Formulating Educational Policy in sub-Saharan Africa

Proceedings of the DAE Biennial Meetings (Tours, 18-22 October 1995)
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Association for the Development of African Education
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INTRODUCTION

1. The Association for the Development of African Education (DAE) held its 1995 Biennial Plenary Meetings at Tours (France) from 18 to 22 October 1995. The meeting was chaired by the Chairperson of the DAE, Mr. Ingemar Gustafson (Swedish International Development Authority).

2. The meeting was attended by 92 ministers and senior government officials representing 45 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, by 103 participants from 43 bilateral or multilateral development agencies, foundations and other bodies. The list of participants is reproduced in Annex 1.

3. The following countries were represented at the meeting: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comores, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tomé-et-Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

4. The following agencies and organizations were represented at the meetings:

   (a) bilateral agencies: Department of Development Cooperation, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austria; Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); Danish International Development Authority (DANIDA); Department of International Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland; Ministère de la Coopération, France; Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Germany; Higher Education for Development Cooperation (HEDCO), Ireland; Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands; Centre for the Study of Education in Developing Countries (CESO), Netherlands; Ministry of Development Cooperation (NORAD), Norway; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway; Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA); Direction de la coopération au développement, Switzerland; Overseas Development Administration (ODA), United Kingdom; United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

   (b) multilateral agencies: African Development Bank (ABD); Club du Sahel, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); Commonwealth Secretariat; European Union (EC); International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP); International Labour Office (ILO); United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); World Bank, International Development Association (IDA).

   (c) foundations and other bodies: Aga Khan Foundation; Association of African Universities (AAU); Bernard Van Leer Foundation; Conférence des ministres
de l’Éducation des pays ayant en commun l’usage du français (CONFEMEN); Council for Education in the Commonwealth; Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA); D.S.E. (Germany); Fondation Paul Gérin-Lajoie; Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); International Development Research Centre (IDRC); Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW); Rockefeller Foundation; SEDEP–Université de Liège, Belgium.

5. Proceedings of the meeting are presented in three parts:

   (a) Substantive sessions, the general theme of which was ‘Formulating Education Sector Policy in sub-Saharan Africa’.

   (b) The meetings of the Caucus of African Ministers of Education. The Caucus of African Ministers held three closed sessions at Tours. Conclusions of these meetings were communicated during the last plenary session.

   (c) A business session on the DAE and its work program, which also served as the closing session.

6. The agenda of the meeting and the program of work are reproduced in Annex 2.

7. A number of fringe meetings took place during the course of the meeting. The following DAE Working Groups met to discuss the progress of their work and their future work programs: Books and Learning Materials, Education Sector Analysis, Education Statistics, Educational Research and Policy Analysis, Finance and Education, Higher Education, Teaching Profession. Two special interest groups, Early Childhood Development and Literacy and Non Formal Education, met to consider becoming full-fledged working groups within the DAE.
PART ONE: SUBSTANTIVE SESSIONS

Organization of the substantive sessions

8. The overall theme and the program of the meeting were presented during the opening session. Two keynote speakers then set the overall tone of the meeting. The session was followed by four panels focusing on the following subjects:

- Panel N° 1: 'The knowledge base for policy formulation—information needs'.
- Panel N° 3: 'Policy formulation in the real world—strategic planning, compromise, trade-offs and consultation'.
- Panel N° 4: 'African experience—policy implementation and the way forward'.

9. Substantive discussions also took place in small discussion groups. A summary of these discussions and conclusions was presented in plenary during panel N° 4.

Opening session

10. The meeting was opened by Mr. Ingemar Gustafsson (Swedish International Development Authority), in his capacity as Chairperson of the DAE for the coming two years. He welcomed all the participants and extended a special welcome to Mr. Sibusiso Bengu, Minister of Education of the democratic South Africa which was represented for the first time in this meeting. He recalled that the DAE was already in its eighth year of existence and stressed its particular feature as a place where all those concerned by educational issues in Africa can meet in an informal and open atmosphere and discuss their common interests, as professionals and as committed individuals. Since the last meeting in Angers two years ago, during which a spirit of partnership was strongly felt, the DAE has been reviewed by an independent team. The concept of partnership is now reflected in the new Statutes adopted by the Steering Committee in March 1995 and embodied in the new name ‘Association for the Development of African Education’ replacing ‘Donors to African Education’.

11. Since its creation, the DAE has carried out considerable analysis and reflection on African education. Achievements include work on examinations, textbooks and universities and reviews of some 230 sectoral studies on African education. The picture which is emerging today is that not everything in African education is crisis and problems. Creative responses have emerged, to the point that the 1995 programme was expanded to include papers describing Successful African experiences. The time has come to look for solutions and the DAE can be instrumental in helping to define new and creative approaches. Mr. Gustafsson mentioned the creation of the Forum...
of African Women Educationalists (FAWE) as an example of the role the DAE can play as catalyst and facilitator.

12. It is generally agreed that education reform work is essentially a political and social process and that educational change should be looked at in a broad social and economic perspective. The choice of the theme ‘Formulating Education Sector Policy in sub-Saharan Africa’ for the Tours meeting was a further step towards such a broad approach. It should lead to a joint framework of action, to a better understanding of the complexities of policy formulation, to a clear definition of the role of the DAE and of the agencies in development capacity at the country level and to finding new modalities of cooperation between countries and between countries and agencies.

13. Ms. Aïcha Diallo Bah, Minister of Pre-university Education and Vocational Training from Guinea, speaking in her capacity as Alternate Chairperson of the DAE, emphasized the changes which have taken place in the DAE since the last meeting two years ago: 36 ministers attended the Tours meeting versus 29 at Angers, two years before. The ‘Donors for African Education’ Task Force Meeting has given way to the meeting of the ‘Association for the Development of African Education’. This change calls for a new method of work: those in charge of financial matters, political leaders and specialists of education are called upon to work together as equal partners. It reflects two major developments which African ministers highly welcome: a donor-driven orientation is no longer relevant and must be replaced by a new type of relationship between North and South; African countries are increasingly aware of the fact that their educational systems are key to their countries’ social and economic development. The first of these developments owes much to the DAE. It has contributed to strengthening the position of African Ministers of Education vis-à-vis external partners, their own governments and public opinion.

14. Managing an educational system is a complex task in which many elements calling for important political decisions are involved. The presence of so many ministers at the Tours meeting reflects the need for regular consultations on solutions that must be found to address the highly critical situation of African education. The task facing African Ministers of Education is becoming increasingly difficult. At a time when the social and economic development of Africa depends increasingly on schooling and literacy, African educational systems are in a difficult position, with few internal resources and diminishing external assistance. Ministers must work closely with specialists of education, and with their technical and financial partners. The DAE is in a position to help them in the performance of their daily political and technical tasks.

15. Ms. Bah concluded by welcoming all the participants and emphasizing the importance of the recent changes in the orientations of the DAE. She reminded participants that the Organization for African Unity had proclaimed 1996 as the Year of Education in Africa. Finally, she mentioned the role played by FAWE to serve education in Africa.

16. Mr. Christopher Shaw, Executive Secretary of the DAE, then presented the program of the meeting and the resources available. Human resources included two invited keynote speakers, five or six panelists for each of the four panel presentations, and all of the participants bringing in their personal experience. Documents prepared for the meeting
included six case studies which account for the experience of policy formulation in six African countries and a background paper entitled *Formulating Educational Policy in sub-Saharan Africa*. The final version of the background paper will incorporate the results and the conclusions of the discussions that took place during the meeting. In addition two other papers were distributed: *Education Policy-Planning process: an Applied Framework*, from IIEP’s series *Fundamentals of Educational Planning*; and *Education Policy Formation in Africa—a comparative study of five countries*, a study conducted by USAID and commissioned by the DAE in 1994.

17. Mr. Shaw then introduced the background paper in more detail. The process of formulating educational policy involves many players that are listed in the paper, classified into two groups: external and internal. The external players include the United Nations specialized agencies and other multilateral agencies, as well as bilateral agencies and international and private foundations. The internal players also include a great variety of stakeholders: civil society, such as teachers, parents, unions, and the State which comprises legislators, planners, civil service, and local government. The document then describes the various stages of the policy cycle – not all of which are present everywhere in that order – from identification and agenda setting through the preparation of policy options (very few, if not one only, in some cases), formal or informal discussion, to adoption, implementation, evaluation and adjustment, until a new cycle of policy formulation is started.

18. Several messages are contained in the background paper, arising from the case studies. Policy formulation requires sound detailed knowledge. It also requires strong leadership with continuity - something that is sadly lacking, due to frequent changes of management. Mr. Shaw compared education to an industry with a long production time since it takes ten to twelve years to educate a child. Unfortunately, Ministers of Education seldom stay longer than 1-2 years. Realistic targets and priorities should be set. Policy formulation can benefit from effective donor and government cooperation, which is precisely the objective of the DAE. It should generate a social learning process, should be shared with the end users and should be continuous and interactive. National review of educational policy should take into consideration the economic, political and educational environment. Some key questions are raised in the paper: what information is needed, for whom it is needed, who should participate in the policy review process, what structures are needed, what should happen after policy has been formulated, how external agencies can be constructive in this process.

Keynote speeches

19. During the following session, two keynote speeches were given by Mr. Timothy Thahane, Vice-President and Secretary of the World Bank, formerly Director of the Planning Department of Lesotho, and Mr. Per Grimstad, Director-General of NORAD. The session was chaired by Mr. Peter Agbor Tabi, Minister of Higher Education of Cameroon.

20. Mr. Thahane spoke about the challenges and the constraints which the world at large and Africa in particular face as we near the 21st century, and about the role which education is called upon to play. The first problem and constraint in Africa is its rapidly growing population, with those under sixteen constituting almost 50% of the population. A corollary of this phenomenon is the growing problem of...
unemployment, particularly unemployment of youth. Education has proven to be a crucial factor for economic development and the reduction of poverty. Various studies, particularly on Asia, have shown that rising investments in education at all levels have been instrumental in leading to the success of growth oriented strategies. Africa must train a skilled labor force in order to be able to compete in an environment characterized by an increasing globalization of activities and rapid technological changes. It is the responsibility of those in charge of education to produce that labour force. Another important fact is the growing role of information made possible by technological developments. The policies of today will shape the society of tomorrow. The gap between an average six-year old child in Africa who has no prospect of getting more than two, three or four years of education vs. sixteen years of education for a child in North America, endangers the future competitiveness of Africa. The education of girls should be given high priority.

21. Mr. Thahane pointed out a number of challenges for education in Africa. Education is a long-term commitment which should transcend electoral or party considerations. Building national consensus and commitment to ensure the continuity of educational policies regardless of changes in government is a major challenge. Other challenges include: prioritizing among the different sectors of education; linking education to employment prospects while keeping in perspective both formal employment and self-employment; encouraging public and private collaboration in the design and management of education. Parents, communities, and the business world should all be partners. The exchange of experience between African countries is important. So is the sharing of facilities in order to optimize the use of available resources. The process of political and economic liberalization through which Africa is now going requires broad-based participation, for which education is essential.

22. Partnership with funding agencies should be based on shared and agreed framework and objectives. Funding agencies have often been interested in particular projects only, especially when they have involved capital investment rather than recurrent costs. What is needed is a commitment from the funding agencies to be involved over a longer period, until the government is able to absorb the recurrent costs. Funding agencies can also play a useful role in providing analytical support to define options, formulate policy, and facilitate the transfer of ideas and experience.

23. The World Bank recognizes the importance of human resource development. Its annual spending in this field increased from 1.22 billion dollars in 1985-1989 to 3.52 billion dollars in 1994 and will continue to increase. Education and human resources are essential for capacity-development in African countries. The type of cooperation prevailing within the DAE, with the Africans in the driver’s seat and funding agencies assisting them, is the right framework as a forum for exchange of ideas, sharing of experiences and developing capacities. If Africa is to have an educated labour force and to be a dependable partner in a global economy, education and training are the key.

24. The second keynote speech, delivered by Mr. Per Grimstad, focused on the future of development cooperation. While it is now generally agreed that environment is a global concern, people
have not yet realized that poverty and underdevelopment should also be of concern to all of us. The effectiveness of development cooperation has often been questioned. In some cases, development cooperation has led to creating dependency, and has weakened governments. Funding agencies are responsible to their countries and to their taxpayers. Taxpayers demand that money spent for development cooperation produce results. If this is not the case, development cooperation will be questioned.

25. To ensure that the cooperation between North and South will continue – and it should continue – it is necessary to stress that development cooperation is first and foremost based on solidarity. Solidarity has always been the basis for public support in Norway. It is also necessary to point out to global dependency. The issues of environment, poverty, overpopulation and population increase are linked. The industrialized world represents only an island of about 20% of the population of the world – a percentage which is bound to decrease even further. Peace is also another item on the agenda. People should be interested in promoting development cooperation to preserve peace. People also need to realize that we are all the same, with the same aspirations and the same capacity to develop. Both sides are bound to benefit from development cooperation, not necessarily in terms of immediate economic gains, but in terms of long-term economic, social and political benefits.

26. Assisting civil society has become a fad in development cooperation. Everybody agrees on the importance of civil society, but it is equally important to avoid the creation of excessive dependency of governments on outside support. Support is necessary for human rights, democracy, free press, education, but most of all for the building of a nation with an elected government able to find its own way in international cooperation.

27. In the late eighties there was a growing feeling in NORAD that development cooperation was a failure and that many of the recipient countries were worse off than before they had received aid. After a long series of internal discussions it was concluded that the only way for development cooperation to succeed was to make the country responsible for its own development. The agencies' role is to be assistants, water carriers, and it is for the country, its government and its people to assume responsibility. This attitude is not easy to implement, especially in the face of bad habits which have developed over so many years. However it is the only attitude possible if development cooperation is to survive. There needs to be a clear contract defining clear responsibilities and reciprocal obligations, as between true partners. NORAD's experience of the last few years using this approach has been positive.

28. What are the implications for African ministers of education? Project or programs should have a sound national foundation, should be considered national priorities and should receive appropriate financing from the national budget. They should not originate from funding agencies - they should be part of national sector policies and objectives. Similarly, the coordination of funding agencies should be the responsibility of the country. Mr. Grimstad concluded by saying that the presence of so many African ministers at this meeting gave him hope that much could be accomplished in line with the strategies he had outlined.

29. The keynote speeches were followed by a short discussion. Several speakers endorsed the approach
which considers education to be a profitable investment and a key to development. They welcomed the fact that this opinion was expressed by people coming from the business and financial world, including the representative of the World Bank. Hope was expressed that there would be a shift in resources towards human development, particularly education and training. The need for each African country to formulate its own comprehensive education development plan was stressed and funding agencies were requested to provide support for preparing such a plan and to mobilize resources in support of its implementation. It was stressed that such a plan should be prepared with a national perspective rather than from a narrow sectoral one. One speaker recalled that when the World Bank was preparing a paper on education in Africa, some ten years ago, funding for consultations with African colleagues had been provided by NORAD.

30. The speakers also agreed with the concept of development cooperation outlined by Mr. Grimstad. There have been deficiencies in the relationship between funding agencies and countries. It should continue on a different basis. Assistance must be replaced by a genuine partnership based on a contractual relationship.

31. One speaker mentioned the issues of debt and related structural adjustment programs as one of the serious difficulties African countries are facing.

32. Mr. Thahane and Mr. Grimstad replied to observations from the floor. Mr. Thahane stressed the fact that education is an investment. One may therefore expect a return from this investment. However, this investment is not easy to measure as it does not accrue to an individual, nor to the ministry of education, but to society as a whole. He recalled the importance of a full partnership between the public and the private sectors, and of long term commitment to the improvement of education and to the investment in education. He stressed the importance of building a broad national consensus around education for national survival. He agreed that debt is a constraint to the development of many African countries and recalled that this issue is under consideration at the World Bank and at the International Monetary Fund. He also commented on whether countries should borrow externally for education. If education were a consumer item then external borrowing would not be justified. However, it should be considered as a contribution to national development and therefore as an investment, although it is not possible to calculate its returns. Mr. Grimstad stressed again the importance of partnership and of defining common concerns. He urged the participants, in their relations with funding agencies, to always say what they have in mind, rather than what they think funding agencies would like to hear.

Panel No. 1: The knowledge base for policy formulation—information needs

33. This session was chaired by Mr. Ahlin Byll-Cataria (Cooperation for Development, Switzerland) who introduced the panel by stressing the importance of a proper information basis for the development of an educational sector policy in Africa. The subject was presented on the basis of the work carried out by several working groups of the DAE. Members of the Panel included: Ms. Lucila Jallade (UNESCO),
Mr. Henry Kaluba (Commonwealth Secretariat), Ms. Carew Treffgarne (British Overseas Development Administration), Mr. Ko-Chih Tung (UNESCO) and Mr. Ward Heneveld (World Bank).

34. Ms. Jalade presented certain conclusions and observations of the DAE Working Group on Sector Analysis. The group has noted that there is a growing number of sectoral studies that are carried out by funding agencies. These studies constitute an important basis for the formulation of policies. However, the group is concerned by the fact that they are not easily accessible. Some of them are confidential, few of them are published. The working group is recommending that funding agencies make these studies more accessible.

