



Donors to African Education



**Improving the implementation
of education projects in Africa
through ownership:**

proceedings of the
DAE Task Force Meetings



Angers, France
22-24 October 1993

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This document is a summary of the events of the 1993 DAE Task Force Meetings. The views and opinions expressed in this volume are those of individual participants at the Task Force Meetings and should not be attributed to the DAE, to its members or affiliated organizations or to any individual acting on behalf of the DAE.

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Introduction

1. The Donors to African Education (DAE) Task Force met at the Conference Centre in Angers, France from 22 to 24 October 1993. It was chaired by the Chairperson of the DAE Executive Committee, Mr. Peter Moock, Manager, Economic and Social Policy Department, World Bank.
2. The meeting was attended by 66 ministers and senior government officials representing 34 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and by 88 participants from 44 bilateral or multilateral development agencies, foundations and other bodies. The list of participants is reproduced in Annex I.
3. The following countries were represented at the meeting: Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome-et-Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
4. The following agencies and organizations sent participants to the meeting:
 - (a) **Bilateral agencies:** Department of Development Cooperation, Federal Chancellery, Austria; Administration générale de la coopération au développement (AGCD), Belgium; Service de développement et de programmes de formation (CEDEP), Belgium; Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); Danish International Development Authority (DANIDA); Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA); 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)

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Netherlands; Ministry of Development Cooperation (NORAD), Norway; Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway; Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC); Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA); Coopération au développement et à l'aide humanitaire (DDA), Switzerland; Overseas Development Administration (ODA), United Kingdom; United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

- (b) **Multilateral agencies:** African Development Bank (AfDB); Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT); Commonwealth Secretariat; European Community (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); UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE); World Bank.
- (c) **Foundations and other bodies:** African Academy of Sciences; Aga Khan Foundation; Association of African Universities (AAU); Bernard Van Leer Foundation; Conference des ministres de l'éducation des pays ayant en commun l'usage du français (CONFEMEN); Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE) -Europe; Ford Foundation; Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); Gulbenkian Foundation; International Development Research Centre (IDRC); National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL), United States; Northern Policy Research Review Advisory Network on Education and Training (NORRAG); Rockefeller Foundation; World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP).

5. The proceedings of the meeting were conducted in three parts:

- (i) *substantive sessions* on the following subject: "Issues in Implementation of Education Sector Programs and Projects in sub-Saharan Africa";
- (ii) *a closed meeting of the African ministers of education*, the conclusions of which were communicated to the plenary session;
- (iii) *a business meeting* on various subjects concerning the functioning of the DAE.

6. The agenda is reproduced in *Annex II*.

7. Several working groups of the DAE met during the session: Working Groups on Finance and Education, on the Teaching Profession, on Education Sector Analysis, on Vocational Training and Education, on Textbooks and Libraries, on Educational Statistics, and the Interest Group on Early Childhood Development.

Part One: Substantive sessions

Organization of the substantive sessions

8. After the opening session during which the program and the method of work were explained and the background paper introduced there were two plenary sessions. The theme of the first session was 'Prerequisites for successful implementation', while the second session dealt with 'National expertise and the financial and administrative environment'. During each session two key speakers addressed the meeting, after which the meeting was divided into small discussion groups. Another key speech was made by Mr. Michel Roussin, Minister of Cooperation of France, during the lunch he offered to the participants.

9. After the discussion groups completed their work the meeting reconvened in plenary session during which a summary of the group discussions was presented. Overall conclusions of the meeting were summarized during the closing session.

Opening session

10. The meeting was opened by Mr. Peter Mook, in his capacity as Chairperson of the DAE Executive Committee, who invited Mrs. Diallo Aïcha Bah, Minister of Pre-University Education and Professional Training of Guinea, to address the meeting on behalf of the Executive Committee.

11. Mrs. Aïcha Bah welcomed all the participants on behalf of the African ministers of education and of the DAE Executive Committee. The Task Force, she said, had an important and difficult work to accomplish. The role of the ministers of education in Africa was very delicate: they share the political responsibility for the action of the governments, while at the same time they have to carry out technical, administrative and managerial duties, to bear in mind the social aspects of their work and to negotiate with multilateral and bilateral development agencies.

Part One: Substantive sessions

development agencies. The ministers of education are thus very vulnerable and change quite often, which makes it difficult to conduct a stable educational policy. The process of democratization which has been taking place in African countries in recent years leads to serious social and political unrest which often seriously disturbs the functioning of educational institutions, while the disastrous economic situation of the continent leads to a general deterioration of educational systems. It is essential, in this period of political and economic tension, to protect the educational system. The difficulties which the ministers of education in Africa face make it even more imperative to work towards a regional strategy conceived in such a way That education may bring its contribution to the process of democratization and of development.

12. Mrs. Aïcha Bah also referred to the activities of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), composed of women ministers of education and women rectors or professors of university. FAWE acts in favor of changes in women's education in Africa, and on behalf of the Forum, Mrs. Aïcha Bah made an appeal for action to improve the condition of women in Africa and to mobilize local and external resources in support of women's education.

13. Mr. Moock welcomed the participants, both those that had been present in earlier meetings of the DAE and the newcomers. For the benefit of the latter he recalled that the DAE had been established in 1988 and that this was the fourth meeting of the Task Force which had already met previously in Paris, in Vienna and in Manchester. It was in many ways a unique body. There is no similar body concerned with education in the other regions of the world, and there is nothing similar to the DAE for other development sectors. The DAE provides an opportunity for representatives of donors and for national policy-makers responsible for education to meet together in an informal setting, to discuss the most pressing issues in the sector of education and to consider what can be done for the greater benefit and more equitable treatment of school children. He stressed particularly the informal nature of the group; the participants should not look upon themselves as official representatives of their country or of their agency, but as professionals working together in the field of education. The fundamental instrument of the DAE is the working group, of which there are at present eight, each of them focusing on a particular issue of importance in African education.

14. The vitality of the DAE was best demonstrated by the number and the quality of participants. Close to 40 African countries were expected to send representatives, as against 31 that had attended the Manchester meeting two years earlier. Two newcomers on the international scene were expected – Eritrea and Namibia - and Mr. Moock expressed the hope that the next meeting of the DAE Task Force would be able to welcome a representative from a free and democratic Republic of South Africa.

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15. Recalling the observations made earlier by Mrs. Aicha Bah about the work of FAWE, Mr. Mook pointed out that, while 6 women ministers had been present at the Manchester meeting, it was expected that about 14 women ministers would attend the present session. He welcomed this opening of senior positions in government to women and expressed the hope that this would help to achieve better recognition of the importance of girls' education for the future development of the countries. The best investment that a country could make was in the education of its girls and women.

16. Mr. Mook then outlined the program of the meeting, consisting of three parts (see paragraph 5 above). In addition, a number of the DAE working groups could hold meetings and there would be ample opportunities for informal exchanges of views outside of formal sessions. Finally, Mr. Mook thanked the key speakers who would address the substantive sessions.

17. The background paper entitled 'Issues in the implementation of education sector programs and projects in sub-Saharan Africa' was introduced by Mr. Christopher Shaw, Executive Secretary of the DAE. He also outlined the arrangements for the division of the meeting into small discussion groups (see paragraphs 64 to 66 below). The paper presented some of the factors which inhibit the successful implementation of activities aimed at improving and expanding education in sub-Saharan Africa. Mr. Shaw enumerated the five elements of the problem: high demand for education; very limited national resources; significant amounts of external support; poor success in improving conditions of education; and, very low impact on student learning. The paper sought to analyze the manner in which the three main actors - governments, national interest groups and donors - strive to respond to these elements.

18. The paper was constructed around seven issues on which the speakers had been invited to concentrate. What are the conditions which facilitate implementation? Whose goals are included in the education programs and projects? How should education sector programs and projects be designed? What are the capacities for implementation required from the movements and the donors? What is the meaning of ownership as a concept central to implementation? How do the different forms of financing influence implementation? What is the role of monitoring and reporting? The paper did not attempt to draw any conclusions; it was expected that the discussions in the small groups and in the plenary would lead to conclusions on the actions that would have an impact on implementation and on the solutions which the partners should adopt in order to improve implementation.

Plenary Session 1: 'Prerequisites for successful implementation'

19. This session was chaired by Mr. Aniceto dos Muchangos, Minister of Education of Mozambique. The two key speakers were Mr. Edward V.K. Jaycox, Vice-President, Africa Region, World Bank, and Mr. Amoorgun Parsuramen, Minister of Education and Science of Mauritius.

