to education is a relative measure depending upon both earnings perspectives and also earnings to be foregone during the time of study. In this frame, a deteriorating job situation does not automatically bring about a drop in demand for education, and thus a rapid return to a good balance. If this deterioration affects the least qualified, as it is often the case, individual returns to educational investment can even increase and so fuel further studies and an inflation of diplomas that is of little benefit to society ;
- iii) when society covers part of the cost of education (free education, grants, etc.), this also affects returns and therefore behaviour. The strategy of some students who look for ways to stay in university as long as possible, by totally and judiciously taking advantage of the rules on authorized repetition, highlights the caricature of the possible gulf between individual rationality and the interests of society as a whole ;
- iv) finally, the embodiment of human capital obviously constitutes another element to be taken into account for the public financing of educational investment. One of its consequences is mobility, which is expressed when there are better opportunities outside the national market. The «brain drain» is the most visible illustration of this.

These different examples show that regulation of the imbalance on the «education market» does not happen automatically and that it may require an adjustment of public funding.



2. What are the specific social effects of post-primary education?

The social effects of education can concern a variety of dimensions such as health, mortality, civic life, political choices, behaviour in terms of birth control, etc. It is not easy to measure some of these areas of impact but it is nevertheless possible to explore the different aspects for which data is available, in order to have an idea of the specific contribution of each level of education socially.

Data relating to sustainable literacy and maternal attitudes in terms of health and birth control²⁵ have already been presented in the report published by BREDA in 2005. They clearly showed that these effects grew with the level of education, but, above all, that many of the effects were present when the mothers had benefited from a full course of primary education. The example of Mali illustrates these results. In order to highlight the contribution of each level of education to each social attitude or result analysed, we have made a breakdown (as a percentage) of the difference between the probability of occurrence of an attitude for the most educated (those who have attended tertiary education) and for the least educated (those who have received no education).

Table 7.A: Consolidated measure of the social impact for adults of the different levels of education on a variety of social dimensions in Mali

Area of impact	Gap between no instruction and complete primary education	Gap between complete primary and complete lower secondary	Gap between complete lower secondary and complete upper secondary	Gap between complete upper secondary and tertiary education	Total
Literacy	46	49	5	0	100
Risk of relative poverty	38	32	22	8	100
Access of children to school	53	21	16	10	100
Population	28	21	24	27	100
Age of first birth	16	20	28	36	100
Spacing out births	40	20	20	20	100
Use of method of contraception	41	23	21	15	100
Total number of births	16	20	28	36	100
Maternal health	52	20	16	12	100
Antenatal check-ups	66	18	10	6	100
Vaccination before delivery	50	21	17	12	100
Assisted birth-modern personnel	40	23	20	17	100
Child health and mortality	52	18	16	14	100
Complete vaccinations	35	20	22	23	100
Vitamin A intake	94	6	0	0	100
Under-5 mortality	26	27	27	20	100
Overall score	43	23	18	16	100

²⁵ Based on data from Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger and Chad.

Source: Authors' calculations based on DHS survey 2001

If we consider all the social dimensions tackled here and give them identical importance, it is seen, roughly, that primary and lower secondary education are the levels of education generating the most obvious social impacts. All in all, a little over 50% of the social effects of education are already obtained with the six years of primary education. This figure is higher for health variables (over 60%) and a little less for the impact on population variables (slightly under 40%).

3. Access to employment for education system leavers in Africa

The needs of the economy in skilled labour depend upon the structure of the economy, and particularly the relative importance of the rural, informal and modern sectors and of how dynamic each of these sectors is. It is therefore essential to take into account the national employment context in defining educational policies. Data is lacking for precise analysis of the employment situation in African countries. A relatively patchy set of still incomplete information can be processed which does, however, suggest that there is already a deep rift, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, between the number of leavers from the highest levels of education and the absorption capacity of the economies. Results from surveys carried out by AFRISTAT and DIAL in the capital cities of seven West African countries do, however, provide precious information on these aspects.

The rate of unemployment is a very imprecise indicator of the imbalance on the labour markets in Africa. The notion of underemployment is more relevant in this perspective. Table 7.B gives the principal underemployment indicators in relation to the situation observed in the seven capital cities. If the different components of underemployment (unemployment, visible underemployment, invisible underemployment) are aggregated to obtain a synthetic underemployment indicator, a global underemployment rate of 67.1% is obtained, i.e. around 2.7 million people out of more than 4 million making up the working population. These indicators therefore suggest considerable employment difficulties on the continent, which, as shown by other data, are in no way explained by overly high salary requirements on the part of young job applicants.