35. The Working Group has conducted a review which will contribute to make these studies known. The review includes an inventory and an analysis of externally initiated, commissioned and supported sector studies of education in Africa. The following observations have been made: a) there is a striking uniformity between themes and an absence of concern for certain issues, particularly socio-cultural and political issues which are of major concern to African decision-makers and researchers; and b) sectoral studies bear the mark of the externally-elaborated terms of reference of the agency commissioning the study.

36. The Working Group believes that the perspective of sectoral studies should be re-oriented to take into account the following: a) they should be designed and conducted to assist decision-makers to formulate national policies and take action on the basis of complete and objective analysis. b) themes should be related to major national concerns; and c) the studies should be conducted by national structures - the country should be in the driver’s seat. The Working Group will work towards instilling this perspective in the next two years. Ms. Jalade also pointed out that sectoral studies are an ideal tool for better dialogue within the country and with external partners.

37. Mr. Kaluba described the experience of the Working Group on the Teaching Profession. In order to generate the knowledge base for policy formulation the group prepared a conceptual paper on the issues of morale and motivation of the teachers and how these affect their performance and the quality of education. After the paper was widely discussed, the second stage consisted in encouraging the participants to examine the specific problems of their country and to carry out investigations into these problems. Investigations on specific country problems were carried out in two countries: Ghana - on teacher motivation and conditions of service - and in Gambia - on teacher management. The Working Group also commissioned specific studies on issues previously identified by the participants as giving rise to concern: the legal framework of teacher management and the merits and performance of teacher management structures. All these studies were targeted to produce specific knowledge in order to provide decision makers in the ministries with alternative viewpoints and new insights so as to put them in a better position to make decisions, especially when reviewing current policies or formulating new ones.

38. Ms. Treffgarne took the floor on behalf of the Working Group on Books and Learning Materials which addresses the fundamental problem of the shortage of appropriate teaching, learning and literacy
materials for formal and non-formal education. Its objective is to support the development of national policies aiming at the creation of a more literate environment. The Working Group has recently widened its terms of reference away from the too narrow focus on books and libraries towards a more holistic approach of books and learning materials – hence its new name ‘Working Group on Books and Learning Materials’. The Working Group has collected information on donor support to textbooks and libraries projects and established a database which records bilateral and multilateral activity in this field. It also has a bibliography of book sector studies commissioned by funding agencies and governments over the last few years. This knowledge base has served as a basis for the working group to draw up guidelines for national book policies.

39. The Working Group has identified gaps in the knowledge base. Hence it is conducting the following studies: a) a study on the economics of educational materials publishing which will help to identify the factors governing the emergence and the expansion of domestic book publishing industries in Africa; b) a study on the cost-effectiveness of publishing in national languages; and, c) a study on the distribution and dissemination systems and strategies in West Africa. By the end of 1996, when these studies will be completed, much more data will be available to generate more comprehensive book policies.

40. Mr. Tung presented the work of the Working Group on Education Statistics. Developments in Africa – rapid expansion of primary education, decline in access and in quality, and the economic recession – have lead to a growing demand for data necessary to monitor various aspects of education, and make for more effective planning and management of resources. However, timely and relevant data needed to establish basic indicators are scarce. Ironically, while demand for information has grown, investment in information management capacity has not changed. This constitutes a major obstacle to effective planning and management of the development of education in Africa.

41. The first task of the Working Group was to conduct a diagnostic survey of the situation of the African countries with regard to information needs and the gap between needs and supply. Different types of information and different types of analysis – even when they are based on the same data – are necessary for areas such as accounting, management, evaluation, planning and policy formulation. More than one hundred directors and department heads replied to questions concerning their needs. Their primary concerns are finances, materials management, staff development and restructuring. They need information about population characteristics on which the demand for education depends, on teachers (whose salaries require 90% of the budgets), on performance, on financial aspects. Regional and local authorities require another set of information. Analytical aspects are an important part of the information required, e.g. on how to measure the performance against the targets.

42. Mr. Tung then dwelt on certain characteristics of information. It should be policy-relevant, directed towards its users, comprehensible and of course technically sound. An important issue is how the information should be presented and how it should be disseminated. The most critical issues in the reporting and delivery of information are the data and its source
and the analytical capacity to convert the data into information. The areas for which information is most scarce are financial matters, material requirements and teachers.

43. Mr. Heneveld drew the attention of the meeting to a recent study of the UNESCO Division of Statistics which disclosed that this Division has been considerably weakened over the years in many aspects: budget, staff and equipment. The report contains a number of recommendations and Mr. Heneveld invited the participants to take some initiative on this issue during the forthcoming session of the General Conference of UNESCO. Another issue he raised was the significance of local experience. People's experience should not be valued less than the rational, carefully-designed studies prevailing among funding agencies. Mr. Heneveld gave a brief description of two programs which he has been involved in Madagascar – where drop-outs and achievements were analyzed – and in Swaziland – where a plan for the improvement of quality in primary education has been developed. He concluded by strongly suggesting to capitalize on the practical experience of people involved in the daily life of schools and assisting them to order what they already know in ways that they can translate into policies.

44. In the ensuing discussion several speakers raised what they believed to be a fundamental issue: what constitutes 'data'? Does data only include statistics or does it also refer to the fruit of experience, and qualitative insight from the field? One of them referred to what he called 'soft data': stories, anecdotes, proverbs, jokes and even gestures. Methodologies need to be developed to be able to describe these in a systematic way. There are also unmeasurable and unquantifiable elements which constitute inputs into education. The speaker mentioned as examples students living with friends, uniforms passed over to younger children, books sold on the pavement. He also pointed out the existence of various studies in Africa which have been carried out by local people with no outside interference and which ought to be analyzed.

45. Minister Ndoye from Senegal mentioned the problems of inadequacy and short-lived validity of data as hindering the decision-making process. As an example of the resulting large degree of uncertainty which he is must cope with, he cited the fact that shortly before the start of the school year, he did not know how many classes there would be due to a number of local and NGO initiatives unknown to the ministry.

46. Mention was made of studies which are available on teaching materials and on materials in African languages. One speaker expressed some doubt about the usual perception that teachers' salaries represent an overwhelming part of the budgets and suggested that this issue should be carefully examined, on a country by country basis.

47. Another speaker pointed out that the issue of data collected for decision-making purposes was directly related to the implicit decision-making models and questions of decentralization, participation of civil society, and participatory planning. It is often believed that decisions should come from the top and that, provided enough accurate and reliable information is fed, the proper decisions will be made to put the educational system on the right track. This model is manifestly insufficient. Many policy decisions concerning the educational system are taken at the local level. Data which is most reliable is data which has been collected by people for their own decision-making
purposes at their own level. The decision making model should include trends towards decentralization and the participation of civil society. Another difficulty consists in the fact that even the most rational decisions, taken on the basis of reliable data, may prove inapplicable because of the reactions of various stakeholders, such as teachers, parents or students and their organizations. Thus, the decision making process must take into account the involvement of these groups and the predictability of their reactions.

48. Mr. Hallak, Director of the International Institute of Educational Planning, observed out that there were obviously two attitudes among the participants. Some are of the opinion that it is essential to go to the grass roots level - families, classes, schools, teachers, communities - otherwise there is a risk of losing contact with reality, and there be too large of a gap between those who are concerned by education and those who are legitimately responsible for the future of their country and its development. Other participants feel very concerned by education and its future and would like to act quickly. These two parties should be encouraged to dialogue. However, it must always be borne in mind that African ministers, as members of their government, are the ones that are responsible for the fate of education in Africa and must be allowed to assume this responsibility. With regard to qualitative data, they are no doubt desirable, but are to a large extent a luxury. What is important is to be able to collect a minimum of sound and reliable information.

49. The members of the panel reacted briefly to the interventions. Ms. Treffgarne pointed out that the survey to be launched on the economics of book production will rely on the experiences of certain countries and invited their cooperation. Ms. Jallade said that both in national studies and those carried out by external agencies the same problem arises: do they relate to practical concerns of decision-makers, at the central or local level, or do they concentrate on theoretical or intellectual preoccupations? This problem of relations between research and action exists everywhere. Mr. Heneveld raised the issue of command structures which are not always compatible with a participatory process. He also recalled the value of the experience of people working for many years in the educational system. Mr. Tung agreed that there are data of various kinds and he thought that data based on observation and experience are of particular value when other data is not available and decisions have to be made anyhow. The problem is that in Africa basic information is often not available.


50. This session was chaired by Ms. Myra Harrison (Chief Education Advisor, British Overseas Development Administration). The meeting started with the presentations of the three African ministers who were members of the Panel: Mr. Sibusiso M.E. Bengu (Minister of Education, South Africa), Mr. Arnaldo Valente Nhavoto (Minister of Education, Mozambique) and Mr. Ignatius M.C. Chombo (Minister of Higher Education, Zimbabwe). The two other members of the Panel took the floor after the discussion: Mr. François Gauthier (Deputy Director of Education, French Ministry of Cooperation) and
Mr. Ash Hartwell (Policy Analyst, United States Agency for International Development).

51. Mr. Bengu, taking advantage of the first appearance of South Africa in this forum, thanked all the countries and agencies represented for their support in the struggle against apartheid. South Africa is now drawing on a rich experience gained during the liberation struggle. In 1992 the African National Congress adopted as its platform the slogan ‘Prepare to govern’. The interim constitution of South Africa and the creation of the national unity government determined the possibilities and the constraints for policy making. Policy making in education is determined by two major political imperatives: the need to ensure consensus around the national education policy and the need to develop this policy within the framework of the interim constitution.

52. It was essential to terminate apartheid education and to initiate a fundamental transformation of the education and training system. A White Paper on education, entitled ‘Education and training in a democratic South Africa – first steps to develop a new system’, was adopted in March 1995. It was necessary to tackle many challenging situations. There is a tension between the need for national consensus and the need for an active social and economic reconstruction programme. The balance between continuity and breaking with the past is a challenge and it requires a good sense of what is possible and of what is strategically necessary. Timing and opportunity are two vital factors in initiating policy development aiming at a fundamental transformation of the education and training system. As stated in the White Paper, rapidly changing external currents in South African society represent a major challenge. It is important to discern these currents and to harness them in the framework of policy priorities.

53. Mr. Nhavoto described the situation in Mozambique which was in a state of war for close to 30 years. While five years after independence the country was able to reduce its illiteracy rate from 93% to 72% and to double school attendance at the primary and even the secondary level, during the most difficult period of the war, between 1983 and 1992, many schools were destroyed and many children were prevented from attending. For the last three years the country has lived in peace and a new government was established after democratic elections. The program of the new government was approved in May 1995, followed by the preparation of sectoral programmes. A national education policy has been defined and an operational matrix is being prepared to determine and schedule priority objectives. Both national and external experts participate in this process. There is also regular consultation with all the interested parties as well as NGOs, religious bodies and even private entities. The needs are tremendous and the resources insufficient. Efforts are accomplished to coordinate all possible sources, bilateral and multilateral agencies and the NGOs.

54. Mr. Chombo pointed out that the situation in Zimbabwe is marked by a constantly unstable environment. Before the country became independent in 1980 there were three types of schools: church-funded institutions, a small number of government schools for Africans and a well established, financed and equipped white education system. War brought about heavy destruction, so that the first task after independence was the reconstruction of the infrastructure. Very soon there was a great demand for schooling...
and a shortage of teachers, so the next stage had to be a massive teacher-training programme, which led to the establishment of 15 teacher-training institutions. Other priorities were identified. A system of technical and vocational education was set up to compensate for the absence of training of the population in technical fields during the colonial era. The history of the country since independence has been marked by a lack of stability and by a succession of critical situations and shortages. There has been little possibility of organizing a regular cycle of planning, implementation of decisions, and evaluation. Efforts have consisted rather in responding to needs as and when they were felt. It can be said that in most African countries. Mr. Chombo also mentioned two other areas in which his country carried out constructive programmes. One concerns the education of women who played an active role in the war for independence. The other relates to youth, the majority of whom had never had an opportunity to go to school and for whom adult education programmes were implemented.

55. A number of questions were put to the members of the panel from the floor. A participant from Liberia recalled that her country was going through a civil war and asked the question of how to provide education to former child soldiers, without giving to other children the impression that they are left out and that there is a reward for having participated in the war. Another question was related to the unsatisfactory relationship between funding agencies and African countries in the area of education. More information was requested about how education policies fit into national policies. Several speakers referred to the issue of entrenched vested interests, often inherited from the colonial system, and the resulting resistance to change. The importance of education for peace and tolerance in countries which experience civil unrest was mentioned. One participant, recalling that men and women fought alongside for independence, wanted to know the level of participation of women in the formulation and the implementation of policies. The importance of developing a certain level of consensus in order to develop education was stressed; what was the experience with regard to developing that consensus?

56. It was also pointed out that a process of social and political liberalization was under way in Africa. Institutions are growing more democratic and new actors are appearing on the scene, not only political parties but also various interest groups, as well as the media. What is the impact of these various actors on the policy environment and what are the mechanisms to deal with this issue?

57. References were made to the highly unstable situation prevailing in certain African countries. The Minister of Education of Lesotho recalled that the apartheid regime had destabilized most of Southern Africa. His country has experienced a number of political upheavals since 1970, as a result of which the literacy rate - which was the highest in Africa before independence - has deteriorated. Moreover, the educational resources of the country were disrupted by the influx of students from South Africa who had to be accommodated in schools. The Minister of Primary and Secondary Education of Rwanda referred to the tragic events in his country as a result of which the educational system suffered considerably. Efforts are under way to rehabilitate it; the needs are immense and the international community should come forward with assistance.

58. The two other members of the panel then took
Mr. Gauthier developed the idea that, in a context of instability, the education sector should be considered as a sanctuary, removed from political and party strife. A social, political and civic consensus on educational questions is important. Political orientations change, sometimes abruptly, so do economic circumstances, but the preoccupations of the educational system should remain. The importance of continuity in education was mentioned several times during this meeting. This obligation of continuity is also binding on the funding agencies. Mr. Gauthier referred to Haiti, where France considered it had the duty to maintain a presence in the field of education through the channel of NGOs, in spite of the political situation and the breaking of political relations between the two countries. NGOs can have an important role to play in a context of instability.

59. Political instability need not necessarily lead to administrative instability. It is important to maintain continuity in the management of educational systems, independently of political developments. For this purpose a body of people able to manage the educational system—rectors, inspectors, managers, advisors—should be trained and their role reaffirmed in all circumstances. In a context of instability, there is a strong advantage in having autonomous and decentralized educational structures which may be in a position to function better, rather than structures entirely dominated by the state. Enlarging the autonomy of educational institutions, broadening their financial basis and involving stakeholders other than the state, may be an important contribution to maintaining stability. Attention should also be paid to the manner in which adjustment programmes are implemented. They should not become another element of instability, in addition to the political environment and the difficulties encountered by new countries.

60. Mr. Hartwell said that he was speaking not so much from the USAID perspective but as somebody who had lived for 20 years in Africa. He thought that the traditional model of educational planning, based on an analysis of gaps between the provision of schooling and the population, was not necessarily adapted to an unstable environment—and there is no such thing as a stable environment. It is often assumed that educational change is a mechanical process which can be compared to building a road, with an end destination in view. Educational change is rather an organic process which can be compared better to raising a family than to building a road. It is a continuous process of growth, requiring constant consultation and adaptation. This metaphor of raising a family is helpful both for policy formulation and for agency support.

61. A few more speakers took the floor before the three ministers replied to the observations. One participant said funding agencies also live in a state of instability. She was never in a position to know what her budget and her staff would be, even in the near future. Another speaker pointed out that, in a stable political environment, instability in the education system is likely to produce change. He quoted as an example the decision taken in Malawi, after 30 years of instability, that all children should go to school, which necessitated hiring 22,000 teachers and giving them a two weeks orientation course before sending them to schools. It was also pointed out that instability was not proper to developing countries. Highly developed countries in the West also experience political
instability and feel the need to periodically redefine the orientations of their educational system. It is necessary to learn how to live with instability and how to turn into an element of progress. Another speaker stressed the importance of developing national capacities, i.e., training men and women who will be capable of tackling education issues, the political conditions permitting.

62. The Minister for Education and Sports of Uganda, in reply to a question put earlier, described the system used in his country to prepare child soldiers for civilian life. These children did not want to return to civilian life and it was found preferable to put them in military primary schools in the barracks, giving them initially a mixture of military and civilian training and attempting to win them over gradually to civilian and academic training. In fact, by now many of them are absorbed in civilian secondary schools. The Minister of Basic Education of Mali described how the establishment of democratic government liberated new forces and new energies leading to associating all constructive forces with the formulation and implementation of educational policies. The Ambassador of Sudan to UNESCO emphasized the importance of educational policy formulation for the resolution of conflicts and indicated the growing awareness in Sudan of the role which education and culture can play in the resolution of conflicts.