20. Mr. Jaycox recalled the changes which had taken place in the world as a result of the end of the cold war and the ideological calm which had settled over the world. New expectations and new motivations emerge. Economic performance is becoming more important than ever and many African countries have started a process of economic reform which may lead to sustainable development. The structure adjustment process is painful, complicated and controversial, but in those countries which succeeded in maintaining this course of action the results are apparent. In a number of African countries growth rates exceed the rate of growth of the population, for the first time in 15 to 20 years. The situation in which economic performance was declining and aid falling is progressively replaced by a virtuous circle of rising performance and rising support.

21. Only performance is capable of attracting the resources required. The trend in the World Bank, particularly as a result of the Wappenham report, emphasizes implementation and results on the ground. The theme of the present meeting, assessment and implementation, is becoming the recurrent theme of all reports, meetings and discussions.

22. However, reports from the DAE indicate that the present situation of education in Africa is not good. In spite of the fact that a very high proportion of the national budgets and of GNP is spent by African countries on education, enrollment ratios, particularly for girls, remain very low, and in some cases are even declining. Educational quality, as measured by success ratios and other indicators, remains inadequate. Education is a crucial sector in the development process. It is therefore essential to strengthen the capacity to manage, to diagnose problems, to find and implement solutions. It is also essential that this capacity should be a domestic capacity. Too often projects are conceived and implemented in isolation, drawing precious resources and manpower away from the mainstream of national activities. Programs should fit with the priorities of national authorities and with the capacity of national authorities to run and manage them. Projects should be designed so that they can be managed in Africa.

23. There is a lot of capacity in Africa, or from Africa (much of it overseas) much more than is being used by African governments to solve their problems. There is a considerable waste of capacity in Africa. Increased incentives for professionalism, greater support and respect for professionalism in Africa are required. Governments should be encouraged to take steps in order to bring back those that went overseas. Donors should be ready to support these efforts, even it means financing current expenditure and national salaries.

24. Mr. Parsuramen started by paying tribute, on his own behalf and on behalf of African ministers of education, to the remarkable work accomplished by Mr. Mook and Mr. Shaw, and by expressing the hope that this meeting would facilitate the difficult task of the ministers. He then shared with the participants the experience of Mauritius in preparing and implementing the education development plan.

25. The plan was approved by the government of Mauritius in June 1991. It lays down the educational goals and the strategies to achieve them at all levels of the educational system, translated into a policy action plan. The plan is now in its second year of implementation. While the experience of each country is unique, countries can benefit from each other's experience.

26. The idea to prepare a comprehensive education development plan stemmed from the Jomtien Conference. Considerable time had been spent on the preparatory work. While it may be convenient to regard planning and implementation as two separate processes, in fact implementation starts with plan preparation and successful implementation depends upon good planning.

27. The first requirement of the planning process is to build up a body of support for the plan. To achieve this, objectives and proposals must be clear and it must be a national plan. While technical expertise is obviously necessary and often can only be achieved through international assistance -and the preparation of the Mauritius plan was greatly helped by technical experts from various international organizations -a successful plan requires political commitment and political support at the national level. A good plan will attract the resources needed to implement it.

Part One: Substantive sessions

28. In Mauritius the process started with the establishment of a high level steering committee chaired by the minister of education and of a master plan working group, with, sectoral sub-committees to draft papers on typical areas. Whenever important policy issue arose, they were brought before the Council of Ministers for endorsement. Thus, the proposal to introduce a nine year universal schooling cycle (instead of the six year cycle) was agreed upon by the Council of Ministers. In this way the political commitment to the objectives of the plan was obtained while the plan was being prepared and the approval of the plan by the government went without obstacles, as the most important issues had already been agreed upon.

29. Throughout the entire preparatory process there was public consultation and discussions were held with all those who were concerned with the education system and would have to play a role in the implementation of the plan. After the publication of the first complete draft of the plan a national seminar was held to discuss the issues and the plan was then revised in the light of proposals made at the seminar. This helped to build up a body of public support for the plan which also received favorable reactions in the local press.

30. The planning process does not come to an end once the plan is completed. It must be continually revised in the light of changing circumstances, new needs and fresh information, demonstrating how planning is closely linked to implementation.

31. An education plan is by nature highly complex. In Mauritius it included over 300 proposals. A special machinery for its implementation was necessary. Task forces were established to formulate programs and projects. A central coordinating unit was created; its task was to allocate responsibilities and to identify implementing agencies for the various elements of the plan. Performance and monitoring indicators were identified. A project implementation unit was established within the ministry to take the responsibility for construction projects. In some cases responsibilities were allocated to experienced professional bodies, such as the examinations syndicate. In connection with this Mr. Parsuramen mentioned the valuable work carried out by the DAE with regard to a study on the examination systems in a number of developing countries.

32. In a number of cases substantial changes in practice or in structures were required which might affect the situation of existing staff. Thus, a major program of comprehensive, continuous evaluation of primary school children was elaborated. The results so far have been disappointing. There is a plan for merging the two existing inspectorates (for private and for state schools) into a single national inspectorate.

33. What are the prerequisites for successful implementation? In the first place, they concern the teachers who are the main actors responsible for improved teaching and learning. In-service training of teachers is therefore essential, as are the measures to improve the moral and the status of the teachers. In many countries there is a feeling that the status of teachers has deteriorated in recent years. In Mauritius not all the teachers are fully aware of the plan or of the general educational policy. The flow of information from schools to the administration and from the administration to the schools is essential. The Minister had personally chaired regular meetings with trade union leaders in the education sector. While there were conflicts, on the whole it proved possible to build up a body of support and consensus among the teachers.

34. A coordination unit is necessary to identify implementing agencies, to convert the plan into a series of phase action plans and to set up a management information system. Such a body needs strong professional backing. For this purpose a program for training local people was established with international assistance. To maintain good relations with the implementing agencies and to ensure a sense of commitment, a steering committee was set up chaired by the minister.

35. In conclusion, Mr. Parsuramen stressed that maximum use should be made of locally available resources. Foreign experts should be brought only when there is no alternative. There are indeed many situations where there is no alternative. The need for international assistance increases rather than decreases with the growth of educational systems. Critical inputs are necessary to help create a stable body of teachers and professionals of education. While thanking the various donor agencies for their support Mr. Parsuramen appealed to them to continue providing their support to education in general and in Africa in particular.

Plenary Session 2: 'National expertise and the financial and administrative environment'

36. This session was chaired by Mrs. Diallo Aïcha Bah, Minister of Pre-University and Professional Training of Guinea. The two key speakers were Ms. Carolyn McCaskie, Vice-President, Africa Bureau, CIDA, and Mr. F. Mogae, Vice-President and Minister of Finance of Botswana.

Part One: Substantive sessions

37. Ms. McCaskie, after pointing out that she had been Vice-President for Africa in CIDA for only six weeks, stated that there is a growing realization that no progress is possible in Africa without returning to certain basic principles. Education, in particular primary education - and even more so primary education for girls - is one of these principles. However, only 1 per cent of donor aid goes to primary education. The allocation of resources has been distorted by pressures on government expenditure, particularly by the pressure for higher education - a legitimate concern but not at the expense of primary education. There are many obstacles to re-allocating resources: political pressures, lack of capacity of ministries of education to design budgets, insufficient administrative controls, presence of so many donors with their own agendas and restrictive procedures and dispersion of African talent around the world.

38. The statistics at our disposal are not very encouraging. While the overall proportion of children completing five years of primary education has gone from 48 per cent in 1960 to 78 per cent in 1990, it amounted in 1990 in Africa to 48 per cent only. Thus, while the world moves ahead, the gap between Africa and the rest of the world is growing. The results are not commensurate with the money spent, the efforts made and the ideas generated. The continuing economic crisis focuses policy-makers' attention on the short term and renders the solution of long-term structural problems more difficult. Another issue is the lack of ownership, the fact that design of policy has been too much in the hands of foreign experts.

39. The deterioration of financial resources, the population growth and the rapidly changing external environment put a tremendous strain on the capacity of governments to plan and implement. This is why the topic of this session - national expertise and financial and administrative environment - is a key issue.

40. Radical changes are needed. Education can no longer be treated as just another sector requiring attention. Education is vital to improve the quality of people's lives, to improve health systems, to end discrimination, to lead to growth. We know that the countries which had registered higher rates of economic growth in the seventies were those that had the highest literacy rate and the highest investment in the social sector (World Report on Human Resource Development of the World Bank).

41. The view is now widely shared that we have to start with ownership. Decisions must be taken locally and not by experts provided by donors. This does not mean that they should be imposed centrally. Ministry staff and school personnel should work together and share professional responsibility based on common commitment.

Key players should have control and authority which means that they must also be accountable. Accountability is fundamental to the notion of ownership and of sustainability. It is the freedom to make choices and be responsible for these choices. It encourages individuals to take risks, to use their initiative and to correct their mistakes. It is a strong tool in the fight against corruption and inefficiency. Transparency and clarity will follow ownership and accountability.