Table 7.B: Measure of the different components of underemployment in the West African capitals

	Cotonou	Ouagadougou	Abidjan	Bamako	Niamey	Dakar	Lomé	Overall
ILO rate of unemployment	5.5	15.4	13.5	7.1	13.1	11.7	8.2	11.4
Rate of unemployment in the wider sense	6.8	22.4	15.8	12.5	23.3	18.9	11.2	15.9
Visible underemployment % of weekly work under 35h	13.4	10.6	12.6	17.1	16.0	16.2	17.1	14.3
Invisible underemployment % of employed working population with an hourly wage below the minimum legal salary	61.1	66.5	53.2	45.4	51.1	57.8	55.8	55.2
Invisible underemployment % of employed working population with a monthly salary below the guaranteed minimum wage	54.9	61.3	49.9	43.9	45.3	53.6	49.0	51.1
Minimum monthly income in CFA francs	25 000	27 080	36 000	22 000	22 000	39 000	13 800	

Sources: PARSTAT project 1-2-3 surveys, 2001-2003, DIAL, AFRISTAT, European Union, National Institutes of Statistics, DIAL calculations

Paradoxically, the integration difficulties affecting young people in Africa concern more particularly those with the most qualifications. In addition, participation by the most educated young workers in the modern sector is not systematically associated with filling a skilled job. The AFRISTAT and DIAL surveys show that the share of educated young workers filling a non-skilled job varies from a minimum of 17.6% (Bamako) to a maximum of 61.3% (Kinshasa), and is over 25% (i.e. the quarter of the most educated in the modern sector) in 7 out of 11 cities. The situation for those graduating from tertiary education is rather better on average from this point of view than for those qualifying from general and technical secondary education even if, almost systematically, around 10% of graduates fill a non-skilled job. With only a few exceptions (Bamako and Niamey), holding a technical certificate rather than a general secondary certificate does not guarantee more frequent access to skilled jobs in the modern sector.

It is possible to have another idea of this downgrade by building a measure of the appropriateness of the job filled to the level of education reached. For example, in Congo, in 2005, 80% of the 25 to 34 age group working population, who had been through tertiary education, were over-qualified compared to the job filled. Comparison of the stocks of jobs and the education system leavers per level of education illustrates this imbalance. In four capital cities out of six, the number of primo job seekers qualifying from tertiary education is the equivalent of at least a quarter of the stock of executive jobs.

4. The contribution of the different levels of education to economic growth

To decide upon possible intra-sector trade-offs, it is therefore appropriate to analyse the marginal contribution of each level of education to growth and development. To do so, comparative international data must be assembled, in order to measure over a sufficiently long period of time the contribution of education, and of each level of education, to the countries' economic development. In this perspective, Foko and Brossard (2007)²⁶ have studied a sample of about one hundred countries at varying stages of development, observed between 1970 and 2003. In this study, the average level of education of the population, at the beginning of the period, and schooling coverage, at the different levels of education, was positively correlated to subsequent macroeconomic performance for all countries observed. For example, when other characteristics were comparable (especially the rate of investment in infrastructure and productive sectors), the countries where the working population had one year more schooling than average in 1970 obtained an extra 0.2 points of real GDP growth per capita in the thirty ensuing years (i.e. income of 6 to 7% higher per inhabitant in 2003).

When examining the specific contribution of the different levels of education to economic growth, it is noticed that this is statistically significant for primary and secondary education. The contribution of tertiary education is positive but not significant, which suggests that a "premature" development of tertiary education is not necessarily an advantage for economic growth. It therefore appears useful to take into account the context in which highly skilled labour is used (productive job opportunities, size of the structured sector, productive structure of the country, etc.).

²⁶ Foko B., Brossard M., 2007, «Couverture scolaire des années 1970 et impact sur la croissance économique entre 1970 et 2003», UNESCO-BREDA, *Pôle de Dakar education sector analysis working document*.

Are these average results valid in all countries as suggested by the growth models, known as innovation-imitation, that are based on the principle of education having a differentiated effect on economic growth, through innovation-research in rich countries (justifying investment in the high levels of education) and through poor countries catching up

technologically (investment in primary and secondary education) ? Table 7.C provides a synthesis of the extent of the effects of human capital in the 1970's on subsequent economic growth, according to the income level at the beginning of the period. These results clearly confirm the existence of priority educational investments, according to the levels of development.