63. Mr. Bengu pointed out that in the situation of a revolution which has mobilized the majority of the people, educational policy-making need not seek to mobilize people further – people are already mobilized. He then referred to the issue of the role of women in the determination of policy and noted that while women were well represented in mass movements concerning education, it was difficult to find qualified women for positions within the Ministry of Education. With regard to those that resist change, this is a genuine problem. The recent national education policy law, passed by parliament, has been challenged before the Constitutional Court. The best way of handling this situation is to take on board those that resist change and to take them along. Mr. Bengu confirmed the opinion he expressed earlier that development cooperation was not on the whole successful. There was a lot of assistance granted, but not in a way that would recognize the priorities of the countries and operate within their programmes. He concluded by stressing the importance of developing educational policies and to act against the way in which education and educationalists are treated in the international fora dealing with development, where they remain on the periphery.

64. Mr. Nhavoto referred in the first place to the issue of former soldiers. A programme of social reintegration was initiated for them. After the demobilization they returned home and two to three months training programmes in different professions were organized for them. At the end of the programme they also received the tools of their trade. However, it is not an easy problem as there is a shortage of work. Children were sent back to their families. It was not considered good to create special schools for them, but rather to encourage them to return to normal life. In reply to a question on the relationship between education policies and national policies, Mr. Nhavoto said that the educational policy is integrated in the overall government policy which has three priorities: to secure peace and return to normal life, including for the millions of refugees inside and outside the country; to develop human resources which are a prerequisite
for the development of the country; to restart the economy. He then indicated that in his country women are given considerable responsibilities: 25% of members of parliament are women and women also occupy some of the key positions in the government. Primary education is managed by women. Finally, he said that Mozambique received considerable international assistance during the critical period it went through and that it is still in need of such assistance.

65. Mr. Chombo also replied to some of the questions raised in the discussion. He pointed out to the major difference between the situation in Liberia, where the civil war opposes Africans among themselves, and in South Africa and in Zimbabwe where the war aimed at overthrowing a racist system. With regard to child soldiers, he thought that it would be unfortunate to establish special programmes for them. Everything should be done to integrate them into the mainstream of the society, so that they should learn something more than the use of a gun. He agreed that education for peace and tolerance was important. In fact, it was regrettable that during the colonial period education was restricted to arithmetic and English. It is now necessary to introduce subjects such as sex education, population education and peace education. Mr. Chombo then recalled that during the liberation struggle many Zimbabweans were forced to go abroad and that they benefited a lot from that experience. He then referred to the issue of the ‘nice schools’ formerly reserved to the minority - these schools are now predominantly black, but there is some resistance from the well-to-do fraction of the population against the integration of children from the poorer strata, which is the government policy about which the government is very firm. Finally, he said that women participate in the life of the country at every level - there are several women in the government. What is important, in view of the small number of women with top qualifications, is to pursue a strong policy of opening access of women to universities and to teacher training and vocational training institutions.

Panel N° 3: Policy formulation in the real world—strategic planning, compromise, trade-offs and consultation

66. This session was chaired by Mr. Wadi Haddad, Deputy Secretary of the World Bank. The panel consisted of Mr. Mamadou Diouf (CODESRIA), Mr. Narciso Matos (Association of African Universities), Mr. Mamadou Ndoye (Minister of Basic Education and National Languages, Senegal), Mr. Nahas Angula (Minister of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology, Namibia), Ms. Joyce Moock (Rockefeller Foundation) and Mr. Poul Erik Rasmussen (DANIDA).

67. Before giving the floor to the members of the panel Mr. Haddad presented two models of policy formulation. One model represents what has been done for a long time, based on rational assumptions and proceeding by stages: sector analysis, followed by problem identification, policy recommendations to solve the problem, and finally implementation process. He thought that this model is to a large extent unrelated to the real world. He then presented a ‘real world’ model, looking at policy formulation with two dimensions. The horizontal dimension relates to actors
and goes from the organizational bureaucratic mode - where actors represent the organizations and the bureaucracies and bring the views of the bodies they represent - to the societal mode where the actors represent interest groups, internal or external and bring their personal values and ideas. The vertical dimension represents process. It goes from the synoptic approach assuming that the policy making is a comprehensive integrated process carried out by an authority which has access to all the required information, to the incremental approach assuming that problem-solving is a step-by-step process where things must not be done all at once. Combining these two dimensions yields two rather extreme possibilities: (i) what might seem to be a rational approach, which assumes that all the actors are organizational and bureaucratic and that the approach is synoptic; and, (ii) a situation where there is no system and everything is the result of an incremental process.

68. Mr. Diouf presented the philosophy which will guide the work of the Working Group on Finance and Education, once it is approved by the Steering Committee. While ministers are responsible for formulating educational policy, the participation of all actors concerned by problems of education is needed. This policy must be defined in the real world which includes public and private stakeholders, NGOs, communities, families, local authorities etc. The policy must be supported by the population and must take into account the available resources, their distribution, management, evaluation. All these issues are dealt with at different levels by different structures and different actors. A consensus is necessary so as to find solutions acceptable to all. A dialogue must be established between the decision makers and those who will participate in the implementation. Various actors participate in different ways and for different reasons in policy formulation. The extent of their involvement is also different. There are different levels at which decisions concerning financial commitments and human commitments are taken: central level, local authorities, families, communities. The Working Group will concentrate its work on the financing of education and on budgetary procedures, so as to put at the disposal of the responsible authorities instruments and arguments which will enable them to prepare and to present their policy proposals in order to achieve the requisite financing.

69. Mr. Matos recalled that in the last few years there had been discussions on whether higher education in Africa should be a priority. He believes it should be. African universities have been facing a critical situation. There is an explosion in demand for university education, in the number of students, while at the same time there is a reduction of financial resources and deterioration of working conditions and there is also a crisis in mission definitions and in strategies. It is now generally recognized that the problems of African universities have to be addressed in a systematic way. Some universities prepared strategic plans for their development, tackling problems such as improvement of conditions of work, strengthening of management capacities, training, cost-sharing, student fees, government loans, subvention, income generation, participation of the private sector, advanced information systems.

70. In higher education there is a high degree of dependency on the external world; universities are funded almost entirely by governments or by external funding agencies and their earning capacity is minimal. Therefore the planning process of universities must
take into consideration the views of all stakeholders and must be a product of negotiation. The strategic plans of the universities have to be approved by various departments and bodies. This process of coordination and consultation required the development of reporting and performance indicators. Mr. Matos concluded by a few words about donor coordination which can only be done by the receiving institutions themselves. Strategic planning is above all an instrument of management and not a donor-driven requirement.

71. Mr. Ndoye presented his country’s experience in formulating educational policies, based on a participatory approach. The point of departure was the social unrest in 1968, in which students and teachers were involved. A National Reform Commission was established, with the participation of all stakeholders. Three years later, in 1971, it led to the adoption of the national education orientation law. A similar procedure was followed in 1979 when the ‘Etats généraux’ of national education were called, followed by another orientation law. Parents’ associations, trade unions and other interested bodies participated in this process.

72. While 32 % of the national budget is spent on education, only 54 % of children attend primary schools and the rate of illiteracy is 70 %. Thus, the state is unable to cope with all the needs and the involvement of other stakeholders is indispensable. The democratic decision making process led to the implication of civil society which wants to participate in the policy formulation process. Such a process was carried out in various fields, such as non formal education, primary education and girls’ education. Mr. Ndoye described, as an example, the procedure followed in non formal education. This procedure started with the consultation of all interested parties. Meetings were held by the minister and his team in the field. On the basis of these observations conclusions were drawn on policies, strategies and priorities and sent to various organizations. A national consultation then took place involving many persons and organizations, the document was revised and submitted for approval to an interministerial committee. Various bodies are entrusted with the task of a regular revision and of technical implementation. The process is made more complicated by the existence of several languages. It is a costly and time-consuming process which requires the conciliation of contradictory interests and involves a risk of confusion of the roles and of the respective responsibilities of government and civil society. However, this is compensated by the advantages resulting from the participation and the involvement of the entire society.

73. Mr. Angula described the experience of Namibia with regard to policy formulation, while emphasizing that it was a short experience (Namibia has been independent for five years only) and an experience of a small country. Four contextual factors were taken into consideration in the process of policy formulation. The first factor was the context of national aspirations to unity, justice and democracy. The second factor is political: the governing party is in control and this party came to power on the basis of a political manifesto defining five broad goals: equity, efficiency, effectiveness, life-long learning and the democratization of the educational process. The next factor is that of the stakeholders which had to be identified and then consulted, which raises the problem of communication since time involved for consultation cannot be excessive. The last factor was
that of the professionals who were invited to participate through task forces, committees etc., so as to create the ownership needed for the policy to get off the ground. Finally, there was the bottom line which was the Ministry of Finance since no policy can be of value without resources. In addition, the funding agencies had to be taken into account. They have their own agenda and perspectives and influence the outcome of the policy. In the last instance the consumers are also involved, especially in Namibia where the population expects education to be free.

74. Ms. Moock began by recalling that out of some 60 million children not in school 70% are female; most of them are poor, in difficult to reach rural areas, some are street children in towns. A large number start school and then drop out. The issue of school access, which is the main topic of the Working Group on Female Participation, is generally understood as a demand-side issue involving parental preferences and priorities. However, there are numerous public policies which can influence demand by increasing the quality and the safety of schooling and reducing costs to households. This can be done without reducing service to those in the system. It is possible to reduce costs through efficiency gains and through cost-sharing between the public and the private delivery systems. The task of weighing the various options, politically and financially, is difficult and calls for local experience.

75. Ms. Moock then said that capacity development in Africa should be the central task of the DAE. This involves training and development of administrative structures. Policy formulation involving difficult education issues is a complex, technical job requiring both skill and judgement. The birth of FAWE reflects the commitment of senior government officials to equitable education which needs to be promoted across public and private sectors. The funding agencies have difficulty in moving large amounts of money in the face of low absorptive capacity. Yet we are all engaged in a long term enterprise. Changes in policy formulation derive from paradigm shifts in how we think about human rights, democracy and cultural diversity. The factors keeping girls out of school are tremendous (a film on this subject was to be shown to the participants). It is only through placing the responsibility for African education in the hands of competent African male and female leaders that external assistance can be most productive.

76. Mr. Rasmussen pointed out that the funding agencies were not a monolithic entity and that in the process of policy implementation they tend often to do something else than what they say they are doing. He then described some aspects of Danish assistance, using an analytical framework derived from a systems perspective: the open systems perspective which looks at the organizations in their environmental context, from the point of view of external demands and interests; and the rational perspective which deals with the organization, management, procedures, priorities; and a perspective which sees organizations as natural systems composed of people. The constituency of DANIDA is composed of the taxpayers, the general public, the businesses, etc. and it is possible to identify three types of motivations: solidarity and concern for the future of mankind; selfishness and greed; vanity or concern for one’s image.

77. Danish external assistance amounts, at present, to 1% of the gross national income, divided equally between multilateral and bilateral. There are a number
of orientations: poverty orientation, concern for sustainable and socially balanced growth in developing countries, focus on the development of social sectors, focus on popular participation and good government, integration of women in the development process. But there is also the concern - seldom mentioned - that Danish assistance should preferably promote Danish exports. Danish assistance is concentrated on 20 countries, 13 of them in Africa. There is an effort to concentrate on a maximum of three to four sectors in a country, preferably sectors where Danish expertise has a comparative advantage. Project assistance gave way to emphasis on programme assistance. There are other trends which may impede the implementation of these principles, such as the desire to produce results within a limited time frame or the desire to facilitate the disbursement of funds. Another element which influences the process comes from the internal reward systems in the organization. There is a complex interplay between these various elements.

78. The panel presentation was followed by several short interventions. One speaker thought that the donor organizations did not always adopt a conduct corresponding to the idea expressed by their representatives at meetings like this one or the meeting in Angers two years ago. He expressed the hope that the participants representing these organization will brief their staff on the proceedings. With reference to an earlier remark about the low absorptive capacity of the countries he pointed out that too often the funding agencies were coming with their offers at the last moment, because the budgetary year was coming to an end. Absorptive capacity would be better if the timing of offers of assistance was more appropriate. Another participant referred to the structural economic adjustment programmes which constitute a serious constraint for African countries. In the presence of these constraints the funding agencies should assist African countries in the implementation of their educational goals which may be endangered.

79. Mr. Haddad summarized briefly the conclusions which could be drawn from the panel. He identified seven items regarding policy formulation at the county level: policy formulation is a political process but it requires a proper knowledge base; the participatory approach is important and needs appropriate mechanisms; leadership in the process is necessary so as to create a feeling of ownership; there is a need for political national commitment over time; the monitoring of implementation is important; policy development requires a long time of maturation and therefore policies should not be changed in haste; a good policy needs a good and competent capacity. Mr. Haddad also identified three issues at the donor level: funding agencies have different rationalities and these rationalities change over time; funding agencies go through a process to formulate priorities and this process is influenced by the incentive system within a donor community, and they are plagued by lack of continuity; donor coordination should be done by the owners of the country programmes.

Panel N° 4: African experience—policy implementation and the way forward

80. This session was chaired by Ms. Paulette Moussavou-Missambo, Minister of National Education, Youth and Sports of Gabon. The members of the
panel were Mr. Harry Sawyerr (Minister of Education, Ghana), Ms. Aïcha Diallo Bah (Minister of Pre-university Education and Vocational Training, Guinea), Mr. Adama Samassekou (Minister of Basic Education, Mali), Mr. Armoogum Parsuramen (Minister of Education and Science, Mauritius) and Mr. Arvil Van Adams (Human Resources Advisor, World Bank).

81. Mr. Sawyerr described the experience of Ghana in policy formulation. The Government of Ghana decided in 1987 to implement an educational reform programme. The results of the first senior secondary school students examination under the reformed system were not considered satisfactory. This led to a series of wide consultations with all stakeholders, followed by the establishment of an Educational Reform Review Committee on which all interested parties were represented. Its results were given wide publicity and a White Paper is under preparation for submission to government and parliament for approval. This method was followed so that it should become a national document, not to be constantly modified by successive governments, which does not exclude adjustments when circumstances warrant it.

82. Along with this policy review exercise, the government took steps to implement the directives of the 1992 Constitution which provides that a programme for free compulsory universal basic education be drawn up for implementation within ten years. The strategic plan for this was presented to funding agencies (who played an active role in all the phases of its preparation) in October 1995 and met with favourable reception. The plan provides for a number of measures which will lead to free compulsory basic education by the year 2005. The funding agencies were invited in July 1994 to a Ministry of Education-Donor Forum. Since then, regular consultations are under way. The government, which spends 40.7% of the national budget on education, is playing the leading role in formulating and designing programmes so as to ensure ownership. A unified projects management unit takes care of all educational projects financed by all agencies. Decentralization is encouraged and capacity building is rapidly increasing. Efforts are made to improve the standards of science and technology education.

83. Ms. Bah described the various stages of the educational reform in Guinea. At the time of the change of the regime in 1984 the educational system had seriously deteriorated. A National Education Conference in May-June 1984 marked a profound desire for change and led to an interim plan for 1985-1990 during which foundations were laid, with outside assistance, for rehabilitation of the educational system. A Declaration on educational policy was adopted by the government in 1989 that defines the major orientations, priorities, and objectives to be reached by the year 2000, along with the appropriate strategy. All external assistance (mainly USAID, French Cooperation and the World Bank) is implemented within the framework of this declaration, on the basis of specific contractual commitments, with an annual review. An educational sector adjustment program (ESAP) was approved for the period 1990-1993. It provides for a number of measures and actions, such as administrative reorganization and strengthening of management capacities, better use of human resources and training of teachers, improvement of infrastructures, revision of programmes and of methods. The results were very positive: between 1989 and 1994 the rate of enrolment increased from 29% to 40%, 3000 classrooms were built and 7000 teachers were trained.
to the required level.

84. The present stage (1995-2000) will lead to a consolidation and an expansion of the reform. Negotiations have been completed with the funding agencies concerning their participation. The main orientations of the programme concern reinforcement of the central administration, renewal of pedagogical conceptions, expansion of in-service training of teachers and of schoolmasters, reinforcement of parents' associations, linkage between the formal and non formal sectors in order to promote insertion in active life, development of school attendance of girls and of women's education, development of adult literacy. The ultimate aim is to draw closer to the objective of education for all through a mutual strengthening of the educational system and of the informal sector. A High Council of Education and Training has been established recently to monitor the process of educational reform and to adjust the Declaration on educational policy. All the elements of the society will be involved in the functioning of this Council. A period of 15 years was necessary for the process of educational reform to be firmly established. This process is not only an integral part of the life of the nation but is also considered as the essential component of development.