42. In some countries administrative and finance procedures have deteriorated to the point when urgent action is required to restore basic government procedures and confidence. Improvements are required in the budget process and in the audit function. As a donor, Canada has reached the conclusion that the traditional technical assistance approach to building capacity is no longer relevant at the project level. Donors should take their share of responsibility for using national capacity poorly. The project implementation units have proved counter-productive, as they weaken the capacity of the ministries.

43. Canada is looking for methods to transform technical assistance and to improve technology transfer. One method is to provide technical training, using mainly local expertise. Another one is to establish partnerships between Canadian institutions and African institutions, supporting the latter in defining problems, goals and strategies and providing resources necessary to undertake the changes identified. This model requires further refining in the light of experience. One of the concerns is how to measure results; another one is how to make sure that the Canadian institution will stay in its advisory role, as the temptation to get things done is very strong. This supportive approach implies that institutions will work with the ministries which define problems themselves, develop strategies and implement them, with the supporting institutions remaining in the background to help when necessary.

44. Donors must be ready to provide budgetary support, which means not only financial support but support for designing the budget and the allocation process. If more resources are to be put into primary education, the issue of providing recurrent costs support cannot be evaded. If this is the case, the question of accountability must be emphasized. It is a long-term process. Serious efforts are under way in Africa to reform budget processes; donors should assist in these reforms.

45. The concept of aid management should replace that of aid coordination; this management should be led by the African governments. This concept of country-led management lends itself well to the area of education, as in some countries donors finance more than 50 per cent of total education expenditures. African governments should take on ownership and accountability in order to respond to the changing needs of society.

Part One: Substantive sessions

46. Mr. Mogae spoke mainly on the financial setting for educational development. He started by recalling that education, particularly at the higher level, was becoming an international commodity. There was a growing need for highly trained and skilled personnel all over the world; hence, many African countries experience a substantial brain drain while at the same time, in their efforts to retain highly qualified people, they develop a dual salary structure, with a substantial difference between the income of the unskilled and of the well-educated. There is a serious problem in planning the educational system around national needs for middle and higher level personnel, while many of those so educated may seek employment in more attractive foreign and international markets.

47. Many African countries allocate to education a larger proportion of government spending than is the case in developed countries: 20 per cent in the case of Botswana, and even more in some other countries. This substantial expenditure would not have been possible without assistance from the donors. And yet expenditure on education in Africa is lower than the average in more advanced nations, especially when the expenditures of the local authorities and of the private sector are added to the central government spending. Efforts to provide adequate financing for the educational sector must be undertaken in the context of limited financial resources.

48. Defining, implementing and maintaining sustainable budgets has proven a very difficult, if not impossible, task in many African countries. The precarious financial position of these countries is best shown by the ratio of external debt to gross national product: 110 per cent in 1991, as compared to 28 per cent in 1980. The service of the debt amounts to 21 per cent of the region's exports. As much of the debt is a public liability, this reduces the allocations available for other purposes, including education.

49. As in many other African countries, the initial approach in Botswana was to focus on development expenditure. Botswana had the good fortune of substantial mining revenues which, together with external funding, enabled it to satisfy the most crucial infrastructure requirements. However, it soon became apparent that building schools without teachers and without resources for recurrent expenditure was a waste of development funds. It became necessary to restrict development spending to the level that would produce infrastructure which it was then possible to operate and maintain.

In this connection, Mr. Mogae appealed to the donors to give serious consideration to assisting in maintaining some of the assets created until such time as the countries can afford to do so.

50. The development of Botswana was restricted by its limited absorptive capacity. The Lack of manpower was one of the main constraints which prevented a fully efficient operation of development projects. There is about 10 per cent vacancy in the civil service posts calling for technical and professional skills. The development spending is under continuous scrutiny and monitoring so as to maintain an adequate cover (a minimum of 6 to 9 months) for imports and for government expenditure and to invest the revenues resulting from the sale of the nations mineral, resources in projects consistent with the country's absorptive capacity. The rate of growth had been very high until recently (10 per cent per year between 1981 and 1991). It is expected that it will diminish substantially, thus reducing the manpower constraints.

51. So far it was considered that development expenditure should be financed mainly by mining revenues and foreign aid, while recurrent expenditure should be financed from other resources. Until now, recurrent revenues have exceeded recurrent expenditure, but this relationship - which is very closely monitored - may change in the future. The authorities are now considering a modification of the ride that recurrent expenditure should not exceed recurrent revenue. This would imply a recognition of the fact that some recurrent expenditures are in fact an investment in the country's future. Such is in particular the case of expenditure on health and on education.

52. The new approach involves a more careful analysis of recurrent expenditures and changes the focus from development expenditure to recurrent expenditure. It puts the emphasis on the sustainability of government expenditure programs. Efforts must be made to reduce recurrent expenditure through increased efficiency and recovery of the cost from the beneficiaries of government services. This requires transparency of the policy formulation and understanding by the beneficiaries - not an easy thing to achieve, as evidenced by the strong reaction against the attempt to introduce some contribution by the students towards the cost of their own education. Care must be taken to prevent government expenditure and tax policies to have inflationary effects and to plan carefully the allocation of resources. Allocations to education must compete with other sectors, even if the African governments give education the highest priority.

Part One: Substantive sessions

53. A national Commission on Education had recently completed its review of the entire education system. Without prejudice to its recommendations (not yet published), Mr. Mogae emphasized three issues. One is the role of the private sector in education. The cost of education cannot be covered entirely through the movement budget, especially in view of the fact that the ratio of recurrent to development costs in the education sector is nearly twice as high as in other sectors. The participation of the private sector in the provision of educational services is necessary, especially in the field of technical, vocational and specialized education.

54. It is also necessary that those who benefit from education should pay a larger share of the cost. This is especially true in the case of higher education which usually results in a higher income in active life. It is only fair to require students to repay a portion of the cost of their education and the movement is exploring a scheme for loans which will also have the advantage of encouraging the students to choose those subjects in which manpower is most urgently needed.

55. Finally, efforts should be made to improve the quality of education through appropriate research and evaluation of the relative marginal productivities of different types of educational expenditures. The existing guidelines on this are not very helpful and both the governments and the donors should give further thought to this issue if the funds and the assistance are to be wisely and efficiently utilized.

Statement of the Minister of Cooperation of France

56. Another key speech was made by Mr. Michel Roussin, Minister of Cooperation of France, during a lunch which he hosted for the participants.

57. Mr. Roussin, on behalf of the French government, welcomed the participants to the city of Angers. The present meeting of the DAE, he said, came at a moment when the situation of many African education systems was very serious. The effects of the population growth were making themselves felt at a time when Africa had to deal with an unprecedented economic and social crisis. The fundamental problem is whether national development policies are really relevant to present circumstances. The development model based on the expansion of the public sector was superseded by the need to recover a lost competitive capacity. It is necessary to accomplish more with fewer resources, to improve the quality of education, to maximize school enrollment, to reconcile budgetary realities with social demand.

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58. A lucid approach is necessary in order to analyze the causes of previous failures and to establish a new model of education. Rigor is just as necessary, as inadequate resources must be managed very carefully. So is determination, because difficult choices will have to be made to the detriment of vested positions.

59. During the first two decades following independence, education systems expanded rapidly and the growing number of school leavers could be absorbed in the public sectors. This model is no longer realistic; emphasis must be placed on matching education to real development needs, to provide primary education facilitating the entry of young people into working life. At the same time stronger support must be provided to technical education and selective improvements must be made in the quality of other levels and types of education.

60. In many countries in partnership with France the creation of a new model of education requires a solution to the problem of financing. At a time when public resources are shrinking, the cost of the existing model does not make it possible to maintain the present enrollment rates, let alone to attain the objectives set up at Jomtien. The reduction of unit costs and a strict management of human and financial resources are necessary, but not sufficient: the state is no longer able to bear the entire burden of the educational effort. Participation on the part of families and of communities must be encouraged. It is also necessary to revitalize vocational training through closer links with economic operators and a modification of the status of technical schools.

61. Difficult and sometimes painful decisions will have to be taken by the states concerned. Priority given to primary and technical education will entail an adjustment of expenditure on other levels of education. While Africa obviously needs higher education and high-level research capacity, thought should be given to the possibility of seeking solutions on a regional scale, leading to the emergence, at an acceptable costs, of focal points of learning of an international standard. Courage and determination will be required of governments, while the donors should think in terms of concerted parallel action in close agreement with national governments. Decisions should be prepared by national senior personnel who can only be convinced of the need for change if they direct such change themselves.