Table 7.C: Qualitative appreciation of the impact of the initial level of education on economic growth between 1970 and 2003

Level of education in 1970	Level of income in 1970			Countries overall
	Low income	Middle income	High income	
Primary	+++	0	0	+++
Secondary	0	+++	0	+++
Tertiary	0	0	+++	+
Average education system coverage (School life expectancy)	++++	+++	++	++

Source : Foko and Brossard (2007)

A « + » sign indicates the existence of a positive marginal contribution to economic growth. Their number indicates the intensity of same.
A « 0 » indicates a positive marginal contribution that is not significant.

The relative inappropriateness of post-primary education in terms of content, quality and flow is to be compared with these results concerning the impact of investment in the different levels of education, in terms of growth. Very clearly, growth in low-income countries depends, firstly, upon the efforts put in towards primary education, and then to lower secondary, but it does not benefit directly from those put in to other levels of education. For these countries, which are among the poorest, it is urgent to reform post-primary education, which is ill-adapted in content, and sometimes of questionable quality, and does not enable the vast majority of young leavers to be rapidly integrated; this question goes far beyond the issue of the intake of future primary school leavers.



CHAPTER 8

DAKAR +7
E D U C A T I O N F O R A L L I N A F R I C A

New benchmarks for action: top priority for integrated sector-wide policies

The updated and documented panorama of the situation of African education systems, set out over the seven previous chapters, brings to light true success stories but also new challenges to be taken up by governments and the international community in the coming years.

Strengthening the progress made towards UPE is undoubtedly the first challenge to be taken up. This concerns maintaining the goal itself for many countries and making the necessary improvement to the quality of learning, and also the need for the international community to fulfil and increase its financial commitments. **The second challenge concerns the necessary reform of post-primary education.** This reform is justified, above all, by the low relevance of these levels of education at the present time and by the incapacity of most governments to finance future expansion at current pace and costs, more than by the pressure of growth in primary enrolments. **Managing flow regulation and financing, within policies defined for the overall education sector, constitutes the third challenge.** The reform on financing must coincide with the promotion of equity: firstly, in the name of social justice, since it is important for such a reform not to exclude the poorest individuals from going on to longer courses of education when they have the necessary capacities to do so; secondly, in the name of effectiveness, since a reform in education financing that does not take equity into account is doomed to failure.

For all these aspects, it is obviously difficult to propose a unique framework for action for every country. This chapter intends,

nevertheless, to suggest different alternatives and to outline what is involved in terms of strategy and of defining and piloting the reforms.

Setting up genuine sector-wide policies, and probably multi-sector policies, as far as vocational and technical education and training or tertiary education are concerned, **will require new instruments and probably new frameworks for action. These will be dealt with in the conclusion to this chapter.**

1. Maintaining the priorities not already met

For many countries, the confirmation and reinforcement of UPE quantitative goals are still a priority. The 15 countries that look like reaching the 2015 deadline must stay on course and absorb remaining survival difficulties. The 28 countries currently off-track for attaining the Dakar goal in terms of UPE, are encountering diverse levels of intake and survival problems. It therefore seems necessary to have recourse to sound recurrent sector diagnosis upstream, aimed at characterising the obstacles encountered in terms of admission and survival, before defining or revising sector policy. Chapter 2 of this report has also shown that a change in dynamics in terms of a higher level of primary completion has taken place in many countries since 2000, even when this still remains very low. In this case, it is essential to pursue the efforts already put in, with a view to ensuring regular expansion of the systems, before targeting more ambitious goals.

A vast majority of countries for which SACMEQ data is available, and of those having participated in the PASEC assessments, are far from a desirable minimum of school learning achievements after five to six years of schooling; this includes countries close to universal education. **The issue of the quality of learning must therefore be the focus of future efforts in terms of Education for All. This issue has to be addressed through two components, i.e. international assessments and management of quality within the education systems.** The need for surveys enabling comparison between countries is no longer questioned. One of the priorities, in terms of monitoring the quality of learning, should consist in setting up a survey of this type at continental level, with comparison points based on international surveys. The development of national assessment systems should also be encouraged. The most cost-effective solution would be to use the information produced by national exams, ensuring, however, that the results obtained be used in the daily running of the education system.

Finally, it is necessary to remobilize donor agencies towards achieving quality UPE. Although there was considerable mobilization by the international community for UPE after the Dakar Forum, promises are far from being kept and there has even been a noticeable slowdown recently. It is necessary to remobilize technical and financial partners, including the Fast Track Initiative, which is, in itself, the symbol of the new forms of aid.

2. Developing genuine sector-wide policies incorporating in-depth reform of post-primary education

Post-primary education must be reformed in line with national contexts. This implies proposing genuine **global** education system **policies**, which will enable achievement of quality UPE and the development of a wide vocational training sector addressing the need for integrating young people into the labour market, and, above all, which will give a new meaning to (general) secondary and tertiary education, sometimes very far from international standards.