85. Mr. Samassekou recalled that changes in the educational system of Mali were introduced in 1962, shortly after independence, in order to break away from the tradition inherited from the colonial power and to enable the country to assume full responsibility for its cultural heritage. The objective of the reform was to introduce quality mass education capable of training, with a minimum of time and money, the staff needed for the implementation of development plan. The former system based on the French model was totally transformed, with the introduction of basic education, with a first cycle of 5 years (later increased to 6) and of a second cycle of 4 years (later 3). General secondary education of 3 years, technical and vocational education and higher education in specialized institutions were also introduced. The implementation of this plan ran into serious difficulties, as the means available were not commensurate with the intentions. Many attempts were made to adjust the system. Considerable effort was made for quantitative expansion of education: the rate of enrolment increased from 7% in 1960 to 36.4% in 1995.

86. In spite of this expansion the situation of the educational system was unsatisfactory when the democratic regime replaced the military dictatorship in 1991. Serious difficulties followed this change. A discussion involving all segments of the society took place and it was concluded that the system required a thorough re-creation (refondation) rather than a reform. The three main elements of this re-creation were: development and reconstruction of cultural identity, including, in particular, the introduction in of national languages in basic education, alongside with the French; linking the school to practical life; involving all stakeholders in the development of education. Instead of expecting the environment to adapt itself to the school system, the school system is now expected to adapt itself to the environment. A National Commission for the Re-creation of the Educational System was created in 1995. New educational policy is gradually introduced, with the cooperation of the funding agencies and in close collaboration with the three types of partners: social partners (teachers, students, parents, cultural associa-
tions etc.), technical and financial partners, and operational partners (such as NGOs). Mali’s school system is expected to produce a new generation of citizens, builders of a democratic society, deeply rooted in their own culture yet open to international norms and standards.

87. Mr. Parsuramen referred to the case study on Mauritius which gives all the details on the formulation of the Master Plan for education in that country. He then recalled that in 1982, when the new government took over, the economic situation of Mauritius was catastrophic, with a high level of unemployment and of inflation. One of the conditions prescribed by the World Bank was a severe containment of expenditure on education. The government was however able to renegotiate with the Bank to maintain a certain level of that expenditure. A White Paper on education was prepared in 1984. The results were spectacular. Today Mauritius has a high rate of growth and no unemployment. Experience has shown that investment in human resources development is central to any development policy.

88. Preparation of a Master Plan for education started in 1990. The plan was based on a total commitment of all concerned and was presented to a funding agencies’ meeting sponsored by UNESCO; it was well received and the necessary financing was promised at that meeting. The government committed all necessary resources to finance the plan up to the year 2000. After two years of implementation, measures were taken to improve the tools for monitoring its implementation and a document on monitoring was prepared. This monitoring is done by a National Steering Committee, chaired by the Minister of Education, on which the various implementation agencies are represented. A review of the state of implementation, with the participation of the funding agencies, took place in April 1995. All performance indicators of education show satisfactory results, but attention is paid to using the resources very carefully. A monitoring bureau was set up within the Ministry which has already led to substantial savings. Mr. Parsuramen concluded by emphasizing that the progress which was achieved by his country was made possible through investment in education.

89. Mr. Arvil Van Adams began his statement by outlining a three-point strategy. The first point refers to putting human resource development first in the strategy for poverty reduction and putting it in the macro-economic dialogue in each country, protecting these expenditures in the course of adjusting economies. The second point is that of capacity development, essential for building and implementing programmes if they are to be owned by the country. The third point consists in building a broad-based partnership, as the funding agencies can account only for a small fraction of the total investment of the nation in human resource development. The Bank is interested in the comparative advantages of other funding agencies and only wants to fill in the gaps in the financing plan put forward by the country. The challenge in making investments effective is very high. In 1986-1988 the Bank invested on the average in education in Sub-Saharan Africa $133 million annually. In 1995-1997 it is estimated that this figure will grow to $419 million. That this is a challenge is shown by some indicators. Disbursement is very slow, one of the slowest of all the sectors. At the same time the rate of qualified financial audits (i.e. audits that disclose that there are potential problems) is unusually high.
90. Mr. Adams then mentioned eight issues which are critical to improve the implementation record: (I) the ownership of projects: there is no such thing as a 'World Bank project' and ensuring country ownership is essential; (ii) availability of counterpart funding: most of the expenditure on human resource development projects is in the recurrent funding, and not in capital investment; long term commitments to finance recurrent costs are indispensable; (iii) project management: poor management is always a barrier to successful implementation; (iv) financial management: its importance is disclosed by the high rate of qualified audits; (v) capacity development, to ensure the availability of qualified local personnel; (vi) procurement which calls for specialized skills and techniques; (vii) disbursement which also requires qualified staff and proper monitoring; (viii) supervision responsibility of the Bank. Of all these issues ownership is by far the most important. Programmes must be country-led and not donor-led.

91. Several questions or remarks were made on the floor. One participant, coming from the teaching profession, expressed his satisfaction that panel members attached much importance to the role of all the stakeholders, including the teachers. He thought that more and more the people will decide that others should not decide for them, they want to be involved and this is the case in a number of countries. This process of involving those that are primarily concerned should come down to the school level. The same speaker emphasized the importance of sustainability of implementation and of generating adequate income for investment in education. Another speaker, referring to the presentation of Mr. Sawyerr, asked what are the criteria for success in terms of outputs rather than inputs. He also questioned the wisdom of concentrating mainly on schooling, while early education and non-formal education, which has as a potential target a group of one billion people, are ignored.

92. The Assistant Minister of Education of Kenya referred to what he thought were very successful experiences in Ghana and in Mauritius and said that the situation in his country was much more difficult. Over the last 20 years or so the school population grew from one million to six million. When free primary education is mentioned, what type and what size of country do we have in mind? What happens to drop-outs, to life-long education, to employment opportunities? If huge amounts are invested in education, what happens to other important sectors?

93. Another participant stressed the importance of leadership which contributed to the success of certain experiences in the development of education. Another important element was continuity at the head of the ministry of education. Capacity development was as important, and this applies to capacity development at the level of the entire population. Finally, the speaker mentioned that funding agencies also need highly qualified and experienced staff, if they are to interact and to work effectively with the African governments.

94. Panel members replied briefly to the comments. Mr. Parsuramen said that the Mauritius Master Plan called for decentralization to the school level, with each school implementing reforms and monitoring progress. His country too encountered problems; these are tackled through the process of dialogue with all the partners. It is the responsibility of the political
leadership to mobilize all the partners. He emphasized the importance of the political and social stability, necessary to ensure economic progress. Finally, he agreed with the speaker who spoke about the quality of the donor staff. The African countries need the best advice and the funding agencies should use the best experts.

95. Mr. Sawyerr said that his country also encounters many problems; the best way to solve them was to remain in close touch with the funding agencies. With regard to performance indicators, decentralization can play an important role. With the growing involvement of communities, phenomena such as taking away children from school for manual labor or irregular work of the teachers are more easily controlled.

96. Ms. Bah fully agreed with the remark about the continuity. Even if the minister of education changes, the staff in charge should remain. She also agreed with the remark about the importance of non formal education in African countries with their low rates of school attendance and of literacy. She hoped that UNICEF would not be the only agency attracted by non formal education.

97. Mr. Adams also agreed with the importance of non-formal education. The Bank believes in supporting basic education which, as shown by its analytical work, has the highest economic return to any investment the Bank can support. This, however, does not detract from the role of non-formal education, essential for those who missed the initial opportunity and who may still have many years of active life in front of them. He also agreed that capacity development has different meanings, in terms of individual skills and of institutional development, and added that what was equally important was capacity utilization. Capacity often exists and is poorly utilized; civil service systems should be devised so as to ensure the best possible use of capacities.

98. Mr. Samassekou thought that it would be desirable to consider the problem of dropouts. In Mali, the rate of wastage, both at the primary and at the secondary level, is extremely high. The trend in Mali is to attempt to consolidate formal education and to develop non formal education, hoping in the end to overcome this distinction. The introduction of African languages in the educational system, formal and non formal, is one of the means to this end. He concluded by emphasizing a few important considerations: vision is essential; population should be mobilized with this vision in mind; capacity for negotiating with the technical and financial partners should be developed at all levels.

Statement on behalf of the Minister of Cooperation of France

99. During a lunch which he hosted on behalf of Mr. Jacques Godfrain, Minister of Cooperation of France, who was away on a mission, Mr. Jean-Michel Severino, Director of Development, Ministry of Cooperation, welcomed the participants to the meeting of the DAE which was taking place in France for the second time.

100. Mr. Severino emphasized the important part that assistance to the development of education has in the French cooperation programme. About one quarter of all resources of the Ministry of Cooperation goes to the sector of education. As of 1996, 71 countries - all the signatories of the Lomé Convention
PART ONE: SUBSTANTIVE SESSIONS

and South Africa - will benefit from this assistance. Close to 2,000 teachers are posted to various countries and this assistance is increasingly being channelled into training of trainers, institutional advice and pedagogical support, with a view to strengthening national capacities. Coordination involving all the partners is one of the major concerns of the French authorities and this is why they welcomed the creation of the DAE and are happy to note its success which is a model of what should be the dialogue between partners to development action.

101. The main theme of this meeting - ‘Formulating Education Sector Policy’ - is particularly important. The quality and the solidity of commitment in favor of education depend on a satisfactory policy formulation. The major role of the development of education in the public policy should be fully recognized and publicized. Preparation of overall programs in the field of education should give rise to a genuine mobilization around major national issues. A national consensus on educational problems and the involvement of all elements of society are highly desirable and they are closely linked to efforts towards building a democratic society which are now so courageously pursued in Africa.

102. The presentation of the various African experiences during this meeting was extremely useful. Among the conclusions which can be drawn from these experiences, mention may be made of the need to involve the entire administrative structure of a country, to organize the largest possible dialogue and an effort to explain, to inform, and to invite the contribution of all component parts of the society. The importance of an appropriate methodology was also shown during the discussions. The discussion on the social recognition of the place of education in national life is a moment of truth, involving both the present concerns and the future of the nation. The role of the funding agencies, or rather of the development partners as they are now called, is defined more clearly: while a discussion, on the volume and the nature of the resources they can bring is legitimate, they can only intervene within the perspectives and the framework defined by the countries themselves.

103. Mr. Severino then recalled that 1996 had been proclaimed by the OAU as the Year of Education in Africa. He concluded by paying tribute to the outgoing Executive Secretary of the DAE, Mr. Christopher Shaw, and welcoming his successor, and by stressing that French Cooperation will continue to be an active partner in the common undertaking.

Small discussion groups

104. For the purpose of substantive discussions, drawing on the background paper, the keynote speeches and the panel presentations, the meeting was divided into ten small discussion groups, each of which met twice during the session. A short list of questions to be discussed (reproduced in Annex 3) had been prepared by the secretariat to assist in the work of the groups. A short list containing a summary of the issues arising from the discussion groups was prepared and circulated (Annex 4).

Summary of the plenary and of the small groups

105. The session during which the overall conclusions of the panels and of the small groups were presented and discussed was chaired by Mr. Jacques Hallak, Director of the International Institute of Educational Planning and Vice President Ex-Officio of the DAE. These conclusions were presented by Ms. Paulette Moussavou-Missambo, Minister of National Education, Youth and Sports of Gabon, Mr. David Berk,
106. Ms. Moussavou-Missambo presented the conclusions of the panel session on policy implementation which she chaired earlier that day. One of the conclusions was that it was the role of the government to assume the responsibility for this process. The first stage in the definition of an educational policy ought to be a wide national consultation encompassing all interested groups. Objectives should be defined and assigned to all the stakeholders in education: the ministry staff, the teachers, the parents, the students, the unions, the civil society. After the problems have been identified and a list of recommendations drawn, the government should prepare an implementation programme which must be preceded by sectoral technical studies, an evaluation of the costs and a timetable. At that stage the funding agencies should be invited to contribute, either through direct negotiations or in a joint forum. In this connection it was noted that donor coordination was sometimes lacking. Finally, appropriate mechanisms should be established for the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation. Regular evaluation was of the utmost importance. A communications policy should be designed so that the actions undertaken may be better known and also that they may benefit from feedback from the stakeholders. An important issue which emerged from the panel was the desirability of political stability, as the programmes are designed for a period which may go from five to ten years.

107. Mr. Berk drew a number of conclusions from the point of view of multilateral agencies. He noted in the first place the concept of relations between equal partners on which the African ministers insisted during the Angers meeting two years ago and which made a lot of progress since then. Increasingly the ownership of programmes is in the African hands and the concept of partnership develops: partnership between the countries and the agencies, and partnership between the various countries in Africa which have a lot to learn from each other. He then insisted on the importance of vision and of goals for the future, as education is a long term process. These goals have to be defined: when to reach universal primary education, when to put all the girls in school, what kind of education is desirable. The options must be defined by the African countries themselves.

108. Progress can also be seen in policy formulation: the number of countries which are developing sectoral programmes is increasing and this is a message of hope. The participation of ministries of finance and of planning in this process is desirable and education should be related to macro-economic situation. In this context use should be made of the East Asian experience which shows that investment first in the primary education and later in secondary education is one of the key factors of economic success. Wide national participation is necessary, as is the participation of the funding agencies who should be involved not only in financing programmes but in their formulation so as to support these programmes technically from the outset - without prejudice to their
national ownership. New methods of funding agencies' participation are desirable, such as joint appraisal missions, common implementation and accounting arrangements, common procurement and joint supervision missions, in order to ease the burden on the administrative capacities of the countries. Implementation is probably the hardest part of the process, but the most important. Structures for supervising the implementation and for regular reviews are necessary; they should be national, but the funding agencies may be associated in some way.

109. With regard to the World Bank, its thinking and behaviour are changing, albeit it still requires some time. The Bank is now more focused on the client and will listen to him, trying to make him benefit from the Bank's world-wide experience. The adjustment programmes will go on, but nearly all these programmes now include an effort to protect or increase expenditure in the social sectors - sometimes not only against the judgement of the International Monetary Fund but also of the finance ministries of the countries themselves. Bank lending for education is increasing and it is expected that it will continue to do so. The Bank attempts not to be as overbearing as in the past. It does not have to be the lead agency but expects to work together under the lead of the government. On the other hand, it pays more attention to results and to good implementation. It will continue to be a good partner with the African countries and with the other funding agencies in support of government developed sector programmes and under the government leadership, while at the same time attempting to go beyond the government sector in the direction of the civil society.

110. Ms. Volan spoke from the perspective of the bilateral agencies. Recalling a remark made at an earlier session that there has been no development cooperation, she said that hard work was necessary to transform our cooperation into true cooperation between equals. Power and responsibilities should be transferred to partners in the South. This puts demands on both actors in the development game. The developing countries, including their ministers of education, need to define clear-cut policies and priorities; they should tell the funding agencies what they want and not what they think the funding agencies want to hear. If there are to be equal partners, both sides should feel that they benefit from the cooperation. The leadership in the donor countries ought to reinforce the message that development work is an investment in the future of these countries. A clear policy in the developing countries is a good starting point for negotiation and both parties should be very clear on their respective roles. Obviously the funding agencies have their own policy and their own criteria for cooperation, but they can only channel their funds through the systems of their partner countries and place all responsibility for implementation in their hands.

111. Ms. Volan then made a few remarks about the political commitment for furthering gender equity and empowerment of women. The funding agencies should be sensitive to this process and to assist it. The education sector must never forget that half of those affected by its policies are girls and that many of them are absent from schools. The issue concerns not only access, but also retention and quality. The funding agencies have to prove that their commitment is also manifested in the allocation of resources. Ms. Volan then mentioned the important role of FAWE which was established indirectly through the DAE. FAWE's
work is based on the commitment and the insight of the African women themselves. It should be allowed to grow and provided with the resources necessary to this end.

112. Mr. Hallak made a presentation of the main points which emerged from the discussions in small groups. These points were submitted to the meeting in a synoptic form (see Annex 4). While emphasizing how difficult it was to present in one table the results of very rich discussions which took place in these ten groups, Mr. Hallak thanked Mr. David R. Evans who had prepared this table. Mr. Hallak drew the attention of the meeting to the items which represented new ideas which had appeared during the small group discussions (marked with an asterisk in the table).

113. Mr. Hallak emphasized some of these new ideas. Under ‘Context for national policy reviews’ the idea was expressed that mature systems should establish a permanent policy review body - not necessarily a new and complex bureaucracy. In the second point, ‘Political and technical rationales’, emphasis was put on the political will which is essential to overcome resistance of vested interests. It was noted that technical work was necessary, but that it can only be effective if it serves as the background for political action. Any change entails resistance and political will is necessary to overcome resistance to change. Under the heading ‘Broad participation of stakeholders’ which attempts identify the stakeholders, it was considered essential that civil society should participate actively. In Mr. Hallak’s view, this concerns not only unions, parents and associations, but in certain countries may apply also to members of parliament. The next section on ‘Policy formulation as a social learning process’ was particularly important. Any entity, any institution which does not undergo a permanent learning process is condemned to die. The original idea in this section was that the ministry of education itself must become a learning institution. No items identified by an asterisk appear in the following section on ‘Government and donor roles in policy formulation’. Mr. Hallak pointed out that it still appears difficult to define the respective roles of these two partners. He believes that entrusting full responsibility to the national leadership is more than a reform: it is a genuine cultural change and it requires a change in the mentality. The last section is entitled ‘Strong and consistent leadership is essential’. This is a fundamental issue and such leadership is not always available. Two new ideas are expressed in this section: processes should be transparent and stability of technical staff is necessary to provide continuity - an important notion, in particular when political stability is weak.