62. Education and training have been identified as one of the priority lines of action of the French cooperation. This sector will absorb this year nearly 2 billion francs, or one quarter of the ministry's budget. It will mostly take the form of wide-ranging programs comprising practical and measurable objectives, relating to the improvement of the quality of education and the development of management capacity of national authorities

Part One: Substantive sessions

Emphasis will be placed on the emergence of national capacities. Technical assistance in the form of personnel will be reduced, though a small number of high-level specialists will still be provided in the areas where national capacity is still weak, especially for training purposes. Training must be closely linked to real circumstances in the field. The countries should commit themselves to ensuring stability and proper conditions of employment for the national personnel so trained. Rigor necessary with regard to financing must also be applied to the management of human resources.

63. Mr. Roussin concluded by calling upon governments and donors to establish a contract setting forth clearly their commitments and obligations. Such a contract must be based on an open and permanent dialogue; it leaves no room for dogmatism, imposed solutions or futile rivalries. The work carried out within the framework of DAE will contribute to this concerted effort called for by the gravity of the crisis and the magnitude of the challenge.

Small discussion groups

64. In order to facilitate a meaningful exchange of views and the formulation of specific conclusions, drawing on the background paper and on the key speeches, the meeting was divided into ten small discussion groups which met after each of the two plenary sessions. A short list of potential questions (reproduced in *Annex III*) had been prepared by the Secretariat to assist in the discussions.

65. In the first round of discussions which followed the Plenary Session 1 the groups were invited to identify the priority issues whose resolution would improve implementation, and to prepare a draft list of such issues. The Plenary Session 2 was followed by the second round of discussions during which the groups finalized their priority issues and identified actions to be taken by governments, by donors or by the two together to resolve the priority issues. Each group was requested to produce a finalized list of priority issues and a list of recommended actions.

66. A short list containing a synopsis of the lists produced by the discussion groups was prepared and distributed (*Annex IV*). A summary of the discussions in the small discussion groups was then presented by a panel to the Plenary.

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Panel discussion on the outcome of the small discussion groups

67. The plenary session during which the outcome of discussions in the small groups was presented was chaired by Mr J. Hallak, Director of IIEP and Vice-Chairperson of the DAE Task Force. Mr. Hallak thanked the discussion groups and their chairpersons for the work they performed and stressed the positive and concrete nature of their discussions. The results of these discussions were commented by a panel consisting of Mrs. Fay Chung (Zimbabwe), Mr. B. Fredriksen (World Bank), NU. I. Gustafsson (SIDA), Mr. R. Peccoud (French Cooperation), Mr. J. DeStefano (USAID) and Mr. A. Habte (UNICEF).

68. Several members of the panel emphasized that education must be considered in its socio-economic context and in the light of the objectives assigned to education. Why is it considered desirable to educate everybody? One speaker pointed out that it is important to widen the discussion about education and to address it within the broader context of educational reform. The educational reform is a very complex social process which involves many actors, including the donors. In this connection, it appeared during the discussions that the requirement of measurable, identifiable and quick results may be somewhat in contradiction with the necessity to widen the approach to educational reform. Another participant thought that the discussion should not concentrate on what is necessary in order to achieve 100 per cent school attendance before the age of 10. What is essential is a dialogue with the parents and with the entire population on what is the purpose of the school and what should be done in order that the school may serve some useful purpose. Such a dialogue would be meaningless in abstract terms; what is important is to define what should and can be done within the available resources.

69. Another issue raised by several of the panelists referred to the ownership of development projects and the more general problem of relations between the donors and the beneficiaries. It was noted that the issue of development being too much donor-driven came out constantly during the discussions. Partnership between the donors and the beneficiaries was a key issue but, as one speaker pointed out, it was very difficult to achieve. Such a partnership involves a constant dialogue between the partners, which is not easy when those partners are not truly equal. It must be remembered that the donors are those who possess financial resources, while the countries can barely pay the salaries or the fellowships to the students. To restore some balance it is necessary for the governments to rely on wide adhesion of the populations which can only be achieved through a process of consultation and agreement with all those concerned by the problems of education.

Part One: Substantive sessions

70. In the words of another member of the panel, the issues of ownership and participation must be tackled in concrete terms. It is essential to know what people want to obtain from education for their children. All improvements in education and all projects of educational reform must be conceived in that perspective. If this is not the case, there is a danger that the demand for education may stagnate or even drop, as has indeed happened in some countries. Therefore interest groups and beneficiaries should be involved in identifying issues, designing projects and monitoring results. A related comment was that when there is a comprehensive and coherent national policy which is 'owned' by the people, or in other words on which there is a large measure of consensus, a lot has already been achieved. This is why the need to formulate a national plan of action is so often emphasized as a precondition for successful donor involvement.

71. An issue closely related to that of ownership concerns national capacity building to which several panelists referred. One of them emphasized the regrettable weakness of the ministries of education, in spite of so many efforts accomplished by the donors in the last twenty or thirty years to strengthen them. In fact, many countries have not had the capacity to retain the capacity that had been created. Difficulties of operating ministries of education - which often control 30 to 40 per cent of the civil service - have been underestimated. This is due to several factors: very high degree of turnover at all political levels and also at lower levels in the ministries; wrong emphasis on developing on a priority basis divisions of planning in the ministries while most of the functions of those ministries are in fact operated by the divisions of primary, secondary and higher education and by personnel and budget divisions; the fact that even when the capacity exists (e.g. good statistical basis) it is not used at the political level.

72. Capacity building involves training of people. More people are needed to take care of key social sectors such as education and health. Capacity for training these specialists in Africa is essential. Training offered abroad may encourage people not to return home, or may be inappropriate to conditions prevailing in the home country. It is also important to take measures likely to encourage people thus trained to remain in the ministries. Capacity must not only be created, it must be retained. This may require changes in the civil service status and salary structure. Several speakers referred to the waste resulting from brain drain or from inadequate or inappropriate use of trained people.

73. The problem of time was also mentioned by some speakers. Education requires a long-term investment; improving education is a very time-consuming undertaking.

This is not always compatible with the project cycle which expects results to be produced in a three to five years project time frame. One of the aspects of this problem is that emphasis is often put more on producing results than on capacity building. This issue is compounded by the fact that those in charge of action, both on the ministries and on the donors side, rotate constantly. A related issue is what one panelist called the 'ides cycle.' New ideas come along every few years and from time to time there is a major shift in approach to what should be the right answer to the problems of education in Africa. All this makes working for long-term sustainable change and for building and retaining capacity exceedingly difficult. Lengthening of the time horizon for investment in education would be desirable. Examples were quoted of attempts to implement this approach.

74. The inescapable conclusion is that education in Africa is in crisis. There are still too many children receiving no education, or irrelevant education. The use of qualified, skilled people in Africa is also in crisis and steps should be taken to remedy this situation.

75. Six African ministers of education or other senior officials commented on the panels presentation. Some of them stressed the importance of the economic growth for the development of education. Without economic progress it is impossible to allocate more resources to education and to social services. National educational development plans must be realistic, funded and planned within the economic constraints. While agreeing that democracy must prevail in Africa, one speaker said that this will not solve all the problems. It was by no means sure that democracy would automatically lead to economic development in general and in the educational sector in particular.

76. There is a crisis in education in Africa, but one participant pointed out that crisis in education is a world-wide phenomenon, taking place in advanced countries also, while another one reminded that much has already been done and much is being done in this field since the colonial regime was replaced in Africa by independence.

77. The importance and the role of capacity building were mentioned by a number of speakers. One of them mentioned the 'triangle of capacity building' which was produced by one of the discussion groups, the three angles of which represent institutional development, human resources development and policy environment. While much has been done, with the assistance of the donors, with regard to human resources development, institutional development is usually neglected. This is one of the reasons for the brain drain which had been mentioned so often in the discussions.

Part One: Substantive sessions

Other speakers also referred to the brain drain; some of them emphasized that African countries cannot be expected to compete with the advanced countries in the conditions they offer to their skilled personnel and must count rather on the patriotic feelings of those that have received the right training. Capacity building is essential in order to move out of the aid dependence syndrome, which, no doubt, both African countries and donors wish to end.

78. Most of the interventions emphasized the importance of partnership between the donors and the recipients and agreed that it was not easy to organize it in practical terms. One speaker pointed out that the donors did not always have a right perception of political, social, economic and cultural realities and this might lead to misunderstandings. Another participant thought that donors must accept the fact that the beneficiaries have their own ideas. Attempts to dictate to the beneficiaries what they should do may kill the very spirit of partnership. Donors should respect the views, the plans and the policies of the beneficiaries and should be prepared to extend their help within that context. The donors should also be ready to accept that there may be several donors contributing to a project and that the activities of the donors within a project are to be coordinated by the recipient country. It was also said that the donors ought to be patient with Africa and not to proceed too fast.