Progressively setting up basic education that will link together primary education and lower secondary education is a key strategic option. This strategy goes further than simply lengthening the duration of primary education and implies the effective extension of learning and an in-depth redefinition of curricula to ensure relevant basic education based on everyday life skills and essential generic competencies, not occupation-specific, and focusing less on knowledge than on transversal skills and attitudes.

The report highlighted the urgent need to reform the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector. This reform must reconcile long-term objectives with a short-term strategy on training mechanisms. In the short term, it is important to devise a strategy for improvement or implementation of alternative, attractive and relevant mechanisms, which will positively participate in the integration of primary school leavers and effectively tackle exclusion. In the longer term, with a view to basic education that will include lower secondary education, it is at the outcome of this cycle that mechanisms should be set up to facilitate direct integration into the employment market, without however excluding the possibility of continuing studies in more specific TVET structures. **The integration of young people must be a central axis of the relevance of TVET mechanisms.** This objective involves better steering of TVET and striving for training-job adequacy, based on teachings adapted to the changing socioeconomic context. Several countries are judiciously injecting new energy into their strategy on effective structures, in terms of integration such as alternate school/business mechanisms. There are many initiatives, in this respect, on the different markets illustrating the **relevance of a multi-sectoral approach for TVET** at this level. The necessary interaction between TVET and the labour market makes it important to work on structuring the professional branches that are flourishing in terms of job prospects. These initiatives go beyond the education sector framework itself and give meaning to the need for developing multiple partnerships between all the stakeholders.

General secondary education and tertiary education must undergo very ambitious reform. Upper secondary education should be intended to prepare pupils for tertiary education of international quality. **Financing and job opportunity constraints oblige these two levels of education to put the accent on quality rather than on quantity.** This implies fundamentally reviewing the present configuration of upper secondary education, directing it towards more scientific and technological fields of study, and defining socially acceptable principles of selection. In tertiary education, the success of the revitalization proposed by the African Union's new decade for education (2006-2015) will depend upon the definition of better criteria for student selection and guidance and considerable improvement to the quality of services provided. The internationalization of tertiary education also strengthens the need for harmonization and modernization of pedagogical practices (synchronization of the systems and standards used, common nomenclature of diplomas ...). Quality assurance devices have priority on this subject and

can facilitate settlement of the issues related to accreditation, harmonization of academic titles, and mobility. Finally, in a context where resources are scarce, the development of quality tertiary education will only be possible with more favourable trade-offs to pedagogical and research expenditure in the national budgets. In many countries, social aid takes up too large a share of the budgets. Better management and targeting of social aid, according to criteria to be defined and efforts for involving the private sector in the provision of quality social services to students are all urgent considerations to be adapted to the situation of each country.

3. Flow regulation, financing of education and equity

The financial projections set out in chapter 6 are convincing enough, as to the fact that many African countries will not be in a position to finance the expansion of secondary and tertiary education at current pace and costs. While it is important, as suggested by the report of the 3rd SEIA (Secondary Education in Africa) Conference held recently, to reduce the costs of post-primary education in order to make its expansion financially sustainable, there are many arguments for justifying additional expenditure made necessary by the indispensable reference to international standards, particularly in tertiary education, and in some branches of upper secondary education. **It will be inevitable, in many cases, to control expansion in enrolments, even to decrease the number of enrolments in some fields of study well known to lead to limited job opportunities.**

This flow regulation can operate directly through the setting up of different restrictions on access (competitive examinations, guidance commission ...), which ensure, at the same time, the regulation of the fields of study and the academic levels of those admitted. It could be more effective if it were to question the principle of free studies, in order to contribute both to mobilizing new resources and better reconcile individual educational choices and the interests of society, while providing the government with an orientation and incentive device that it is lacking. These policies are certainly difficult to implement and must be part of a dialogue approach to be fuelled with sound arguments and a gradual agenda. They should only concern upper secondary education and tertiary education, for which the imbalance between qualifications and jobs are often the most manifest and where more resources should be concentrated on a smaller number of beneficiaries for better quality education. It is imperative to include actions aimed at promoting equity in financing a reform such as this. While equity must preside over the orientations of the education system, it is clear that it is not free education that will make it possible to achieve this goal, as today this leads to an inverse redistribution benefiting those who get the most out of the education system, and coming mainly from the most privileged socio-economic backgrounds. It is therefore appropriate to turn the traditional set of arguments completely around, in order to make equity one of the objectives in giving up free post-primary education. Just like positive discrimination policies, the search for equity implies supporting the poorest and, for the most able, considerable support to enable longer education. This type of policy requires additional resources, which could be obtained by abandoning the notion of free education for longer studies; besides, this is justified by the private nature of investment in this type of education, which is largely funded by society today.