114. Mr. Gustafsson attempted to sum up the substantive discussions. He noticed that two key words stood out very clearly from the discussions: capacity and partnership. They may mean different things to different people, but there is a general feeling that they represent something important. The challenge of the DAE is to say what they mean to us all, now and in the future. The confusion about capacity flows from our understanding of education and of the external and internal conditions for change. Difficulties come from the fact that we look at policy formulation in the widest possible context, international, national, regional, community, family etc. While we talk about education as an investment, we also agree that it has other dimensions, social, cultural etc.

115. There is a general agreement that there is no
stable environment. Instability is not necessarily a bad thing; it was pointed out that it was necessary to abandon apartheid in South Africa in order to create conditions for an educational reform. On the other hand, instability may be devastating, as in countries plagued by civil war. The issue of stability presents a dilemma. On the one hand, it is agreed that education is a long term process which requires continuity, but on the other hand it is recognized that educational systems must be responsive to new needs and changes outside of the education field. Many ideas have emerged that suggest that educational change is not a linear process and can be compared to raising a family rather than building a road. In order to ensure this continuity and stability, consensus building and capacity development are necessary. Capacity development is essentially a learning process. Dissemination of information is another key field which was mentioned in a number of discussion groups.

116. Much has been said about partnership and there is a striking change in discussions about this concept. It now means much more than several years ago when it was considered that sharing of information was enough to lead to coordination. The conviction is now that coordination can only be done by the country. This is an important change. Agencies are moving away from the traditional project model to a much wider concept based on the understanding of the whole process of educational change. The spirit of partnership has undoubtedly progressed a lot.

117. Coming to the issues of immediate concern to the DAE, Mr. Gustafsson mentioned the successful experience of groups such as FAWE or the Association of African Universities where there is a definite attempt to establish relationships and work closely with partners in Africa. He also mentioned that under the new Statutes, the Steering Committee has an important new role as a focus for dissemination of the results of the work of the DAE and for seeing to it that this work and the needs of Africa really match.

118. Mr. Hallak invited Mr. François Gauthier (Ministry of Cooperation, France) to open the discussion. Mr. Gauthier stressed the exceptional and friendly atmosphere of the deliberations and the manner in which all concerned listened to each other in a spirit of partnership. He thought that it would have been difficult to encounter in a field other than education such a warm dialogue and so much mutual understanding. Among the conclusions to be drawn, he attached particular importance to the political will which must preside over formulation of educational strategy. Two other basic concepts were: continuity which should exist at all levels and, in particular, in the administrative organization; participation, the largest possible participation of all the components of the society. These three concepts are crucial to solving the contradiction which was referred to in the discussions between the short term and the long term requirements. With regard to the French Cooperation, Mr. Gauthier said that it will reinforce its action in certain key areas such as communication technology and distance education which deserve more attention from the funding agencies. Growing attention will also be paid to the development of national capacities and of national expertise. Mr. Gauthier concluded that he was strongly impressed by the amount and the quality of the work accomplished and by the strong attendance, particularly at the ministerial level. He was confident that the results of this meeting will be felt in practical work in the years to come.
119. In the short discussion which followed the problem of expertise and of capacity building was mentioned on several occasions. It was suggested that the whole issue of technical support should be taken up at a future meeting. This area is closely connected with the building up of national technical expertise. One participant recalled that several speakers had called earlier upon the agencies to provide ‘best experts’ and wondered what was meant by that. It was explained that it was desirable for the agencies to provide experts who had the type of experience that could really help the country on particular issues. Another speaker pointed out that people were also available locally who had the expertise, the experience and the tradition required and that more use should be made of them. It was also proposed to make greater use of national universities in capacity building. Another idea expressed was that there was a great variety of experiences in the field of capacity development from which it was possible to draw.

120. One participant was impressed with the manner in which both the ministers and the donor representatives identified very concrete lists of things which can be done on both sides to improve the development of education. It takes time to learn more about these things but it would be desirable to draw upon this list for the orientation of future activities. He was also impressed with the list of issues which emerged out of the discussions in the small groups. He pointed out, however, that one thing was missing from this list, as it was missing from the presentations and the discussions in general, and that was a mention of the learners. We think more in terms of the inputs which we provide and not enough of what happens to them when the teachers and the children are together in the classroom.

121. One participant pointed out that higher education was an important part of the educational process and that it deserved greater attention from the funding agencies.

122. A few remarks were made about the orientations to be given to the action of the DAE. The DAE could both benefit from and contribute to some of the developments which are going on in Africa. One of these developments is the growing trends towards regionalization. The policy formulation process does not take place within isolated nations; there are common trends and aspirations of which account should be taken. Many materials are available in African countries which no doubt some countries would be prepared to make available free of charge. This is an input which could be brought to African education through the DAE. Distance education is one of the areas where materials are available. One speaker suggested that those African countries that are in a position to do so might contribute to the DAE.

Session concerning the Forum of African Women Educationalists

123. The activities and the program of the Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE) were presented during a session chaired by Ms. Grace Alele Williams (Professor of Mathematics Education, University of Lagos, Nigeria). A film prepared for FAWE was presented on this occasion.

124. Ms. Catherine Kainja (Malawi) reported on the activities of FAWE, in particular on the follow-up to the meeting of FAWE with the ministers of education of African countries which took place in Mauritius in September 1994. The main subject examined at that meeting was wastage in the education system in Africa,
in particular the high rate of drop-outs. Many factors affect this phenomenon; some of them are related to conditions at home and other to conditions in the school. Some of these factors are gender-specific, like teen-age pregnancy. The ministers showed a great interest in this issue and it was agreed to meet again in one year's time to review the developments.

125. To follow up on the results of the Mauritius meeting Ms. Kainja and another member of FAWE visited six countries in Africa: Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and Zanzibar. They were selected because their ministers were the first who responded to the invitation addressed by the Mauritius meeting to all the ministers to indicate if they needed any assistance for the follow-up of the meeting. Since then other ministers communicated with FAWE on this subject. The purpose of these visits was to see what was the degree of advocacy of girls' education shown by the ministers and their officials, to look at policy reviews initiated in the countries concerned, to review the programmes and activities undertaken to address the problem of drop-outs and to investigate all other problems concerning girl's education.

126. Ms. Kainja and her colleague were happy to find that the interest shown by the ministers was shared by their officials and that they were even successful in passing on to their Heads of State, as evidenced by advocacy campaigns which some Presidents undertook personally. They also found that a lot of research was going on in some countries on the issue of drop-outs and of possible measures to counteract it, but that in some of those countries this research still needs to be translated into programmes and activities. There are some other countries, however, where the reasons for the high rate of drop-out still require research. Most of the questions raised in Mauritius remain yet to be answered: what is the extent of wastage in schools, particularly due to pregnancy, who is affected and how, what are the perceptions of the groups affected, of the families, of the teachers, what is the economic, ethical and social significance of the problem, and what remedial measures ought to be taken. The mission and the ministers agreed that more data are required. It is also desirable to desegregate the data already available so as to know better the impact on girls as well as on boys. The importance of these data for policy formulation was also acknowledged.

127. The mission was pleased to note that almost all the countries are involved in the advocacy for girls' education. In most of the countries there are national campaigns in order to sensitize the communities about the problem of drop-outs and about the specific problems of girls. The ministers have shown a strong personal commitment. But more work remains to be done and there will be another visit of FAWE to these countries to see what measures have been taken as the result of the first visit.

128. With regard to policy formulation, the mission found that four out of the six countries have a policy to enable a pregnant girl to return to school after delivery, but measures on this issue are still under consideration in the other two countries. However, even with regard to the countries when this policy has been in effect for several years Ms. Kainja believes that it is necessary to find out what is the impact of the policy on girls' education and how many are affected by it. The mission found that some officials in the Ministry of Education were not aware of the policy. Measures should be taken to obtain a national consensus on this issue and to
inform all administrators, principals and institution heads of the policy and of its practical implications. It is also desirable to find out in what way the policy influences other policies of the Ministry of Education and also other ministries.

129. More programmes are planned to encourage girls to enrol and to remain in schools and to achieve better results, especially in mathematics and science. These programmes should be expanded and their implementation encouraged. There are also programmes to sensitize the girls to the importance of doing away with sexual activity before the completion of education or before marriage, as well as programmes to take care of pregnant girls so that they should not lose the results of the schooling they have had. Most of these programmes are pilot programmes which should be evaluated and extended. There is also the problem of the shortage of female teachers in rural areas. Another problem is that of harassment of women and girls in schools.

130. FAWE is obviously highly interested in this problem of wastage. A lot of resources are lost because girls do not complete the educational cycle. The film to be presented deals with attitudes, both in school and at home, in two countries, but similar problems are no doubt encountered in other countries. Ms. Kainja concluded her statement by recalling that FAWE, in cooperation with other interested partners, is ready to help the ministers to implement the programmes they are planning for the sake of sustainable development and for the sake of girls.

131. The Chairperson then introduced briefly the film called These girls are missing. The film is about school experiences of girls in two countries: Guinea and Malawi. It illustrates the impact of the home life of the girls and of the attitudes of the communities on their school experience. It also deals with the institutional environment and its effects on the girls’ learning. Ms. Williams pointed out that in many countries the need for girls’ education is not perceived; girls are not seen, they are not heard. FAWE is in a position to give a voice to the girls who have seldom an opportunity to speak for themselves. To be able to perform this task we must listen to the girls, to understand better their perceptions, to know them better. Ms. Williams asked the audience to voice their opinions about the film.

132. After the film was shown a discussion took place and a number of remarks and suggestions were voiced. There was a widespread feeling that the film should focus more on the benefits which the girls can draw from education on the one hand, and on the reasons which keep them out of school on the other.
PART TWO: CAUCUS OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

133. The Caucus of African Ministers of Education held three sessions in private during the biennial. Mr. Armoogum Parsuramen, Minister of Education and of Science of Mauritius, chaired the meetings. Close to 40 ministers and heads of delegations attended the meetings. The deliberations and conclusions of the Caucus were then presented to the plenary by Mr. Aliou Baniré Diallo, Minister of Higher Education, of Scientific Research and of Culture of Guinea.

Reports from ministerial consultations

134. The Caucus examined the reports of the following meetings:

- Meeting of the Bureau of African Ministers of Education, held at Grande Baie (Mauritius), on 10-12 April 1995;

- Consultation of the Ministers of Education of Southern Africa on the theme 'From transition to cooperation—planning in a period of instability', held in Harare on 28-29 August 1995;

- Consultation of the African Ministers of Education on the theme 'Basic education, with emphasis on school attendance of girls' held in Conakry on 21-22 August 1995;

- Report on the ‘Prospects of Ségou’ and on OAU’s declaration announcing 1996 Year of Education in Africa.

Interministerial cooperation on distance education

135. Mr. Parsuramen made a statement on the experience of his country in the field of distance education and distributed documents on this subject.

Discussion on of the Caucus of African Minister's work plan and priorities

136. The Ministers congratulated the Bureau for contributing to increasing the place and role of the African Ministers within the DAE. They also expressed thanks to Mr. Christopher Shaw for the quality and efficiency he has bestowed upon the DAE.

137. The Ministers also expressed their satisfaction with the considerable output of the DAE and the different working groups which have contributed to clarifying the issues which educationalists are encountering in Africa. The Caucus of African Ministers welcomed the new impetus given by the Ségou Prospects Observatory to regional integration through education. The Caucus was pleased to note that this trend is gradually growing stronger, thereby proving that the three dimensions of the Ségou Prospects, i.e. the spirit, will and operational application, are increasingly being shared.
Concerning the DAE’s operations and the direction of its activities, the Ministers recommended the following measures designed to increase African ownership of the DAE’s modus operandi and results:

- Improving documentation distribution channels for wider and timely dissemination in various languages.
- Looking for closer links between working group topics and priority education needs as defined in Africa.
- Involving institutions and African expertise more closely in studies and working group activities so as to build endogenous capacities.
- Emphasizing the sharing of experience and cooperation among African countries, as well as the implementation of national policies.
- Organizing sub-regional meetings by units that are more relevant than language groups.
- Moving DAE’s structures and bodies closer to the African continent by alternating the venue of the biennial meetings (Africa - Europe - Africa - America,...) and gradually transferring it’s Secretariat there. In this respect, the caucus supported Senegal’s offer to host the DAE’s next biennial.
- Active participation of members of the Bureau in the revision of texts concerning the organization and operation of the DAE.
- Updating of information on the DAE and its activities and broad dissemination directed to members of the Caucus.
- Participation of a member of the DAE Secretariat in the Ministers’ meetings.

On the 1996 DAE Program, the Ministers recommended that it be drawn up in conjunction with Africa’s Year of Education so that the activities planned will contribute to its success. Suggestions were made regarding various aspects of the 1996 programme:

- Meetings: the Ministers expressed a desire for the DAE to support the seminar-workshop planned for April 1996 in Bangui (as recommended in Bamako on the occasion of the launching of Africa's Year of Education, 5-7 October 1995) on the use of African languages in the continent’s educational systems. Furthermore, the DAE was invited to consider holding a special meeting in Africa on the occasion of Africa’s Year of Education, and to support efforts to enhance the momentum of the ‘Ségou Prospects’. The Forum also recommended that the DAE supports actively the implementation of OAU’s Resolution CM-RES 1603 declaring 1996 Africa’s Year of Education.
- Working Groups: the Ministers emphasized the importance of themes such as literacy, non-formal education, distance teaching and early childhood education.
- Publications and case studies: the Ministers stressed the importance of carrying out studies that highlight successful experiences in education in sub-regional integration and policy formulation in other countries such as Chad.
- Support to national policy implementation: the
Ministers expressed the need for support in order to improve education policy monitoring through the strengthening of internal capacities in data collection and processing (particularly statistics) and in research on education.

- Vision of the education systems: the Ministers made an appeal for a more global vision of the education systems by the DAE's more active support to subsectors of education, particularly higher education.

- African contributions: the Ministers called upon African countries to promote internal contributions for the development of education in Africa through the exchange of experiences and information. In this regard, they invited all of the African partners to participate actively and support each other mutually. They also recommended the creation of a budget line called ‘African Contributions’ in the DAE budget. They also suggested the establishment of a resource bank to support African solidarity programs.

140. Regarding the composition of the Bureau of African Ministers of Education, the Caucus agreed that it is necessary to share responsibilities on the basis of the principles of balance and equity. To this aim, it was decided:

- that the Bureau would hereafter be constituted on the basis of the representation of the various sub-regions in sub-Saharan Africa, and
- that the principle of a rotation among states by alphabetical order will be practiced to renew Bureau membership, which would be for two-year terms.

141. The Caucus adopted the propositions of a small ad hoc group, comprised of the Bureau, Sierra Leone, Angola, Malawi and Uganda, which was given the task of defining the concrete procedures to implement the rules thus established.

Countries have been grouped into five different regions:

1. Southern Africa: (1) Angola; (2) Botswana; (3) Lesotho; (4) Malawi; (5) Mozambique; (6) Namibia; (7) South Africa; (8) Swaziland; (9) Zambia; (10) Zimbabwe.

2. Western Africa: (1) Benin; (2) Burkina Faso; (3) Cape Verde; (4) Côte d’Ivoire; (5) Gambia; (6) Ghana; (7) Guinea; (8) Guinea-Bissau; (9) Liberia; (10) Mali; (11) Mauritania; (12) Niger; (13) Nigeria; (14) Sierra Leone; (15) Senegal; (16) Togo.

3. Eastern Africa: (1) Eritrea; (2) Ethiopia; (3) Kenya; (4) Rwanda; (5) Somalia; (6) Sudan; (7) Uganda; (8) Tanzania.

4. Central Africa: (1) Burundi; (2) Cameroon; (3) Congo; (4) Gabon; (5) Equatorial Guinea; (6) Central African Republic; (7) Sao Tomé et Principe; (8) Chad; (9) Zaïre.

5. Indian Ocean countries: (1) Comores; (2) Djibouti; (3) Madagascar; (4) Mauritius; (5) Seychelles.

142. The Caucus elected the Bureau representatives of each of the five sub-regions:

Southern Africa: Angola and Namibia.
Western Africa: Guinea and Ghana
Eastern Africa: Uganda
Central Africa: Cameroon
Indian Ocean: Mauritius

Among these representatives Henry Sawyerr, Ghana was elected President and Diallo Hadja Aïcha Bah, Guinea, Vice-President.

Other business

143. Regarding Rwanda’s appeal for help in reconstructing its educational system, the Caucus of African Ministers recommended that the DAE and its financial and technical partners seek appropriate funding for programmes aimed at:

- improving the educational planning and management capacities;

- developing pre-service and in-service teacher training;

- developing and introducing new curricula to stress education for peace, justice, tolerance and human rights;

- rehabilitating and reconstructing school facilities and equipments; and,

- developing technical education and vocational training.