79. Drawing the conclusions of the discussions, Mr. Hallak identified four main points which emerged. He then invited the members of the panel to comment briefly on these points. The *first* point related to the time frame in which the work is to be carried out. There is an apparent contradiction between the rapid changes of ideas, agencies and individuals involved and the length of time necessary for international and national action in the field of education to produce an impact. The *second* point concerned the conditions for a successful partnership, which involves a difficult and heavy process. While a consensus on this subject seems to emerge from the statements made by the panelists and by other participants, it is a source of some concern that this partnership is not the most difficult to achieve at the highest political level. The partnership is most important at the level of implementation, of day-to-day decisions, and it is important that the coordination should be carried out by the country concerned.

80. In his *third* observation Mr. Hallak referred to a world-wide problem, which is the imbalance between the demand for education and the perspectives of employment and insertion. The phenomenon of exclusion - of exclusion of young people, of adults, of school leavers - has reached alarming proportions. A related issue is that of a real adaptation of the development of education to social and economic development - an issue raised by one of the ministers who had taken the floor.

81. The fourth point concerned the absolute necessity of taking into account, in the development of national capacities, three elements on which this development is dependent: training of people, creation of institutions and political will. The building of national capacity for development requires at the same time: a favorable political environment and a political will, so that the population controls its own fate; efficient institutional structures, meaning institutions that are able to evolve and to become and remain efficient; and, people who are not only trained for their tasks but who are able to learn and to adapt themselves to changing circumstances.

82. Several members of the panel agreed that the issue of the time frame was a serious problem. Maybe it was even more serious to the donors than to the governments: the donors were bound by their programming cycle (often five years) and had to show quick and definite results to be able to continue their work. It is necessary to explain that development of education is a long-term undertaking and that the results cannot be measured in terms of short-term achievements. It was also pointed out that a distinction should be made between the development of an educational system, which is a long-term task, and specific results which can be attained in a relatively short time. Examples were quoted of substantial increases in the school enrollment which had been obtained in three years, but it was agreed that the improvement of the quality of education can only be achieved in the long run. It was also pointed out that there was little time left: the situation in many countries was critical and the children who have no access to primary education at present cannot wait for ever.

83. There was also a consensus on the importance of partnership. The necessity of such a partnership, and of the government's responsibility to coordinate, was stressed. This requires both appropriate structures and good personal relations. One panelist thought that when a government has a well-defined strategy, then it is on an equal footing with the donors. Another speaker, however, expressed the opinion that, necessary as it was, it was not sufficient: ministerial stability and the existence of an efficient administration were also essential. The same speaker stressed the importance of the issue of ownership. Ownership should not manifest itself at the ministerial level: the key to a successful implementation of the strategies was the direct involvement of those concerned by the evolution of the educational system.

84. Some reference was also made to the relationship of education to development. The growing unemployment gives rise to a serious concern. However, even if there are problems in the labor market, it is still true that no country has ever developed without education. Education cannot be planned in isolation from the overall economic development.

Closing session*

85. The closing session was chaired by Mr. J. Hallak who invited Mr. P. Moock, in his capacity of Chairperson of the DAE Executive Committee, to address the session.

86. Mr. Moock said that the subject of successful implementation of education programs and projects proved to be a good organizing theme, allowing for good discussions both in the small groups and in the plenary. The discussion had been open, frank and valuable. Participants listened to each other and a true spirit of partnership developed. Implementation, ownership and the need for a clear national strategy for the development of education in Africa were the key issues in the discussions. A plea was made by country representatives that the donors should be more sensitive to socio-education conditions and more flexible in their procedures. They should resist the apparently irresistible temptation for imposing conditionality from outside.

87. There was a clear link between the development of a clear and coherent national strategy and the avoidance of donor-driven programs. If the national policy-makers fail to draw the agenda, the donors will attempt to fill the vacuum. On the other hand, when there is a clear and nationally owned strategy, the donors will spare no efforts to be able to support these strategies. Any piece contributed by a donor will be a part of the strategy. Otherwise each donor will come with his own agenda and the result will be an addition of bits and pieces having little in common. Where there is a clear national strategy conditionality and adjustments need not be donor-imposed.

88. Mr. Moock then paid tribute to Mr. Aklilu Habte who was retiring from UNICEF after a distinguished career as minister, as vice-chancellor and as senior official of UNESCO, the World Bank and UNICEF. He also welcomed the participation of FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists), a new non-governmental organization the seeds of which had been planted at the previous meeting of DAE in Manchester two years earlier.

*The report of that part of the closing session which dealt with internal DAE matters will be found in Part III hereafter. (Business session).

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The vitality and the commitment of FAWE should be noted and this organization, as female education in general, deserves the strongest support of the donors.

89. Speaking on behalf of the participants Alhadji A.E.W.F Badji, Minister of Education of Gambia, said that the DAE did a good thing in coming to Africa and that it should remain there as long as it is needed. He thanked the DAE for its invitation and for having convened this meeting at Angers. He expressed gratitude to the Minister of Cooperation of France for his attendance and hospitality and noted with appreciation that France had committed huge amounts to education in Africa. He also stressed the efficiency of the secretariat and thanked the representatives of the donors, the African ministers present, the various working groups and their leading agencies, as well as the staff in charge of practical arrangements, for their valuable contribution.

90. Mr. Badji expressed the hope that the deliberations at Angers will lead to a real improvement in the delivery of education to the African child. He expressed the hope that in the end those in charge will succeed in delivering high quality and relevant education. Finally, he emphasized the need for professionalism which is essential to achieve the three goals of quality, access and relevance.

91. Mr. Hallak referred briefly to the role of IIEP which is a part of UNESCO and had been selected by ministers and donors as the seat of the DAE since it belongs to neither of these groups.

92. Mr. Mook welcomed the presence of the Minister from Eritrea, the most recent participant in DAE, and expressed the hope that the next meeting may be able to welcome participants from free and independent South Africa. He then declared the meeting closed.

Part Two: Closed meeting of the African Ministers of Education

93. The African ministers of education participating in the DAE meeting held a closed session chaired by Mr. A. Parsuramen, Minister of Education and Science of Mauritius. The purpose of this session was to discuss the theme of implementation and the issues of external assistance, as well as to renew the representation of the African ministers on the DAE Executive Committee.

94. The meeting decided to appoint Mr. Stanley I.G. Mudenge, Minister of Higher Education of Zimbabwe, as the representative of the African Ministers on the DAE Executive Committee, in addition to Mr Parsuramen and to Mrs. Diallo Aïcha Bah, Minister of Pre-University Education and Professional Training of Guinea, who were already serving on this Committee. Three alternate representatives were also appointed: Mr. Joao do Sacramento Bonfim, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports of Sao Tome-et-Principe, Prof. Ibrahim Imogie, Secretary for Education and Youth Development of Nigeria, and Mrs. Gennet Zewide, Minister of Education of Ethiopia. Mr. Parsuramen will serve as President of the Caucus of Ministers, Mrs. Aicha Bah as Vice-President as Mr. Mudenge as Secretary.

95. The results and the conclusions of the closed meeting of the African ministers of education were presented by Mr. Parsuramen, in his capacity as the chairperson of that meeting, to a plenary session chaired by Mrs. K. Kainja, Minister of Education and Culture of Malawi. Additional comments were made by a panel of ministers composed of the representatives and the alternates mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

96. Mr. Parsuramen thanked the African ministers for having chosen him as their chairperson. He expressed his appreciation for the excellent work accomplished within the DAE by Mrs. Fay Chung (Zimbabwe) who was the most senior member among those participating in the work of DAE and wished her full success in the new position she was about to assume at UNICEF.

He also wished to put on record the appreciation of the African ministers for the excellent work done by the DAE Secretariat and by the Chairperson of the DAE Executive Committee, Mr. P. Moock. He had a special word of thanks for the representatives of the donors whose participation in the DAE Task Force is an indication of their commitment to support the development of education in Africa. Mr. Parsuramen emphasized the importance of the statement made the day before by Mr. M. Roussin, Minister of Cooperation of France. Finally, he welcomed the presence of the African Development Bank at Angers and expressed the hope that the Bank will become an active participant in the DAE.

97. The African ministers had agreed to explore ways and means of meeting on a regular basis for consultation and exchange of views. They plan to hold a meeting prior to the meeting of the DAE Task Force on an agenda to be prepared by the Executive Committee of the Caucus of Ministers, composed of the six members designated to sit on the Committee. This will enable the ministers to participate more actively in the Task Force meetings and facilitate better understanding and cooperation. The ministers intended also to meet the following week at UNESCO for further discussions.