4. Adopting instruments for managing and directing training supply and appropriate frameworks for dialogue and action

Defining and setting up genuine sector-wide policies supposes an extension, if not a redefinition, of diagnosis and assessment tools of how the education system and the labour market operate. This requires the simultaneous change and reinforcement of the structures, where the sector dialogue takes place at national and regional levels, and also of the frameworks for action where the government-donor dialogue develops and external financial support to the education system is concretized.

It is advisable to extend the field of sector analysis to the overall educational system, and particularly to give more detailed coverage to tertiary education and the different forms of technical and vocational education and training. The extension of sector diagnosis must also concern the simulation tools enabling financing trade-offs, both global (financing needs for the sector compared to mobilizable national and external resources) and inter-sectoral. Defining effective policies in terms of post-primary education is also based on the regular monitoring of external effectiveness, and particularly the integration of school leavers. This involves giving greater attention to the employment situation, in such a way as to guide pupil/student flow to the different levels of education.

The sector policies to be undertaken imply new levels of trade-offs and strong political will to be necessarily supported by a renewed social dialogue. The changes that have occurred since the Dakar Forum, in the different countries and at international cooperation level, certainly constitute a significant advantage in this context; however, they will not be less insufficient would the practices they have fostered stay in their present configuration. The aim of this dialogue is, first and foremost, to rapidly set the basis for a global sector policy, together with a realistic agenda. Cutting corners could lead to brutal rejection of the reforms; disconnecting them too excessively from each other could, just as well, lead to jeopardizing achievement of the set goals. In the present context, under the pressure of the growth in enrolments in primary education, it could be very tempting to limit these reforms to setting up basic education, which would necessarily give rise to a consensus, and put off until later the more difficult structural reforms concerning the other levels of education. While basic education must indeed be considered as an important goal for transition towards a new stage of growth, especially for countries having consolidated UPE, this goal can only take on its full meaning through a reorganization of the different levels of education.

Generally speaking, the quality of the dialogue and reforms is very much dependent on putting together sound elements to support the changes envisaged. The urgent need for factual elements undoubtedly comes up against the changing modus operandi of technical and financial partners (TFPs) and more particularly the transition to programme aid, which provides for fewer analytical resources (technical personnel, financing of studies, etc.). There is, at the time when the need is felt the most, a technical deficit and a lack of human resources on the side of the governments and their partners, as to the capacities for global understanding of the challenges of harmonizing the different levels of education and of defining the activities to be actually set up. Technical reinforcement of the TFP groups could therefore constitute a major challenge in this new context.

As part of this evolution and in view of the new objectives, the EFA promotion, coordination and monitoring mechanisms must necessarily change. In some countries, the national EFA coordination has been the mainspring of the new processes (programme

approach, sector analysis, sector plans) that govern the implementation of genuine education policies. In many others, due to the fact that it was not the centrepiece of government structures for elaborating and monitoring educational policy, it has become out of phase and disconnected from the mechanisms that are actually operational. So, the countries have let structures build up and it is undoubtedly time to reconsider the relevance of some of these.

Sub-regional mechanisms have hardly operated, whether the sub-regional EFA Forums or the devices specific to the sub-regional economic communities. There are many reasons for the lack of success, ranging from the poor quality of the sub-regional integration processes to the absence of an appropriate institutional base, and to the lack of resources. However, one of the major reasons is probably the difficulty of connecting sub-regional programmes and national programmes.

At regional level, the African Union is experiencing evident difficulties for implementing and monitoring the Decade of Education for Africa. The device supported by the regional economic communities has not worked. It is unquestionably legitimate for the African Union to have goals in terms of education, but it does not seem to have found either the way to place the necessary political influence on the countries or to have been in a situation technically to organize consultation on educational policies and strategies, sharing of information and successful experience, cross-national studies and data collection.

Finally, **the activity of the Regional EFA Forum**, which has convened three times over the period 2001-2007, has been positive, in terms of monitoring progress and of advocacy. The Regional Forum seems nevertheless to have lost sight of one dimension, which is the definition of a programme of activities and support to national efforts for EFA, as adopted in the form of a regional agenda for monitoring EFA in the first Regional Forum. This must be a permanent element for the future of the Regional Forum. The agenda must be defined from the needs expressed at country level in terms of coordination and must link national, sub-regional and regional EFA monitoring mechanisms closely together.





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