144. The Caucus stressed its readiness to bring its support to Rwanda and Liberia. Armoogum Parsuramen, Minister of Education and Science of Mauritius announced his country’s contribution of $10,000 in support of Rwanda. The Caucus asked Rwanda and Liberia to submit to the Bureau specific requests.

145. UNESCO General Conference: the Ministers expressed their interest in international cooperation priorities in the field of basic education, and recommended that the UNESCO conference select as priority targets those African countries which have the lowest primary education enrollment and literacy rates in an effort to eliminate illiteracy and promote education for all.
146. The closing session was chaired by Mr. Ingemar Gustafsson, Chairperson of the DAE. He announced that Mr. Shaw would be leaving the post of Executive Secretary of the DAE and would be replaced by Mr. Richard Sack.

147. Mr. Shaw said that this session was supposed to be a business session of the DAE. However, practically all the issues concerning the programme of work of the DAE had already been discussed and the participants were fully familiar with this programme. He drew the attention to a document which was available to the participants: *Historical Reports from the Working Groups*. This document relates what the working groups, which are the essential part of the DAE, had been doing in the past and what they were doing at the present. The convenors of the groups will now work on future programmes, on the basis of the conclusions and recommendations of the Caucus of Ministers and of the Biennial Plenary Meeting. The Steering Committee will review the revised work programmes of the working groups. Mr. Shaw also drew the attention of the meeting to some of the products of the work accomplished by the DAE Secretariat. One was the second edition of the ‘Statistical Profile of Education in sub-Saharan Africa’, covering the period 1990-1993 (the first edition covered the years up to 1990). This profile also exists in the form of a computer program. Products he mentioned included the first successful experience published by the DAE on the redeployment of teachers in Guinea, and a report on the coordination of external assistance to education in Namibia.

148. Mr. Shaw then informed the meeting that he had been closely working with Mr. Sack for the preceding two months in preparing the future budget, so that there was an orderly hand-over from the outgoing to the incoming Secretary.

149. Mr. Sack said that he was very honored by the prospect of working with the participants. He recalled that the DAE Secretariat was basically demand-driven and requested all concerned to provide inputs on the kind of services they expect from the DAE. He emphasized the spirit of friendship and of partnership – a word often used during the proceedings – in which he hoped to be able to perform his duties.

150. Ms. Aïcha Bah was then invited to make a closing address to the meeting. She expressed her satisfaction over the friendly atmosphere which presided over these four days of meetings between the African ministers, the development partners and the professionals of education. She identified the recognition of the responsibility of Africans and the involvement of women in development as the two overriding themes of the discussions. The Biennial meeting in Tours marked thereby a profound change in the relationship between the partners in the field of education in Africa.

151. The joint efforts of all concerned should concentrate on the preparation of the action to be undertaken in the near future in order to pull African education
out of the critical situation in which it is now. The DAE is precisely there for this purpose, with its working groups which are equipped to assist the African countries in managing and in monitoring their educational systems, while fully drawing on the national expertise of the countries concerned. The ministers must exercise their political responsibilities with the help of technical, pedagogical and financial instruments geared to facilitating their decisions. Their solidarity is particularly important and useful and there is a clear need for a constant exchange of views on their common problems.

152. Ms. Aïcha Bah then recalled the ‘Prospects of Ségou’ which had led to the proclamation, on 7 October 1995 in Bamako, of the Year of Education in Africa. These activities should lead to a greater sub-regional integration of educational activities. Two other major events must be mentioned: the mid-term evaluation of national plans of action on education for all and the 4th World Conference on Women which stressed the primordial role of women in the development of Africa and the priority which ought to be given to their education. The time has now come for specific actions in the field, to be carried out urgently but not hastily, through international solidarity but not simple assistance. The ministers must surmount the daily burden of their difficulties and to assume genuine management of their educational systems.

153. Ms. Aïcha Bah concluded by thanking Mr. Shaw for his valuable contribution to the cause of education in Africa and by telling Mr. Sack that he can count on support in his demanding task.

154. Mr. Gustafsson, after having thanked all those that contributed to the success of the meeting, declared the meeting closed.
ANNEX 1 : LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

I. African Ministers:

ANGOLA
Hon. Mr. João Manuel BERNARDO
Minister
Ministry of Education
B. P. 1281
Luanda
Phone: (244)2-321.709   Fax: (244)2-321.592

Mrs. Ana Maria GUIMARAES
National Director
Technical and Professional Training
Ministry of Education
B. P. 1281
Luanda
Phone: (244)2-321709   Fax: (244)2-321709

BENIN
Hon. Mr. Karim L. DRAMANE
Minister
Ministry of National Education
B. P. 348
Cotonou
Phone: (229) 30.16.98   Fax: (229) 30.18.48

Mr. BABIO
Secretary General
National Commission of Benin to UNESCO
Ministry of National Education
B. P. 348
Cotonou
Phone: (229) 30.16.98   Fax: (229) 30.18.48

BOTSWANA
Hon. Mr. Gaositwe K. T. CHIEPE
Minister
Ministry of Education
Private Bag 005 Gabarone
Fax: (267) 31.35.37

Mrs. Hermetinah S. MOGAMI
Deputy Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education
Private Bag 005
Gabarone
Fax: (267) 31.35.37

Hon. Mr. Seydou Baworo SANOU
Minister
Ministry of Basic Training and Literacy
03 BP 7032
Ouagadougou 03
Phone: (226) 335.708/308.50   Fax: (226) 308.494
Mr. Julien DABOUÉ
Director of Studies and Planning
Ministry of Basic Training and Literacy
03 BP 7032
Ouagadougou 03
Fax: (226) 308.494

Mr. Mahamadou OUEDRAOGO
Director General of Higher Education
Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education and Scientific Research
B. P. 7046
Ouagadougou
Phone: (226) 31.00.35

BURUNDI
Hon. Mr. Liboire NGENDAHAYO
Minister
Ministry of Higher and Secondary Education
B. P. 1990
Bujumbura
Phone: (257) 22.55.14/22.51.12 Fax: (257) 22.68.39

CAMEROON
Hon. Mr. Peter Agbor TABI
Minister
Ministry of Higher Education
B. P. 1457
Yaoundé
Phone: (237) 22.13.70 Fax: (237) 22.97.24

Hon. Ms. Isabelle TOPKANOU
Secretary of State for National Education
Ministry of National Education
B. P. 7109
Yaoundé
Phone: (237) 23.28.07 Fax: (237) 20.92.52

Mr. Zang LAURENT
Head of Division for University Cooperation
Ministry of Higher Education
B. P. 1457
Yaoundé
Phone: (237) 22.13.70 Fax: (237) 22.97.24

Mr. Medjo MINTON
Chief of Mission to the Prime Minister
Ministry of Higher Education
B. P. 1457
Yaoundé
Phone: (237) 22.13.70 Fax: (237) 22.97.24

CAP-VERT
Mrs. Maria Rosa BARBOSA
Ministry of Education and Sports
92 Bd. Malesherbes
75008 Paris
FRANCE
Phone: (33)1-42.25.63.31 Fax: (33)1-42.25.83.52

Mr. Raul BARBOSA
Permanent Delegate of Cap-Vert to UNESCO
Ministry of Education and Sports
92 Bd. Malesherbes
75008 Paris
FRANCE
Phone: (33)1-42.25.63.31 Fax: (33)1-42.25.83.52

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Hon. Mr. David ZOKOE
Secretary of State for National Education
Ministry of National Education
B. P. 35 Bangui
Phone: (236) 61.23.88 Fax: (236) 61.64.94
CHAD
Mr. Abdel-Hamid ABAKAR
Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports
B.P. 730
Djamen
Phone: (235) 51.42.43

Mr. Koko ABDERAMANE
Executive Secretary
National Commission for Education and Training
B.P. 730
Djamen

COMORES
Hon. Mr. Aboudou SOEFO
Minister
Ministry of National Education and Professional and Technical Training
B. P. 73
Moroni
Phone: (269) 73.27.23 Fax: (269) 73.27.23

DJIBOUTI
Hon. Mr. Guirre Waberi AHMED
Minister
Ministry of National Education
B.P. 16
DJIBOUTI
Phone: (253) 35.09.97 Fax: (253) 35.42.34

ERITREA
Mr. Amanuel GIORGIO
Economic Officer
Embassy of the State of Eritrea
382 Avenue Louise
1050 - Bruxelles, BELGIUM
Phone: (322) 644.2401 Fax: (322) 644.2399

Mr. Daniel YOHANNES
First Secretary
Consulate of Eritrea
Paris, FRANCE

ETHIOPIA
Mr. Tegegn Nuresu WAKO
Head
Education Management Information Systems
Ministry of Education
P.O. Box 33950
Addis Ababa
Phone: (251)1-12.34.92 Fax: (251)1-55.08.77

GABON
Hon. Mrs. Paulette MOUSSAVOU-MISSAMBO
Minister
Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports
B. P. 6
Libreville
Phone: (241) 72.44;61 Fax: (241) 76.69.37

Hon. Mr. Gaston MOZOGO-OVONO
Minister
Ministry of Higher Education
B.P. 2217
Libreville
Phone: (241) 76.07.64 Fax: (241) 76.43.45

Mr. Jean-Bernard IKANIA
Communications Consultant
Ministry of National Education
B.P. 6
Libreville
Phone: (241) 72.44.61/76.14.52 Fax: (241) 76.14.48
Mr. Nicolas MBA-ZUE  
Technical Consultant  
Ministry of Higher Education  
B.P. 2796  
Libreville  
Phone: (241) 76.07.64 Fax: (241) 76.43.45

Mrs. Jeanne NYALENDO  
Director General of Training and Teaching  
Ministry of National Education  
B. P. 6  
Libreville  
Phone: (241) 77.34.22/77.34.22 Fax: (241) 76.16.48

GAMBIA  
Hon. Mrs. Satang JOW  
Minister  
Ministry of Education  
Bedford Place Building  
Banjul  
Phone: (220) 228.231 Fax: (220) 224.180

GHANA  
Hon. Mr. Harry SAWYERR  
Minister  
Ministry of Education  
P. O. Box M.45  
Accra  
Phone: (233)21-665.421 Fax: (233)21-662.718

Mr. J. S. DALRYMPLE-HAYFRON  
Chief Director  
Ministry of Education  
P. O. Box M445  
Accra  
Phone: (233)21-666-070

GUINEA  
Hon. Mr. Aliou BANIRE DIALLO  
Minister  
Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Culture  
B. P. 2201  
Conakry  
Phone: (224) 41.35.39 Fax: (224) 41.35.39

Hon. Mrs. Aïcha DIALLO BAH  
Minister  
Ministry of Pre-University and Professional Training  
B. P. 3385/2201  
Conakry  
Phone: (224) 41.34.84 Fax: (224) 41.34.84

Mr. Modi Sory BARRY  
Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific and Cultural Research  
B. P. 2201  
Conakry  
Phone: 411643

Mr. Jean DELACROIX CAMARA  
Chief Consultant for Educational Policies  
Ministry of Pre-University and Professional Training  
B. P. 2201  
Conakry  
Phone: 41.34.41 Fax: 41.34.41

Mr. Saïdou SOUARE  
National Coordinator for PASE  
Ministry of Pre-University and Professional Training  
B. P. 2201  
Conakry  
Phone: 41.34.41 Fax: 41.34.41
GUINEA-BISSAU
Hon. Mr. Ibrahim SAW
Minister
Ministry of National Education
B. P. 353, Rua Aerolinocruz
Bissau
Phone: (245) 20.11.77 Fax: (245) 20.14.00

Mr. Mário NOSOLINY
Inspector General for Education
Ministry of National Education
Caixa Postal 353
Phone: 20.14.00 Fax: 20.14.00

IVORY COAST
Mrs. Alice KOUADIO
Director
Ministry of National Education
B. P. V. 120
Abidjan

KENYA
Hon. Mr. Yuda KOMORA
Assistant Minister
Ministry of Education
P. O. Box 30040
Nairobi
Phone: (254)2-228.411 Fax: (254)2-214287

LESOTHO
Hon. Mr. Tseliso MAKHAKHE
Minister
Ministry of Education
P. O. Box 47
Maseru
Phone: (266) 317.856 Fax: (266) 310.206

M. T.G. KHATI
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education
P. O. Box 47
Maseru
Phone: (266) 312.397/ 323.956

LIBERIA
Mrs. Hawah GOLL-KOTCHI
Secretary General
Liberian National Commission for Unesco
Ministry of Education
P.O. Box 9013
Monrovia
Phone: (231) 225.008/ 226.06 Fax:231-226406/ 226216

MADAGASCAR
Hon. Mr. William MAROLAHY
Minister
Ministry of National Education
B.P. 261
Anosy Antananarivo
Phone: (261)2-28625 Fax: (261)2-24765

Nairobi
Mrs. Josiane RABETOKOTANY
Ministry of National Education
B.P. 331
Antananarivo
Phone: (261)2-26464  Fax: (261)-2-29213

M ALAWI
Hon. Mr. Cassim CHILUMPHA
Minister
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
P.B. 328
Lilongwe 3
Phone: (265) 783.452  Fax: (265) 782.040

Mr. Stanley CHAMDIMBA
Chief Education Planning Officer
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
P.B. 328
Lilongwe 3
Phone: (265) 783.452  Fax: (265) 782.040

Hon. Mrs. Catherine M. CHIPEMBERE
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Education
P.B. 328
Lilongwe 3
Phone: 784800/ 783053  Fax: 782873

M. Sam D. SAFULI
Secretary for Education
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
P.B. 328
Lilongwe 3
Phone: (265) 784.800  Fax: (265) 780.25

Mrs. Imelda Grace SALAMBA
Assistant Controller
Education Services
Ministry of Education
P.B. 328
Lilongwe 3
Phone: 784800

M ALI
Hon. Mr. Adama SAMASSEKOU
Minister
Ministry of Basic Education
B.P. 71
Bamako
Phone: (223) 22.21.26  Fax: (223) 22.77.67

Mr. Coulibaly N’GOLO
Ministry of Basic Education
B. P. 71
Bamako
Phone: (223) 22-77-67  Fax: (223) 22-77-67

Mr. Sahaloum OULD YOUBBA
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
B.P. 2468
Bamako
Phone: (223) 22.57.80  Fax: (223) 22.82.97

M AURITIUS
Hon. Mr. Armoogum PARSURAMEN
Minister
Ministry of Education and Science
Sun Trust Bldg, Edith Cavell St.
Port Louis
Phone: (230) 212.8574  Fax: (230) 208.7546
Mr. Motichand SEEBAH
Assistant Secretary
Ministry of Education and Science
Sun Trust Bldg, Edith Cavell St.
Port Louis
Phone: (230) 212.8909   Fax: (230) 208.7546

MOZAMBIQUE
Hon. Mr. Arnaldo Valente NHAVOTO
Minister
Ministry of Education
Ave. 24 de Julho, No. 167,
C.P. 34, Maputo
Phone: (258)1-490.998   Fax: (258)1-490.979

Mr. Virgilio Zacarias JUVANE
Director of Planning
Ministry of Education
Ave. 24 de Julho, No. 167
C.P. 34, Maputo
Phone: (258)1-490.892   Fax: (258)1-492.196

NAMIBIA
Hon. Mr. Nahas ANGULA
Minister
Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training,
Science and Technology
P.B. 13391
Windhoek
Phone: (264)61-207.2165   Fax: (264)61-207.277

Hon. Mr. John MUTORWA
Minister
Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
P.B. 13186
Windhoek
Phone: (264)61-293.3127   Fax: (264)61-231.037

Ms. Ulla KAAN
Advisor
Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
P.B. 23186
Windhoek
Phone: (264)61-293.3249   Fax: (264)61-231.037

Miss G. Tuli-Mevava NGHIYOONANYE
Senior Education Officer
Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
P.B. 13186
Windhoek
Phone: (264)61-293.3127   Fax: (264)61-231.037

NIGER
Hon. Mrs. DIALLO BOULI ALI
Minister
Ministry of National Education
B.P. 557 Niamey
Phone: (227) 72.22.80   Fax: (227) 72.21.05

NIGERIA
Hon. Ms. Veronica iyabode ANISULOWO
Minister of State for Education
Federal Ministry of Education
Ahmadu Bello Way, Victoria Island
P.M.B. 12573
Phone: (234)1-612.964   Fax: (234)1-612.856
Mrs. E.O. BABA NIJI
Deputy Director
Federal Ministry of Education
Ahmadu Bello Way, Victoria Island
P.M.B. 12573
Phone: (234)1-612.847 Fax: (234)1-612.856

RWANDA
Hon. Mr. Laurien NGIRABANZI
Minister
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
B.P. 622
Kigali
Phone: (250) 84974 Fax: (250) 84234

Tharcisse MUTAKE
Director of Executive Office
Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research
and Culture
B.P. 624 Kigali
Phone: (250) 82322 Fax: (250) 82162