98. The ministers had discussed the mandate of their representatives on the DAE Executive Committee. These representatives will ensure that the interests of African countries and the promotion of African education are fully taken into account and will reflect the views of the ministers on the relationship between the donors and the African countries. Steps will be taken to provide regular information to all countries on the valuable work performed by the DAE.

99. The importance of female education had been stressed and the ministers wanted to put on record their appreciation for the excellent work of the Forum for African Women Educationalists and their support for this organization.

100. The activities of some of the working groups had been reviewed. Their work was considered useful and it was noted that their reports are being used by various African countries. The African countries would like to benefit from the expertise developed by the Working Group on School Examinations and request the donors to provide adequate support. The ministers support fully the setting up of a Working Group on Finance and Education which is a very important issue. With regard to the issue of a Working Group on Literacy, the ministers noted that considerable work had been performed by UNESCO and other agencies and would like to avoid duplication.

Part Two: Closed meeting of the African Ministers of Education

101. The ministers had reflected on the role of the donors and on the relationship between the donors and the African countries. While they appreciate the contribution of donors to the development of education in Africa, the ministers expressed serious concern about the way in which conditionality is imposed on African countries when assistance is provided. They cannot accept conditions being imposed unilaterally and they would like this subject to be fully discussed in a spirit of partnership. The ministers hope that the donors will give full consideration to this issue. They noted a change of attitude during the last few years and would like to encourage it further. The DAE Task Force Meetings had allowed for a better understanding. More information was requested about the concept of partnership as proposed by the Chairperson of the DAE Executive Committee, Mr. P. Mook. African countries are ready to develop national education development plans to facilitate the work of the donors.

102. The issue of economic development in Africa had also been stressed. No increased allocation to education can be expected if the economy does not develop. Support to the economic development of African countries is essential if these countries are to be encouraged to invest more in education and to take loans for education, as loans have to be repaid.

103. The ministers request the representatives of the donors to bring their observations regarding the relationship between the donors and the African countries to the attention of the heads of their institutions. The ministers will enlist the support of their heads of government and of the ministers of finance for education development programs.

104. The ministers had commented on some of the points raised in the small discussion groups. They support the development of local and institutional capacities and the need for a formulation of a clear national strategy. This is not an easy exercise and it requires a lot of support from the donors. The support of the DAE Secretariat for the formulation of such a strategy in Namibia had been appreciated and the ministers hope that the Secretariat would be able to provide such support for other countries.

105. On the issue of ownership, the ministers would like to have a clearer indication of what is meant by this. If it is understood that it should reflect national objectives, national development and national consensus, they are in agreement with the idea.

106. The subject of macro-education environment, of the lack of sufficient resources and of internal allocation of existing resources, is an item to be considered by the Working Group on Finance and Education.

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In this context Mr. Parsuramen mentioned that advanced countries are also faced with the problem of the financing of education. One issue which he was following with particular interest was that of fees for higher education which were being reintroduced in some advanced countries. African countries can hardly afford the continuation of free higher education and the experience of other countries will be very useful.

107. A program of temporary secondment to African government of Africans working for international organizations was mentioned. The ministers would like to concentrate more on the use of African consultants, without excluding consultants from other countries so as to obtain the best available expertise. With regard to the view that the education system should use the skills of the private sector rather than of the government sector, the ministers preferred another approach: the skills of both sectors are equally needed.

108. Donors should support experimentation within the education sector and the results should be synthesized by a group; duplication with existing work should be avoided. The definition of the three elements of capacity building: institutional development, human resource development and policy environment, was fully supported by the ministers. The proposal to strengthen specialized NGOs should be redrafted to read 'to strengthen specialized agencies in the education sector, including NGOs, to help build institutional capacity'.

109. In conclusion Mr. Parsuramen thanked once again the ministers for the trust placed in him. On their behalf he expressed the hope that the DAE Task Force would bring better understanding among African ministers and between the countries and the donors, for the benefit of the African child.

110. The members of the panel of ministers commented on some of the issues referred to by Mr. Parsuramen. One of them stressed the importance of the use of high-level national expertise. Foreign experts should have a thorough understanding of African culture and environment. Human resources available locally ought to be put to full use and information disseminated to the entire population so that the population would really know what the school represents.

111. Another panelist, while agreeing that in general conditionality was not acceptable, thought that it might be desirable in some circumstances, in order to redress the unjust situation of women in Africa in the field of education. National policies must be made free of gender bias. In the design of human resource development, participation of women should be included in the programs and gender issues should be considered as a part of the package.

**Part Two: Closed meeting of the African
Ministers of Education**

112. It was also pointed out that donors can bring an important contribution to the transformation of the countries concerned. They must avoid at all costs competition among themselves which complicates unduly the task of the beneficiaries. A strategy of training is necessary to reinforce technical capacity of the countries and motivate staff.

113. References were also made to the issues of ownership and of partnership. These concepts were not easy to formulate and more information was desirable. One panelist said that partnership was conceivable between equals and between unequals. What should be promoted is obviously a partnership between equals - and not, as another member of the panel put it, the type of partnership that exists between the horse and the rider. Partnership was difficult to develop when individual ministers were involved. The Conference of African Ministers could do a lot to develop a partnership on an equal footing and this is why the DAE should help the African ministers to be well organized. Hope was expressed that donors would understand fully that action should be conceived in terms of national objectives and placed under national control.

114. Ten participants - from both the ministers and the representatives of donor agencies - took the floor in the ensuing discussion. The need to elaborate a national education strategy was emphasized by a number of speakers. One of them stressed the important role played by ministers of education in Africa and the difficulties of their task. Too often they are held responsible for the failures in the educational system and do not enjoy sufficient support from the national leadership. The existence of a national strategy enjoying a wide degree of consensus would strengthen considerably the position of the ministers of education within the country and in relation to the donors. Measures must be taken to reverse the decline in education which is visible in many African countries. This requires, in spite of the economic difficulties, an increase in the share of education in the national budgets.

115. One speaker made a strong plea for more attention to be paid to scientific and technical education. He noted that calls for increased allocations to basic education usually met with favorable reactions. Necessary as it was, basic education was not sufficient; a society cannot do without scientific and technical education and vocational training and this sector also deserved support. This idea was approved by other participants.

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116. Several speakers referred to the remarks of one of the panelists about the fact that conditionalities were acceptable in some circumstances. The conditionalities which are encountered most often concern the need to increase the share of the budget to develop primary education, to recruit more teachers and to provide more textbooks for primary education, to increase the share of girls in primary education and to build more schools in rural areas. Nobody can disagree with these conditionalities. In fact, they should not be imposed by outside donors but should be considered as priorities in the national policy. These priorities will help the countries to develop their educational system and it must be remembered that, although considerable progress had been made in Africa in the last 20 or 30 years, there are still countries where less than 25 per cent of the children attend primary school. The development of other branches of education, including higher education, is important, but it is difficult to ask a donor to help countries which spend 80 per cent of their higher education budget on scholarships for students.

117. While agreeing on the importance of eliminating gender discrimination one participant stressed the need for eliminating discrimination between regions in a country, through an appropriate decentralization policy.

118. The coordinator of the Working Group on Higher Education (Mr. W. Saint, World Bank) recalled the recommendation of that group to encourage universities and other higher education institutions to elaborate their own development strategy plans based on a broad consensus of all those that have a stake in higher education in the country, including the donors. This recommendation is in line with the support expressed by the ministers for national educational development plans as a framework for dialogue with the donors.

119. Another issue raised during the discussion concerned the need for non-formal education and literacy action. Economic development is seriously curtailed by high level of illiteracy (60 to 80 per cent in some countries). Students and other privileged persons should be strongly encouraged to take part in literacy campaigns. Non-conventional methods of education should be developed, such as distance education, in particular with the help of television. Both the ministries and the donor agencies, as well as the DAE, should take a stronger interest in these forms of education which may reduce the costs and produce a strong impact. It was also mentioned that NGOs may play an important role in the development of educational systems.

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120. Mr. Nahas Angula, Minister of Education and Culture of Namibia, thanked his colleagues who had supported a request to the DAE to coordinate the cooperative effort aiming at the development of education in his country. His country had to cope with the results of the last 100 years during which 5 per cent of the population maintained the remaining 95 per cent in a marginal position. It is necessary to address the outcome of this historical injustice. It is expected that a plan will be ready by the middle of the next year and the donors and the lenders will then be requested to assist in the development of a system which would provide equity in access to education, efficiency, quality and democratic participation.

121. In this connection it was suggested that the lessons drawn from the experience in Namibia and in other countries may be of use for the development of educational system in the new South Africa which was expected to emerge from the forthcoming elections. Hope was expressed that South Africa would attend the next meeting of the DAE Task Force and that the DAE might be instrumental in providing information and coordinating aid to South Africa over the next few years.