SAO TOME ET PRINCIPE
Hon. Mr. Guilherme O. VIEGAS DOS RAMOS
Minister
Ministry of Education
C.P. 41
Phone: (239)12-21466 Fax: (239)12-21518
Mrs. Natalia P. da COSTA UMBELINO NETO
Secretary General
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
C.P. 41-S
Tomé
Phone: (239)12-21518 Fax: (239)12-21518

SENEGAL
Hon. Mr. Mamadou NDOYE
Minister
Ministry of Basic Education and National Languages
Administrative Building
Dakar
Phone: (221) 22.95.23 Fax: (221) 21.71.96

Mr. Diack Imame BOUSSO
Chief of Project for Girls Schooling
Ministry of Basic Education and National Languages
Administrative Building
Dakar
Phone: (221) 22-95-23 Fax: 221-21-71-96

SEYCHELLES
Mr. Mohammed AFIF
Principal Secretary
Ministry of Education and Culture
Mt. Fleuri
P.O. Box 48
Phone: (248) 22.47.77 Fax: (246) 22.48.59

SIERRA LEONE
Hon. Ms. Christiana A.M. THORPE
Secretary of State
Department of Education
New England Freetown
Phone: (232)22-240881 Fax: (232)22-240137

Mr. David Sanu KAI-ROGERS
Special Assistant to the Secretary
of State for Education
Department of Education
New England Freetown
Phone: (232)22-240612 Fax: (232)22-240137
**SOUTH AFRICA**
Hon. Mr. Sibusiso M.E. BENGU
Minister for Education
Ministry of Education
P.B. X603
Pretoria 0001
Phone: (27)12-326.0126  Fax: (27)12-323.5989

Ms. L. R. JIYA
Personal Assistant to the Minister
Department of Education
P.B. X895
Pretoria 0001
Phone: (27)12-312.5531  Fax: (27)12-324.5072

Mr. N.C. MANGANYI
Director-General
Department of Education
P.B. X895
Pretoria 0001
Phone: (27)12-312.5531  Fax: (27)12-324.5072

Mr. John SAMUEL
Deputy Director-General
Department of Education
P.B. X895
Pretoria 0001
Phone: (27)12-312.5446  Fax: (27)12-323.1413

**SUDAN**
Hon. Mr. Nureldin SATTI
Ambassador of Sudan and Permanent Delegate of Sudan to UNESCO
56, avenue Montaigne
75008 Paris
FRANCE
Fax: 45.63.66.73

**SWAZILAND**
Mr. Myekeni E. VILAKAZI
Principal Secretary
Ministry of Education
P.O. Box 39
Mbabane
Phone: (268) 42496  Fax: (268) 43880

**TANZANIA**
Mr. Mohammed G. BILAL
Principal Secretary
Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education
P.O. Box 2645
Dar es Salaam
Phone: (255) 51-46167  Fax: (255) 51-44244

**TOGO**
Hon. Mr. Bamouni Stanislas BABA
Minister
Ministry of Technical and Professional Training
B.P. 398
Lomé
Phone: (228) 21.20.97  Fax: (228) 21.89.34

Mr. Adjji Oteth AYASSOR
Secretary General
Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research
B.P. 12175
Lomé
Phone: (228) 21.24.73  Fax: (228) 22.07.83
Mr. Ampah JOHNSON
Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research
B. P. 12175
Lomé
Phone: (228) 21.24.73

Mr. Kougnima Tiléna MARTIN
Ministry of Technical and Professional Training
B. P. 398
Lomé
Phone: (228) 21.85.17 Fax: (228) 21.89.34

UGANDA
Hon. Mr. Amanya MUSHEGA
Minister
Ministry of Education and Sports
P. O. Box 7063
Kampala
Phone: (256) 41-257.200 Fax: (256) 41-230.437

Mr. Stephen B. MALOBA
Commissioner for Education
Ministry of Education and Sports
P. O. Box 7063
Kampala
Phone: (256) 41-233-651 Fax: (256) 41-230-437

ZAMBIA
Hon. Mr. Kabunda KAYONGO
Minister
Ministry of Science, Technology, and Science Education
P. O. Box 50464
Lusaka
Phone: (260) 1-252.099 Fax: (260) 1-252.951

M. Geoffrey LUNGWANGWA
Senior Lecturer
Educational Admin. and Policy Studies
University of Zambia
Lusaka

Mrs. G. M. MULAPESI
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Science & Technology
P. O. Box 50464
Lusaka
Phone: (260) 1-252.411 Fax: (260) 1-252.951

ZIMBABWE
Hon. Mr. Ignatius M. C. CHOMBO
Minister
Ministry of Higher Education
P. O. Box 275
Harare
Phone: (263) 4-734.051/735.633 Fax: (263) 4-734.075

Hon. Ms. Tenjiwe Virginia LESABE
Minister
Ministry of Education and Culture
Box CY 121 Causeway
Harare
Phone: (263) 4-734.051 Fax: (263) 4-302.288

Ambassador S. G. CHIGWEDERE
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education and Culture
Box CY 121 Causeway
Harare
Phone: (263) 4-734.051
Mr. J.J. CHITAUNO
Ministry of Higher Education
P.O. Box 275
Harare
Phone: (263)4-796.441

II. Invited Participants

Mr. Djibril DEBOURO
B. P. 06 2585
Cotonou
BENIN
Phone: (220) 33.09.66   Fax: (229) 30.03.26

Mr. D.K. FOBIH
Dean
Department of Primary Education
University of Cape Coast
Cape Coast
GHANA
Phone: (233) 042-33379   Fax: 233-42-32449

Mr. Joseph Pierre KAMANO
Chief
School Textbooks Division
National Pedagogic Institute
Conakry
GUINEA
Fax: (224) 41.47.40

Mr. Amoti Wa Irumba KATEBALIRWE
Consultant
Good Shepherd Child Centre
18 Old Kampala Road
P. O. Box 2424
Kampala,
UGANDA
Phone: (256)41-245.839   Fax: (256)41-220.397

Mr. Mohamed MAAMOURI
Associate Director, ILI
University of Pennsylvania
3910 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111
USA
Phone: (1)215-898.2100   Fax: (1)215-898.9804
Email Address: ili@literacy.upenn.edu

Mr. Glory J.T. MAKWATI
Chief Education Officer (Policy Planning)
Ministry of Education & Culture
Box CY 121
Causeway,
Harare
ZIMBABWE
Phone: (263)4-704361

Mr. Venancio MASSINGUE
Director of CIUEM
Eduardo Mondlane University
Maputo
MOZAMBIQUE
Phone: (258)1-492.601   Fax: (258)1-499.15.57

Mr. Barnabas OTAALA
Professor
Faculty of Education
University of Namibia
P. Bag 3301
Windhoek, NAMIBIA
Phone: (264)61-2063607   Fax: (264)61-207.2444
III. Bilateral Agencies:

Austrian Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Development Cooperation
Ms. Lydia SAADAT
Desk Officer for Education & Training
Minoritenplatz 9 Room 738
A-1014
Vienna, Austria
Phone: (43)1-53115/4470 Fax: (43)1-53185/272

Administration Générale de la Coopération au Développement (AGCD) de Belgique
Mr. Walter DHONT
Chief of mission
Brederodestr.
06 Bruxelles 1000
Phone: (32)2-500.63.44 Fax: (32)2-500.65.85

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
Mrs. Nicole BOUCHARD
Senior Development Officer
Africa and Middle East Branch
200 Promenade du Portage, Hull
Québec K1A OG4
Phone: (819) 994.4267 Fax: (819) 953.9453

Danish International Development Authority (DANIDA)
Mr. Knud MORTENSEN
Education Advisor
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2 Asiatisk Plads DK-1448
Copenhagen K
Phone: (45)33.92.02.21 Fax: (45)33.92.07.90

Administration Générale de la Coopération au Développement (AGCD) de Belgique
Mr. Walter DHONT
Chief of mission
Brederodestr.
06 Bruxelles 1000
Phone: (32)2-500.63.44 Fax: (32)2-500.65.85

Mrs. Christiane STRAUVEN
Research Officer
SEDEP
University of Liège
Bâtiment 32, Sart Tillman
4001 Liège
Phone: (32)41-66.20.72/66.20.56 Fax: (32)41-66.22.37
Mr. Poul Erik RASMUSSEN
Education Advisor
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2 Asiatisk Plads DK-1448
Copenhagen K
Phone: (45)33.92.02.21   Fax: (45)33.92.07.90

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Wim HOPPERS
Education Sector Specialist
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P. O. Box 20061
Bezuidenhoutseweg 67
2500 EB The Hague
Phone: (31)70-348.5162     Fax: (31)70-348.6436

Ms. A. M. KROON
Technical Advice Section
P. O. Box 20061
Bezuidenhoutseweg 67
2500 EB The Hague
Phone: (31)70-348.713     Fax: (31)70-348.6436
Email Address: akroon@dst.buza.nl

Mr. Arend J. MEERBURG
Director
P. O. Box 20061
Bezuidenhoutseweg 67
2500 EB The Hague
Phone: (31)70-348.4391     Fax: (31)70-348.6436

Mr. H. W. van de VEEN
Southern Africa Division
P. O. Box 20061
Bezuidenhoutseweg 67
2500 EB The Hague
Phone: (31)70-348.5162     Fax: (31)70-348.6607

Ms. K. Van de WETERING
Division for International Education
P. O. Box 20061
Bezuidenhoutseweg 67
2500 EB The Hague
Phone: (31)70-348.4391     Fax: (31)70-348.6436

Finnish International Development Agency
(FINNIDA)
Mr. Heikki KOKKALA
Education Adviser
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Dept. for International Development Cooperation
Katajanokanlaituri 3
FIN-00160 Helsinki
Phone: (358)0-1341.6435     Fax: (358)0-1341.6428

Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit
(GTZ, Germany)
Ms. Gisela FROMMER
DE 411, Postfach 51 80
65726 Eschborn
Phone: (49)61-96.79.1361/ 1366
Fax: (49)61-96.79.1115
Higher Education for Development Cooperation of Ireland (HEDCO)
Mr. Colin McGRADY
Chief Executive
65 Fitzwilliam Square
Dublin 2
Phone: (353)1-661.2085
Fax: (353)1-478.0952/676.8632

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
Mr. Seiichi KANAI
Resident Representative
8 rue Sainte-Anne
75001 Paris, France
Phone: (33)1-40.20.04.21 Fax: (33)1-40.20.97.68

Ms. Yumiko YOKOSEKI
Expert, Education Sector
8 rue Sainte-Anne
75001 Paris FRANCE
Phone: (33)1-40.20.04.21 Fax: (33)1-40.20.97.68

Ministère de la Coopération, France
Mr. André BAILLEUL
Head of West Africa Office
Education Research and Culture Division
20, rue Monsieur
75007 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.83.19.90 Fax: (33)1-47.34.70.91

Mr. Jean-Claude BALMES
Head of Sector Analysis and Support Office
Education Research and Culture Division
20, rue Monsieur
75007 Paris
Phone: (33)1-47.83.14.41 Fax: (33)1-47.34.64.05

Mr. Pierre FAUGERE
Chief of Mission
Educational Research and Culture Division
20, rue Monsieur
75007 Paris
Phone: (33)1-47.83.15.01 Fax: (33)1-43.06.87.79

Mr. François GAUTHIER
Assistant Director for Education
20, rue Monsieur
75007 Paris
Phone: (33)1-47.83.15.21 Fax: (33)1-43.06.87.79

Mr. Jean-Yves HOISNARD
Head of Geographic Office
Education Research and Culture Division
20, rue Monsieur
75007 Paris
Phone: (33)1-47.83.15.01 Fax: (33)1-43.06.87.79

Norwegian Ministry of Development Cooperation (NORAD)
Ms. Sissel VOLAN
Senior Education Adviser
P.B. 8034 Dep.
0030 Oslo
Phone: (47)22-31.44.00 Fax: (47)22-31.44.01
Mr. Per Ö. GRIMSTAD
Director-General
P.B. 8034
0030 Oslo Dep.
Phone: (47)22-31.44.00   Fax: (47)22-31.44.01

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms. Marianne LOE
Adviser
Department of Multilateral Development Coop.
P. O. Box 8114
N-0032 Oslo Dep.
Phone: (47)22-34.39.85   Fax: (47)22-34.95.80

Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA)
Mr. Ingemar GUSTAFSSON
Chairperson, DAE
Birger Jarlsgatan 61
S-105-25 Stockholm
Phone: (46)8-698.50.00   Fax: (46)8.698.56.51

Mr. Kjell NYSTRÖM
Head of Education Division
Birger Jarlsgatan 61
S-105-25 Stockholm
Phone: (46)8-698.50.00   Fax: (46)8.698.56.51
Email Address: kjell.nystrom@sida.se

Swiss Development Cooperation, Department for Development
Mr. Ahlin BYLL-CATARIA
Head of Programme
73 Eigerstrasse
CH-3003 Berne
Phone: (41)31-372.3428   Fax: (41)31-371.5721

British Overseas Development Administration (ODA)
Ms. Myra HARRISON
Chief Education Adviser
94 Victoria Street
London SW1E 5JL
Phone: (44)171-917.04.14   Fax: (44)171-917.06.52

Ms. Carew TREFFGARNE
Education Adviser
94 Victoria Street
London SW1E 5JL
Phone: (44)171-917.04.14   Fax: (44)171-917.02.87

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Mr. Ash HARTWELL
Policy Analyst
Africa Bureau
1815 N. Fort Myer Drive,
#600 Arlington, VA 22209
Phone: (1)703-527.5546   Fax: (1)703-527.4661

Ms. Gretchen HUMMON
Consultant
47 rue Malherbe
20000 Casablanca
M A R O C
Phone: (212) 2-26.29.63

Mrs. Joan LARCOM
Education Officer
REDSO West
B.P. 1712 rue Jesse Owens
Abidjan
CÔTE D’IVOIRE
Phone: (225) 41.45.28   Fax: (225) 41.35.44
Mrs. Julie REA  
Education Officer  
AFR/SD/HRD  
320 Twenty-First Street N.W.  
Washington DC 20523  
USA  
Phone: (1)202-647.8259   Fax: (1)202-647.2993

Mrs. Karen TIETJEN  
Educational Economist  
Africa Bureau  
320 Twenty-First Street N.W.  
Washington DC 20523  
USA  
Phone: (1)202-647.8259   Fax: (1)202-647.2993

Ms. Joy WOLF  
Educational Anthropologist  
Africa Bureau  
1815 N. Fort Myer Drive,  
#600 Arlington, VA 22209  
Phone: (1)703-527.5546   Fax: (1)703-527.4661

IV. Multilateral Agencies:

African Development Bank  
Mr. E. K. M. SANVEE  
Director  
Agriculture & Rural Development (South)  
01 BP 1387  
Abidjan 01  
IVORY COAST  
Phone: (225) 20.40.48   Fax: (225) 20.49.87

Club du SAHEL, OECD  
Mr. Peter EASTON  
Associate Professor of Education/Consultant  
c/o Florida State University  
Tallahassee  
Florida 32306-4070  
USA  
Phone: (904)644.81.65   Fax: (904)644.64.01

Mrs. Dana FISCHER  
Counsellor (USAID Representative)  
Club du SAHEL, OECD  
41 Boulevard Suchet  
75016 Paris  
FRANCE  
Phone: (33)1-45.24.89.60   Fax: (33)1-45.24.90.31

CODESRIA  
Mr. Mamadou DIOUF  
B. P. 3304  
203 Dakar  
SEN EGAL  
Phone: (221) 25.98.22   Fax: (221) 24.14.89
Commonwealth Secretariat
Mr. Henry KALUBA
Quadrant House, 55-58 Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HY, GREAT BRITAIN
Phone: (44)171-747.62.76  Fax: (44)171-747.62.86

Mr. Stephen MATLIN
Director
Human Resource Development Division
Marlborough House, Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5HY, GREAT BRITAIN
Phone: (44)171-747.62.80  Fax: (44)171-747.62.87

Development of African Education (DAE)
Mr. Christopher SHAW
Executive Secretary (Outgoing)
c/o IIEP
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix
752116 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.03.37.96  Fax: (33)1-45.03.39.65
Email Address: dsecretariat@worldbank.org

Mr. Richard SACK
Executive Secretary (Incoming)
c/o IIEP
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix
752116 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.03.37.96  Fax: (33)1-45.03.39.65
Email Address: dsecretariat@worldbank.org

European Union
Mr. Anthony CRASNER
Senior Manager
General Directorate for Education
200 rue de la Loi
1049 - Bruxelles, BELGIUM
Phone: (32)2-299.98.17  Fax: (32)2-299.28.75

International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)
Mr. Jacques HALLAK
ADG/Director
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix
75116 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.03.77.00  Fax: (33)1-40.72.83.66

International Labour Office (ILO)
Mr. Pierre MARTIN
4 route des Morillons
CH-211 Genève 22, SWITZERLAND
Phone: (41)22-799.6911  Fax: (41)22-799.7650