122. Mr. M. Thiam, representative of the African Development Bank (AfDB), hoped that the Bank would join the DAE in 1994. AfDB supported activities aiming at the development of national expertise, the only course likely to enable the countries and the donors to negotiate as equals. The activities of the donors should complement each other and any competition between them must be avoided. Mr. Thiam quoted the example of Mauritius where a national plan had been developed, on the basis of which the donors were then invited to act in full cooperation with national experts. He also expressed the support of AfDB for education of women and its interest in the activities of the DAE working groups.

123. Mr. Parsuramen took briefly the floor at the end of the session to stress that, when it embarked on the course of drawing a comprehensive national education plan, Mauritius was in a very bad economic situation. It was the vision of the political leadership, coupled with the understanding of the donors and the support of the population, which enabled the country to achieve a substantial progress not only in education but in all fields of development. He concluded by assuring the Minister from Namibia of support for the efforts of his country.

124. In her concluding statement Mrs. Kainja, chairperson of the session, said that there was a general agreement on the importance of capacity building. Capacity building included not only human resources development, but also institutional development and policy environment. She also noted that there was an agreement on the issue of conditionality and of ownership.

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It was generally felt that consultation and dialogue were essential, not only at the central level but also with schools, parents, students and NGOs. It was also felt that when there is a well planned national strategy, the need for conditionality would not arise, as all the necessary conditions would normally be a part of such a plan. Mrs. Kainja also welcomed the spirit of the proceedings during which a frank exchange of views prevailed.

Part Three: DAE business meeting

125. During its business meeting, chaired by Mr. P. Moock, the Task Force reviewed questions relating to the structure and the functioning of the DAE. It reverted again to these issues during the closing session.

126. The Executive Secretary of the DAE, Mr. Christopher Shaw, made a brief presentation of the structure of the DAE consisting of four elements:

- (i) the Task Force, composed of representatives of the donor agencies working on education in sub-Saharan Africa and of African ministers of education; it meets once in every two years;
- (ii) the Executive Committee, composed of representatives of a number of donor agencies (which undertook to provide a minimum amount of core money for the functioning of the DAE) and of three representatives (and three alternates) of the African ministers of education;
- (iii) a Secretariat which is deliberately kept very small;
- (iv) Working Groups which perform most of the substantive work.

127. The working groups consist of donor agencies working on a voluntary basis together with African professionals coming from the ministries, universities and other bodies working in education in Africa. The reports of the working groups were provided to the Task Force as part of the background documentation.

128. Most of the working groups started by defining their program, their goals and their objectives. Having arrived at a clear picture of what they wanted to achieve (which took them some time) these working groups have now reached a stage of analysis and diagnosis. Some of them went beyond this stage and are now working to produce a coordinated action plan. Two or three groups have set up a framework for country teams working at the national level with direct bilateral support.

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In these cases the working group provides a mechanism through which individual countries participate after having obtained the necessary support through direct negotiations with a donor agency. Another feature of this system is the emergence, in the recent period, of special interest groups operating in connection with the working groups. This enables the DAE to cover a broader range of subjects without necessarily creating a new working group each time a new concern emerges, thus avoiding the danger of fragmentation and waste of efforts. The Working Group on Female Participation established a number of such groups, on science and mathematics education, on cooperatives and on class groups initiatives. A special interest group on literacy was scheduled to meet later in the day.

129. Mr. Shaw then informed the Task Force of the two proposals which were before it: to close the Working Group on School Examinations (lead agency: Higher Education for Development Cooperation of Ireland (HEDCO)) and to establish a new Working Group on Finance and Education for which the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which had already carried out substantial preparatory work, was prepared to serve as lead agency.

130. Mr. John Lynch and Mr. Thomas Kellaghan (HEDCO) reported on the work carried out by the Working Group on School Examinations and on the reasons why the lead agency was proposing to close the Working Group at this stage.

131. The group had been established in 1989 in order to emphasize the vital role of examinations in providing quality improvements in education and to enhance the quality of education through the improvement of examinations system. 14 national studies were carried out, with funding from the World Bank and the Irish AID; the group contributed to the design of these studies and to the dissemination of their results. A synthesis report was published in 1992. There were two aspects in the national studies: (i) to provide an analysis of existing examinations systems and to assess the existing institutional capacity; and, (ii) to study the perspectives of the development of the system and to establish costed action plans for a period of five years.

132. It was then decided to review of the impact of these studies. In addition to a postal survey, a more detailed impact study was carried out in seven Anglophone countries. It appears that some of the countries had incorporated the findings of the studies into their development plans or had at least been influenced by the studies in their planning.

Part Three: DAE business meeting

133. At its meeting held a few days before the meeting of the Task Force, the Working Group agreed that it had achieved its specific objectives and that it would be best to close down. The group had drawn the attention of those concerned to the importance of examinations and to their use for the improvement of the quality of learning at the class level. However, there are other inputs that affect the quality of learning in the classroom: textbooks, curriculum, teachers training and classroom facilities. It is desirable to look at the issue of improving the quality of learning in the broader context of the various inputs, of which examinations are but one, and to be able to compare the value of the various inputs. Such a knowledge is necessary to the governments in order to allocate available resources and to the donors in order to justify the various projects and programs. The Working Group suggests that further discussion on the use of examinations to improve the quality of education should take place within a broader forum which will assess the comparative impact on learning of all the inputs.

134. Mrs. Linda English (CIDA) and Mr. Jean-Paul Ngoupande (Central African Republic) presented the proposal to set up a Working Group on Finance and Education. The idea to strengthen the work of the DAE in this field emerged at the previous meeting of the Task Force in Manchester. An 'issues paper' had been prepared by CIDA and the question was discussed with a group of donors at a small meeting in Washington and then at a consultative meetings in Mauritius with the participation of representatives of ministries of education and finance, donors and the private sector.

135. The meeting noted that the African governments have little time to attend to medium- and long-term aspects of their action and that, as the resources available are becoming more and more limited, it was necessary to think about the best possible use of existing resources and about the ways to find new ones. This would seem to justify the creation of a working group which would have the following objectives: (a) to strengthen the management capacity of the ministries of education which often are ill equipped to deal with budgetary techniques; (b) to assist in the training of managers who would know how to discuss with the ministries of finance and who would be able to mobilize additional resources (e.g. through local authorities, enterprises, families); and, (c) to put at the disposal of the ministries the results of experience of other countries.

136. The main purpose of the Working Group will be to serve as a forum for an exchange of experiences, studies and information. CIDA was ready to undertake the role of the lead agency, subject to final approval and to the identification of an African institution to coordinate the work.

The next stage would be to prepare a work plan, to identify those interested and to find other sources of financing.

137. The Task Force approved the proposals to close the Working Group on School Examinations and to establish the Working Group on Finance and Education.

138. During the closing session the Chairperson of the DAE Executive Committee, Mr. P. Moock, made further remarks about the functioning of the DAE. He recalled the structural changes which had taken place since the previous meeting in Manchester: establishment of an Executive Committee and of the Secretariat. He stressed that the working groups remained the essential part of the structure and recalled the general rules for their establishment: there must be a willingness of one agency to take the lead coordinating role and to provide the necessary staff input and financial resources, as well as interest and readiness to participate by other members of the DAE. The essence of the DAE is the collaboration among a number of partners on important issues related to the development of education and training in Africa. In some cases the projects may be supplemented, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, out of core funds of the DAE. It is important to keep in mind that financial and personnel resources are limited. New topics may in the first place be considered by interest groups, as those proposed on literacy and on early childhood development. In other cases new initiatives may be carried out under the umbrella of an existing structure, as was the case with the Working Group on Female Participation. The creation of new working groups should go through the same process as the one that had led to the new Working Group on Finance and Education. On the other hand, the closing of the Working Group on School Examinations shows that the DAE intends to remain flexible and wants to avoid the creation of a new permanent machinery.

139. Mr. Moock expressed satisfaction over the attendance of agencies which had not participated before, at least not recently, in the work of the DAE: the Belgian Cooperation Administration, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the African Development Bank. He hoped that these agencies, as well as others which have a role to play in education in Africa, would strengthen their participation in the DAE. He also emphasized the importance of the presence of the Minister of Cooperation of France who came specially from Paris to host a lunch and to address the meeting and recalled that the Minister of Overseas Development of the United Kingdom had come to the opening session of the Task Force in Manchester.

Part Three: DAE business meeting

140. Another important issue mentioned by Mr. Moock concerned an independent evaluation of the work of the DAE over the first five years of its existence. Such an evaluation, to be completed during the coming financial year, will be discussed during the meeting of the Executive Committee to take place the following week in Paris. Mr. Moock also requested feedback from the participants on the format and the substance of this Task Force meeting, on the periodicity of its meetings and on the type of participants to be invited. This information will be very useful for the Executive Committee and for the Secretariat.

141. Finally, Mr. Moock recalled that a change of the name of the DAE had been suggested, while keeping the acronym 'DAE'. 'Partnership for the Development of African Education' and 'Dialogue on African Education' had been proposed. This subject was also to be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Committee.

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Final Agenda

Thursday, October 21, 1993

6:30 p.m. Cocktails at the Centre de Congrès

Friday, October 22, 1993

8:00 a.m. Registration of participants at the Centre de Congrès

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. Meetings of Working Groups (*non-members welcome*):
(a) Working Group on Finance and Education
(b) Interest Group on Early Childhood Development

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
Mr. Peter Moock, Chairperson, DAE
S.E. Mme. Diallo Aïcha Bah, Minister, Guinea

9:30 - 10:00 a.m. Theme of meeting: 'Issues in the Implementation of Education Sector Programs and Projects in Sub-Saharan Africa'
Mr. Christopher Shaw, Executive Secretary, DAE

10:00 - 10:30 a.m. Coffee break

10:30 - 11:30 a.m. Plenary Session 1: 'Prerequisites for successful implementation'

Chairperson: Hon. Aniceto dos Muchangos, Minister,
Mozambique
Presenters: Mr. Edward V.K. laycox, Vice-President,
World Bank
Hon. Amoorgun Parsuramen, Minister,
Mauritius

Annexes

11:30 - 1:00 p.m. Small discussion groups-Session 1: 'Priority issues for the improvement of implementation'

Drawing on the implementation paper and speeches, small groups will identify the priority issues whose resolution would improve implementation. Groups will prepare a draft Est of the priority issues.

1:00 p.m.

Luncheon

2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Plenary Session 2: 'National expertise and the financial and administrative environment'

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Chairperson:

S.E. M. Andre Sonko, Minister, Senegal

Presenters:

Ms. Carolyn McCaskie, Vice-President,
CIDA

Hon. Festus Mogae, Vice-President and
Minister of Finance, Botswana

3:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Coffee break

4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Small discussion groups-Session 2: 'Actions for the improvement of implementation'

Groups will finalize th& list of priority issues and will identify actions to be taken by governments, by donors, or by the two together to resolve the priority issues. Each group will produce two lists: the finalized list of priority issues and the recommended actions.

8:00 p.m.

Dinner at Château du Plessis-Bourré hosted by Mr. Peter Mook, Chairperson, DAE

Saturday, October 23, 1993

7:30 - 9:00 a.m.

Meetings of Working Groups (non-members welcome):

(a) *Working Group on the Teaching Profession*

(b) *Working Group on Education Sector Analysis*

Annex II

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Panel discussion 'Summary of the discussions in small groups'

Chairperson: Mr. Jacques Hallak, Vice-Chairperson, DAE

Panel members:

Hon. Fay Chung, FAWE
Mr. Joseph Di Stefano, USAID
Mr. Birger Fredriksen, World Bank
Mr. Ingemar Gustafsson, SIDA
Mr. Aklilu Habte, UNICEF
Mr. Robert Peccoud,
Ministry of Cooperation (France)

10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Coffee break

11:00 - 12:30 p.m. Report on DAE activities

Mr. Christopher Shaw, Executive Secretary, DAE

1:00 p.m. Luncheon hosted by Mr. Michel Roussin, Minister of Cooperation (France)

2:30 - 5:30 p.m. Caucus of African Ministers

- (a) Discussions on the 'implementation' theme and on external assistance; and
- (b) Business session to renew the African Ministers' representatives and alternates on the DAE Executive Committee.

2:30 - 5:30 p.m. Meetings of Working Groups (non-members welcome):

- (a) Working Group on Vocational Education and Training
- (b) Working Group on Textbooks and Libraries
- (c) Working Group on Educational Statistics

Free evening

Sunday, October 24, 1993

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Panel discussion: 'Feedback from the Ministers and Plenary Discussions' introduced by Mr. Aklilu Habte, UNICEF
Chairperson: Chairperson of the Ministers' Forum
Panel members: African Ministers of Education

10:30 - 11:00 a.m. **Coffee break**

11:00 a.m. **Closing remarks**
Peter Moock, Chairperson, DAE
Chairperson of the Ministers' Forum

12:00 p.m. **Luncheon**
p.m. **Departure**

Annex III

Potential questions for the mail discussion groups

1. To what extent did the speakers agree on the *prerequisites needed* for the effective implementation of educational programs and projects? How did the speakers differ? Based on your experience with specific programs in specific countries, what other factors are necessary for successful implementation?
2. Identify specific examples where governments, donors and beneficiaries agreed or disagreed on the goals of an education program or project? What level of agreement was there and how did this affect implementation?
3. What makes it difficult for governments to involve the private sector and local authorities in the implementation of educational improvements?
4. The background paper summarizes the now conventional wisdom that 'ownership' is an important factor in implementation. Identify some examples from education projects in sub-Saharan Africa that support this claim. What do these examples tell us about ownership?
5. Under certain conditions does the need for central coordination outweigh the advantages of local participation? Discuss the trade-offs as witnessed in specific cases.
6. How does the availability of national funds and national staff influence the implementation of externally-funded education programs? What influence would the external funding of recurrent and local costs have on implementation?

Annexes

7. What effect does the incompatibility of donors' procurement and reporting methods have on implementation? How do the procurement and reporting procedures of different donors influence the implementation of education projects in Sub-Saharan Africa? How important and how feasible would it be for the donors to agree on a uniform set of procedures?
8. Project implementation reports tend to emphasize contract management and accounts. Are there examples where project implementation reports have been broadened to measure achievements of sector goals and quality improvements?

Outcome of the small discussion groups*

- Part A: Present below your group's list of priority issues to resolve that would improve implementation.
1. Development of local and institutional capacities (1,3,7,8,10)
 2. Formulation of a clear national policy strategy (4,5,6,7,9)
 3. Ownership (3,8)
 4. Development of a national consensus (3,5,8)
 5. Insufficient dialogue and lack of national participation in program conception (3,6,8,9)
 6. Implications of donor conditionality for education sector ('education as hostage') (7)
 7. Development of genuine partnerships (3,5)
 8. Instability of personnel (1,6)
 9. Macroeconomic environment-the lack of sufficient resources and adapting the internal allocation of existing resources to changing geopolitical and demographic realities (5,8,10)
 10. Time horizons on projects is too short (3,4)

*There were 10 small discussion groups. Figures in brackets refer to the groups that made these proposals.

Part B: Present below your group's list of recommended actions to be taken by government, by donors, or by the two together.

1. Better condition of donor activities and harmonization of donor project management requirements. (6,10)
2. Depoliticize the administration and promote stability in top echelons of the Ministry of Education
3. Greater project continuity through joint government - donor sector analysis and project development. (1,10)
4. Build and retain local long-term capacity: at the policy level to develop a national framework for education; and, at the project level to plan and implement. (3,5,6,8,9,10)
5. Define an education development strategy (as seen in Mauritius). (4,7,9)
6. Experiment with more effective mechanisms than PIUs for project management (as seen in Ghana). (4)
7. Create a core group of local professional program planners and managers who deal full-time with educational development. (4)
8. Create a program of temporary secondments of Africans already working in international organizations to African governments. (4)
9. Measure project success by the development of local capacity rather than the disbursements of funds. (5)
10. The education system should address the skills needs of the private sector rather than the government sector. (1)

Heads

11. of State should be directly involved in the development and implementation of 'Education for All'. (1)

12. Donors should support experiments within the education sector. A designated group (think tank or task force) should synthesize the results. (1)

13. a model of planning focused on an objective of 'capacity building' with three elements: institutional development, human resource development and policy environment. (7)

Adopt

14. Donors adopt a stance of support for policy dialogue prior to defining the details of the program/project. (7)

15. Restrict donor leverage to those conditions in line with national policy. (7)

16. Draw in the private sector to help finance education systems through direct contributions sponsored fellowships and contracted short courses. (10)

17. Strengthen specialized NGOs in the education sector to help build institutional capacity. (10)

18. Concentrate the propositions and conditionalities on a limited number of realistic and flexible objectives. (9)

19. Donors develop the capacity to adapt to the rhythm and uniqueness of country planning processes by learning to wait, re-program when appropriate, and further develop long-term financing mechanisms. (4)

20. Review procurement procedures to improve competitiveness in contracting through greater simplicity and elimination of procedures that hinder local firms. (4)

21. Review and revise local laws and regulations that hinder local competitiveness for education development contracts. (4)

18.