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Mr. Cyr-Mathieu SAMAKE
Senior Consultant to the Director
African Regional Office
One UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Phone: (212)906.59.58  Fax: (212)906.59.53

Mr. Digby SWIFT
Seconded National Expert
200 rue de la Loi
B-1049 Bruxelles, BELGIUM
Phone: (32)2-299.98.17/296.67.24  Fax: (32)2-299.28.75
**UNESCO**
Mr. John BEYNON
Director
Bureau for Development Cooperation in Education
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.10.38 Fax: (33)1-40.65.94.05

Mr. Marc COHEN
Programme Specialist
Division of Policy & Sector Analysis
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.21.22 Fax: (33)1-47.34.76.37

Ms. Anna ERIKSSON
NESIS
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris

Mrs. Winsome GORDON
Chief, Sector for Primary Education
Basic Education Division
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.06.10.37 Fax: (33)1-40.65.94.06

Mrs. Lucila JALLADE
Director
Policy & Sector Analysis Division
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.21.32 Fax: (33)1-47.34.76.38

Mr. Michael LAKIN
Executive Secretary
EFA Forum
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.10.00 Fax: (33)1-45.67.16.90

Mr. Pius OBANYA
Director
Regional Office for Education in Africa
12 avenue Roume
Dakar
SENegal
Phone: (221) 23.50.82 Fax: (221) 23.83.93

Mr. Adama OUANE
Senior Programme Officer
ED/BAS
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.10.08 Fax: (33)1-40.65.94.05

Mr. Alexis POKROVSKY
Coordinator, Africa Desk
Bureau for Development Cooperation in Education
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.10.00 Fax: (33)1-45.67.16.90

Mr. Wim Jan RENKEMA
Associate Expert
NESIS, Division of Statistics
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.24.45 Fax: (33)1-45.66.98.99
Email Address: W.Renkema@Unesco.org
M. Joël SAMOFF
Consultant
Division of Policy & Sector Analysis
3527 South Court
Palo Alto, CA 94306-4221
USA
Phone: (1)415-856.2326   Fax: (1)415-856.2324
Email Address: samoff@hudson.stanford.edu

Mr. Ko-Chih TUNG
Project Coordinator
ST/DEV, Office H.159
7 Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris
Phone: (33)1-45.68.10.00   Fax: (33)1-45.03.39.65

UNICEF
Mr. Cyril DALAIS
Senior Education Adviser
Education Cluster
3 U.N. Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Phone: (1)212-702.7283   Fax: (1)212-702.7149

Mr. Aklilu HABTE
Consultant
9410 Corsica Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
Phone: (1)301-564.1165/9192   Fax: (1)301-564.1174

World Bank
Ms. Penelope BENDER
Education Specialist
Population and Human Resources
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.1484   Fax: (1)202-473.8107

Mr. Herbert BERGMANN
Education Specialist
AF3PH
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473-4005   Fax: (1)202-473.8107
Email Address: hbergmann@worldbank.org

Mr. David BERK
Division Chief
Population and Human Resources
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.4897   Fax: (1)202-473.7577

Mr. Nicholas BURNETT
Acting Manager, Education Group
Human Development Department
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.4166   Fax: (1)202-522.3233
Email Address: nburnett@worldbank.org

Mr. Nat COLLETTA
Senior Education & Social Policy Specialist
Human Resources and Poverty Division
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.4163   Fax: (1)202-477.2990

Mr. Wadi HADDAD
Deputy Secretary
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-458.4770   Fax: (1)202-477.0380
Mr. Ward HENEVELD
Senior Education Specialist
Human Resources and Poverty Division
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.6769   Fax: (1)202-477.2900

Mrs. Ruth KAGIA
Senior Education Specialist
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433

Mr. Paud MURPHY
Educational Specialist
Economic Development Institute
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.6450   Fax: (1)202-676.0961
Email Address: pmurphy@worldbank.org

Mr. C. Ok PANNENBORG
Division Chief
Human Capital Development Division
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.4415   Fax: (1)202-473.8216
Email: cpannenborg@worldbank.org@internet

Mr. Arvil Van ADAMS
Human Resources Adviser
Africa Region
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.3435   Fax: (1)202-477.2900
Email Address: aadams1@worldbank.org

Mr. Jack van LUTSENBURG MAAS
Division Chief
Population and Human Resources
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.4170   Fax: (1)202-473.8299

Ms. Yang-Ro YOON
Economist
Population and Human Resources
1818 H. Street N.W.
Washington DC 20433
Phone: (1)202-473.7520   Fax: (1)202-473.8299

V. Foundations and Others:

Aga Khan Foundation
Ms. Kathy BARTLETT
Education Programme Officer
P. O. Box 4179 1211
Geneva 4, SWITZERLAND
Phone: (41)22-736.0344   Fax: (41)22-736.0948
Email Address: akfgva@uniZa.unige.ch

Ms. Angele REKOULA
Pre-school and Elementary Education Inspector
B. P. 2299 Libreville,
GABON

APNET
Mr. Victor U. NWANKWO
Chairman
Fourth Dimension Publishers
16 Fifth Avenue City Layout
PMB 01164
Enugu, NIGERIA
Phone: (234)42-459.969/ 453.739
Fax: (234)42-456.04/ 453.298
Association of African Universities
Mr. Donald EKONG
Secretary General
P. O. Box 5744
Accra-North, GHANA
Phone: (233)21-774.495 Fax: (233)21-774.821

Mr. Narciso MATOS
Professor
P. O. Box 5744
Accra-North, GHANA
Phone: (233)21-774495 Fax: (233)21-774821
Email Address: secgen@aau.org

Bernard Van Leer Foundation
Ms. Paula NIMPUNO-PARENTE
Programme Specialist
Africa Desk
P.O. Box 82334, 2508 EH
The Hague, NETHERLANDS
Phone: (31)70-351.2040 Fax: (31)70-350.2373

CESO
Mr. Kees B. Van den BOSCH
Senior Education Adviser
P. O. Box 29777
2502 LT The Hague, NETHERLANDS
Phone: (31)70-426.0300 Fax: (31)70-426.0299
Email Address: vdbosch@nufficcs.nl

CfBT Education Services
Mr. Tim EMMETT
Project Planning Director
1 The Chambers, East Street
Reading RE1 4JD, U.K.
Phone: (44)1-734.523900 Fax: (44)1-734.523926

Conférence des Ministres de l’Education des Pays ayant en commun l’usage du francais (CONFEMEN)
Secretary General
Mr. Bougouma NGOM
B. P. 3220 Dakar, SENEGAL
Phone: (221) 216.022/224.734 Fax: (221)213.226

Council for Education in the Commonwealth
Mr. John MAY
King’s College, Waterloo Road
London SE1 8WA, U.K.
Phone: (44)171-872.31.01 Fax: (44)171-872.31.82

Mr. Peter R. C. WILLIAMS
Deputy Executive Chairman
c/o College of Preceptors
Coppice Row, Theydon Bois
Epping CM16 7DN, U.K.
Phone: (44)1-992.812727 Fax: (44)1-992.814690

Centre for Education Science and Documentation (DSE)
Mr. Wolfgang GMELIN
Deputy Director
DSE
Hans Buckler Strasse 5
53 225 Bonn, GERMANY
Phone: (49)228-400.12.10 Fax: (49)228-400.11.11

Ecole Internationale de Bordeaux
Mr. Jean TABI-MANGA
Director General
43 rue Pierre Noailles
33405 Talence, FRANCE
Phone: (33)1-56.37.50.59 Fax: (33)1-56.04.42.01
International African Institute
Ms. Carol PRIESTLEY
Director
SOAS, Russell Square
Thornhaugh Street
London WC1H 0XG, U.K
Phone: (44)181-997.3274   Fax: (44)181-810.9795

International Association of Universities
Mrs. Berit OLSSON
Director of Cooperation
1 rue Miollis
75015 Paris, FRANCE
Phone: (33)1-45.68-30-76   Fax: (33)1-47-34-76-05
Email Address: iutra@frunes21

Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)
Mr. FLEISCHACKER
Senior Economist
Postfach 11 11 41
60046 Frankfurt am Main, GERMANY
Phone: (49)69-74.31.0   Fax: (49)69-74.31.29.44

National Centre for Early Childhood Education
Ms. Margaret KABIRU
Coordinator
P.O.Box 30231
Nairobi, KENYA
Phone: (254)2-74.99.00   Fax: (254)2-74.69.73

The Rockefeller Foundation
Ms. Joyce MOOCK
Associate Vice President
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10018, USA
Phone: (1)212-852.8363   Fax: (1)212-764.3468

Ms. Katherine NAMUDDU
Senior Scientist
P. O. Box 47543
Nairobi, KENYA
Phone: (254)2-22.80.61   Fax: (254)2-21.88.40

Mr. David COURT
The Representative
Nairobi Office
P. O. Box 47543
Nairobi, KENYA
Phone: (254)2-22.80.61   Fax: (254)2-21.88.40

VI. DAE Staffing
Mrs. Annette Bessières
Mrs. Rachel Charron
Ms. Thanh-Hoa Desruelles
Mr. Neil Saravanamuttoo

Temporary support staff:
Ms. Janeane Ingram-Agabalyan

Consultants:
Mrs. Irène Auger
Mr. David Evans
Mr. W. Zyss

VII. Interpreters:
Mrs. Eve Boutilié
Mrs. Anne Chatenay
Mrs. Chantal Corajoud
Mrs. Elizabeth Lamielle
Mr. Théodore Schuker
Mr. Jean-Paul Vogel
ANNEX 2: AGENDA

Wednesday, October 18

2:50 p.m. Departure from Paris - Gare d’Austerlitz by special train
4:10 p.m. Arrival in Tours
6:30 p.m. Cocktails and buffet supper at the Congress Center

Thursday, October 19

8:00 a.m. Registration of participants at the Congress Center
8:00 - 9:15 a.m. Optional meeting of (i) Working Group on Statistics and (ii) Working Group on Higher Education (non-members welcome)

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks from
   • Mr. Ingemar Gustafsson, DAE Chairperson
   • Hon. Mme Aicha Bah, Alternate Chairperson

10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Theme of meeting: ‘Formulating Education Sector Policy in sub-Saharan Africa’ presented by:
   • Mr. Christopher Shaw, Executive Secretary

10:45 - 11:00 a.m. Coffee break

11:00 - 12:55 a.m. Invited Keynote Speakers: (Chairperson: Hon. Tabi, Minister of Higher Education - Cameroon)
   • Mr. Thahane, Vice-President & Secretary, World Bank
   • Mr. Grimstad, CEO, NORAD

1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Luncheon

2:30 - 3:55 p.m. Panel #1: ‘The knowledge base for policy formulation—information needs’
   (Chairperson: Mr. Byll-Cataria, Swiss DDC)

3:55 - 4:00 p.m. Logistics for small groups
4:00 - 4:15 p.m. Coffee break

4:15 - 5:30 p.m. Discussions in small groups
5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Optional meetings of (i) the Working Group on the Teaching Profession and (ii) the Working Group on Textbooks and Libraries (non-members welcome)
Friday, October 20

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Optional meeting of working Group on Sector Analysis (non-members welcome as observers)

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Panel #2: ‘The African Perspective on Policy Formulation: lessons from experience—stable and unstable environments’
(Chairperson: Mrs. Myra Harrison, ODA)

10:30 - 10:45 a.m. Coffee Break

10:45 - 12:55 a.m. Panel #3: ‘Policy Formulation in the Real World—strategic planning, compromise, trade-offs and consultation’
(Chairperson: Mr. Wadi Haddad, World Bank)

1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Luncheon

2:30 - 4:00 p.m. Logistics followed by discussions in small groups

4:00 - 4:15 p.m. Coffee break

4:15 - 6:00 p.m. Closed session of the Caucus of African Ministers (1st session)

7:30 p.m. Gala Dinner hosted by DAE Chairpersons

Please note that, for those members of the Steering Committee wishing to attend, a session of the Administrative sub-committee of the DAE Steering Committee is scheduled between 4:30 and 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 21

7:30 - 9:00 a.m. Meeting of the Interest Group on Early Childhood Development (non-members welcome)

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Caucus of African Ministers closed meeting (2nd session)

10:30 - 10:45 a.m. Coffee break

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. Report to plenary from the Caucus meeting
(President: Mr. Aklilu Habte)

11:45 - 12:45 p.m. Panel #4: ‘African Experience in Policy Implementation and the way forward’
(Chairperson: Ms. Paulette Moussavou-Missambo, Minister of Education, Gabon)

1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Luncheon

2:30 - 3:45 p.m. Summary of the plenary and the small group sessions with the implications for (a) countries and (b) agencies
(Chairperson: Mr. Jacques Hallak, ex-officio Vice-President, DAE)

3:45 - 4:00 p.m. Coffee Break

4:00 - 4:30 p.m. Summary of discussions (conclusion)

4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Film from FAWE
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.  Meeting of FAWE with the Caucus of Ministers

Sunday, October 22

9:30 - 10:30 a.m.  Caucus of African Ministers— business session (3rd session)
10:30 - 10:45 a.m.  Coffee break
10:45 - 11:15 a.m.  Report to the Plenary from the Caucus
   (Chairperson: Mr. Aklilu Habte)
11:15 - 11:45 a.m.  Business session on the DAE and its work program
   (Chairperson: Mr. Gustaffson) (Speaker: Executive Secretary)
11:45 - 12:30 a.m.  Closing Remarks from Mr. Gustaffson and Hon. Aicha Bah
12:30 - 1:30 p.m.  Luncheon
4:00 p.m.  Departure from Tours by special train
6:00 p.m.  Arrival in Paris by special train (Gare d’Austerlitz)

The DAE Steering Committee will meet at the Tours Conference Center from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoon to consider the 1995 Report and the proposed program and budget for 1996.

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1 The funding agencies are free to consult informally among themselves if they wish.
**ANNEX 3: QUESTIONS FOR SMALL DISCUSSION GROUPS**

**Group Assignment:** Each participant will be asked to join a Discussion Group, which will meet twice during the Biennial meeting – once on Thursday afternoon and once on Friday afternoon. For the first discussion session, each participant has been assigned to a group.

**Preparation:** Participants are asked to read (i) the Biennial Plenary meeting discussion paper (Formulating Educational Policy in sub-Saharan Africa), (ii) the country case study for your group, and (iii) as your time permits, other country cases of interest to you.

**Objectives:** (1) To discuss the key challenges and factors that play a determining role in educational policy formulation; (2) To identify major factors, activities and/or events that (a) are important in the case studied, (b) are relevant to your own national concerns, and (c) could be transferable to other national settings.

**Process:** The following resources are available to each group: a country case study; a resource person directly involved in the case study; the plenary panel presentations; and your personal experiences. Discussions should focus on the points below.

A. Challenges for the first Session: initial stages

1. Under what conditions can a national review of education be satisfactorily undertaken – political, economic and educational context?

2. What is the relative importance of technical vs. political participation in the process?

3. What information is needed for the process, how is it best gathered and analysed, and how should it be disseminated?

4. Who should participate in the review process, to what extent, and when?

B. Challenges for the second session: putting policies to use

5. What structures can successfully transform policy statements into strategies and plans for implementation?

6. How to achieve realistic decisions on goals and priorities within resource constraints and generate widespread support, given the trade-offs between sacrifices and benefits?

7. How can government formulate its policies and plans so that funding agencies become constructive partners in the process of implementation?

8. What leadership structures and practices will be most effective through the policy process?
In 1990, the DAE sponsored a series of case studies on education policy-formation in four African countries: Botswana, Mali, Senegal, and Tanzania. In 1995, in preparation for the Biennial, six other case studies were commissioned by the DAE: Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Uganda.

These ten case studies reflect a broad range of experiences and have revealed key factors in the process of policy formation. The following important factors and their main characteristics have emerged from the case studies as well as from discussions which took place during the Biennial:

**Context for national policy reviews:**
- Often initiated by revolutions or major changes of government
- Driven by internal conditions
- Mature systems tend to establish a permanent policy review body*

**Strong and consistent leadership is essential:**
- Delegates authority and trusts subordinates
- Explains goals and reasons; uses public media
- Works openly with all: processes are transparent*
- Promotes stability of technical staff to provide continuity*

**Political and technical rationales are present:**
- Political participation is first priority
- Technical work supports and informs political dialogue
- Political will is essential to overcome resistance of vested interests*

**Broad participation of stakeholders, including:**
- Government, parliament, political parties
- Students, parents, teachers
- Organizations in civil society who participate actively*

**Policy formulation as a social learning process implies that:**
- Major goal is consensus and widespread understanding
- Reasons for changes need to be clear to all
- Those sacrificing immediate benefits see societal benefits
- Ministry of Education becomes a learning institution*

**Government and donor roles in policy formulation:**
- Government must be the leading player
- Cohesive, prioritized, viable plans empower the government
- Donors can learn to be supportive partners in policy process.

* New ideas having emerged from discussions during the Biennial
Background paper for the meeting:


Six case studies:


Proceedings of the DAE
Biennial Meetings
(Tours, 18-22 October 1995)